CARL F. H. HENRY, 1913 -

Samuel J. Mikolaski

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Carl Ferdinand Howard Henry was born in a small Manhattan flat on January 22, 1913, the first of eight children to German immigrant parents, Johanna Vaethroeder (Roman Catholic) and Karl Heinrich (Lutheran). The surname was anglicized to Henry because of anti-German sentiment during World War I. In 1920 the family moved to Long Island. They were nominal Christians, attending church at Christmas and Easter. Theirs was a hard immigrant life. Henry was baptized at his confirmation at age 12, but soon fell away from the episcopal influences of a neighborhood church. He was a talented student, skipping grades three times. In High School he opted for vocation-centered commercial courses to qualify for a job as quickly as possible. Upon graduation in 1929 at age 16, having already begun writing copy for a local newspaper, he became a general news reporter for *The Islip Press*, then cub reporter and finally editor of *The Smithtown St*ar at age nineteen. From 1933-1935 he was editor of the *Port Jefferson Times-Echo*.

In the summer of 1933 through the influence of a business friend he experienced profound Christian conversion, was baptized as a believer, and thenceforth committed his life to Christian vocation. Through the advice of Frank E. Gaebelein of the Stony Brook School on Long Island, he enrolled at Wheaton, the Christian liberal arts college in Wheaton, Illinois, which initiated years of intensive undergraduate and graduate studies. At Wheaton he met Helga Bender, daughter of German-American missionaries to Cameroon, who became his life-long love and co-worker. They were married in 1940. Henry worked his way through college by teaching typewriting and as a local reporter for Chicago area newspapers.

His academic career included undergraduate and Master of Arts studies in Theology at Wheaton, the Bachelor of Divinity degree at Northern Baptist Theological Seminary (1941) followed by the Doctor of Theology degree (1942). He then pursued Ph.D. studies at Boston University in philosophy, completing research on the influence of E. S. Brightman's personal idealism in the theology of A. H. Strong. Subsequent studies in Calvin and Thomas Aquinas took him to Indiana University, then to Loyola University for additional study in Thomistic Theology. He was ordained at the Baptist church in Humboldt Park, Chicago in 1941.

An influential teacher, he lectured in theology, philosophy, philosophy of religion, ethics, and the relation of Christianity to society. He was instructor, then professor, at Northern Baptist Theological Seminary (1939-1947). In 1947 he was part of the founding faculty of Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, CA,

until his appointment as founding editor of *Christianity Today* (1955-1967). Henry was an accomplished journalist who combined theological and philosophical reflection with Christian journalism. *Christianity Toda*y became the most prominent Christian journal in the United States, outstripping its theologically liberal rival, *The Christian Century*. Following a sabbatical year at Cambridge University he lectured at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. Currently he serves as visiting professor of theology at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School.

He has been an indefatigable traveler and, latterly, Lecturer-at-large sponsored by World Vision and, more recently, by Prison Fellowship Ministries for many international lectureships. His involvement in major international conferences on theology and evangelism is significant. Among these are: The Berlin World Congress on Evangelism (1966) and the Asia-South Pacific Congress on Evangelism (1968) in cooperation with Billy Graham; the Jerusalem Conference on Biblical Prophecy (1971) and the Lausanne International Congress on World Evangelism (1974). He served as president of the American Theological Society (1980-81).

Henry's output of published material is the largest by any conservative evangelical theologian in America in the 20th century. He is part of a generation of conservative evangelicals who eschewed growing negativism within fundamentalist reaction while pleading for world concern for evangelism. His life and the lives of scores of other evangelicals of the recent past, notably Billy Graham, parallel and intersect strategically in their efforts to make evangelicalism a positive force theologically, evangelistically, ecclesiologically and socially.

While he has been a leader in the era of explosive evangelical growth in world Christianity, he has latterly cautioned that despite growth Christianity is losing ground in relation to world population. American evangelical success since the late 1970s has turned increasingly to fundamentalist reaction, often self-promoting, exploitive and politically oriented, rather than fostering repentance, rededication, reformation and renewal. Anything short of genuine spirituality is pseudo-evangelicalism, he says. In this he is both the son of and, at times, the victim of the peculiar non-denominational, para-church evangelicalism which characterizes the northern United States. While he is one of the few northern evangelicals to have effective contacts with the more denominationally oriented evangelical southerners, especially Southern Baptists, his vision for larger evangelically renewed Protestant denominational cooperation for the task of world mission and communication of Christianity as a world-view has not seen fruition in the manner he worked for. He criticizes the growing cocooning of evangelicals into comfortable communities, such as the move of *Christianity Today* from Washington, DC to the evangelical enclave in the environs of Wheaton, Illinois.

Henry has been the consummate scholar-communicator: incisive, irenic, with

wide-ranging interests. He has insisted upon philosophical diligence and logical clarity as well as competence in biblical studies, the Church Fathers, and the Reformers in his life-long quest to grasp the meaning of post-Enlightenment transformation of Western postulates into a secular model, and to offer the alternative of a biblically based world view. His *magnum opus*, *God, Revelation and Authority* (six volumes) conveys his life-long effort to expound a conservative evangelical theology. Nevertheless, the driving force of his life is evangelism: that human unregeneracy cannot find or create for itself religious reality; rather, that the true and living God is the self-revealed heavenly redeemer and that the unique message of the Bible is that God created and gives life to all things, that he redeems humanity to new life through faith in Christ, and that, finally, resurrection life awaits God's children.

Short List of Carl F. H. Henry's published work:

Remaking the Modern Mind. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1946. 309pp.
The Protestant Dilemma. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1949. 248pp.
Giving a Reason for Our Hope. Boston: W. A. Wilde, 1949. 96pp.
Christian Personal Ethics. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1957. 615pp.
God, Revelation and Authority. Waco: Word. Six volumes, 1976-1983.
Confessions of a Theologian. Waco: Word, 1986. 416pp.
Gods of this Age or ... God of the Ages. Nashville: Broadman, 1994. 323pp.

MODERNISM

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While in modern American religious life modernism and liberalism are deemed to be the same, certain historical distinctions need to be made.

Liberalism was a post-Enlightenment nineteenth century movement among secular Europeans and Britishers and religiously among European and British Protestants which advocated greater openness to new ideas and freedom to explore them than traditional medieval and post-Reformation churchmanship had allowed. As a social and political movement, liberalism persisted, formulating and reformulating ideology through the political parties of the Western democracies, including the New Deal in the United States.

In the late nineteenth century liberalism's religious focus narrowed to dogmatic and theological issues. Its interests and choice of issues were fed by German higher criticism of the Bible. This coalesced with earlier deistic views about the nature of God, the romantic movement in philosophy and literature, a surge of historical skepticism, and the naturalistic impulse of the evolution hypothesis to question key teachings about God, Christ, the Trinity, creation, human nature and the human condition, the atonement, salvation and Christian conversion. The roots of this lay in the epistemological skepticism of Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), the religion of feeling for the infinite of Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834), and the emphasis upon the religious values of Christianity, rather than factual data and dogma, of Albrecht Ritschl (1822-1889).

In Britain, the theological apex of liberalism's influence is the work of Charles Gore (1833-1932) and his editorship of *Lux Mundi* (1889). British theological liberals tended to take a high view of the church and the episcopacy and, often, of the creedal statements about Christ, but questioned received dogma about the infallibility of Scripture.

Theological reaction in Britain was significant, notably in the symposium volume Foundations (1914), which included A. E. J. Rawlinson and William Temple (later to become Archbishop of Canterbury). They re-asserted the claim that the true knowledge of God came not by philosophy or reasoning but through the "direct spiritual apprehension of the Hebrew prophets, the explicit teaching of our Lord himself, and the interpretation of the person of Christ by inspired writers of the New Testament and in the long history of the church," (p. ix).

Non-conformists also took up the battle against theological liberalism. R. W. Dale of Birmingham (1829-1895), whose book on the Atonement (1875) went through many editions and was translated into French and German, criticized the theology

of the liberals and the American liberal theologian, Horace Bushnell. Bushnell advocated the view that the Cross was a revelation of love, not expiation for sin, and was influential in the early formation of public education in America. Other American liberals of the period who influenced American theology and religion included William Ellery Channing (1780-1842) and Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882). The Scottish New Testament scholar James Denney (1856-1917) was prominent as a defender of the integrity of the Gospel records and of the Atonement. P. T. Forsyth (1848-1921) became the foremost non-conformist theologian to defend evangelical faith against liberalism. He had studied in Germany and had been profoundly influenced by G. W. F. Hegel and Albrecht Ritschl. Later, his conversion to evangelical faith came about through a study of the Atonement. His work and that of Denney continue to be published and have influenced generations of American evangelical theological students.

Historically, the term modernism identifies a movement within the Roman Catholic Church. It was an offshoot of the nineteenth century liberal impulse, parallel to the liberal movement within Protestantism. The Roman Catholic counterpart came to prominence in the period 1890-1910. In the years 1907-1910 it was identified (and the word modernism enshrined) within several papal encyclicals and letters. A number of theologians were condemned, excommunicated or withdrew from the church. Controversy over liberalism's tenets continued in the Roman Catholic Church until the Second Vatican Council (1963-1965). Ironically, some of the ideas the early liberals fought for are embedded in the decrees of the Council, notably legitimate critical scholarship and a more open attitude to Christians outside Roman Catholicism.

Modernism within the Roman Catholic Church did not present a solid front either theologically or politically. It was a mind-set which drew together individuals who were temperamentally unsuited to developing power structures. However, their views did not ring true to the vast majority of confessing Roman Catholics. Geographically, they were as diverse as they were philosophically. In Germany and Italy they were peripheral to church life. They were much more visible and influential in France, England and Ireland. It was the French situation, along with the efforts of the lay philosopher Friedrich von Hugel (1852-1924) to keep open the lines of communication among liberal Roman Catholic scholars, which drew the attention of Rome. As a layman, von Hugel escaped excommunication, but a number of others were excommunicated including Alfred Loisy (1857-1940), the key figure among the French Roman Catholic liberals. They espoused ideas (often differing sharply among themselves) such as immanentist views of God as a primal force, the evolution of Christian dogma from simple Judean faith, translation of essential Christian dogma into moral codes, and the superiority of experience over intellectual assent to dogma. In France, their rejection of the medieval Thomistic theological method evoked sharp scrutiny which led to censure and condemnation by Rome and greater ongoing vigilance against modernist error for over two generations.

Within American Protestant life in the twentieth century, the liberal movement and the modernist movement are understood to be the same. Especially in fundamentalist and centrist evangelical circles they are deemed to be identical and the terms are used interchangeably. For example, in his *Remaking the Modern Mind* (1946) Carl F. H. Henry indexes the term "modernism" while in *The Protestant Dilemma* (1949) he indexes "liberalism."

It is difficult to overstate the seriousness of the modernist controversy and its adverse effects upon North American Protestant denominational life because of the acrimony generated. At the same time, this obscures positive results.

The terms "fundamental" and "fundamentalist" derive from the publication of *The Fundamentals* by sixty-four orthodox theologians, pastors, and conference Bible teachers to conserve essentials of the Christian faith against modernist subversion. In 1919 the World Fundamentals Association was formed for this purpose. This movement was capped by publication of *The Fundamentals* in twelve booklets during the years 1910 to 1915. Over three million copies were circulated. The series defended the authority of the canonical scriptures for Christian doctrine. Recent fundamentalists would disown the views of some of the contributors because of their positive, if critical, approach to canons of historical and literary criticism, evolution theory and the philosophy of religion.

In the United States and Canada denominations divided and restructured. It appeared to many that modernism and ecumenical interests moved in tandem. Thus, when most of the Methodists and Congregationalists joined to form the United Church of Canada, only half the Presbyterians did so, retaining their identity and Knox College in the University of Toronto alongside theologically liberal Emmanuel College of the United Church. Though Anglicans retained formal unity under the episcopacy, they split theologically and institutionally within the same university. Wycliffe College is the low church, theologically conservative institution, while Trinity College is the high church, theologically more liberal institution. Such divisions, deeply theological and ideological, are common across Canada and the United States.

It is widely believed by evangelicals that the modernist impulse among Congregationalists, Methodists, Presbyterians and Baptists caused the steep decline of these denominations in New England. In particular, Baptists in the northern United States suffered severe disruption and schism. The Northern (now American) Baptist Convention split twice: first the churches of the Regular Baptists broke away, then the Conservative Baptists. Each of these has grown considerably since. In Canada, the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec and the Baptist Union of Western Canada both ruptured and competing evangelical Baptist denominations were formed.

The controversy sparked a schism at Princeton Theological Seminary through the conservative theological opposition of J. Gresham Machen (1881-1937) who as

early as 1923 published a book against liberalism. Machen led a schism after 1929 to form Westminster Seminary, from which others later divided, partly on grounds of eschatological theory, to form Faith Seminary. No Protestant denomination was untouched by the controversy, and many of the effects persist to the present. Of the major denominations, only Southern Baptists managed to conserve their unity, the result being that the combination of their powerful evangelical heritage, stable denominational structure and educational institutions became the base upon which their explosive growth in this century was built. However, recently they too have suffered schism, belatedly, over the core fundamentalist-modernist issue: the way in which the authority of the canonical scriptures is to be formulated.

Evangelicals regarded modernism as parasitic: liberals had largely given up evangelism and won few converts to Christian faith. Indeed, many advocated universalism and the parity of world religions. Conservatives charged them with infiltrating traditionally theologically conservative denominational leadership, seminaries and churches to suborn them with moralistic platitudes. P. T. Forsyth's aphorism is an apt reflection of the mood of the times: a church without a theology is a netful of gas. On the other hand, liberals, having experienced the wrath of evangelicals who held them to be heretics, regarded evangelicals as reactionary, anti-intellectual, schismatic and, though traditional, that their preaching of the Cross offended modern moral sensibilities and the ideals of the Social Gospel. Liberals argued that conservative theology about human sinfulness demeaned moral upward progress of humanity because human nature was defined by liberals as essentially good and spiritually educable apart from special revelation and the new birth. The fact that mainstream Roman Catholic, Orthodox and Angle-Catholic traditions also vigorously opposed modernist ideology was scarcely heard within American Protestantism due to the din which the modernist-fundamentalist controversy generated within the major denominations. This mood diverted energy from vigorous intellectual engagement of the issues. For over two generations liberals and conservatives passed one another like ships in the night, firing cannonballs of invective which rarely hit their targets accurately.

Modernism had many nineteenth century roots which grew into diverse religious expressions, ranging from those who sought to conserve essential orthodox doctrines while pleading for intellectual freedom to those who proposed to redesign Christianity to become a social, political and economic force. The primary impulse from the nineteenth century which evangelical and fundamentalist Christians strenuously resisted was Naturalism. They were concerned, as Reinhold Niebuhr later said, that liberalism had more in common with modern forms of Naturalism than with core Christian beliefs. Beyond German Higher Criticism of the Bible, the other broad trend which influenced modernist ideology was nineteenth century Transcendentalism. However, it rapidly became apparent that Naturalism was overwhelming Transcendentalism and was seriously undermining the status of the objective moral and spiritual values which modernists espoused.

Metaphysically, God became a philosophical abstract or philosophical hybrid. God was wholly transcendent. Or, the God idea grew as part of the process of evolution. Or, God is totally irrelevant to the evolutionary theory of origins: such a process defines whatever may be conserved of theism. Or, God is the wholly immanent spirit of romantic transcendentalism which has become incarnate as the divine spark within human nature. Thus God is not the self-revealed God of the Bible, the personal creator and redeemer. These two perspectives, Naturalism and Transcendentalism, were then and continue to be major points of contention between conservative Christians and the heirs of modernist theology.

Epistemologically, modernist theological method was rationalist. It fundamentally rejected special revelation and the trustworthiness and normative status of the Bible in favor of theories of an emergent divine force and the post-apostolic formation of dogma upon a foundation of primitive Galilean faith.

Modernism made its most popular appeal ethically, but the strength of this appeal gradually diminished due to unresolved inconsistencies. A powerful wave of naturalistic value theory, which resulted in modern forms of ethical relativism and secularism, engulfed modernism's largely sentimental idealistic expression of Christian goodness and love (to believe like Jesus, not believe in Jesus). Modernists failed to provide a rationally and revelationally defensible foundation for the uniqueness and truth of the Christian ideals which they held. Recent public anxiety about values in American society is a direct descendent of this conflict. Modernist Christianity was identified with comfortable, middle-class Christian culture. As the naturalism and relativism of the behavioral sciences won the minds of younger generations, conservative Christians reacted apologetically and polemically and, more recently, have taken to political action and alternative forms of education to redress what they perceive to be cultural imbalance.

As to philosophy of history, modernism was fundamentally utopian. While both modernist and conservative Christians espoused teleological views of history, modernists understood the kingdom of God to be the emergence of a new man-made social and economic order, usually argued in socialist terms. Many modernists were heirs of nineteenth century post-millennial theology. They sought to bring in the kingdom through the Social Gospel. Two world wars and crumbling western social standards have seriously blurred this vision. Conservatives resisted the idea of a man-made utopia as certain to fail. The result was radical diminishing of the post-millennial view among evangelicals in favor of the vision of a kingdom established by Christ himself upon his personal return.

The church for modernists became a function of a new social order. Here was a point of powerful resistance by evangelicals who feared a world church movement because they correlated such a vision with a world government movement. For evangelicals, ecumenism had the sound of dull corporate takeover, not the vibrancy of new life. World Council of Churches insiders

reinforced this perception, for example in the symposium edited by Keith Bridston and Walter Wagoner, *Unity in Mid-Career* (1963). Resistance to ecumenism as corporitism and deviance from mission increased with the growing involvement of American liberal church leaders in radical politics and social experiments. It was thus a great surprise to many American and European liberals in 1961 when the World Council of Churches at New Delhi adopted a theological basis which was expressed in traditional Nicene incarnational and trinitarian language. The language reflects the influence of Eastern Orthodox theologians on the Council who sought to fill the theological vacuum created by modernism.

Theologically, modernist beliefs were at variance with received Christian doctrine. Jesus Christ was seen to a holy Galilean, the example not the object of faith, the son of God not uniquely incarnate but representative of all humans as children of God. He was appreciated ideally, but depreciated incarnationally. Human nature was viewed in the terms of humanistic idealism, of evolutionary anthropology, not as sinful at the core and in need of regeneration. The Cross was viewed as an exhibition of divine suffering love not as expiation of and atonement for sin. Salvation became the fanning of the innate divine spark within every human being, not supernatural renewal through grace and faith. Modernism espoused the utopian doctrine of the inevitability of progress and of the inherent goodness of man; or, as more recently, the realized form of a divinely energized process in nature.

Two significant influences from the fundamentalist-modernist controversy upon American religious life are discernible and have on-going effects. These may be identified in relation to the quest of the historical Jesus in biblical scholarship of the past century.

The European modernist trend has coalesced in the approach of Rudolf Bultmann which concludes that no life of Jesus is possible. They hold that the historical data about Jesus are largely irrelevant to the Christ of faith. This mood prevails in much of contemporary American modernism, for example in the work of the scholars who make up the Jesus Seminar. European reaction to this trend includes the work of Karl Barth and Emil Brunner and the objections by Ethelbert Stauffer and Peter Stuhlmacher to the historical skepticism of the Bultmann school. This form of modernism is now primarily an elitist intellectual pursuit among students of religion.

The biblical approach of British scholarship has been more confessionally influential on the main body of American Christians. Included are the works of C. H. Dodd, T. W. Manson, William Manson, W. R. Farmer, Vincent Taylor, and R. V. G. Tasker, to mention a few. Many of these were nurtured in the liberal tradition but retained respect for the historicity of the Gospel accounts. They believed that a life of Jesus is possible. Their work fostered renewed biblical studies in the period 1930-1950 which helped create the wave of new English translations of the Bible on both sides of the Atlantic, beginning with the Revised

Standard Version of the New Testament (1946) and the Old Testament (1952). Nevertheless, until recently, many American evangelicals viewed British scholarship with suspicion because the lines drawn between modernists and evangelicals in Britain differed from those drawn between modernists and fundamentalists in America.

Tension developed within American Protestant life between the old liberals who were powerfully influenced by nineteenth century romanticism and naturalism, and a new generation of preachers, teachers and writers who sought to recover a sense of the supernatural. Their views paralleled those of the new breed of British biblical scholars with whom many of them had warm contacts, and the neo-orthodox reaction of Karl Barth and Emil Brunner to the older liberalism in Europe. They held a much darker view of human nature, capacity for evil and need for redemption. Walter Rauschenbusch's (1861-1918) gospel of social change was powerfully extended by H. Richard Niebuhr (1894-1962) to heighten the tension between authentic churchmanship and comfortable middle-class society. Reinhold Niebuhr (1892-1971) issued a prophetic call to the church to reacquaint itself with the doctrine of original sin and human capacity to do evil. But he rejected the orthodox creeds. Others who pressed the neo-supernatural thesis included Harry Emerson Fosdick, Nels S. F. Ferre´, W. M. Horton, John C. Bennett, H. P. van Dusen and Norman Pittenger (who later espoused Process Theology).

The modernist-fundamentalist schism drained the fundamentalist movement of mainstream scholarship which was not rebuilt in substantial numbers for two generations. Nevertheless, fundamentalist and other evangelical churches, Bible schools and seminaries conserved and promoted serious textual study of the Bible. During the decade of 1950 and 1960 when many liberal theological schools gave up Hebrew as a curriculum requirement, and were giving up Greek as well, the fundamentalist Bible schools highlighted the biblical languages as part of core pastoral education curricula. Complete restoration of such language requirements has not occurred among seminaries, liberal or conservative. Restoration which has occurred is due as much to the place of language study within the new near-eastern studies curricula of competing secular departments of religion as to perceived practical requirements for ministry.

The decline of modernism as a religious force because major denominations compromised confessional Christianity has been matched by a powerful resurgent wave of confessional Christianity within the Roman Catholic Church, the Eastern Orthodox churches, and some Protestant denominations. As well, this trend has been accentuated by establishment of large numbers of independent evangelical schools, colleges and seminaries and by the emergence of a large number of young scholars who have completed advanced study in the most prestigious schools of the western world. Prominent individuals who have single-handedly contributed to this wave include Carl F. H. Henry, founding editor of *Christianity Today* and a prolific writer, and Billy Graham the evangelist. Nevertheless,

uneasy tension persists among evangelicals, as the recent inerrancy controversy has demonstrated. The greatest fear contemporary modernists now have is not the theology of evangelicals, but their new coherence as a political force in American life on social issues. Evangelicals have not lost the initiative on the production of expository biblical materials, but they have been eclipsed during the past half century by liberal scholarship in the new contextual and patristic studies, with notable exceptions, such as the work of Tyndale House scholars in Cambridge, England. Such studies are now the preserve chiefly of liberal and conservative scholars within the Roman Catholic and Orthodox traditions, and the American liberal theological tradition, but not many Protestant evangelicals. American evangelicals have focused upon an apologetic of the Word, while traditional liberals are dominant in first century Palestine contextual studies. This is challenging traditional incarnational theology on grounds of the interpretation of social, religious, and political sources and the logic of the incarnational claim.

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MEMO RE: ESSAYS ON R. W. DALE, JAMES DENNEY, and P. T. FORSYTH

These six essays on R. W. Dale, James Denney and P. T. Forsyth comprise collations of research which went into my doctoral thesis for the University of Oxford, 1956-1958. For each of the theologians I published two essays in the *Evangelical Quarterly* edited by the late F. F. Bruce, the first on the Theology of each man and the second on his Doctrine of the Atonement.

The D.Phil. thesis may be consulted in the Bodleian Library, Oxford. It is entitled "THE NATURE AND PLACE OF HUMAN RESPONSE TO THE WORK OF CHRIST IN THE OBJECTIVE THEORIES OF THE ATONEMENT ADVANCED IN RECENT BRITISH THEOLOGY BY R. W. DALE, JAMES DENNEY AND P. T. FORSYTH."

My early university education and pastoral ministry gradually led me to the formulation of this doctoral research project. This preparation included the B.A. in General Arts (including Greek and Hebrew) and the M.A. in Philosophy with interests in classical and contemporary philosophy, both at the University of Western Ontario. Then, following suggestions by my mentor, Professor R. K. Harrison, who taught me Greek and New Testament -- only later did he turn to Old Testament studies -- I completed the Honors B.D. program for the University of London. Early in my career, as I pondered what my life's work in Christian ministry should be as I began the pastorate of two small churches in Ontario, I was intrigued by a theme that is both evangelical and deeply theological: what is the relationship between that which the apostles declare Jesus Christ accomplished through his Cross and human response to that work? Hence the proposal to the Theology Faculty at Oxford which John Marsh, the Principal of Mansfield College, helped me to formulate. Marsh, a Congregationalist, was well acquainted with the work of Dale and Forsyth, both Congregationalists. Out of pastoral and evangelistic concern my aim was to research the application of the Work of Christ to the human condition and human response to that work, not merely to write a theoretical paper. It was a boon to me that Dr. Leonard Hodgson, then Chairman of the Board of the Faculty of Theology at Oxford, decided to supervise the project himself. It was a delight to work under him. He left me alone to do my research and writing, interacting with me as I submitted drafts of the chapters to him. He himself was deeply committed to the objective nature of Christ's sacrifice and redeeming work and was surprised to discover how closely many of his published ideas paralleled those of the three theologians I was researching.

The complimentary Viva (Oral Examination) was chaired by Austin Farrer along with John Marsh. This research was a labor of love which I was able to complete alongside the pastorate of Headington Baptist Church in Oxford during those two

years. I propose with the new few months to scan the text of the thesis into this website for whatever use it may be to students and lay persons world-wide.

SAMUEL J. MIKOLASKI, D.Phil.

'Of And About'

Published in *Faith and Thought* 93.2, Winter 1963, the Journal of the Victoria Institute in Britain.
A shortened version appeared in *Christianity Today*, January 3, 1964 under the title *Revelation and Truth.*
Another shortened version appeared in *Calling*, Summer 1970, published in Vancouver, Canada, under the title *Faith and Knowledge: Of and About.*

THE philosophical issues of the Christian claim to revelation are very much to the fore amongst theologians. The turn of the philosophical wheel of fortune may now, strangely, yield unexpected support for those who claim the indispensable role of Scripture for revelation in contrast to those who claim experience of God alone as revelation. At best it is hazardous to inject personal experiences into an essay, but I beg the reader's indulgence. It has been disconcerting to find my theological stance juxtaposed simply by a change of geography. In Canada, as an evangelical Christian, I stressed the importance of personal faith. Since coming to the southern United States I find myself cast by some into the role of a 'propositionalist' or `reformation scholastic'. By this they mean one who advocates not personal religion but credal subscription for faith.

The issue can be stated pointedly: can we have the knowledge of God without the knowledge about God? Existentialist theologians answer, or seem to answer, yes. My answer is, no. The issue is not a new one. It shows itself, though in very general terms, in the continuing transcendentalist stress of German theology in contrast to the empiricism that has conditioned British thought. One might recall the indignation of Dr Austin Farrer at the logical and theological ingenuity of Dr Bultmann, the disjunction between the late Dr John Baillie and Dr Karl Barth, or even the questions argued between Drs Barth and Brunner.

The problem is first how to conceive of the infinite and eternal God, and then how to state what the relationship of the impassible God is to the world. Plato made only the world of ideas and the good real; the phenomenal world is fundamentally unreal and unintelligible, he said. The historical character of the confrontationist claim to revelation and experience is not unlike this. The Christian claim to historical revelation must mean that in at least *some* ways and at *some* times and places history does convey the reality and will of God. How often, how much, and how accurately, are the questions that divide us. This brings into view whether Scripture can be, and ought to be, viewed as revelation, or part of revelation, or revelation in part. The existentialist denies that the term revelation can be used in any other fashion than the direct

confrontation of the soul by God. Soren Kierkegaard, Heidegger, Paul Tillich, Nicholas Berdyaev, among others, are claimed to articulate this concept.

The confrontationist says that God reveals only God; that the meaning of the term revelation can be only `God speaking to me as God and commanding my obedience', to summarise oft-thundered arguments that I have heard. It goes without question that God reveals God. But no pronouncements backed by reddened necks and dilated eyes should deter us from inquiring whether this is all that the term revelation carries for Christians. The apparent simplicity of the dogma is deceptive. We cannot accept the withdrawal to non-rational categories or the rejection of logical procedures too early in the game. Whoever destroys logic will by logic be destroyed.

In one such debate among a group of students, the confrontationist withdrew to the propositional cliche that `God speaking to me directly' is the only meaning of revelation. When asked how this came, what it rested upon, or to say one thing about God, we got silence-a silence that seems quite appropriate to the totally subjective character of the claim, and not unlike the silence of the ancient sceptics. The argument ended as follows: `Do you believe in God?' `Yes,' he replied.'Well then, do you believe in the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ? we pursued. `This I cannot say,' he replied. One might concede that this could be an issue of Dr Tillich's doctrine, let us say, but it is evidently a far cry from the claims to faith in God of apostolic Christianity.

To say that we can have the Christian experience witnessed to by the New Testament without the truth from the New Testament that generates it seems to be a very precarious position indeed. It will be contended here that the saving confrontation with God in Christ depends upon, and takes up into it as part of its reality, historical elements such as the written apostolic word. We cannot claim the transcendent experience, the oneness of the soul with God, or of the soul with God in Christ, without the truth that God gives of Himself, especially in the saving events of history, the truth of which comes to us by historical media.

Fact and theory, faith and knowledge go together inextricably in any reasonable and intelligible religion. Especially is this so of Christianity which claims to be an *historical* religion.

The vitality of faith for life is apparent whether one thinks of Aristotle's predication of the *apXai* upon grounds of a settled conviction

(πίστις), St Paul's declaration that ‘faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen,’ Dr Jung's notice that faith is fundamental to the modern man's search of a soul, A. N. Whitehead's argument that science developed on the medieval faith in a rational God who made an intelligible world,

or Dr Bronowski's common sense base of science. The solutions to the basic problems of life, not only at the outset of knowledge, but also at its outer limits (for issues like those of history, communion, sin, and death) are made in terms of faith of some sort.

Christian faith is not hung on a sky-hook, but founded securely in fact. One senses that the writers of the New Testament were terribly empirically minded. `No belief', said Thomas, `unless I plunge my finger into the nailprint.' `That which we have heard, seen, and handled declare we unto you', says the writer of the first Johannine epistle. `We were eyewitnesses', declares St Peter. *The fact-basis of faith is everywhere apparent in Scripture.* This is to claim that faith without truth is impossible to Christians; and that truth is not some aether that haunts the atmosphere or the brain, but something that is the function of statements and that grasps us *when there is conveyed that which is actually the case.* States of mind are not propositions. If the confrontationist claims truth then he must cast it into propositions. He cannot claim ineffability, truth and non-propositionalism. This conclusion is reinforced rather than undercut by the words of our Lord to Thomas, `Blessed are they that have not seen and have believed,' because *their* faith will not stand in the faith of others, nor completely of itself, but *in the word of truth* which can scarcely therefore fall outside the penumbra of the term revelation.

Far from undercutting knowledge or the truth for faith St Paul vindicates it in i Cor. i-ii. Against the wisdom *of the world* Paul puts the wisdom *of God in* the act and word of the Cross. Then by a play on an historic philosophical concept (τὸ μὴ *όν*) he declares that the Christian things that are unreal to the world (τὸ μὴ *όντα*), St Paul's declaration that ‘faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen’, Dr Jung's notice that faith is fundamental to the modern man's search of a soul, A. N. Whitehead's argument that science developed on the medieval faith in a rational God who made an intelligible world, or Dr Bronowski's common sense base of science. The solutions to the basic problems of life, not only at the outset of knowledge, but also at its outer limits (for issues like those of history, communion, sin, and death) are made in terms of faith of some sort.

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revelation in human language. This is the claim to the revelational function of language in its truth functions for at least a part of the meaning of the term revelation.

Similarly, when the writer of *Hebrews* says 'He that cometh to God must believe that He is', he does not leave the matter there, but adds the perfectly intelligible proposition, 'and that He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him'. In other words, it is not some god, nor any god, but the God who in fact *exists* and who is *dependable* of whom he speaks. This is not the reign of silence, nor the stab of conjecture, but the triumph of revelation that gives the truth of what is actually the case. If the revelation is historical why cannot God use such finite elements as language? There seems to be no sound reason for excluding *ex hypothesi* either the fact-basis or the revelational function [1] of language from the faith that is Christian.

For Christians the highest conception of reality is that of persons in interpersonal relations. Such recent readable accounts as Leonard Hodgson's *For Faith and Freedom* and H. D. Lewis' *Our Experience of God* argue this in a highly competent manner.

But the concept of persons in interpersonal relations points up the categories by which we interpret reality as these bear upon the possibility and nature of revelation. Leonard Hodgson has given a very succinct definition of personal life. It is to be the individual subject of experiences mediated through a particular body in space and time. My own definition parallels this in essential respects: to be personal means to be a self, a rational self, a moral self, and a purposing self. Thus we are concerned with the environment (space and time) and the self-moved creature within it (as Plato would put it). The person is not an aggregate of experiences (as the behaviourist says) but the subject of these. This subject has the power of thought and action, in view of moral ends.

Thus, prior to, and more primary than, the questions of the validity and the change by new evidence of such categories as fashion the Ptolemaic, Newtonian, Einsteinian, or post-Einsteinian conceptions of the world, are the categories that make logical thought in the world possible at all. These I would like to call the intellectual and the moral, and the causal and volitional elements of experience.

As a rational creature man grasps the meaning of things, i.e. their sense (which he cannot even begin to do without presupposing the

[1] Note the suggestions of the late M. B. Foster, *Mystery and Philosophy.*

sense he looks for), but this intellectual part cannot be bifurcated from his moral life. He acts in terms of moral ends. In *Logic and the Basis of Ethics,* A. N. Prior renews the claim that ethics cannot be built upon a non-ethical footing. The noetic and the moral go together in experience. Response to the truth is moral as well as

intellectual. P. T. Forsyth remarked in an apt aphorism, ‘the truth we see depends upon the men we are’.

In addition to these are the issues of, first, a dependable world, regular in its function and thus patient of scientific study, yet, second, the claim that contingency makes upon us with its double issue of moral freedom (that seems to threaten causal dependability) and a teleological interpretation of the world according to the will of God. To be personal and moral must mean that choices are real; it must mean that the course of events might have been otherwise and that this difference would have rested upon the decision of some will.

Other categories which Christians acclaim rest upon these. Some are: Creation, Fall, Grace, Redemption, and Church. All of these turn back upon the conception of reality at its highest as personal; that is, of a creation moved and sustained by God and looking to the sharing of the trinitarian life of God by man.

To speak of persons in interpersonal relations is to raise the question of the meaning of confrontation. What is personal confrontation? Everybody talks of this as if he knows what it is -- until precise articulation is required.

There is involved here not only the issue of the divine-human encounter, but also the question how human beings know one another and communicate with one another. Clearly silence is something less than desirable (especially between lovers!), but on the other hand language can include much more than words. Bodily states, such as pleasure, happiness, pain, fear, and disappointment, communicate meanings to others. Facial or bodily gestures do also. Other kinds of symbolic acts are employed by human beings as forms of language. Even the actions we perform in the normal course of living convey meanings to others.

But of the symbols that man employs in very intricate ways to communicate with others, by far the most common and significant is ordinary language. Why should it be thought beneath the dignity of God to employ the language of men to communicate his truth? If Scripture is taken seriously it will be seen that God has used this finite vehicle as one amongst others, yet as the primary one, to communicate His truth.

Surely human confrontations envisage something more than the facings of faces. Something higher, deeper and more meaningful is suggested by the term confrontation. It involves the meeting of minds, of common response to one another-in the truth. Is there ever personal confrontation of any kind unless a word is spoken? Is this not the primary significance of the Johannine employment of Λόγος for Jesus Christ as God incarnate? Logos, that is, not in any one of dozens of possible ancient usages, but in that usage now intended by the Holy Ghost to John *and to us.* The confrontation of persons involves the communication of truth. Truth is a function of language.

The Christian revelation and message takes this form. How can we escape the revelational function of language unless we substitute the primacy of theistic

mystique for the Gospel which calls for repentance toward God and faith in Jesus Christ the Lord? This is to judge neither the importance nor the efficacy of the former-we leave that to God-but it is to claim that the truth of God, if it is given in an historical revelation, must involve propositions that articulate it. Can there be meaningful existential confrontation that evacuates events of their historicity? This possibility does not seem to occur to the New Testament Christians.

We now turn to two further issues: the problem of language and the problem of history.

Long ago Christians ought to have given up the idea that words have real meanings. However they must hold tenaciously to the idea that theological language ought to have real referents. Words have real meanings neither in common parlance nor in theological languagethey have uses. Minds have meanings. Words convey meanings from one mind to another where the passing of the meaning through the symbols moves successfully; that is, where that passage of meaning is neither broken nor distorted. Words store up meanings for minds. This is the positive side of the problem that words are capable of serious ambiguity. Ambiguity need be an insurmountable barrier only if a stable meaning from mind to mind is impossible; that is, if it is not possible to communicate ideas (that are true) from one mind to another.

We are concerned not just with the coherence of our judgments with one another, but with their ontological reference. They must be true; they must express correctly what is actually the case. This was Aristotle's first criterion for the establishment of the undemonstrable *ἀρχαι,* and one may murmur agreement with H. D. Lewis' argument in *Our*

Experience of God when he insists that the Christian is not satisfied if others concede that religious statements about God are meaningful. The question is, are they true?

Are we to say that the truth of God is known only in immediate confrontation but not discursively? Is such a use of the term truth meaningful, and can it be meaningful for a religion claiming an historical revelation? The non-verbal character of revelation, or its mythological form, is set forward very strongly in arguments that anthropomorphise the wrath of God, for example. But, are there not unaccounted-for judgments of value involved in the simple-minded declaration that God is love, but not a sweet potato, or a bowl of jelly, or some such thing? How do we know that God is love?

While the reality that God is love seems obvious, let us say to the non-verbal forms of revelation doctrine that are agapaic, it was not so obvious to philosophers like Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus, or Spinoza who, because they aimed to guard the impassibility of the divine principle, put love, which suggests passibility, in us, not in God. We know that God is love *historically* (probably

before we know it existentially) and we know it as truth through the biblical revelation. The question of `what is appropriate' to God, to put it in the words of Xenophanes, for Christians cannot be separated from the prophetic and apostolic word of truth.

In the dispute between religions and philosophies that denigrate the actual world, that by supramental knowledge, non-discursive and nonpropositional forms, and transcendental events, claim revelation, as against a. religion that claims that *the historical events and narratives are the actual forms the eternal realities take, I* believe Christians must declare for the latter.

Factuality involves us in the question of the historical events. Theologically, Nicaea settled for the Church that the real incarnation involves Christians in real history. But historical events, like archaeological specimens, are very dead, and very much subject to conflicting interpretations about their significance. What can we say about this?

We are not so prone now to contrast the alleged inexactness of historical conclusions with those of the physical sciences, not because the problems of historiography are less severe, but because the firmness of scientific conclusions has given way to the concept of *trends* of events under scientific study. Witness the work of Dr Bronowski, Dr Coulson, and others in many recent monographs on this question. Nevertheless, the claim to an historical revelation must meet full-face the issue of the

variables of historical interpretation. If the revelation is given finitely, at least history is finite.

Event and interpretation go together in *our* world. This an important vehicle used by God in His revealing activity. The Cross is the vital instance of this. For Pilate the Cross concluded a distasteful bit of judicial juggling. To the Jewish leaders it was a crude but effective way of disposing of a troublesome meddler. And it brought the world of the disciples crumbling at their feet. But what *was* the Cross? That it was the act of God for the world's salvation-this fact, this truth-comes because we have the Cross as the apostolically interpreted event, given to the insight of faith, and enscripturated for our faith also. This is the significance of St Paul's declaration 'we thus judge' in relation to the theology of the Cross.

Christianity has to do not simply with dead events of the past, but with events that are actual in the past and alive in the present because their true significance reaches us today in and by the Gospel. The historical reality is thus vital for faith despite the claim of Dr Tillich that history cannot unseat faith.1

In the New Testament the events are not abstract and timeless, but real: they are concrete, particular, actual. While the Christian cannot claim to have solved how eternity is related to time, he does make the common sense claim that neither in

time nor in eternity are ‘events’ events unless they happen, and to this he adds the claim to the continuity of that life with the life that now is. While the definition of eternity as unending time is unsatisfactory, the identity and continuity of personal life in both states must be maintained. The historical Jesus and the eternal Christ therefore do go together, indivisibly and irrevocably. This is the theological thrust of the Ascension. And if, as is likely, the understanding of these things will be clearer as we grasp the quality of the life that now is in Christ, we can escape neither the force of its reality nor of statements that say this truly.

To conclude: Can we rest the case for Christianity solely upon unhistorical parables, myths, or events? Is the confrontation of persons meaningful unless a word happens? This seems to demand a language of some kind. I submit that ordinary language, used by men of God in extraordinary ways, conveys the revelation of God in statements that tell the truth. How truth can be disjoined finally from revelation has not been shown. What do the words *truth of person* mean? This

1. *Interpretation of History, pp. 242-243, 264; Systematic Theology I, pp. 129-130.*

difficulty is increased when *truth of person is* contrasted with *truth about person.* Ought we not to grapple with the concept *truth from person?*

What the eternal state will be is not known to us now, nor do we know fully what event means for us both in history and eternity. The living quality of historical events is clearest to us in the saving significance of the Cross; and that life into which the Cross calls us, the fellowship of the trinitarian life of God, is adumbrated in John xvii. But for both we are dependent upon that apostolic word of Scripture that is normative of the vital experience of Christ we now know. We do not imitate the experiences of the apostles, nor is our experience normed by that of our contemporaries. Existentialist theologians are singularly reluctant to advance either their own or some extra-biblical saint’s experience as the norm and content of revelation. But references to biblical persons, to the words of the Bible, and to the record to Jesus Christ abound in their writings. In this the Holy Scriptures, whose words give the truth of God, find dramatic vindication of their revelatory function.

The claim of Kierkegaard, and other existentialists, that the knight of faith knows the truth because he grasps the paradox of faith which calls upon him to do the grotesque thing, the irrational or the mad thing, cannot stand if by this is meant that the universal he answers to is only in himself. The moral law of God, the truth of God, or the knowledge of God stands in the universal revelation of his power and righteousness (the distortion, not adequacy, of which is in question) *and* in the specific communication of the will of God by the Logos to men capable of receiving the truth. The universal, the truth, is not given abstractly and timelessly only, but historically and concretely. This is that word of truth of the

salvation of God that we have in Holy Scripture vindicated to faith by the Holy Spirit. The vitality of Christian life and witness stands in the joyous fullness of a *Gospel,* not in the dark face of existential leap.

END

PRINCETON THEOLOGY

Samuel J. Mikolaski

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Princeton Theology has been a foremost stabilizing and cohering influence in American Protestant religious life. Progenitors of the movement, which represented mainstream Protestant life, such as Archibald Alexander of Virginia (1772-1851) and Samuel Miller of Delaware and New York (1769-1850) were religiously influential in the early stages of the formation of the fledgling nation. Factors which show how fluid and challenging nineteenth century life was within which orthodox Protestant Christianity had to make its way and its presence felt include: rapid immigration and resulting religious pluralism including cult formation; the issues of slavery and the Civil War; the romantic and idealist philosophical movements; new forms of critical biblical scholarship; the evolution hypothesis and resulting scientific questioning of Christian postulates; economic and industrial issues which spawned Marxism.

It is important to distinguish two main streams of Reformed Theology and church tradition in America:

The European Calvinist traditions which include churches such as the Dutch Reformed Church, the Christian Reformed Church, the Reformed Church of America and their institutions, including Calvin College and Seminary, Dort College, Brunswick Seminary, were not significant influences in the formation of the Republic (the Dutch culture of New Amsterdam, now New York City, had largely dissipated). European Calvinists represent distinct cultures and forms of church-state relations unlike United States constitutional development. These traditions have gradually modified and have been largely assimilated by American cultural and political ideals.

On the other hand, the Scottish-English Presbyterianism and Congregationalism are Reformed theology traditions which profoundly influenced the ideals and formation of the early Republic through church ministry and their many educational and philanthropic institutions. They, along with the struggles of east-coast Baptists for religious freedom (many of whom espoused Calvinist principles), were crucial to the success of the constitutional amendment to separate the authority of church and state. Thus, when speaking of the Reformed tradition in America primacy must be accorded to the anglophone Presbyterian and Congregational forms of that tradition. In this respect the Princeton school was enormously influential in American life, an influence which cut across Protestant denominational lines.

From the founding of Princeton in 1812, several generations of prominent scholars followed the seminal work of Alexander and Miller. Notable are those in

the latter stages of the movement who, while influential in their own times, have, as well, made an enduring impact upon American evangelical religious life: Charles Hodge (1797-1878), his son Alexander A. Hodge (1823-1886), Benjamin B. Warfield (1851-1921) and J. Gresham Machen (1881-1937).

Charles Hodge, of Scots-Irish ancestry, married to Sarah, great-granddaughter of Benjamin Franklin, arguably was the most influential of the Princeton School, though Warfield is regarded by many today as exercising the more enduring influence upon American fundamentalism and evangelicalism. He was a superb exegete, interested in science, and an apt commentator on current affairs. He had pursued graduate study abroad (Paris, Halle, Berlin) despite painful separation from his wife and young children. His journal *Biblical Repertory* (1825) was later folded into *Biblical Repertory and Princeton Review*, the precursor of the *Princeton Theological Review*.

For forty years he wrote prolifically, his chief focus being the theology and principles of the *Westminster Confession of Faith*. His hugely successful The *Way of Life* was published by the American Sunday School Union in 1841 though, oddly, the 1959 reprint is of the original British publication. It is an exposition of Christian conversion and discipleship. The three-volume *Systematic Theology* (1871) has been widely influential. The fruit of a lifetime's work, it continues to be printed and is still used in evangelical institutions as a landmark of nineteenth century conservative Protestant theology. His son, Archibald Alexander Hodge, was appointed associate to the theological chair in 1877 and succeeded his father in 1878, which position he held until his death in 1886. He is best known for his *Outlines of Theology* (1860, revised 1878), written as the substance of didactic sermons from his pastorates. It was translated into Welsh and modern Greek and was greatly expanded in the revision to extend interpretation of the Westminster Confession for the generation after his father's.

Archibald Hodge and his younger colleague Benjamin Warfield co-authored "Inspiration" (*Presbyterian Review*, April 1881) which laid down the gauntlet to German higher criticism and served powerfully to impel Warfield into polemical theology. For this he is highly regarded in American fundamentalist circles to the present day.

Warfield's era marks the zenith of the Princeton School as well as the beginning of the rapid shift within Presbyterian life and faith away from a conservatively held Westminster Confession. His was a formidable intellect, at first sharpened in the natural sciences before he pursued graduate studies and conversations in Edinburgh and Heidelberg. His large output (10 volumes) of chiefly theological essays continues to be published in various shorter collections. He was virtually an academic recluse because of the lightning strike which invalided his wife on their honeymoon. He rarely left her side for more than a few hours. He devoted himself to her and to his writing, controversies and seminary lectures.

It is a mistake to describe Princeton Theology as primarily a polemic and as the fountain of modern schismatic fundamentalism. It was probably the most powerful current in the stream of nineteenth century American Protestant theology. It was well-informed, broadly based confessionally, outward looking scientifically, and irenic toward non-Reformed conservative Christian traditions. The two Hodges and Warfield strove vigorously to defend the Protestant faith from the standpoint of a centrist Calvinism of the Westminster Confession of Faith. They questioned the philosophical romanticism of their era and the religious perfectionism of the evangelist Charles Finney. Until they deemed German higher criticism to have gone too far they made appreciative scholarly responses to it. They exhibited a strong tendency to a factual, empirical approach to reality (Scottish common sense realism) in contrast to the idealism and historical skepticism of their times. At first they embraced the possibility of the evolution hypothesis as an explanatory paradigm but turned away as its proponents set it on a naturalistic path.

The heart of Princeton Theology was the firm conviction that the essential elements of the Christian faith comprise inalienable truths which can be expressed rationally and that the canonical Scriptures are the unfailing repository of those truths, which are open for discovery by competent, dedicated scholarship through divine help.

Did the legitimate apologetic interests of nineteenth century dialogue become, especially in Warfield and Machen, the polemic of twentieth century fundamentalist reaction? Jack B. Rogers and Donald A. McKim argue that late Princeton Theology adopted a view of the inerrancy of the Scriptures which derives from the seventeenth century European theologian Francis Turretin rather than from the mainstream of church life as represented in the church fathers and the reformed tradition of the Westminster divines. They identify this as an apologetic rather than a constructive mode, as a deductive not inductive approach, and as a modern form of medieval scholasticism. It remains the case that the recent struggles among American evangelicals over the meaning of inerrancy, including resulting schism, is claimed by defenders of inerrancy to be the heritage of Warfield and Protestantism, though they seldom remark on the breadth of Warfield's interests, including evolution.

Princeton Theology was an expression of evangelical faith rooted in the exegesis of Scripture, infused by wide intellectual interests, and was thus far more than a Reformed perimeter defense against error. The legitimate confessional side far outweighs in importance the side-trips into polemics. Evidence for this is the continuing widespread use of their exegetical and theological work in Presbyterian, Reformed and Baptist educational institutions, and in interdenominational Bible Schools, Colleges and Universities today. Edward J. Carnell has classified evangelical orthodoxy as cultic or classical. Princeton Theology may be aptly described as a form of classical orthodoxy which has been employed polemically by some to bolster the claims of cultic orthodoxy.

Part of the enduring polemical heritage springs from the bitter struggle between Warfield and C. A. Briggs over higher criticism and the nature of biblical authority. A. A. Hodge and Warfield argued that acceptance of inerrant original manuscripts of Scripture as the foundation of faith is essential. The conclusion of the protracted five-year academic and denominational struggle was the 1893 suspension of Briggs from the Presbyterian ministry. The issues have taken on new life in our time in the theologically fratricidal struggle over inerrancy among American evangelicals. Those who deemed themselves heirs of the Princeton School helped form the Conference on Biblical Inerrancy which has subsequently disbanded because their work was thought to have been completed with the publication of a significant body of apologetic and expository material. Ongoing discussion among evangelicals has recently focused more upon canonical and hermeneutical issues than upon questions about texts and higher criticism. This has shown that a statement on inspiration is not the end but merely the beginning of academic agenda.

Nevertheless, recent historical revisionism and post-modernist attitudes to language such as deconstructionism, have reinforced central concerns of confessionally oriented Christians. This is as much at the heart of any expression of confessional Christianity as it is of Princeton Theology. If revelation is a truth claim and truth is a function of statements which purport to state that which is actually the case, then the divinely authenticated authority of the Bible is critical to that claim no matter how one generation expresses it as against another in terms such as inspiration, verbal inspiration, plenary inspiration, inerrancy. The debate is on-going but the core issue is clear: Princeton Theology affirms the unique truth-claims of the Bible against all attempts at historical and contemporary relativizing.

Broadly speaking, in America Christians of the Presbyterian and European Reformed heritage continue to experience tension, in significant measure because of the differences between the Dutch and Swiss forms of the tradition and the British-American Presbyterian forms. Recent debate concerns: A particularist as against a general view of the atonement; for example, some individuals and churches will cooperate with a Billy Graham Crusade and some will not over questions about the free offer of the Gospel. Common grace parallels the foregoing issue, such as the debate between the *Reformed Journal* (now *Christian Perspectives*) along with James Daane on the side of common grace versus John Murray, Westminster Seminary faculty and theologians such as Louis Berkhof. Heirs of the Princeton Theology continue to defend infant baptism on biblical grounds while others, in light of recent textual and historical studies, do so primarily on heritage grounds. In recent times the most vocal defenders of the Princeton School are largely in the separatist Presbyterian and Reformed denominations and among those who espouse neo-Puritanism within other evangelical groups. Efforts persist within the mainline Presbyterian and Reformed denominations to revive interest in the historical confessional and

ecclesiologically irenical sides of the Princeton theologians.

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ROMAN CATHOLICISM

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Perceptions of Roman Catholicism and relations between Roman Catholics and Protestants, including evangelicals and fundamentalists, have been profoundly altered by the Ecumenical Council of 1963-65 convened by Pope John XXIII, commonly known as Vatican II. Nowhere more than in North America and England have perceptions and relations changed. Vatican II was a watershed. The result is new understanding and appreciation, sporadic and sustained dialogue, and greater religious, cultural and political cooperation. Nevertheless, doubts remain.

Generic to Protestant mistrust, subliminally entrenched and almost universally palpable since the Reformation, the Counter-Reformation and Inquisition, is gut-wrenching fear of the possibility, indeed likelihood some believe, of resurgent cultural repression and political persecution of non-Roman Catholics where the Roman Catholic Church becomes religiously dominant, as irrational as modern American Roman Catholics deem this to be. Most evangelical and fundamentalist groups support large numbers of overseas missionaries who, in this century, have frequently reported persecution of evangelicals in Roman Catholic dominated countries.

Traditional anxieties among Protestants of all stripes about Roman Catholic religious beliefs and practices include issues such as: The claim that the church through its leaders and traditions is the authorized interpreter of Scripture and can create dogma, rather than that the Scriptures alone are the final authority in the church. The claim to papal authority and infallibility. Objection to what has been perceived as the Roman Catholic concept of grace mediated by measure through authorized sacraments, rather than a relational view of grace and justification by faith alone. Offense taken at the cult of Mary and claims for her as Mediatrix, and at the importance attached to material factors in religion. Insistence upon soul liberty, resistance to censorship and objections to the use of the episcopal imprimatur and the Index. That religious liberty must include the right to proselytize (evangelize) without fear of persecution by Roman Catholic authorities. Fear of the use of political power in the interests of religion; hence the importance of the separation of church and state. Concern that the accumulation of power inevitably leads to complacency within religious hierarchies (including Protestant ones) and to moral and fiduciary corruption. The doctrine of purgatory. Finally, more recently, the appropriateness of appointing an ambassador to the Vatican.

Modern Protestant mistrust, especially among evangelicals, intensified during the nineteenth century because of a powerful wave of Roman Catholic irredentism which included large programs of evangelism to convert Protestants to Roman Catholicism and programs of immigration and settlement of Roman Catholics.

Countervailing Protestant effort often engaged the two camps in bitter struggle in a pamphleteering age. The historical and anecdotal data are enormous and must be interpreted contextually with regard to specific regional factors and personalities.

Prominent among these was Isaac Hecker (1819-1888), convert from a New York City Methodist family and founder of the Paulist Fathers. This movement aimed to evangelize America and the world for Roman Catholic faith by means of typical nineteenth century evangelistic fervor, consciously patterned after the preaching of Charles Finney and Dwight L. Moody. Hecker was motivated by apocalyptic urgency to evangelize Protestants in America and by a conviction that Roman Catholicism in Europe could not renew itself.

Hecker recruited powerful allies to his cause, including Archbishop John Ireland of St. Paul, MN (who published the booklet *To Make America Catholic*); Bishop John Keane, the founding Rector of the Catholic University of America; and Monsignor Denis O'Connell, Rector of the North American College in Rome. Hecker's efforts were the counterpart of creating the American dream on behalf of Roman Catholic faith. His view that Americanized Catholicism was the future of the church in the world deeply offended British and Continental Roman Catholic leadership. Cardinal Manning in England refused to license the Paulists to evangelize England and Continental Roman Catholic leaders dubbed the movement the "Americanist Ideology," "Americanist Myth" and even "Americanist Heresy."

Widely publicized Roman Catholic evangelistic efforts continued well past the middle of the twentieth century. Examples include the spectacularly successful radio network broadcasts of Bishop Fulton Sheen from Detroit and the many newspaper ads published by the Knights of Columbus such as one entitled "Why Missions Call the Pope Holy Father."

Protestant reaction was vigorous and was sustained throughout the modernist controversy which divided Protestants into the Liberal, Evangelical and Fundamentalist camps. Reaction to Roman Catholic irredentism was theologically as powerful among liberal Protestants as among the evangelicals, though the evangelical and fundamentalist reactions were often more strident and negative.

D. Leland Foster Wood, a former Secretary of the Commission on Marriage and the Home of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America published a "look before you leap" pamphlet in 1945 entitled *If I Marry a Roman Catholic*? in which he cautioned against mixed marriages, especially the implications of Roman Catholic demand for pre-nuptial agreements that children be baptized and raised Roman Catholic. Arthur G. Reynolds wrote *What's The Difference? Protestant and Roman Catholic Beliefs Compared* for the Commission on Christian Faith of the Boards of Evangelism and Social Service of the theologically liberal United Church of Canada. It took over a decade of discussion to gain authorization for publication in 1954. George Caird, then at McGill University in Montreal, did ground work for the booklet. Later, upon his return to

Oxford, Caird became prominent in Roman Catholic-Protestant dialogue leading up to Vatican II and was an official observer at the Council. As well, the United Church Publishing House issued *What Protestants Believe and Why?* by John Y. MacKinnon of the prestigious First St. Andrews United Church in London, Ontario, which went through seven printings and was distributed through church connections into the United States, who also published *Thinking of Rome? Think Twice* (1958, reprinted in the same year) by H. R. Alley as a response to the Paulist W. G. Hurley, *The Pope Is Infallible*. Many of the Protestant denominations published cautionary pamphlets, such as the Southern Baptist *Our Catholic-Protestant Marriage* (1950), a testimonial dissuasive in response to a Roman Catholic pamphlet entitled *Marry Your Own Kind*.

The most powerful wave of anti-Roman Catholic hegemony sentiment and literature originated among evangelicals and fundamentalists in Canada because of fear of the almost solidly Roman Catholic province of Quebec. The perceived threat the Roman Catholic hierarchy and population in Quebec posed to Protestants and to Canadian unity evoked a tidal wave of publication. The fear was that Quebec would produce the leaders, have the money and population (because of the then exceedingly high birth rate dubbed by Protestants "the revenge of the cradle") for Roman Catholic takeover not only of Canada but also to serve as a base for activity in the United States.

T. T. Shields, the well-known preacher of Jarvis Street Baptist Church in Toronto, marshaled fundamentalist forces through the pages of his weekly church magazine The Gospel Witness. At its peak the magazine circulated to sixty countries, often translated. He also helped found the Canadian Protestant League which, along with its sister organization in England, the Protestant Truth Society, sought to counter the perceived Roman Catholic threat.

Pamphleteering became prolific. Rewards of upwards of $50,000 were offered for scriptural proof of key Roman Catholic dogma. J. B. Rowell of Victoria, Canada, published the pamphlet *Why Millions Do Not Call The Pope Holy Father* to counter the Knights of Columbus crusade and pamphlets of Archbishop John Ireland, and another against public funds for parochial schools.

The most widely distributed books by fundamentalists were two testimonials by converted Roman Catholics. The first, *Rosary Road*, published by the Evangelical Alliance Mission of Chicago (1950) went through four editions in the United States and Canada plus translations into French, Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch and German. Its theme was convent life as the life of unconverted devotees. The second, Father Chinuquy's book *The Priest, The Woman and the Confessional* went through at least forty-four editions and printings. Of the same era as Isaac Hecker, Chiniquy had been honored by the Vatican, Protestants, the Canadian Parliament and the Bishop of Montreal as a moral crusader and the Apostle of Temperance. When he collided with Roman Catholic authorities in Illinois during his leadership of the planned migration of thousands of French Canadian Roman Catholics to form a new Roman Catholic community on forty square miles of land in 1851 (Kanakee, IL) he left the church and wrote his expose´ of immoral

priestly behavior in Quebec. He was never charged with wrong-doing, only with being too zealous. Such books and pamphlets had a far greater religious impact than later post World War II scholarly defenses of defection from the Roman Catholic Church such as those of Charles Davis and Anthony Kenny or the polemics of Hans Kung.

A remarkable change has occurred in perceptions and relations between Roman Catholics and Protestants, especially evangelicals. Because fundamental doctrinal beliefs are seen to be congruent more attention is being placed upon those beliefs which unite than upon those which divide the two traditions. The initial impetus was Vatican II which totally changed the ground rules by referring to non-Catholic Christians as separated brethren not as heretics and by mandating cooperative coexistence among all people of Christian faith. Contributing to this change has been the rise of evangelical faith and Bible study among Roman Catholics (including the Charismatic movement) and a new emphasis upon personal conversion; powerful impetus toward lay participation in worship and leadership in the Roman Catholic church; the common threat of secularism in America; and social issues such as divorce, sexual license, homosexuality and abortion which have brought Roman Catholics and evangelicals together for personal spiritual and ecumenical dialogue, cooperative civic programs, educational reform, and joint legislative action.

Prominent Protestants such as Jaroslav Pelican, G. C. Berkhouwer and Carl F. H. Henry have stressed key elements of faith common to Roman Catholics and Protestants while not dismissing critical differences. One instance was the series of personal theological conversations between Gustave Weigel, the conservative Jesuit theologian of Woodstock College, and Carl F. H. Henry, the founding editor of *Christianity Today* and one of the leading evangelical theologians of this century. Weigel recommended Henry's books to his seminary students and publicly embraced themes of Henry's *Fifty Years of Protestant Theology*, the 1949 address which preceded the formation of the Evangelical Theological Society. It is of interest that Henry and the staff of *Christianity Today* declined to endorse Richard Nixon in the Nixon/Kennedy presidential contest which Kennedy won and they urged fairness when commenting on the controversy over whether a Roman Catholic President could act independently of the authority of the Roman Catholic Church.

Moral and social issues affecting public policy and imperatives of the Christian mission in face of secularization are drawing Roman Catholics and evangelical Protestants together, as demonstrated by activities of the Roman Catholic Conference of Bishops, the rise of the Moral Majority and the more widely based interests of the Religious Right, and a number of individual religious leaders and scholars. Noteworthy conferences have been held between Roman Catholics and Evangelical Protestants to clarify differences and common interests, such as the Baptist-Roman Catholic International Conversation (1988) and the consultations between Evangelical Protestants and Roman Catholics (1992-94) initiated by Richard John Neuhaus of the Institute of Religion and Public Life and Chuck Colson of the Prison Fellowship Ministries.

The Neuhaus-Colson consultation comprised Roman Catholic and Evangelical Protestant leaders, acting as individuals. They published the statement *Evangelicals and Catholics Together: the Christian Mission in the Third Millennium* (March 1994), which appeared in *First Things*, May 1994. A number of other prominent Roman Catholics and Evangelical Protestants subsequently have publicly endorsed the statement; however, several individuals prominent in American evangelical life have declined to do so on grounds that the statement is objectionably ambiguous.

The statement calls for convergence between Roman Catholic and Evangelical Protestant Christians on grounds of common faith in Christ, the incarnate Son of God and only Redeemer, as expressed in the Apostles Creed. It postulates a "necessary connection between the visible unity of Christians and the mission of the one Christ," and pleads for cooperation and contending together on matters of public interest and world mission. A number of unresolved theological issues between (and sometimes within) the two traditions are listed. The authors plead that more unites them on the common footing of justification by grace through faith because of Christ than divides. The statement ends with an appeal that Roman Catholic and Evangelical Protestant understanding of conversion are congruent and that both sides should concentrate effort to evangelize the non-Christian world rather than to proselytize each other. Nevertheless, there remains the serious ambiguity in the statement that Roman Catholic teaching claims the baptismal regeneration of infants followed by later conversion, while most Evangelical Protestants insist that the new birth coincides with conversion followed by believer's baptism.

Roman Catholics and Evangelical Protestants are urged to cooperatively contend on behalf of critical issues, not as religious agenda but as directions to take for the common good. Thirteen are listed: Proclamation of the Evangel. Individual and corporate church responsibility for the right ordering of civil society. Religious freedom (including the right to proselytize). Separation of church and state. Legal protection of the unborn. Conservation of America's cultural heritage in public education. Parental choice in education. Opposition to pornography. Acceptance of one another across racial and ethnic barriers. A market economy in a free society. Renewed appreciation for Western culture. Renewed respect for care institutions of society such as family, church and voluntary organizations. International promotion and defense of democracy.

An assumption pervades the document which forms common ground for the participating Roman Catholic and Evangelical Protestants, namely, a necessary connection between the visible unity of Christians and the mission of the one Christ and that there is but one church because there is one Christ and the church is his body. This assumption reflects the view of many northern United States, Canadian and British evangelicals (chiefly independents, Episcopalians, Reformed, and para-church organizations) that the invisible church is the body of Christ, but this is not the view of many Evangelical Protestants, especially Baptists, who understand the term "body" primarily to identify concretely the

local assembly of believers, as in 1 Cor. 12:27.

Vatican II and subsequent pronouncements make clear that the Pope regards all mankind as his people whether perfectly joined to Rome or imperfectly related by cooperative coexistence or even hostility. Theological ferment within the Roman Catholic Church and controversy over the nature of authority, especially on the role of women, and the desire among conservative Christians of all denominations for cooperation in face of secularism, have created a unique historical mix. Elements within the Roman Catholic Church are perceived by some to be pressing for recovery of Roman Catholic expansionist strategy. The missionary travels of Pope John Paul are cited. Another example is the republication in 1993 of the 1967 book by Dietrich von Hildebrand (1889-1977) *Trojan Horse In The City of God*. The *Catholic Crisis Explained* with introduction by New York John Cardinal O'Connor and approving comments by Chicago's Bishop John J. Myers. While Hildebrand criticizes elements of the post-Conciliar "new" church, O'Connor emphasizes Hildebrand's call for spiritual renewal against the tide of modern secularism and that ecumenism presupposes profound Catholic faith which embraces all believing Christians.

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[Editor's Note: A series of articles on the Biblical foundations of the doctrine of the Atonement by Dr. Leon Morris is appearing in THEMELIOS. Here, Dr. Mikolaski, an Oxford graduate who is now Professor of Theology in New Orleans Baptist Seminary, U.S.A., expounds and criticizes some forms of the doctrine which have been influential in many parts of the world.]

7

THE ATONEMENT IN BRITISH THEOLOGY

by Samuel J. Mikolaski

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of the
International Fellowship of Evangelical Students

I

The publication of John McLeod Campbell's *The Nature of the Atonement and its Relation to Remission of Sins and Eternal Life* in 1856 is a convenient point of departure for this study.1 More than challenging Calvinism, he brought to public attention, as R. W. Dale did also, the extent to which Christians had shifted

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from the theory of limited atonement. It is not easy to state the significance of this reaction without gilding the edges of the reaction and distorting traditional Calvinism. The thought of nineteenth century theologians was profoundly influenced by the Evangelical Revival, but some of the concepts which influenced them made strange bedfellows. While McLeod Campbell stressed that the reign of law provides no place for atonement, nevertheless for him love does not act gratuitously because the Cross viewed only as a spectacle of suffering love is inadequate. That is, if a forensic frame of reference for the atonement is inadequate, the relations between man and God are nonetheless moral; something did happen in the Cross. Everyone will acknowledge that relating the moral to the divine love and grace in forgiveness is as much a problem for us as it was for nineteenth century theologians. And we with them resist the tendency to evacuate normative morality from the universe. Campbell pleaded for men to interpret Christ's work not by law but by the Kingdom of God, not by a predisposing scheme but as a free offer to all men, not primarily in terms of satisfaction and penalty but of spiritual, personal and moral relations.

The point of this is that no final value ought to be attached to the metaphor (in this case a legal metaphor). This does not make the claims of righteousness unreal, but the form of penalty of pain, he said, should be understood as the form of holiness and love that they convey where the Son deals with man on God's part and with God on man's. As to man Christ does the will of God per-fectly; as to God he utters the perfect Amen to righteousness in the midst of judgment. It is misleading then to say that Campbell advocates vicarious penitence as the idea of atonement, because he specifically rejects the notion that in the confession of Christ in judgment his contrition is vicarious. For a lead he turned to Luther and Jonathan Edwards. Luther, he said, advocated the victor idea (note the anticipation of part

of Aulen's interpretation by seventy-five years) not as a legal fiction but as expressing the reality of the moral relations between God and man. In the case of Edwards, he picked up one side of an alternative as the solution he sought. Edwards said that God could be just only by the vindication of Himself in either the infinite punishment of sin or a repentance, humiliation, and sorrow for sin proportionable to the greatness of the majesty despised, and he assumed that the latter was not possible. McLeod Campbell said that Jesus Christ as God incarnate alone could and in fact did make this perfect human response in judgment. He highlights both satisfaction and penitence without which atonement and reconciliation would be farcical.

But the stream of resistance to traditional Calvinism widened to include both the children of that theology (such as R. W. Dale) and its critics (such as F. D. Maurice). The latter, especially in his seventh essay "The Atonement" (*Theological Essays*,1853), vigorously criticized the penal doctrine but left his own ideas in doubt for the reader. He says that forgiveness cannot be made by exacting a legal equivalent for it;

rather, the sufferings of Christ are not punishment inflicted but an entering into our suffering by him in a moral way. Maurice, too, was attracted to Luther; but he adds that Luther's conscience did not construct a rigid system out of his experience. Nevertheless it will be clear to everyone who reads the essay that Maurice does not abandon the formal relations between God and man, nor the judgment which Christ bears. A more vigorous, if less constructive, attack was made by Benjamin Jowett. Substitution, representation and imputation are fictions and immoralities, he charged, that can never make men right with God. He and other exponents of the moral influence idea of the atonement failed to see that the death of Christ is an integral part of the atonement dealing with evil and sin objectively in a way that is both rationally and morally comprehensible.

A more significant development centered in the studies of New Testament scholars like B. F. Westcott and James Denney. Westcott has in view especially the incarnate life of our Lord, not unlike the earlier approach of Campbell and Maurice, and that of Horace Bushnell the American theologian (whose book, though published in Britain did not significantly influence the main stream of theological development there. Dr. Westcott describes Jesus Christ as "truly man", "perfectly man", and "representatively man" (*The Historic Faith*, 1883, pp. 59-69). Here the universality of Christ's manhood is clear but the role of this manhood in the passion of the Cross is not. Westcott says that what we strive after in human nature we discover in the Cross given by Christ in his love. The Incarnation was necessary both to fulfill the divine ideal for the race and for atonement because in his perfect humanity Christ bore the "uttermost burden of sinful humanity". But it is not within our power to say how Christ's life and death avail with the Father. As later, so here, the theology of the vicarious act eludes our grasp. Three other theologians made a significant contribution to the theology of this period.

They are J. Scott Lidgett, *The Spiritual Principle of the Atonement* (1897), R. C. Moberly, *Atonement and Personality* (1901), and Hastings Rashdall, *The Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology* (1919).

Probably no writer of this period developed the “ethical” satisfaction as against the “penal” satisfaction theme of our Lord’s passion more comprehensively than J. Scott Lidgett. He pointed to the moral perfection of Christ in His suffering and to the Fatherhood of God, rather than stressing the Father’s role as Judge of men. Scott Lidgett argued that we know no higher conception than Fatherhood, and that what this says of the relations within the Trinity speaks volumes about the fellowship to which we are called. But fatherhood mingles the ideas of severity and benevolence; hence forgiveness is irrational, indeed impossible, unless the sanctity of the parental and filial bond (experienced in the law and spirit of that bond) is effectively honoured. This includes the idea of vindicating righteousness and enthroning it in the sinner’s life. Divine law and judgment are not expressions of resentment nor harsh

vengeance; rather, just as the law of the family is in the interest of the child, erring or not, so the law of God cannot be waived or ignored. The necessary and beneficent role of divine law and judgment in the purpose of God is to work a change of feeling in the sinner toward God's dealings (note chapter V). Three strands are subtly woven together: the necessity of satisfaction in judgment (remission as the ground of response), the necessity of quickened response acknowledging judgment (response completing the meaning of remission), and the necessity of perserving filial yet formal relations (relations that are both personal and moral) in the atonement which reflect the inner life of the triune God. Scott Lidgett is much indebted to R. W. Dale both as to form and substance of argument, though he puts stronger emphasis upon surrender.

R. C. Moberly built up the doctrine upon the Fatherhood of God and the supremacy of moral values in a manner reminiscent of McLeod Campbell and with a vigorous criticism of penal theories of which he regarded R. W. Dale the chief spokesman. Moberly aimed to preserve in his viewpoint both the judgment of sin and the moral renewal of the sinner. Thus he devotes space to an important discussion of punishment, penitence and forgiveness, concluding (i) that the intention of punishment is reformatory because it is meaningless unless the punished one accepts his due, (ii) that true penitence involves the perfect detestation of sin (only a life entirely free from sin, he says, can know true detestation of and true penitence for sin), and (iii) that forgiveness is the correlative of penitence answering to the sin-consciousness of the sinner. Let no one suppose that Dr. Moberly takes sin lightly (is there a doctrine of sin anywhere in Hastings Rashdall's theory?), but the object of Christ's sufferings seems to be this : that as the grief of a parent has a real influence upon the erring child in his sin, so the passion of Christ has a real influence upon us evoking true penitence. There is a faint trace of substitution here also, for when rejecting penal ideas he says (p. 130), "The perfect sacrifice of penitence in the sinless Christ is the true

atoning sacrifice for sin ... it is the full self-identification of human nature, within the range of sin's challenge and sin's scourge, with holiness as the Divine condemnation of sin, which was at once the necessity - and the impossibility - of human penitence." What is doubtful about Moberley's theory is how the dealing of God with sin is real, especially respecting past sin and guilt, and this same criticism is even more devastating of the "example theory" advanced by Dr. Hastings Rashdall.

No recent foe of penal and objective doctrines of the atonement has been as implacable as or more articulate than Dr. Rashdall. Three points about his work, and that of others who share his viewpoint need to be made at the outset. First, retribution and retributive ideas of justice are for them survivals of primitive modes of thought and inconsistent with enlightened Christian doctrine. This is based on the notion that retribution means only vengeance or spitefulness. Second, there is no need, as they see it, to deal with guilt or sin. "Justice"

and all such notions, including the conception of Jesus Christ as generic to the race, are wrong notions, impersonal, and reminiscent more of Plato’s world of abstractions than of personal relations. Third, the passion of Christ can have nothing at all to do with guilt or evil or sin, except so far as the sufferings generate repentance and change of character in men. Rashdall claimed (Lecture VIII) that even in its simplest form atonement formed no part of Christ’s teaching, that it originated in a primitive necessity for explaining to the world a crucified Messiah, that no clear substitutionary theory emerges in the church until Irenaeus, and that all penal, substitutionary and satisfaction views are both immoral and irrational. To our Lord the meaning of His death was simply this, that He conceived of Himself as persisting unto death in His task of announcing and preparing the way for the Messianic Kingdom, and that these sufferings are “calculated to awaken in the mind of him who believes that the whole life and death of Christ was one of love for His fellows, and that in Him who so lived and died the love of God was uniquely and supremely manifested.” (p. 443). But the valid criticisms of such theories by scholars of all ages can be epitomized in what Dr. Denney and Dr. Leonard Hodgson have to say. Denney insisted that in the light of its place in the New Testament there must be *a rational connection* between the death of Christ as the proof of divine love for the sinful, and the responsibilities which sin involves and from which that death delivers us. Rashdall verbally concedes the importance of this, but he fails to meet it in his theology. His doctrine is patterned after Peter Lombard, “The death of Christ therefore justifies us, inasmuch as through it charity is stirred up in our hearts.” This is blind, says Dr. Hodgson, to the effects of sin outside the sinner’s soul, and to the fact that the work of Christ has cosmic relevance. In other words there is in the Cross something finished, something done, upon which the whole world and every sinner stands - it is redemption ground.

We must now draw attention to another powerful movement that attempted a realistic conservation of its Puritan heritage as quickened by the Evangelical Revival. Three names stand out sharply for our review: R. W. Dale, James Denney, and P. T. Forsyth.

While three factors bore heavily upon theological development after 1850, namely the Darwinian hypothesis, the rise of the "Higher Criticism", and the influence of German idealistic philosophy, it is important to remember that the theological revolt against the type of Calvinism of the postPuritan era was well nigh complete by mid-century. R. W. Dale began his ministry in Carr's Lane Chapel in 1854 as sole pastor already oriented differently from his predecessor J. A. James. This is not to say that traditional Calvinism was altogether destroyed nor even that it is an insignificant factor in British theology today.[2] But the quickened interest in vast new areas of knowledge, particularly of the natural sciences, coloured not only conceptions of the nature of the world but also of man.

Is man's life really qualitatively different from animal life? Has "the moral" normative meaning for men (and this bore notably upon atonement theory) if ethics, as was claimed, is the description of man's upward struggle through mores to standards of which he alone is the measure? The debate was not new and it continues today. Naturalists continue their iconoclasm but theology is entrenched in the revelation of God's righteousness in the Cross of Christ. Added to this were the apparently destructive results of the Higher Criticism. If the Sciptures fall what is left? was asked on all sides. Then too, continental theology seemed much more able to assimilate the new, especially philosophical, modes of thought. Among Baptists the Downgrade Controversy illustrates the tension of those years. Far from being obscurantists the late nineteenth century evangelicals were dedicated wellread men with a large degree of concern for the faith. For example, R. W. Dale in his address at the opening of the new Mansfield College building (1889) exhibited balance, intelligence, Christian conviction and willingness to accept new evidence, but he refused to have foisted upon himself and his fellow Christians harebrained and unverifiable hypotheses. But the unfounded charge, often made patronizingly, that British theology is insular and that British theologians are remarkably immune to the influences of continental theology deserves attention. Of those discussed here, Denney was well versed in the German literature (he translated Delitzsch's *Isaiah* for the English edition) and Forsyth had studied in Germany. Following his own spiritual awakening, Forsyth frequently jibed at German theologians influenced by idealism, though he also confesses his indebtedness to others (note the prefaces to *The Person and Place of Jesus Christ* and *The Principle of Authority),* and any casual reading of *The Clerical Life* (1898) to which Denney contributed, shows a humorous satire on those young Britons who having studied abroad return home aiming to initiate their fellows into the mysteries of continental philosophy and theology. Enlightened Anglican confessionalism on the doctrines of the Incarnation, Trinity, and Atonement are the corner-posts of recent British theology, whereas the

German theologians - at least that segment of theology reaching English readers - have devoted the lion's share of their attention to the doctrine of Revelation. British theologians have used continental theology as a foil for the development of their own ideas, but British thought has long been characterized by a strong strain of empiricism in philosophy and confessionalism in theology. So far as atonement doctrine is concerned, it may be said that from the days of Anselm England has developed an indigenous school of thought.

One must guard against fitting men into neat categories of theology. The theologians of this period have been too wide-ranging to force into traditional theological stalls and this sometimes makes the study of the period as frustrating as it is exciting and rewarding. Attention may be drawn to five elements of theological truth that figure prominently in these years. It will be seen at once that the earlier theologians had in view these

same points and that they underlie contemporary discussions also. They are: an adequate statement or definition of the moral relations between God and man; the relation of the atonement to the doctrine of the Trinity on the one hand and of the Incarnation on the other; the cosmic as well as individual relevance of the atonement; and the importance of the social idea in salvation. It is a gross distortion of the truth to say that the evangelical writers on the atonement such as Dale, Denney, and Forsyth advance viewpoints predicated upon legalistic relations between God and man. But it is true that these and others like Moberly and Scott Lidgett were concerned about the morality of those relations, and, if unhappily dubbed *legal* they are nonetheless formal. The relations between God and man are moral, they have substance, and it is to these that the atonement is addressed. The law of God, said Dale, is alive, it has its life only in God, it does not stand above God so that a transactional dealing happens between God, the law, Christ, and man, and on this both Denney and Forsyth concur. Evil is a reality and sin is an event. They have happened, and their evil issue must be *dealt with* by God; evil and sin are not ideas to be cured by thought but acts with consequences that can be cured only by divine action. This *objective* dealing with sin by Christ is the problem we have to face in understanding the atonement in relation to the Trinity. Here, all three men achieve insights fundamental to Christianity but which few analysts of their writings have seen. The atonement is God acting in Christ to save the world. It is as much the vindication of God as it is the self-satisfaction of God, according to Forsyth. Conversely, the atonement bears upon the world and men in the Incarnate life of our Lord, cosmically in the sense that the evil has been atoned for and its power broken, and racially because in Jesus Christ who is generic to the race there has been a racial dealing with sin. He stands related to every man's guilt and to the race as a whole enduring solidary judgment. Contrary to the notion of many critics of Dale and Denney, (including Moberly and Rashdall) none of these theologians predicated the relation of man to God on purely juridical terms, nor the relation of Christ to the race in terms of abstract platonic universals. The relation is always personal and moral and the one involves the other. The solidarity of the race is not only

physical and social but moral and spiritual as well. Thus in Dale, who is probably the most misunderstood of the three, and also in Denney and Forsyth, the word *interdependence* or the idea it expresses has a large place. In Jesus Christ the ideal of God for the race is realized in history. He overcomes the power of evil in life, but particularly in His death (for only He as sinless could know the true meaning of the horrordeath of sin). He does in relation to the righteousness of God what was necessary to vindicate righteousness and he binds up in Himself as well the true submission and response of humanity. The metaphors and images cannot at any given point illuminate the whole of the doctrine, but they do light it up for us, and the whole yields the truth that God and man in Christ are related in a personal

and moral way. God judges sin, God forgives sin, and God does it in Christ. It is both true to say that God sacrificed His Son and that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. This is the fundamental paradox of the atonement but nothing less satisfies the demands of revelation, history or of the Christian conscience.

Further, the atonement is of cosmic dimensions. Dale put it this way: what is expressed depends upon the point of view. From God's viewpoint salvation is of a world in Jesus Christ in which all men may share; as for us, when we look out through the windows of our redeemed souls and comprehend the significance of who Jesus Christ was and what He accomplished then the cosmic relevance of the atonement grasps us. Forsyth said that it took the saving of a world to save a single man's soul. We are thus on the threshold of the doctrine of the Church. We are not saved, they said, to an individual but to a social salvation. The Church as the body of Christ is the community of the redeemed where the very life of God in the interdependence of life and personal communion of the Trinity is the generating power of the personal relations between man and man in Christ. D. M. Baillie has restated some elements in Denney's theology in contemporary form in *God was in Christ.* Rather than our comparing Christ's humanity with ours and declaring His real because we think *we* know what it means to be human, He was the only one who was ever truly human (we are in various ways sub-personal) and it is God's intention to win us into Christ's image by His redeeming work.

NOTES

[1] A small but not insignificant body of literature is available on the history of the doctrine. R. S. Franks' twovolume *A History of the Doctrine of the Work of Christ In Its Ecclesiastical Development* is a standard work. G. B. Stevens, an American, devotes attention to the British schools, and both J. K. Mozley, *The Doctrine of the Atonement* (Duckworth, 1915) and Sidney Cave, *The Doctrine of the Work of Christ* (London : University of London Press, 1950) have written useful studies. T. H. Hughes' *The Atonement: Modern Theories of the Doctrine* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1949) is the only book on theories of contemporary vintage but regrettably Dr. Hughes tends to force writers into "standard" categories of theories. R. S. Paul's recent book *The Atonement and the Sacraments* (Abingdon--Cokesbury, 1960) is an American work that shows a refreshing appreciation for the late nineteenth century British evangelicals, though the interpretation is

strongly conditioned by his interest in sacramental theology. Unquestionably the best book (though not in touch with more recent viewpoints), is L. W. Grensted's *A Short History of the Doctrine of the Atonement*, first published in 1920 by Longmans Green, and recently reprinted. The value of this study lies not only in the extensive crucial quotations of Greek, Latin and English texts, but also in Dr. Grensted's capacity for penetration of thought and the scrupulous fairness with which he tries to deal with various viewpoints.

[2] Representatives of orthodox Calvinism in the late nineteenth century are chiefly: G. Smeaton, *The Doctrine of the Atonement as Taught by Christ Himself* (1868) and *The Doctrine of the Atonement as Taught by the Apostles* (1870); and, T. J Crawford, *The Doctrine of Holy Scripture Respecting the Atonement* (1871).

END

(For reasons of space the editor omitted from the published version of this essay some bibliographical allusions and discussion in the body of the essay, and end-notes.)

THE BIBLE AND A COMPUTER

by Samuel J. Mikolaski

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A startling new development in literary criticism promises to initiate a new era of debate in biblical studies. A. Q. Morton, a minister of the Church of Scotland and an expert mathematician, is using acomputer to collate data of stylistic differences that distinguish Greek prose, whether classical or biblical. When introducing Morton (who gave two lectures at the University of Chicago Nov. 21-22) R. M. Grant, professor of New Testament, said that an explosion had hit the biblical field of studies. The purpose of Morton is to produce a new theory of literary criticism.

Two Approaches

Morton collaborated with G. H. C. Macgregor, late professor of New Testament in Glasgow. Macgregor's work is well known, including the work on *John* in the *Moffatt New Testament Commentary*. However, the computer research is Morton's. Macgregor stood by as an interested friend and adviser. He died last summer.

Morton's use of a computer falls into two phases: a theory of literary units based on sentence length, and a theory of literary units based on common word occurrences.

The first of these was set forward in part earlier (Macgregor and Morton, *The Structure of the Fourth Gospel:* Oliver and Boyd, 1961), and the method is now being extended by him to the rest of the New Testament and to portions of the Old Testament.

The second theory has just been reported publically by Morton in *The Observer* (London, Nov. 3, 1963). Replies from five leading churchmen were published Nov. 10, and further letters to the editor appeared Nov. 17. It is announced that Hodder and Stoughton will publish the first of a series of the findings of Morton and Macgregor next spring.

These theories have nothing to do, he claims, with the way sentences and words are used (some might think they ought to) but only with statistical facts of number of occurrences. In the case of the first theory the method is simply a test of the significance of the distribution of sentence lengths and an observation of the way sentences are composed into literary units of certain manuscript lengths. In the case of the second theory the method is simply that of selecting and counting certain common, recurring words, the frequency of use of which is claimed to be an index to an author's identity.

Use of Computer

It is inevitable that an electronic computer should eventually be applied to literary work, and for many purposes this tool is welcomed. A computer is 300 times faster than a man once the information has been fed in.

Several valuable uses are evident once the Greek text of the New Testament, or any text, has been typed onto a tape in terms of numbers. For example, a complete concordance of the New Testament can be made within a few hours. Done manually the task takes years. The comparison of variant readings can be done very quickly. The identification of thousands of manuscript fragments lying in museum collections can now be attempted by instructing a computer to locate word groups within a literature that resemble the fragments. The question, "When is a quotation not a quotation?" may havb readier answers by computing how often one might meet combinations of words by pure chance.

A computer will simply hold any given Greek or other text, then one must ask for information that a computer can give. Sentence lengths, word frequency, grammatical forms, the use of biblical material in the church fathers-these and many other matters can be dealt with. Grant has announced that a service will be set up in the University of Chicago for identifying fragments, quotations, and so forth. A computer can read two million words per hour; there are only about 19 million words of classical and biblical Greek extant. You simply say, "Here is a list. When you meet one, print it out."

The Claim

Morton claims to supersede the subjectivity of scholars on certain critical questions. For example, it is well known that both liberal and conservative scholars differ amongst themselves as to the Pauline authorship of Hebrews. Two men might examine the same data and come up, conscientiously, with contradictory conclusions. Morton claims that this pattern of argument can yield no further results on many important questions. He proposes to establish stylistic indicators for all Greek prose. These rules emerge from the literature itself, he says; and when they have been thoroughly tested they can be used as indicators. Morton says that such tests have been devised using the literature of Demosthenes, Isocrates, Heroditus, Plato, Aristotle, and Philo, to name a few. Six hundred samples of literature from 16 authors were run. When rules were found to work consistently on these, then they were applied to the New Testament Greek. He claims the authors examined extended over a wide range of subject matter and wrote over many years-in the case of Isocrates an output of probably over 60 years of literary activity was involved.

Such rules derive from statistical averages of sentence lengths and word occurrences that yield a pattern for any particular author, he says. Limits of variation are also established statistically.

Feeling the rebuff of colleagues keenly, Morton has been sharply critical of New Testament scholars (naming J. S. Stewart, A. M. Hunter, and W. Barclay) but complementary of scientists and classical scholars who, he says, have shown

interest in his venture. He claims that “no work accepted as genuine by most classical scholars has been shown to be written by another hand and” that “no work rejected by most classical scholars has turned out to be by the man whose name had been attached to it.” He charges that most New Testament scholars work within limits that preclude effective scholarship.

Sentence Length Theory

Morton’s first approach was prompted by the researches of W. C. Wake in classical literature that sentence length may be an indicator of authorship. He extended this to the New Testament. This was his first attempt to discover some unconscious, consistent literary habit that would identify prose to be from one hand or another. He found that the test does not work efficiently on dialogue (e.g. Plato’s works), and that one needs roughly a minimum of 100 sentences of Greek to establish a pattern. Actually, 150-200 sentences make a more conclusive test (only Matthew, Luke, Acts approximate the latter figure). By this method he claims to show that Romans, I and II Corinthians, and Galatians (Philemon is also allowed) are one group (probably Paul’s) but that the remainder of the Pauline epistles fall into other distinct groups.

He makes a further claim that ancient manuscripts were not written as free composition but to fit the composition to available sheets and scrolls in terms of certain length of line and number of lines per column. For example, Souter’s Greek Text shows Romans to have 60 columns (666 lines) which is the length of II Corinthians plus Galatians, he says. By this he claims it can be shown that problem passages of the New Testament which seem to be disjointed were, in fact, mechanically fitted into place by the scribe. He applied the same method to Isaiah, Daniel, and Job and makes similar claims for the composition of Matthew, Luke, and Acts.

That this method of composition should have been used as universally without it becoming known until discovered by a computer defies belief. The biblical books cited were written over a period embracing hundreds of years. Surely some inkling of it would have been apparent. Curiously, he does not report results of this method applied to the classical literature he cites. His whole case is built on the homogeneity of techniques of Greek prose as a class; why the isolation of the biblical texts on composition techniques?

Word Frequency Theory

More important than the foregoing is Morton’s claim that the frequency of the use of certain common words comprise tests of authorship.

The claim is that statistically authors use these in quantities that are patterns of distinctively personal, though unconscious, literary traits. In particular, Morton claims that the use of “and” (kai) by the various writers tested is so consistent that in itself it comprises a strikingly important index to authorship. Its use, he claims,

is shown to stay within the predicted limits for each writer.

To Morton these tests indicate that most of Romans, Galatians, I Corinthians, most of II Corinthians, and Philemon belong to one writer and that since Galatians is universally attributed to Paul then the others may be also.

The remaining Pauline epistles, he claims, come from at least five other hands: I and I Thessalonians go together, I and II Timothy go together; Ephesians, Philippians, , and Colossians each stand separate.

Scholars Reply

In the published replies five churchmen all expressed interest in his work but deplored Morton's extravagant claims, peaked attitude, and bitter language. Bishop John Robinson notes, as do all, that only conclusions have been given without the data supporting them. He asks whether the differences cited are enough *to require* separate authorship and points out that to claim that *all* that one needs is to discover unconscious literary habits is an unscientific statement. Characteristically, Leslie Weatherhead writes that authorship is a needless question, as if it didn't matter how the New Testament writings came.

Christopher Evans, professor of New Testament in King's College, University of London, says that the operator of the computer (which is in London) did demonstrate the procedures to them; therefore not all New Testament scholars are obscurantist. He questions that the "and" test is foolproof. (Another reader points out that in his essay Morton used "and" twice in the first half, and nine times in the second. Is this to indicate dual authorship?) But validation of the procedure will furnish a valuable tool for scholars to use, Evans says. However, Christians are agreed that either apostles or apostolic men closely associated with them wrote the New Testament books. The alternative is important.

Surprisingly, Thomas Corbishley, a Roman Catholic scholar, says that even if Paul wrote nothing the value of the books remains, though he-evades Morton's questions on the role of ecclesiastical authority for faith. Canon Charles Raven claims that the use of a scribe by Paul can account for some of the differences because scribes need not have been necessarily dactylographers. He holds that the theological development of Paul's ideas indicates the sort of progress that attests the whole and the several parts in the whole of the Pauline books.

Observations

Even though Morton disclaims that his method will solve all problems his claims are so confidently and flamboyantly put that one feels himself on guard. Since I have examined what he has written and listened to his recent lectures in Chicago I wish to make certain observations.

First, as intriguing as are these methods scholars must await the disclosure of the detailed data that supports the conclusions. This has not yet been forthcoming.

During the Chicago addresses certain tables of data were flashed on a screen but usually for only a few seconds. It was therefore impossible to take extensive notes. Understandably, Morton may wish to guard his findings until he can publish them formally, but until then scholars must hold their judgments in reserve.

Undoubtedly this technique .will change the face of literary criticism considerably. The values of such equipment to aid scholarship are evident. But it must be borne in mind that *someone* must put data into the computer and then ask the questions. The personal factor is never completely eliminated. Word occurrences do fall within limits that may be small, but also very large.

Then, too, the *way* words are used does bear upon how many of them will be used in any literature. For instance, "and" can be used as a content word (bread and butter, flesh and blood) or as a structural word (I read his article and was amused), to cite a comment by one correspondent.

Second, in the case of both theories, the brevity of most of the New Testament books and letters looms as a difficult hurdle. Only Matthew, Luke, and Acts seem actually long enough to meet the criterion of length that Morton himself lays down. Short sections of prose will certainly lead to inconclusive results, as did the use of "and" in Morton's essay. He concedes that he includes Philemon in the Pauline group because he sees no reason to leave it out. This. conclusion tends to undercut his premise.

Third, there is considerable doubt as to how Morton uses the internal evidence of biblical books, especially as most of the Pauline epistles contain the apostle's name. If the attachment of Paul's name might attest forgery equally well as authenticity (as Morton alleges), let it be observed that Morton is not slow to use internal data where it suits him-for example, the differences of mood of the various Pauline writings. We will need to know why certain evidence is accepted while other evidence is not.

Fourth, Morton repeatedly insists that such findings hold in them serious theological implications for faith. In his essay he cited two: the alleged variations of eschatological perspective in the New Testament and the undercutting of episcopal authority because the historical footing of the claims to apostolic succession are gone. So far as the first is concerned we will wish to know what contradictions he has in view. So far as successionist doctrine is concerned this has never troubled Baptists who properly stand in the succession of gospel truth and experience, not churchly authority.

But theology is not statistics nor statistical averages. I pressed Morton, from the floor to say what doctrinal issues he had in mind beyond eschatology and successionism when he claimed that theological changes are inevitable as a result of his technique. He suggested three: less dogmatic claims that any particular church is *the* church (I fail to see what this has to do with computer results but add that evangelical Christians' have always acknowledged that God has His redeemed everywhere); the reduction of belief by jettisoning unnecessary dogmas such as the virgin birth (Whatever some may think, the doctrine of the virgin birth

of Jesus Christ is accepted by Christians of varying persuasions and the evidence for it is as good as one could expect evidence for such a thing to be); and the negative attitude of churches to the role of women must be revised since this, he alleges, is a peculiarly Pauline prejudice (this question is now being debated in the Church of Scotland).

In view of the fact that he allows both I and II Corinthians to be Pauline this is a curious twist to his claim that the computer results will effect belief. Also, I would have thought that such large claims to changes of dogma as he had made might have issued in elements larger and more concrete than that he put.

In fact, if he grants Romans and Galatians as Paul's then the theological structure of the New Testament remains intact. However, no computer result can say what the theological thrust and power of the New Testament message is or ought to be.' Christians have .yet to see reasons in his conclusions for jettisoning faith or their dependence upon Scripture; but if light can be thrown on the form and text of Holy Scripture by such means they will be welcomed when given out of faith to faith.

The theological issue is the final one, but for Christians this rests in part on historical authenticity and validity. The experience Christians claim can scarcely be of use unless what it rests upon is true.

Even if one should concede all that Morton claims, what are the criteria, the value judgments, by which he selects parts to be of supreme value while others are left? Thus the theological unity of the New Testament, bearing as it does the Word of Truth under the witness of the Spirit, attests again the work of God who by His own means historically has given Holy Scripture to the world to lighten men by the face of Jesus Christ.

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END

THE NATURE OF ATONEMENT:

The Cross and the Theologians

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When writing to the Trallians the martyr Ignatius said, "You are not living as ordinary men but according to Jesus Christ, who died for us that you might escape death through faith in his death." What do the contemporary theologians say of Christ's cross?

THE CRISIS THEOLOGIANS

The foremost names in modern European theology are those of Karl Barth, Emil Brunner, and Rudolph Bultmann. The first two insist that the Atonement is an act in history appropriate to the Holy God himself. Barth says that the Father "gave effect to His (Christ's) death and passion as a satisfaction for us, as our conversion to God, and therefore as our redemption from death to life" *(Church Dogmatics, IV/1, p. 157).* The obedience and self-humiliation of the Son Barth develops by indicating four respects in which Jesus Christ was and is for us: (1) Jesus Christ took our place as Judge. *(2)* He took the place of us sinners. (3) He suffered, was crucified, and died. *(4)* He accomplished this before God and has therefore done right. Further, the Cross and the Resurrection are necessary one to the other. They witness together to the Christian's death in Christ's death and to his resurrection life in Christ's resurrection.

Brunner attacks those who divide the meaning of Christ's person and teaching from His work; they are one, says Brunner. The "must" element of Christ's death (which, the theologian claims, is missing in the Abelardian view) is inescapable in the apostolic witness *(The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption, pp. 278-81).*

As the active love-fulfillment of the Law, Christ's obedience to death involves five considerations : (1) The shed blood of Christ means that his life was forfeited to the judgment death of sin. *(2)* Christ's sufferings were penal. *(3)* Christ canceled our debt. *(4)* God triumphs over evil powers. And, (5) the true Pascal sacrifice establishes the New Covenant *(p. 28386).* Forgiveness without atonement is claimed only by those, says Brunner, who believe this truth is one they can discern for themselves *(p. 294).*

Our appreciation for Barth and Brunner must be tempered with reserve, however, because of certain philosophical tenets that underlie their opinions. First, both Barth and Brunner seem to exhibit an uneasy tension between the historical and the suprahistorical, between fact and events that command faith. Was the Resurrection a reportable event to Barth? _ Why the Cross if not the Fall? To say, as does Brunner, that the Cross is the one point where historical revelation is possible, is to concede that revelation is more than encounter. Despite Brunner's five points one may well ask, "Does Dr. Brunner intend these as images only of the one truth or as statements that describe the nature and conditions of the divine

life and the human in the Atonement?" To his faith they appear to be very real, but in his theology, they seen to be myth. Faith, however, can rest only on fact; the events must be not only meaningful but true in the ordinary sense. Once and for all let it be believed that the New Testament writers do not talk in the air but speak of reality.

Second, is God's wrath a function of love? Is grace the essence of wrath (Barth, pp. *533-35)* or does wrath remain wrath still, not only where God himself meets it on the Cross, but also upon the sinful world? Further, in regard to the relationship of the Cross to the inner life of God these men seem to come either to a modalistic trinitarian concept or to an unresolved tension in the divine action. Brunner rejects the doctrine of the Trinity as kerygmatic *(The Christian Doctrine of God, p. 217),* and Barth makes obscure statements that God exists as an above and a below, an *apriori* and an *aposteriori (pp. 201,202);* such concepts do not allow one to speak of the divine action in the same way as do the essential personal distinctions of the New Testament. We, too, claim that God himself acted in the Cross; the New Testament says, however, not only that God *came* and *acted,* but that God also *sent* and *gave* his Son.

Finally, even aside from the disappointing developinent of faith's vitalities (is faith not more than venturesome leap and genuine but comforted despair?) one senses an incongruity between the theological perspective of these men and our situation (the value of their work on the Continent notwithstanding). The English-speaking tradition has been blessed by theologians whom Barth and Brunner seem not to have known. (Brunner shows touches of Forsyth, however, who apparently influenced the young Swiss during his two-year stay in England.) Forsyth had developed the cosmic relevance of the Atonement more fully prior to the work of either Barth or Brunner. Barth's concept of Judge and Judged had been strongly urged by R. W. Dale in *The Atonement (1875),* a book that went through *22* editions and enjoyed an enormous circulation; Dale also had probed the moral implications of the atoning act. Who can read Barth on substitution without recalling the brilliant exposition of Dr. Denney in *The Death of Christ (1902)* where, too, on II Corinthians *5:14* he develops far more richly than Barth the concept that we died in the death of Christ, that the Cross achieves *something specific* that changes the situation created by evil and sin? Moreover, one senses in the English writers a more realistic handling of the historical data of the New Testament; in short, they display a basic faith born of fact that seems to have escaped German theology generally since the time of Immanuel Kant.

Rudolph Bultmann, the New Testament scholar, has attracted attention by his attempt to separate the essential Gospel from what is allegedly peripheral to it (the pre-scientific world-view) through a process called *Entymythologisierung,* or demythologizing. We are not concerned, he says, with certain historical saving events such as the Atonement and the Resurrection (only primitive mythology could construct these) but with a message of saving history attested to in the sacraments and in the present concrete spiritual perfecting of life.

How then do we decide what is myth and what is not? In *Jesus and the Word (1958)* Bultmann says that Jesus did not come to atone; nor did he come to win

forgiveness, but rather to proclaim it. Why then the Cross, we ask? The Church is wrong, he claims, to see "the event, the decisive act of deliverance, in the death of Jesus, or in his death and resurrection," insofar as they are regarded as "given facts of history which may be determined or established by evidence" (pp. *212, 213).* But do not the events and their interpretation stand together in the New Testament? Paul's "Christ died for our sins" and "we thus judge" are that kind of statement (I Cor. 15:3; II Cor. *5:14).* Any explanation, R. W. Dale reminds us, that fails to grasp the *necessary* connection between the death of Christ and the forgiveness of sins is a grotesque distortion of New Testament doctrine. Bultmann's basic and prior premise is that no historical event or fact can be the ground of faith or of the highest spiritual reality. Is it possible to dispose of troublesome scriptures so easily? Bultmann's "events" bear little resemblance to the fullblooded factuality of the New Testament.

A contrasting perspective by the Swedish theologian Anders Nygren *(Agape and Eros, 1932-1938) is* based on a restudy of love in the New Testament. It restates the "moral influence" theory of Abelard and, more recently, of Hastings Rashdall *(The Idea of the Atonement in Christian Theology, 1915)* and R. S. Franks *(The Atonement, 1934)* in Britain, and of Nels F. S. Ferre in this country.

Nygren attempted to demonstrate the theological unity of the New Testament in the concept of agape (spontaneous love) as against that of eros (self-seeking love). As the nature of God, agape "hallmarks the new way of fellowship with God that Christianity brings" *(p. 108).* Many scholars, however, resist Nygren's claim that *all* that the Law stood for in Israel and for Paul is of the flesh. Nygren seems to confuse the "law-works" idea with the Law *of God.* If God is love he is also holy, we maintain. Thus when he says that "fellowship with God is no longer for Paul a legal relationship, the only question is whether it is a relationship of love," it may be noted that a love relationship must in that right be moral also. Unless the Cross meets the issue of condemnation we miss the "must" element of Calvary, as Brunner puts it.

Nygren says that "the agape of the Cross" is a "love that gives itself away, that sacrifices itself, even to the uttermost ... it is God's way to man." Did the agape need *this kind* of passion for its proof? While claiming this much, objective views have always demanded more as well-divine action dealing with sin, condemnation, and judgment. But this emphasis is totally missing in Nygren. Calvary, as we know, does more than clear up a misunderstanding about the divine love; it is God's act to save the world and men on the cosmic scale (Rom. *8:22; Col. 1:20-22).* Nygren's view is too anthropocentric. Leonard Hodgson has pointed out that while the moral influence theory has value, it is blind to those effects of sin which operate outside the sinner's soul.

THE CROSS AND PROPITIATION

C. H. Dodd has encouraged those who resist the idea that propitiation means averting divine wrath (therefore undercutting the judgment-bearing and substitutionary aspects of the Cross). According to Dodd *hilaskesthai* and its cognates

should read expiation (of sin) and not propitiation (of God). His findings *(Journal of Theological Studies*, July, 1931; see also Dr. T. W. Manson, Jan.-Apr., 1945) have been widely adopted by theologians on both sides of the Atlantic. Curiously, scholars have been slow to grapple with critics of Dodd's thesis, notably Leon Morris (*The Expository Times*, May, 1951; *The Apostolic Preaching of the Cross*, 1955; *The Biblical Doctrine of Judgment*, 1960) and Roger Nicole (*Westminster Theological Journal*, May, 1955), also E. K. Simpson and Professor R. V. G. Tasker.

The theological claim in Dodd's system is that we cannot think of God as the God of wrath but of love, something which requires close reexamination in the light of what sin must mean to God. The older studies show this clearly; for example, R. W. Dale, *The Atonement*; James Denney, *The Death of Christ*; and P. T. Forsyth, *The Work o f Christ*. Denney (as well as Dale, Simpson, and Morris) has said that the idea of propitiation "is not an insulated idea.... It is part of a system of ideas", (pp. 197, 198); therefore such a vital word cannot be applied at will in new ways without jeopardizing the whole of New Testament theology.

The piacular elements of the Atonement together with those that declare the love and grace of God form a unity. What possible attitude can God take to sin but wrath and judgment? There is no meaning to the universe unless its moral structure is reflected in the righteous dealing with sin in the judgment-death of the Cross. The real question is, "If not propitiation then why expiation?"-for if God's dealing with sin is a reality then this fact is but part and parcel of the prior reality that God's wrath comes upon both the sinner and his sin. We dare not banish normative morality from the universe. Only if God cares enough to be angry can we say he cares enough to redeem. If someone rejects words like "anger" and "wrath," let him choose other terms, but maintain the vital realities of the life of God and of the nature of the world.

THE CROSS AS SACRIFICE

The foregoing question ought not obscure the "Back to the Bible" movement in recent studies of the Atonement. In broad terms, this movement stresses that Christ made final and indispensable sacrifice for sin. Scholars working with this approach may be grouped for convenience' sake as follows:

First, those who stress the vicarious element. These include Oliver Quick, Doctrines o f the Creed (1938); Vincent Taylor, Jesus and His Sacrifice (1951) and The Cross of Christ (1956); and F. C. N. Hicks, The Fullness of Sacrifice (1938). The moral quality of Christ's act of self-offering and the power of this vicarious act to forgive, restore, and heal are in view.

A second more recent perspective comes from those who stress the sacramental character of Christ's sacrifice. The work of Austin Farrer and of Father Lionel Thornton is deeply sensitive here. In America Robert S. Paul (The Atonement and

the Sacraments, 1960), a non-conformist, has probed the relation of the Atonement to the Gospel and the sacraments in a manner reminiscent of P. T. Forsyth.

Third, many have emphasized the Cross as the victory over the powers of darkness; this emphasis is due chiefly to the influence of Gustaf Aulen's Christus Victor (1931), which tried to resurrect a viewpoint held by certain fourth-century Fathers and later by Martin Luther. It should be noted that McLeod Campbell (The Nature of the Atonement) made creative use of this idea over a century ago.

Finally, some have made a vital attempt to recapture the theological realities of the New Testament as seen in A. M. Hunter (The Unity o f The New Testament, 1943) and in D. M. Baillie (God Was In Christ, 1948). Christ's life and death are a unity in Scripture, they urge, and exhibit God's purpose to redeem. Hunter sums up this unity as follows: "The Atonement originates in the gracious will of God; it has to do with sin; its means is the crucified Christ whose death is vicarious, representative, and sacrificial; and the spiritual end which it secures is reconciliation or renewed fellowship with God based on a forgiveness of sins" (p. 102).

While the value of these studies is great, one senses, first of all, a tendency to distinguish sharply between representation and substitution. Are not *both* essential to New Testament theology? we would ask. Why does Hunter discuss *huper* as the "representative" idea, but ignore *anti*, the term that conveys the idea of "substitution"? We cannot overlook the fact that Christ did something for us as in our place, something that we could not do for ourselves. Further, to interpret "shed blood" as the offerer's sharing in the life that is released rather than in the victim's death tends to disallow the piacular elements of the Atonement. The "sharing-in the-life-released" idea goes back to William Milligan and Bishop Westcott, though they conceded the penal element of the Cross. Surely the point is that *our redeemed life can be only the issue of His saving death*.

In the case of the victor idea and of the vicarious element we need to investigate more deeply the theological realities involved. What is the victory according to Dr. Aulen? His explanation might suggest that the principalities and powers are myths; if so, the actual nature of the victory remains unidentified. Similarly, what is a vicarious act? How does the vicarious act of one life bear upon that of another as far as forgiveness, reconciliation, and regeneration are concerned?

It is heartening to note the resurgence of interest in New Testament theology. The work of a generation ago, however, like that of Dale, Denney, and Forsyth, bearing as it did upon both the biblical and theological realities, ought still to command our attention. Much of what is being said today was said by them. The recent book by J. S. Whale *(Victor and Victim, 1960)* is an excellent, evangelically conceived study, but introduces Paul Tillich’s ontology in such a fashion as to undercut freedom rather disappointingly. Mack B. Stokes’s work *(The Epic of Revelation, 1961)* shows a balance of Bible exposition and

philosophical penetration. *The Doctrine of the Atonement (1951) by* Leonard Hodgson is a noteworthy volume. Hodgson says that as an objective work, the Atonement deals with evil and sin as radical surd elements of the world. The law is the very condition of personal, moral life; thus the Atonement as God's act vindicates righteousness and judges the evil. God aims to fashion in creation and to win by redemption a race of free human beings who voluntarily out of love seek and do the will of God expressed in Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit.

No verbal cure for evil and sin can suffice, nor can any solution that does not take seriously the predicament of sinful men under the wrath of God. As the act of God, the Atonement stands in logical relation to the Incarnation (which is how Christ's work is relevant to us) and to the Trinity (which is the life to which we are called). We must accept and comprehend, therefore, the double reality that God sent his Son and that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself. This double reality is what the biblical images declare-each part as an insight generated by the truth contributes to the unity of the whole, namely, that the Cross is the issue of-the love of God accomplishing redemption. Certainly it is true that Christ sacrificed himself for us, that he died the death of sin, that he made satisfaction for sin expiating it, that he was the propitiation for sin, that he died as the substitute for sinners and as the representative of the race, that his blood is the precious ransom price of our salvation that seals the covenant of grace. We need to comprehend these concepts in their bearing on the life of the triune God and upon the race.

Despite the intricacies of the doctrine of the Atonement, that the straightforward preaching of the Cross has the power to save men (I Cor. 1:18) should be central to faith and theology. Seminarians have the curious habit of studying the Atonement comparatively, like some problem in logic, and sometimes forget to make the Cross the vital spiritual datum that it was to New Testament Christians. Our profession is not that of theological cowboys who rope ideas into theological stalls; rather we are to herald the apostolically interpreted fact that "Christ died for our sins." Happy is he who believes and has the forgiveness God won for mankind through Jesus Christ the Lord.

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