A FRESH START: JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN

Samuel J. Mikolaski

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In September, the Jewish community celebrates ROSH HA-SHANAH, the festival of the New Year (Sept. 11-12), followed several days later (Sept. 20) by the most solemn observance of their religious calendar, YOM KIPPUR, the Day of Atonement. These significant events are reminders to Christians of the Old Testament roots of crucial teaching about our redemption through Christ.

The Hebrew New Year begins with the autumn harvest festival. It is a feast-day commemorating God's goodness in the harvest and, some have said, enthroning God as King. Ezra reiterated the Law on this solemn occasion (Nehemiah 7:73; 8:1-8). It is the "day of blowing the horn" (Leviticus 23:23-25). Nowadays, thirty notes are blown on three occasions during the afternoon service, plus ten at the conclusion for a total of 100, as God is praised and entreated for mercy. The 100 notes correspond in Jewish mystical teaching to 100 gates in the heavenly realm. The New Year also corresponds to the traditional date of Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac.

Interestingly, a custom has emerged since the sixteenth century A.D. to observe the day before the New Year (and also before the beginning of each new month) as the minor Day of Atonement. Already then, the great Day of Atonement is anticipated by fasting and supplication. Celebrated nine days later, the great Day of Atonement points to the need of a new spiritual start for each man, as for the nation, through repentance and forgiveness. However, while Jewish observance no longer includes sacrifice (since the fall of the Second (Herod's) Temple, though some Jews look for resumption of the Levitical sacrifices), Christian teaching solidly bases forgiveness on sacrifice, namely, the final, unrepeatable, atoning sacrifice of Christ.

Four Hebrew themes from the Old Testament comprise major elements on which New Testament teachings about the work of Christ are based. These are the sacrifice of Isaac (Genesis 22), the Passover Iamb (Exodus 12:7), the sacrifices of Leviticus (especially the Day of Atonement, Leviticus 16), and the Suffering Servant (Isaiah 53). Christian teaching as to the nature of redemption derives from Christ's institution of the Lord's Supper as an extension of the meaning of the Passover feast, the teaching of Paul especially in Romans and Galatians, the teaching of Peter in his famous sermon (Acts 2) and in his first epistle, and the teaching of the writer of Hebrews, who interprets Christ's sacrifice as a fulfilment and termination of the Old Testament sacrifices (note especially Hebrews 9-10).

Several offerings are prescribed in the opening chapters of Leviticus. These include: The burnt offering (ch. 1) and the meal offering (ch. 2), which are gifts to God and probably, as well, include self-dedication of the worshipper. The peace offering (ch. 3), by which the offerer enters into communion with God. The sin offering (ch. 4:1-5:13) and guilt offering (5:14-19), which expiate sin.

However, the climax of the sacrifices is YOM KIPPUR, the Day of Atonement. On this day, once a year, the nation assembled solemnly to express its penitence ("you shall afflict yourselves," Leviticus 16:31) and to receive forgiveness through atonement ("on this day atonement shall be made for you, to cleanse you: from all your sins you shall be clean before the Lord," 16:30).

The day began with Aaron the high priest first offering for himself, for his family, and for the nation, a dedicatory burnt offering of a ram (16:3) and an expiatory sin-offering (16:6). The high priest himself must be cleansed if he is to represent the people. Then came the critical sin-offering for the people, which involved two goats (16:7). Aaron cast lots over the goats. One was chosen for the Lord and was subsequently sacrificed (16:9). The other was chosen "for Azazel" (the scapegoat). It was presented live before the Lord and then released into the wilderness (16:10).

Can these things mean anything for us today? Are they sheer primitive superstition? Or are they, as Nathaniel Micklem, late principal of Mansfield College, Oxford, said, an expression of true religion and a faint anticipation of our faith in Christ, the high priest and mediator of a new and better covenant, as the writer of the book of Hebrews explains?

The heart of these rites lay in an animal serving vicariously for the life of a man, and for the life of the nation. Inherent are concepts of the transmission of sin and guilt, substitution and expiation.

Over the head of the live goat (by laying on his hands) Aaron confessed the sins of the people. The goat was then released into the wilderness (16:8, 20-22, 26). The meaning of Azazel is disputed. It may identify a rough and rocky mountain, or a spirit haunting the wilderness (i.e., the sins being consigned to the devil). Or, as some British scholars suggested early this century, it portrays the entire removal of sin and guilt on the back of a goat, which is a symbol of entire forgiveness. There seems little doubt that this is the heart of the matter: entire removal of sin and guilt on the back of a goat, which is a symbol of entire forgiveness.

Following the sacrifice of the Lord's goat, the blood was sprinkled before and upon the mercy seat (16:15-16). Aaron was to be completely alone. He entered into the holy of holies of the tabernacle only this once during the year. The mercy seat was a golden slab that covered the ark of the covenant. Angels were fashioned from the ends of the mercy seat with wings overshadowing it. Here the blood was sprinkled as atonement for sin. This was the place of meeting between God and man.

Of this Paul speaks, in Romans 3:25, as though Christ sacrificed, is himself that mercy seat in whom God and man meet. In Hebrews the symbolic significance of

YOM KIPPUR is more fully detailed by a series of contrasts: Aaron must first offer sacrifice for his own sins; Christ the sinless one need not (9:7). Aaron offered the blood of an animal; Christ sacrificed himself (9:12-14). Aaron did service in an earthly tabernacle; Christ entered the heavenly holy place where God himself dwells (9:11-12, 24). Aaron's sacrifice must be repeated annually; Christ's is unrepeatable (9:12). We need no more sacrifices. Christ the author of a new, eternal covenant (9:15), has accomplished once-for-all, through his own blood, redemption for all. He now appears in heaven before the Father for us. He who suffered for us will come again, with sin banished forever, in triumph (9:23-28). What the old covenant foreshadowed, Christ has fulfilled (10:4-10). Type gives way to anti-type. On this firm redemptive foundation we, now forgiven, have free access to God through Christ our redeemer and we may therefore live in hope (10:19-25).

The Old Testament and the New Testament meanings of sacrifice coincide at important points. Sacrifice expiates sin and guilt, purifies the defiled sinner, propitiates God as to the judgment of sin, and reconciles the sinner through divine forgiveness. The difference is that Christ has made a sacrifice of universal, eternal and unrepeatable significance. Hence we neither repeat sacrifices, nor re-offer Christ in the mass. Rather, what he has accomplished we gratefully and penitently receive.

It is around these themes that the New Testament teaching moves. The work of Christ is like a large, beautiful diamond. It is a single, solitary work. But it is also cut with many facets. These facets reflect deep inner truths on its several sides. All of them derive ultimately from the twin truths that God sent his son into the world to be our Saviour through his cross, and that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself. As C. H. Dodd wrote years ago, a key to the unity of the New Testament and the Old Testament is the truth that the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53 is the Son of Man who comes "to seek and save the lost" (Mark 10:45). This is what Philip the evangelist interpreted to the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:26-40).

Consider the following New Testament concepts:

First, Christ is our sacrifice (1 Corinthians 5:7, Ephesians 5:2, 1 Peter 2: 21-24). His was a vicarious sacrifice for sin. The cross is the perfect instance of vicarious love. With the cross there enters into the world a new principle of suffering and subordination: that love is able to go out of itself and make the burdens of others its own. Sin is forgiven as it is borne (John 1:29). Christ died for our sins (1 Corinthians 15:3).

Second, Christ made atonement for sin through his death on the cross. He is our propitiation to turn aside the righteous judgment of God (Romans 3:25, Hebrews 2:17, 1 John 4:10). He expiated sin through his own blood (Ephesians 1:7, 2:13, Colossians 1:20). Christ's blood stands for his death as the judgment death of sin.

Christ died our death, and in that death we died (2 Corinthians 5:14). Grace and judgment stand together in Christ's work.

Third, Christ is our redemption. His death is the ransom-price of our redemption (Mark 10:45, 1 Timothy 2:6, Titus 2:14). He is our substitute (Matthew 20:28) and our representative (1 Peter 3:18).

Fourth, Christ is our mediator. He established a new covenant between God and man through his blood (Matthew 26:28, 1 Corinthians 11:25). He is both of God and of man, to bring together what sin estranged (1 Timothy 2:6). He reconciles us to the Father by means of atonement (Romans 5:6-11).

Fifth, Christ is our victor. The one who triumphs (Colossians 2:13-15) is the Lamb who was slain (Revelation 5:12). The victory is Christ's incorruptibility in the face of the cross. He could say even there, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." He carries us up into his triumph so that we too can absorb the barbs of evil and turn their energy to good.

Our Saviour's sacrifice is the expiation-price for sin. His was a life voluntarily given sacrificially. Through his death we receive forgiveness, not only for sin as lapse but also for wilful sin (for which the Old Testament rite did not provide).

These several teachings are intended to highlight the meaning of Christ's sacrifice in its many aspects. At bottom they converge on a simple point of faith: "Christ died for our sins." Have we made the commitment of faith to receive him as the indispensable Saviour? Or are we today too sophisticated for that? "Christ died for our sins" is not intended purely as an axiom of faith. It is intended as a spiritual datum translated into the personal confession that "Jesus died for me."

ADJUSTING A DIFFERENCE OR RESTORING A RELATIONSHIP

Samuel J. Mikolaski

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Reconciliation originates in the love of God who sent Christ to die for our sins.

In the dead of night early on Sunday 23 October 1983, a lone Moslem suicide driver crashed his dynamite-laden truck into the U.S. Marine Corps building at Beirut airport. He and 241 good men died in the horrendous explosion. Our son, First Lieutenant Stephen Mikolaski, who was part of the command staff of that unit, was sleeping in a building barely 100 yards away.

The bay door of the garage where he was billeted blew in. He was blown out of bed but, thank God, sustained only minor flying-glass injury to a foot. Minutes later another suicide driver similarly exploded a truck-bomb at the French peace-keeping contingent building where scores of French soldiers also died.

It is a great irony that our son should be in Beirut, which is the current location of the fratricidal line between Islam and the West. During the past 1,300 years, wherever that line occurred there have been recurrent brutalities of the worst kind. I say ironical because my Serbian childhood in Toronto was filled with heroic tales of Serbian struggles against the Moslem Turks in south-east Europe.

If you have recently watched telecasts of the 1984 Winter Olympics from Sarajevo in Yugoslavia, you will recall the comments of reporters on the many mosques there. Minority Moslem culture in Yugoslavia is the residue of that 500-year era of invasion and human butchery. The struggle ended. only after World War I but is, sadly, now being renewed. I had never discussed that bloody heritage with my children; yet here was our son in the midst of the ancient fratricide which had plagued my ancestors.

Stephen survived Beirut and is safely back in the United States. The stories he and others have told me about atrocities in Beirut rival the tales of the past. As I write this, the current issue of the London Observer (29 January 1984) features an article on The Terror in the Middle East. It pictures boys and young men dedicating themselves to suicide missions under oaths of eternal hatred for the Christian West. I'm told that suicide drivers are promised a score or more wives in Moslem paradise and the privilege of bringing along their families.

While these atrocities are condemned by moderate Moslems and Christians alike, the resurgence of closed, repressive societies in which dissenters are cruelly liquidated is a terrifying feature of world history during this century. Paul Johnson's recently published *Modern Times,* a larger, serious book, makes nightmarish reading.

How can I be kept from hating perpetrators of such hideous atrocities? Can it all end? Is it conceivable that men could be at peace? Not the Real Peace which

Richard Nixon recently discussed in his book of that name, which is the stand-off of global powers (he may be correct, so far as sinful man is concerned). Rather, I mean reconciliation. Can there be peace from the heart?

The gospel of Christ, proclaims that there can be such peace. But this true peace is based on God's formula: to change men in their relationship to God and, consequently, to change men in their relationships to each other. This peace is based on true reconciliation, which is not the mere adjusting of a difference, such as reconciling numbers in a ledger but restoring men to God and men to each other. This is one key element of the meaning of the cross in the Bible.

When commenting on the horrors of the French Revolution, Edmond Burke remarked that "Custom reconciles us to everything." Earlier, Samuel Pepys wondered at "How a good dinner and feasting reconciles everybody." In the Bible, reconciliation entails more than fiddling with problems; more than adjusting differences; more than fatalistically accepting things as they are, more than bonhomie. Three outstanding passages in the New Testament highlight the Christian meaning of reconciliation: Romans 5:6-11, Ephesians 2:11-22, and 2 Corinthians 5:11-21. Consider each in turn.

Restored Sinners
(Romans 5:6-11)

First and foremost, reconciliation means sinners are restored to God. "We have peace with God" (Romans 5: 1) is equivalent to "reconciled to God" (v.10).

Paul's attesting to the joy, virtues and hope of Christian experience (vv.1-5) triggers a reminder of the Christian's previous morbid condition: helpless, ungodly, sinner, enemy (vv. 6, 8, 10) . How are we, who are alienated, reconciled to God? The initiative for reconciliation and the means of reconciliation, are God's. Reconciliation is God's gift. He accomplishes it. We gladly accept it.

Reconciliation originates in the love of God who sent Christ to die for our sins (v. 8). It is based on the sacrifice of Christ, which atones for sin and saves us from God's wrath (v. 9). Specifically, Christ's death is the ground of our reconciliation (he died our judgment death). We receive the reconciliation God has wrought through Christ's sacrifice (v.11). In this latter verse the Revised Standard Version wrongly inserts "our" reconciliation. Properly, it is "through whom we have now received the reconciliation."

The reconciliation is a moral and spiritual reality, ready to be received. This emphasizes God's grace. Reconciliation is his gift to us. The basis of reconciliation is Christ's having dealt with our sin and guilt on the cross. Thus, "We were reconciled to God through the death of his Son" (v. 10) also stresses the objective character of Christ's work.

"Since, therefore…" and "not only so..." (v.11) identify two ranges of benefits

which follow from restoration to God. We are not only saved from God's wrath. We experience, as well, joy in the new-found relationship we have with God through Christ. Our new life is "in Christ," or, as Paul expresses it at the end of v. 10, we are saved by, or in, his life. A generation ago, the great German scholar Deissmann explained: the Christian has his being "in" Christ, as living creatures "in" the air, as fish "in" the water, as plants "in" the earth. Being reconciled, we draw our life from Christ.

It is pretty clear from Paul that this is the starting point for anything that follows. The first crucial issue is each person's relationship with God. Once that is made right, everything else can follow. In other words, to do right we must be made right. What we do depends in the first instance not on what we know, but on what we are.

In v.10, I think the word "enemies" is best understood in the sense of hostility: the condition of lofty, proud, unfriendly detachment is displaced by a warm loving relationship with God. Christ invites us to restoration, to be reconciled people. A forgiven sinner is a reconciled person. He or she is at peace with God. Such people seek peace wherever possible.

Fellow Citizens
(Ephesians 2:11-22)

These themes are reinforced and expanded by Paul in Ephesians in a deeply moving way. At issue is the centuries-old fratricidal relationship between Jews and gentiles. The entire passage moves around three foci: "you were" (v.12), "but now" (v.13), and "so then" (v.19).

"You were" (v.12) is a reminder of the exclusiveness of the Old Testament covenant. Gentiles were separated from Christ, Paul says, alienated from the theocratic commonwealth, strangers to the covenant, without hope, without God. Further, the issue was not only religious, but had also become deeply racist. The antagonism was bitter and irreconcilable. Does this remind you of hateful situations today.

"But now" (v.13) pinpoints the hinge of history, which is the reconciling work of Christ's cross. Alienated people are brought nigh by Christ's blood (v.13). Christ is our peace, having torn down the wall of hostility (v. 14). How? By abolishing in his death the old ordinances and their ensuing racial prejudices and re-uniting humanity (v.15). Christ reconciled both Jew and gentile equally to God by his cross (v.16). Thus, his message of peace (reconciliation) is addressed to gentiles (those who were far off) and to Jews (those who were near, v.17). The hostility is at an end. Not only does Christ erase the hostility between man and God, but also between man and man. By means of the one Holy Spirit both sides equally and together have access to the heavenly Father (as if to say, approaching the Father hand-in-hand).

"So then" (v.19) catalogues remarkable consequences. No longer strangers lacking rights of citizenship (sojourners), redeemed gentiles, along with redeemed Jews, have become fellow citizens of God's household. The pervading mood of this new community is generated by the sweet Spirit of God (v. 22). "You also" (i.e. you Ephesians) are included, says Paul. It remains to add that all of us are included in Paul's lovely "you also."

Years ago, near Zurich, my wife Jessie and I attended a children's Christmas folk-opera. One line in Swiss German, sung by children made up to represent the racial differences in the world has stuck with me: *Au fur eus wird de Heiland gebore* -- *also for us was the Saviour born*. That fits me and it fits you. It fits each of us who are outcasts inwardly and outwardly. For us too, for me too! This is the loving touch of Christ's gospel. And when it brings us home we are indeed at home - home among the redeemed, with a new set of values, which enables us to see humanity in completely new ways.

Reconciling Agents
(2 Corinthians 5:11-21)

Finally, a gift received becomes a life-encompassing ministry. Reconciled, we reconcile. Restored, we seek the restoration and peace of others. I know that reconciliation extends into the theme of the Christian hope. Paul eloquently anticipates the day when, by the power of the same cross, God will bring his sin-damaged world into harmony with himself (Colossians 1:20). However, in relation to this hope Paul zealously pursued a life-task, which the Corinthians passage states and then transfers to each of us. This is what we ought to focus upon today.

But first, can we tolerate the theme of judgment in the same context as the theme of reconciliation? In verse 10 Paul somberly reminds us of final judgment. This fear should motivate us to persuade men and women to accept God's reconciling work (v.11). As well, the reference reassures us that God will indeed judge unreconciled men and women. Paul's urgency to preach reconciliation is due to the jeopardy in which the unredeemed are found. In other words, fratricidal men will yet be dealt with by God, and justice may demand that society also punish evil doers. Judgment is in part the stuff of hope. Otherwise, we would go mad thinking upon the evils of the world.

The constraint Paul feels is not so much his love of Christ but of Christ's love for humanity. This constraint confines, restricts and concentrates Paul's efforts, impelling him on in his evangelistic task. His motivation is that since Christ died for all, we who now live in him should live selflessly and dedicate ourselves to God's reconciling mission. In the midst of this powerful appeal occurs yet another gem about the atoning death of Christ as the ground of reconciliation. Paul says, "We are convinced that one has died for all; therefore, all have died" (v.14). This striking statement means "We conclude that one has died, and in that dying they all died." James Denney years ago said that here again Paul declares that Christ

died the death of the sinner (i.e., the death which the sinner was judged to die) and in light of this the redeemed sinner no longer lives life to himself but for Christ.

God reconciled us and God calls us to a reconciling ministry (v. 18). Paul plumbs the deepest elements of Christian teaching when he says "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself" (v.19). We glimpse its fuller significance only in a fully trinitarian confession of faith. Christians affirm two equally important truths: that God sent his Son into the world to save us; and, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself. The uniqueness of Christ (who as mediator is "of God" and "of man," 1 Timothy 2:5) is Paul's point in v. 16. We can no longer judge Christ in purely human terms. His relation to the Father and to us is peculiar to himself, and explains his qualifications and power to reconcile God and estranged men. Athanasius long ago (as embedded in the Nicene Creed), said that salvation is uniquely of God alone. No created being, no one less than God incarnate could save us. Thus we are ambassadors of this word of reconciliation: "We beseech you ... be reconciled to God" (v. 20).

One final word from Matthew 5:23-24. Our Lord makes the familiar statement: Don't bother with your sacrifice at the altar. Go first and be reconciled to your brother and then offer your gift.

Here is a nice, delicate nuance. Christ says to us: as you worship "remember" that your brother has something against you. The word "remember" is freighted with benevolence. The feeling starts in the heart. It is as if to say, "Should you remember him, do it for good, or to a good end. Think well of him. Be desirous that the alienation end. Things need not go on as they have been."

What a lovely touch this is! Interestingly, the Greek form of the word "reconcile" used in Matthew is an older Attic form (not used by Paul), which is also picked up by the writer of *The Didache* (14:2), a church manual of the second century A.D. It is as if to say, the greatest blessing over the whole range of human experience and language is to see people who have been enemies sit down together as brothers and sisters. Therein is the love of Christ.

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APOSTACY

Samuel J. Mikolaski

New International Dictionary of the Christian Church, ed. J. D. Douglas
Grand Rapids: Zondervan 1974, p. 57

APOSTASY. The abandonment or renunciation of Christianity, either voluntarily or by compulsion. The use of the term for religious apostasy in the Hebrew-Christian tradition derives probably from Septuagint usage. Both voluntary (Josh. 22: 22; 2 Chron. 22:9) and involuntary aspects occur (1-Mach, 2:15). Mattathias's refusal to apostatize to pagan rites was the occasion for the Maccabean revolt; it denoted deserting from, rebellion against, or abandonment of the Mosaic teaching. While the term does not occur in the KJV, it does in the Greek (Acts 21:21; 2 Thess. 2:3).

There are frequent biblical allusions to the evils and the dangers of apostasy. It is described as departure from the faith (1 Tim. 4:1-3), being carried away by the error of lawless men (2 Pet. 3:17), and falling away from the living God (Heb. 3:12). The great apostasy, "The Rebellion" of 2 Thess. 2:3, is associated with the return of Christ. The serious consequences of apostasy are stressed in Hebrew 6:4-6; 10:26 (cf. 2 Pet. 2:20). It occurs through the subverting activities of false teachers (Matt. 24:11; Jude, etc.), but it may also occur because of persecution and stress (Matt. 24:9, 10; Luke 8:13). Thus the NT warns against both voluntary and involuntary apostacy so identified.

Church history reflects the activities of apostates and alleged apostates, and as well the problems of persecution, involuntary recanting, and what to do with the lapsed. The use of the civil power by both Catholics and Protestants to punish those charged with apostasy resulted in great cruelties during the Middle Ages and later. The Anabaptist concept of a religiously composite society prevailed in the New World and later in the Old also. Compositism does not diminish the seriousness of doctrinal error, but it does tolerate divergent views within society under law in the belief that persuasion not coercion reflects the Christian ideal. This in no way abrogates the responsibility of the Church to maintain and defend its doctrinal purity in relation to the norms of biblical teaching.

ARE ALL CHRISTIANS MINISTERS/

Are there ministries which are not just pastoral?

Samuel J. Mikolaski

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The 500th anniversary of Luther's birth should compel Baptists to re-think their popular doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. What did it mean at the time of the Protestant reformation? What should it mean today?

Have you ever attended an Eastern Orthodox service? It could be Greek, Russian, Bulgarian or, as in my childhood in Canada, Serbian Orthodox. No matter. The pattern is the same. The priest performs the sacrament of the Lord's death on behalf of the people. Behind him is a partition, usually beautifully adorned with Christian symbols, which seals off the "holy place." During the course of the sacrament he enters the holy place through two little swinging doors. As a child, I used to wonder what was in there and what the priest did there. The entire ritual was developed from early medieval times to symbolize worship in the tabernacle of the Old Testament. The priest acts for the people in relation to God. He is the divine representative, the sacramental agent, who is authorized to perform religious service. The screen represents the separation between God who is holy and man who is sinful.

Rejection of exclusive priestly representation was a key factor in the Protestant reformation. The issue is alive today in the continuing claim by the episcopal churches (Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox and Anglo-Catholic. among others) that only episcopally authorized persons can minister in the church. Baptists and most other Christians reject this claim. Rather, Baptists say, every Christian is a priest. There is only one kind of Christian and each Christian is called to ministry.

The symbolism of the screen between God and man is instructive. The tabernacle form in Exodus and Leviticus in the Old Testament is developed in the New Testament in Hebrews where Christ himself, not an animal, is the final sacrifice. He opens the way into God's holy presence not with animal blood but with his own. The way is now freely open to every Christian. Each of us, in relation to Christ's merit and work, has free access into God's presence. The last priest, and the great high priest, is Christ himself. No other priest is any longer required. He accomplished an unrepeatable sacrifice, once for all, on the basis of which we are forgiven and may now freely enter into God's presence as forgiven sinners.

As a result, we Christians are a kingdom of priests (Hebrews 9:11-14, 23-28; 10:11-14. 19-25: Revelation 1:6; 5:10). It is a word of great comfort:

> "Brethren, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus. by the new and living way which he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh … Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith."

We come to worship, but not in fear (Heb. 12: 18-24) through Christ the mediator of a new covenant.

Not all the blood of beasts, on Jewish altars slain.
Could give the guilty conscience peace, or take away the stain.
But Christ the heavenly Lamb, takes all our guilt away,
A sacrifice of richer blood, and nobler name than they.

It is easy to see how this attractive Old Testament symbolism was perpetuated in the Christian church, though in its episcopal form it seriously impeded true understanding of the gospel and of ministry.

The trend began early in the Christian era. Kenneth Scott Latourette, late well-known Baptist church historian at Yale University, said that by the end of the second century A.D. clergy had become a separate order. The election of bishops was done commonly by presbyters and other clergy (as at Rome), ratified by the congregation and approved by neighbouring bishops. Bishops usually selected and ordained subordinate clergy. Eventually, only the wafer was given to the laity in mediaeval times. This sacramental distinction between clergy and laity symbolically reinforced the division in the mind of society. One of the points Luther made forcefully is that the sacrament in both kinds (wafer and wine i belongs to all Christians. not merely to priests.

In mediaeval times clericalism showed itself variously. Clergy became virtually a *tertium quid*, a third kind of humanity. They did not marry. They dressed differently and cut their hair distinctively. They claimed exemption from the civil courts and submitted only to the papal courts. They held enormous spiritual authority over the populace in times when the brevity of life due to plague generated deep spiritual anxiety among the people about the after-life.

Were there options in mediaeval times? Vast stretches of mediaeval history have been obscured to us but recent scholarship is turning up a surprising amount of diversity in times when vigorous attempts were made politically and religiously to protect the cohesiveness and uniformity of societies. From the earliest times of the Christian faith dissidents, for good and bad reasons, sought freedom to hold and practise their faith. Isolated places such as the deserts of Egypt and North Africa, the gorges east of Jordan. the mountains of Asia Minor and the remote parts of the Tigris-Euphrates valley became refuges of dissidents. Others at least as far back as the time of Jerome. fled to the (Alps) mountains and valleys of what is now Switzerland and France, and to the mountains of Spain. There, in high mountain retreats, they were free to live their own lives. They have been dubbed, “Men of the Valleys”. Remnants of folklore persist over the centuries, including arts and crafts among some Anabaptist Christians in Canada for instance, which parallel arts and crafts believed traceable to the “Men of the Valleys” (Blodwen Davies. *A String of Amber*, Vancouver, 1973).

Over the centuries many elements of early Christian teaching were preserved in the archives and traditions of Central European dissident groups. These included

the teaching of *The Didache*. the second century A.D. manual which is widely cited in the literature of the Mediterranean rim. In Central Europe features of religious life included no fixed religious rituals or practices. The church was a community of Christians. It met in the homes of members. Preachers were appointed by the election of several, the choice falling on one of them by lot. Itinerant preachers and teachers circulated among the communities of Christians to teach the gospel and the Christian life. They taught love to God and neighbour, that Christians must not hate or be violent and that Christians should give freely. They practised the Lord's Supper as a feast of thanksgiving and love. There was little standardized dogma but strong faith, Christian charity, lay ministry and the concept of Christian brotherhood. They reflected the moral and spiritual teaching of the "two ways" in *The Didache*, the way of life and the way of death.

It was not, however, until new scholarship within established English and European Christendom in the late Middle Ages confronted the questions of authority. the nature of salvation and the nature of the church that the whole structure and faith of received Christendom was celled into question. This occurred in many places, among many different groups.

Fully 130 years before Luther's essays were rocking Europe. John Wyclif"s theological essays were profoundly influencing not only England. but Bohemia through John Hus. Struggles within the Catholic hierarchy for papal power forced rethinking the question of authority. The noted German theologian Henry of Langenstein (d. 1397) at Paris, for example, denied that the pope had power to define dogma and affirmed that the pope could be deposed for cause. The church is comprised of all the faithful (clergy and laity, including women) he said. Supreme authority is vested in a general council. Thus, those who espoused the conciliar ideal sought to curb arbitrary powers claimed by Rome.

Wyclif and Hus pushed the questions back to the font of Christianity: The scriptures are the first and only final authority. The church is made up of the believing faithful. Said Wyclif, "Holy scripture is the highest authority for every Christian and the standard of faith and of all human perfection." (*De Veritate Sacrae Scripturae*). Every Christian. he declared, must know the scriptures and read them in his own language. The stage was thus set for a massive re-thinking of the nature of true Christian discipleship, the nature of the church and the nature of the Christian ministry.

It might be added that the modern doctrine of the invisible church probably has its roots in this period. Did this doctrine arise because of the inclusive and corrupt character of the late mediaeval church as Christians sought a rationale for the true church? Wyclif in England and movements such as the Sisters and Brethren of the Common Life in Central Europe influenced many, including the Christian humanist Erasmus and Luther, the latter through the devotional book *Theologica Germanica*.

We come back to Wyclif. Some of his essays read as if they were written today. If' we regard the reform of the church, the liberation of conscience in religious matters and the development of composite, democratic societies as social, political and religious advance over the mediaeval monolithic ideal, then Wyclif was marvellously centuries ahead of his time. While he affirms that, customarily, spiritually and morally qualified priests should minister, he powerfully argues biblically for the universal priesthood of the believer: *No faithful person (I say) doubts that God could give a layman the power to perform the sacrament, just as a layman, since he could be a priest (as the logicians say), could perform the sacrament. Surely it seems according to the testimony of Augustine, Chrysostom, and other saints that every predestined layman is a priest and a much more devoted layman performing the sacrament, since he would give sacred ministry to the church, would have the raison d'etre … of a pries,*" ("On the Eucharist," 1379-80. *Advocates of Reform*, ed. Matthew Spinka).

It was, however, Luther in Germany and the Scandinavian countries who electrified Europe with his reform proposals, paralleled by Calvin in Geneva and Zwingli in Zurich. The spin-off of the Geneva reforms revolutionized the church in Scotland under John Knox. The English reforms were not so decisively felt, partly because Henry VIII remained faithful to Rome until his jurisdictional breach with the papacy. More to the point, however, is the likelihood of traditional English pragmatism to seek accommodation, as the *Thirty-nine Articles* reflect.

Luther's essay addressed *To The Christian Nobility Of The German Nation* (1520 aptly epitomizes his arguments and earthiness. The Roman church, he said, has erected a Jericho wall around it of seeming impregnable three-fold interlocking argument, which the truth like Joshua's forces can by God's help breech: *First*, the spiritual power is above the temporal power and the temporal has no jurisdiction over the spiritual. *Second*, they refuse argument from scripture because they claim that only the pope may authoritatively interpret scripture. *Third*, even if one should appeal against the pope to council, no one may call a council but the pope.

Luther proceeds to demolish these arguments. Of interest to us is what he says about church believers and ministry. Beginning with Paul's analogy of the body (1 Corinthians 12) Luther points out that as members of that body we are one in Christ, we are to fulfill each his own task and we are to serve each other. "This is because we have one baptism. one gospel, one faith, and are all Christians alike: for baptism, gospel and faith, these alone make spiritual and Christian people." Therefore it is the divine, spiritual unction which qualifies for ministry not unction by pope, bishop, tonsure (haircut), ordination. consecration and clothes differing from those of laymen - all this may make a hypocrite or an anointed puppet but never a Christian or a spiritual man." He cites 1 Peter 2:9 and Revelation 5: 10.

These opening shots in Luther's address to the German nobility pretty well sum up the staggering dimensions of the revolution Luther proposed. His theses impinge upon not only the political structure of the church, but on the nature of true Christian discipleship and the ministry. Luther then serves up an apt illustration: *And to put the matter more plainly, if a little company of pious Christian laymen were taken prisoners and carried away to a desert and had not among them a priest consecrated by a bishop and were there to agree to elect one of them … and were to order him to baptize, to celebrate the mass, to absolve and to preach, this man would as truly be a priest as if all the bishops and all the popes had consecrated him. That is why in cases of necessity, every man can baptize and absolve, which would not be possible if we were not all priests. This great grace and virtue of baptism and of the Christian estate they have quite destroyed and made us forget by their ecclesiastical law …*

He adds that "we are all priests alike" though we properly defer to one another, depending upon gifts and calling. "Whatever issues from baptism may boast that it has been consecrated priest. bishop and pope … Therefore a priest should be nothing in Christendom but a functionary." Luther's insight is of great consequence: Christians are put into the ministry not by ordination but by baptism. This truth was sadly sidestepped as the Reformation unfolded and not a few Baptists today have missed its truth as well. It is a key truth for witnessing Christians and the church as we confront a secular world at the close of this present century.

Full Reform or Half-Way House

Nevertheless, the Protestant reformers stopped at a half-way house. *First,* the reformers refused to give up infant baptism, though most conceded that believer's baptism is scriptural. *Second,* they refused the corollary of the foregoing, namely, that the church is a fellowship of believing people; that public discipleship is essential to membership; that the new life in Christ, as identifiable Christians, in contrast to the mixed multitude of believing and unbelieving people, should comprise the church. *Third,* these issues interlocked with perceptions then current as to the fundamental nature of society. Infant baptism marked not only entrance to the church, but acceptance into Christian society, or Christendom.

Nation-state churches expressed the homogeneity of Christendom. To fracture this seemed inconceivable. Social chaos would ensue, it was believed. The Reformed theologian Leonard Verduin's study, *The Reformers and Their Stepchildren*, makes fascinating reading. He pulls out data from Dutch Protestant court records which show the anger of judges at the thought of religious diversity. Thousands of Anabaptists were condemned to death in Europe, by Protestants as well as by Catholics.

We who live in North America seldom realize that the ideals of the Believers' Church and of a composite, democratic society first made their way into the

United States and Canada as social experiments. Example: the Tolpuddle martyrs, buried near London, Ontario. The old repressive European ideas died hard and they persist in countries dominated by state churches.

The Baptist ideal is clear and is biblically based: Direct access to God is the liberty of every Christian unmediated by man so far as any form, office or sacrament is concerned. Entrance upon ministry for every Christian takes place at baptism (which is coincidental with conversion in the New Testament), where public discipleship is accepted, identification with God's people in the local church and service for the Lord Jesus. We are, as the New Testament declares, a kingdom of priests unto the Lord.

Implementation and development of these ideals was rapid, especially in the 19th century as toleration increased and emigration to the new world accelerated. They are intimately associated with the emergence of denominations, which are a form of religious pluralism. The growth of lay ministry was immense. Included were: overseas missions, beginning with William Carey; scripture distribution and the development of the Bible societies; thousands of small group ministries; such as Methodist classes and Baptist home mission groups which became thousands of churches; urban mission ventures in the core areas of large cities; Sunday Schools for street children. Explosive growth characterized the period as multiplied thousands of lay people exercised their right to minister and witness.

What is the Believer's Priesthood Today?

As Baptists along with other groups in Canada have sought to regularize their practices and denominational life during this century, the initiative of lay people in ministry has been somewhat squelched. Add to this fear of indigenous leadership since the controversies of the 1920s and we now have a situation where ordination is thought to be the prerogative of the elite and many lay people are afraid to witness or to act because they feel this is work proper to ministers.

It is urgent that Canadian Baptists give up negative definition of the priesthood of believers and re-claim the positive elements of the doctrine in new ways for ministry today. We do reject the dogma of an esoteric group specially authorized to act as agents between God and man. We do reject that any such group has the power to absolve from sin or to declare sin forgiven, more than any other Christian. We do reject the notion that Christ can be re-sacrificed or that he can be offered up anew in any sense. We do reject any claim that in virtue of office God has given any class of persons special insight, grace or power more than other Christians. Nevertheless, while we do affirm the finality, completeness and adequacy of Christ's mediatorial work for us on the cross, what do we more so far as Christian priesthood is concerned today? What is your priesthood, and mine?

Whatever we say about this matter must be said in relation to the priesthood of Christ. Our ministry extends from his and should be patterned after it.

First, priesthood requires that the priest truly represent both God and man. (The writer of Hebrews points out that Christ. unlike the Old Testament priests, came from God.) The Christian is a partaker of the divine nature (2 Peter 1:4). Each Christian, like Christ, bears the Spirit of God (John 14:16-17; Romans 8:11). This duality reflects the truth of the incarnation. Hence the importance of evidence of new life to our early Baptist forefathers. As redeemed sinners, publicly identified with Christ, we represent in the world the Lord's saving grace. Note Jesus' prayer regarding his followers who would remain in the world as his representatives (John 17: 11, 18).

Second, each Christian is to minister God's word (John 17:18: 1 Peter 2:9) in more than one sense. Believers are an exhibit of God's grace. What God has accomplished savingly in us communicates to others (2 Corinthians 3:2-3). As well, each Christian ought to be witnessing to his or her faith. This is the command of Christ to his followers (Acts 1:8). In addition, we are urged to teach and admonish one another (Colossians 3:16) as wellequipped, knowledgeable students of God's word (1 Timothy 4:11-16).

Third, Christians are to exhibit the redeeming power of the cross by reflecting in themselves and in their behaviour the passion of Christ. We are to practise the *humilitas* (self-humbling) of our Lord, which Paul declares in Philippians 2:1-13, as servants duplicating their Master. This truth is one of the most powerful aspects of Christian priesthood. It is highlighted in a remarkable distinction made by Paul between suffering for Christ and suffering with Christ. To suffer for Christ is to be abused for Christ. To suffer with Christ (Romans 8:17) is to fulfill important aspects of the cross in ourselves as Christ's ministers. Not that Christ's sacrifice is incomplete: rather, that key functions of Christ's sacrifice are fulfilled in us (Philippians 3:10; Colossians 1:24; 1 Peter 4:13). This means two things: to bear evil redemptively, i.e., to convert its power to good in the way we bear it (1 Thessalonians 5:15) and to bear the burdens of others pastorally (Galatians 6:2) out of love and compassion.

Fourth, priesthood means full utilization of Christians in ministry. May God help us Canadian Baptists to give more attention to training leadership. The clericalism we practise in the exclusive roles assigned to clergy and laity are alien to the New Testament. We Canadian Baptists have utilized our people more fully and more effectively in the past than we have done during the past 50 years. We need to re-think the meaning of ordination. [If you are interested, note the report I wrote last autumn for a study group in Atlantic Canada on this question entitled "Canadian Baptist Ordination Standards and Practices," in *Canadian Baptist History and Polity* (M. J. S. Ford, ed. Hamilton: McMaster Divinity College, 1982).] Ministry means more than sitting on committees, though committee work is included, of course. Many of you, along with me, have sat on scores of committees during the past generation. We need to sit less and to act more. Some words from Petronius are apt: *We trained hard, but every time we were beginning to form up into teams*

we would be reorganized and I was to learn later in life that we tend to meet any new situation by reorganizing and a wonderful method it can be for creating the illusion of progress while producing inefficiency and demoralization. Priesthood means acting; getting things done.

Fifth, priesthood functions in relation to the body of Christ which, most of the time, means the local church. Canadian Baptists have espoused a misguided doctrine of the invisible church in order not to become too heavily involved in the local church. Very nice. but the New Testament doesn't allow for it! We have compounded dogma and parachurch organizations too often to escape responsibility for witness where God has placed us. New Testament priesthood compels re-thinking our granularism. We are ministers to one another, as well as to the world. Sometimes this entails care for one another when trouble strikes. At other times ministry means stomping on one another's corns. Both are ministry and each of us needs both.

A recent biography of president Dwight Eisenhower delineates his leadership style. Elements of it fit very well what I have sought to say above: “Hidden-hand” leadership, i.e., willingness to assign the public role to others. Care not to criticize publicly so as not to provoke or alienate. Action based on careful assessment of persons as to their abilities and capacities. Artful delegation. Building consensus.

The time is here for Canadian Baptists across the length and breadth of our land to take hold of their God-given task, as brothers and sisters, hand-in-hand.

But you are a chosen race. a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light (1 Peter 2:9).

AUTHORITY

New International Dictionary of the Christian Church, ed. J. D. Douglas
Grand Rapids: Zondervan 1974, p. 90

AUTHORITY. In biblical teaching the source of all authority is God Himself (Rom. 13:1; cf. Dan. 4:34; John 19:11). We must distinguish between authority and power, and between religious or ecclesiastical authority and civil authority and power. Christianity claims to be based upon divine revelation, to which reason and conscience must be subject. This does not jettison reason in apprehending the revelation or discovering truth. Reason itself, however, is not autonomous, for one cannot begin thinking -- even to examining his own perceptions and thoughts --without making the act of faith that the things he is thinking about make sense. The distinction between natural and special revelation is not absolute. The concept of the revelation of God as Creator and the revelation of God as Redeemer is more comprehensive because all truth is from God and all truth must grasped by men who have the gift of reason from God. Christians believe that men cannot discover truths behind God's back or without God's assistance and that there is no use in God's giving revelations to creatures incapable of receiving them. In contrast to claims of totally subjective revelatory authority, the Christian claim to historical revelation involves historical events and narratives as the actual form the eternal realities take.

The biblical revelation comprises the utterances of prophets and apostles and the record of the life and teaching of our Lord, which have authority because they are inspired by the Spirit of God (2 Tim. 3:16). For Christians, the biblical writings transcend all other claims to religious authority. Some claims to the authority of church tradition and the episcopacy (including the papacy) have been made, especially in the Orthodox and Roman Catholic traditions, but these have been played down recently in favor of discovering biblical and early church roots of authority faith.

At the Reformation, the Bible as the Word God interpreted to faith through the inner witness of the Spirit was re-established as the norm of faith and practice in Protestant and evangelical churches. The magisterial Word of God was moved to center as the judge of the faith and life of the church, not the church as the judge of Scripture. The canonical Scriptures without supplement from church tradition were seen to be self-interpreting and complete.

The Reformed and Lutheran theologies of the Word were complemented by the Anabaptist personal religion of the Spirit, in which English and American evangelicalism and independency have their roots. Their view that the church is essentially non-dynastic, non-territorial, and a spiritual democracy of believing people has profoundly influenced Western Christianity including rejection of the enforcement of church sanctions by civil powers.

The evangelical principle entails Word and Spirit in which the authoritative Word of God is the chief agency of the Holy Spirit and the chief function of the church.

It is the Holy Spirit who makes the Word to be revelation, and it is the Word that makes revelation historic and concrete. Theology is not the mold but the image of the church's spiritual life. Political democracy recognizes no authority but what it creates, but the church as a spiritual democracy recognizes no authoritative principle but that which creates it as Christ's body, namely the Word, the Gospel, and the Spirit under Jesus Christ's lordship.

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CHRIST AND MODERN MYTHS ABOUT DEATH AND RESURRECTION

Samuel J. Mikolaski

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In our time realities of faith tend to be mythicized in the process of being demythicized. Thereby, we hope to make them more palatable to the modern scientific mind. The resurrection of Christ has been a favourite target. New mythologies have sprung up around death. If we more squarely faced the reality of death we'd be much more prone to listen to the wonderful news in the New Testament that Jesus Christ rose triumphantly from the dead.

The best quip I know about death was made by Epicurus over three centuries before Christ. It was revived more recently for a philosophical paper at the Winnipeg meetings of the Learned Societies of Canada. Here it is: "When we are here, death is not; when death is here, we are not." That is pretty clear and, to the unbeliever, pretty convincing.

Our engineering-mechanic mind-set has at long last reached to death. In recent years I've watched the macabre exercise of seminars at seminary on death and dying. What a misnomer! They're certainly not about death. And dying is treated like an illness, as Ian Kennedy said recently in his B.B.C. Reith Lectures on medicine. Doctor, patient, chaplain and family lock arms in the pursuit of immortality, symbolized by the respirator. When they fail, no one knows when to turn it off. They scurry away lest they be overtaken by the shadow of failure when there are so many out there dying to whom they hope to hold out the hope of cure.

Last summer a lady church member of a congregation my wife and I ministered to asked me for help. Her husband's twenty-one year old son by a previous marriage lay in hospital at the point of death. Would I go and help? For years he had suffered from an uncontrollable discharge in his head, which had been surgically piped to his bladder. Often he had been ill from infections but these had been controlled. Now no treatment helped. The doctor had walked away sending an (indirect) message. "I can do nothing more," and suggesting that they turn off the machine. Who was to do that?

The grieving father and family wept in an adjoining reception room. The nurses coolly monitored the machine. I spoke with the family. Were they ready to accept that their son and brother was beyond human help? Should he be left to die in peace? Yes, they said. Would I go and ask that the machine be turned off? They could face neither the sick room, nor the staff and sat puzzled that all on whom they had leaned professionally were not there at the time of death.

I stayed by that bedside as the monitor wound down. The Catholic sister - gentle soul - stood by me. Finally I said we should have prayer. The staff, somewhat puzzled, concurred. At the end of the prayer the Catholic sister spoke a fervent "amen" which set a seal on the joy of Christian hope in the face of antiseptic,

unfeeling, scientifically monitored dying.

Nearly three years ago my mother, Sofia, died at Woodstock, Ontario. She had been a godly, very hard-working lady and now at long last was at peace with her Lord at eighty-five years of age. The Baptist pastor to whose church she belonged led a comforting and inspiring service.

But it was at the graveside that the myths of the past intruded. After the casket was lowered, friends of our own nationality suddenly leaned over and threw money into the open grave. A propitiatory peace offering? A gesture from our ethnic pagan past to furnish a little pocket money for the life to come? Change to pay the ferryman at the river Styx? How odd at a Baptist funeral!

And yet how characteristic of our modern mythologies. We don't know what to do with death. We dissect the stages of dying, enter notes in our little black notebooks, and call it the study of death. We try to ameliorate its stark reality by calling it a perfectly natural process, when it is not perfect; it is horrifyingly unnatural and dehumanizing; and it has nothing to do with process except decay.

The Apostle Paul agonized over the terror of death. This agony pervades all of scripture. Sin and guilt and judgment and death are all interwoven in the Bible (note, for example, Romans 5:12-21). This might not suit our current mythologies, but so much the worse for them. Death is the last enemy (1 Corinthians 15:26). Unless Christ literally triumphed over death we simply add one more myth to the endless banal chain of myths about death and resurrection that have shackled humanity from our tribal and pagan past.

This is why the resurrection of Jesus Christ is pivotal to everything that is Christian. If Christ be not risen, said Paul, we might as well throw in the towel -- our faith is a vain thing.

It is hard to be poetic about death. But resurrection is something else. What a theme! We can be inventive and can rhapsodize about Easter faith without saying anything at all!

So the myths take over again. The fairy tales that used to be spun about the resurrection of Christ were fairy-tales dressed up to look like reasoned argument: Jesus didn't die, but merely swooned. The cool of the tomb revived him. He pushed the stone out of the way and walked out of the tomb. Or, the disciples had a vision that he had risen. Or, they hallucinated and thought they had seen him alive.

Modern sophistication tends to be more indulgent toward people of faith than the foregoing, if not any more believing. The resurrection is seen to be a fact of faith, but not of history. Thus some German theologians in our time foist upon us a perennial European idealistic penchant for unhappened events -- "events" to faith

which are not “events” in fact. The first Christians attested to the fact that Christ had risen.

Their faith is enough. By means of their faith we can retain the crucial resurrection base of New Testament faith without the alleged pre-scientific concept of resuscitating a dead body. The victory of faith lay in the refusal of the first disciples to surrender their Lord to the thought that he had gone down to defeat, not that he had actually triumphed over death by resurrection.

I plead for an empiricist view of the meaning of the event. It seems to me that the New Testament writers stubbornly insist that events are things that happen in history and not merely in faith.

What is the character of the evidence for the resurrection in the New Testament? *First,* it is selective. Not all of the times the risen Lord came to his disciples are recorded. Paul’s list in the first few verses of I Corinthians 15 appears to be evidence that was commonly used in preaching the truth of the gospel. *Second*, the disputed ending of Mark (16:9-19) parallels other references in the case of at least four of the noted appearances. *Third,* the wide geographical spread of the appearances is not improbable and may represent early regional collections of data. Paul gives no hint of location. Matthew and Mark centre in Galilee, Luke in Jerusalem, and John in Jerusalem and Galilee.

Two complementary lines of data are stressed by the New Testament witnesses: *First,* the tomb was empty on Easter morning. *Second,* the Lord appeared to his (at first disbelieving) disciples on many occasions before his ascension. These are the interlocking ideas in Luke 24:1-12 and John 20:1-18.

Of the appearances, five occurred on Easter Day: to Mary Magdalene (John 20:11-18), to the other women (Matthew 28:9,10), to Peter (Luke 24:33-35, I Corinthians 15:5), to the two on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35), and to ten apostles and others (Luke 24:36-43, John 20:19-25).

Five other appearances occurred on different days: to the eleven (John 20:26-31, I Corinthians 15:5), to the seven disciples in Galilee (Matthew 28:16-20), to his brother James (I Corinthians 15:7) and final appearances to the apostles (Luke 24:44-53, Acts 1:1-11). All these took place during forty days (Acts 1:3) between the resurrection and the ascension. The appearance to Paul (while he was still the persecutor Saul) occurred much later (I Corinthians 15:8).

These events are presented as common-sense events, not merely as events of faith. They are historical facts, reportable events. Unless the resurrection is real, declares Paul, the Christian religion amounts to empty words (I Corinthians 15:14-19), and we misrepresent God. As to the characteristics of our Lord’s resurrection body, the New Testament writers exhibit chaste wonderment and appropriate uncertainty as to how this could be; nevertheless they are certain that

they are not fantasizing. The risen Lord came into a closed room to be with them (John 20:26). At times he was unrecognizable, for reasons not made clear except possibly their own blinding assumptions that it could not be he (John 21:12, Luke 24:16). The report seemed like an idle tale (Luke 24:11). They were a mixed bag of disbelief and joy (Luke 24:41).

Nevertheless, they knew (in the way persons are known to each other by a root conviction to be the same self) that it was he, despite their native scepticism (John 21:12). Most of all, the accounts stress the empirical character of the evidence, not only in the challenge to Thomas to put his finger into the nailprint (John 20:27), but to them all in the quite remarkable words, "See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me, and see; for a spirit has not flesh and bone as you see that I have" (Luke 24:39). And then he ate food with them. As they watched him I don't think any one of them could chew his own food.

Why does so much hang on Christ's resurrection? Most of the reasons are stated by the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians chapter 15. The truth of the gospel depends upon it, for if Christ be not risen his death could not be redemptive (verses 1-2, 17). His resurrection is the sure guarantee of the ultimate triumph of the faithful over the grave. He is the first fruits, the advance master copy (verses 20, 23).

Every time you and I stand at the open grave of a loved one who dies in the Lord, we are assured that the ultimate triumph over death is Christ's resurrection. No amount of mythologizing death, studying its process with a view to understanding it, or other rationalization can mitigate its horror. Resurrection is more than resuscitation and more than immortality. It is new life won by Christ the Victor, which we too shall share. Resurrection means that the dead shall be raised.

To Jesus the resurrection was the complement of his sombre predictions of his passion (Mark 8:31; 9:9, 31; 10:34, Luke 13:32; etc.). There is no confusion in his mind between resurrection and his second coming, as some have suggested. In the earliest apostolic preaching the resurrection vindicates Jesus' divine mission (Acts 2:22-24, note Romans 1:4). The resurrection is God's greatest work. Thereby the gospel of salvation in Christ alone is authenticated (Acts 4:10-12).

Most of all, by his resurrection Jesus is declared to be Lord of all. He is the universal Lord (Acts 2:32, 36; 10:39-43; Romans 10:9). That Jesus is Lord is probably the earliest Christian confession. How splendid is the Eastern Orthodox Easter greeting between friends: Greeting: Christ is risen! Response: He is risen indeed! The resurrection is not a last miracle in a series; it is the final act of God to authenticate and vindicate his Son. Jesus Christ is the new head of a new race, the Second Adam, the Last Man, the Progenitor, the File Leader of redeemed humanity now made triumphant over death and hell.

In important respects the challenge of Christmas and Easter are identical. We fete the wise men who came to find what the star meant. They knew nothing, but

found everything as they bowed before the infant Lord. The religious leaders at Jerusalem who directed the wise men knew everything (even the place where Messiah was to be born) but they found nothing because their religion was insensitively calloused to God's speaking.

At Easter we can mouth sentimental drivel about new life in springtime (a rehearsal of the old pagan life-death nature cycle), or we might demand empirical verification.
The New Testament disciples were tough-minded. I think that we, like Thomas, would scarcely dare to push our finger into the nailprint of his hand. When confronted by the risen Lord is there any other response but to say, "My Lord and my God!" Try it.

CHRISTIANITY AS AN HERMENEUTIC

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The present failure of nerve within Western Christianity may be attributed to a loss of a Christian hermeneutic. This is the significance to me of the observation that we have entered the post-Christian era. In a Lenten address during the 1960s the late Bishop Bayne said that the prime characteristic of our age is a massive demonstration of unbelief. The spirit of the age, he said, is self-consciousness of the arts of power and industrial skill but without faith. It is a demonstration of what man can accomplish without any traditional belief in God at all. The wheel has turned full-circle. For the first time since the early centuries of this era, Christianity faces a secular world which threatens its existence - not as an institution or as a set of mores, because like Roman Stoic Republicanism the modern world is eclectically tolerant of religions, but because of Christianity's claims on how to arrange the world. Christian categories are no longer thought to be a viable intellectual alternative.

An hermeneutic[1] entails more than preaching or proclamation. It consists of what the proclamation is all about. An

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hermeneutic is a way of arranging the world. It is a statement of the coherence of "all that is the case," to purloin Wittgenstein's phrase. It is to say, "This is how things hang together meaningfully." It is a schematic blueprint showing man's place in the totality of historical, spiritual and empirical data.

The dominant philosophical assumption in the latter half of the twentieth century, an age of psychological uncertainty as well as of vast expansion of scientific knowledge, is that knowledge is the direct instrument of man's power over nature. Parallel to this is the assumption that the truth of the world is not such as to exceed the measure of our understanding. This view does not necessarily deny God but

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denies mystery and revelation or the possibility of saying anything about them. In Christianity the claim to revelation excludes human command of all knowledge.

How and why did Christianity overtake the world of antiquity? It is instructive to trace certain parallels between the ancient world and our own. In doing this it is important to distinguish intra-hermeneutical systems from the fundamental issues involved in Christianity's claims.

The intra-hermeneutic has performed an indispensible function within Christendom. An intra-hermeneutic is a point of view which requires a broad Christian tradition and consensus within which to be meaningful. But it has only marginal relevance to the non-Christian , world. Intra-hermeneutical systems include comparative theology, religious traditions such as denominations, and religious polemics.

Displacement of the World of Antiquity

Christianity came into a world richly furnished with ideas. How did it come about that as a result of the life and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth and the activities of a group of undistinguished and largely ethnically and culturally insulated followers in Galilee and Jerusalem, the ancient cults and schools were displaced by Christianity? We may never know adequately, but fresh studies in the social, economic, political as well as religious life of the Roman Empire are yielding new knowledge. We have especially lacked the data of social and economic history, but recent attempts to discover and quantify some of it compel a re-reading of sources for new insights on the kind of hermeneutic constructed by the early Christians in their attempts to justify a distinctive life within the Empire.[2]

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Consider the expansion of Christianity in relation to the political institutions of the time, sociological factors, religious life and philosophical heritage.

1. *Political Institutions*. The Roman Empire was republican in nature. For Christianity to spread, the nationalist-royalist outlook and religious-ethnic sentiments of Galilee and Jerusalem had to be transcended. The Book of Acts is the record of that break-out from Jewish nationalism largely through the development of Antioch as a Christian center. Religious nationalism as a socially cohesive force is often a major aspect of intra hermeneutic traditions. Once religious nationalism was transcended, Roman republicanism provided

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the decentralization of power, political cohesiveness, rule of law, trade and commerce, and rights of the individual for the spread of Christianity. Roman republicanism tended to generate and elevate the spirit of public duty and the rule of law over personal obligation and local tyranny.

In this light it would be interesting to speculate on the fate of fledgling Christian faith had the Roman Empire approximated a monolithic autocracy in the traditional pattern of despotic rule, rather than the composite republicanism that it was. The Empire was not only a composite of many nations and languages, but also of religions and religious fervor. The latter were respected and allowed to propagandize and to win converts, provided that the cult of honor to the divine genius of the Empire embodied in Caesar was accepted. Geographic and economic expansion of the Empire tended to reinforce the importance of

republican ideals. Thus toleration of religions and the rule of law afforded religions, including Christianity, public social acceptance and reasonable freedom to proselytize, provided that the state cult was at least formally acknowledged. This last proved to be what many Christians would not concede and became the reason or excuse for their repression and persecution.

2. *Social Factors.* The Empire became an economic unit with a vast increase in trade and commerce. This created new mobility and important new wealthy classes. The first and second centuries A. D. were the traveler's paradise. One could travel from the Euphrates to the border between England and Scotland without crossing a foreign frontier. Only t w o languages would carry the traveler all the way, Greek to Yugoslavia and Latin from Yugoslavia to Britain. Wherever he traveled he was safe under the umbrella of an efficient civil service, stable legal system, vigorous economy, and powerful army.

The heirs of classical culture were the bilingual, conservative, aristocratic families of the Roman Empire. By 200 A. D. they became enclosed

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the arts, they built monuments to themselves. Conformist, tolerant and urbane, they were nevertheless unaware of the powerful new forces building up around them. In an era of rapid change and increased horizontal and vertical mobility they protectively drew inwards. Political instability (as they saw it) overtook conservative stability. Gradually the new barbarian world, which was the not uncivilized world of the developing nations on the expanding borders of the Empire, overtook them.

The changed world of antiquity was created by a new mobile, entrepreneurial class. They acquired means and achieved influence without becoming part of the aristocracy. Men and women were vigorous, outgoing, goal-oriented, and were able administrators. New economically-based oligarchies grew up which had strong local roots. Though n o t fully egalitarian, republicanism provided the political framework in which formed the new local oligarchies and associations. Through them the ideas of the Empire could filter down to the lower classes more effectively than through the old exclusive aristocratic families. The rapid spread of Christianity was due in no small measure to the conversion of many of the new meritorious class.[3] Their households (*oikonomia*) called not only for

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family loyalty; they also involved social and economic interdependence. Households comprised a natural network of relationships through which the new faith spread.

This should be understood in relation to the cultural, economic and political backdrop. The paternalism of Caesar at times rivalled the paternalism of the household, especially as the republican state generated pressure for each citizen to

be his own master. The emergence of the citizen-individual on the one hand, and the dependence of many individuals on the household system socially and economically, on the other, both worked in favor of the spread of Christianity. The state served as the umbrella authority over the entire Empire, but only about one in ten men lived in the urban towns. The cultural uncertainty of the rural areas, the pressure of the primitive tribes and frequent wars tended to foster the personal and economic loyalties which were important constituents of the household system.

Within the households personal worth and relations, decency, frugality, diligence and industry all had a recognized place. When slaves and freedmen were converted, their manner of life and faithfulness were commended to others at first hand; when a family head was converted, this often entailed the conversion of the whole house. It is true that solidarity of religion was expected in many houses, whether the head was despotic or paternalistic; but natural intimacies and loyalties also drew people to one another and to a common faith. The worth of the individual, whether bondman or freedman, was a key feature of the Christian appeal.

The same can be said for the many associations (*koinoniai*) which existed. These formed the social mechanism for the

spread of ideas, but also a pattern for relationships within Christianity. Gradually Christian conventicles sprang up everywhere, from which emerged the Church as known in post-Constantinian times. The Christian associations or conventicles provided a homogeneous and stable set of relationships to any traveling or migrating Christian stranger. Anywhere in the Empire he had an identity and was welcomed, he could worship the same one true God, he was offered hospitality and was cared for when ill. A new world *koinonia* and *oikonomia* had been created within the framework of the existing *politeia*.

3. *Religious Life*. Religion in the Empire was cultic, impersonal and ritualistic. Belief in the activities of the gods, including conflicting superstitions, was widespread and strongly held. Adherents to the cults were often painfully dedicated.

The Cult of the Emperor was the umbrella cult of the Empire. Augustus' genius was worshipped. He incarnated the spirit of the Empire. The ritual was as much social and patriotic as religious. Cultic acts such as libation ,a\ e impetus to empire solidarity through the idea that the divine spirit was immanent in the Caesarean-republican system.

Specifically religious cults abounded and embraced their multitudes. Rebirth or death-resurrection (Mithra, Adonis, Isis), or the nature death-resurrection cycle (Eleusis) themes were common, at times coupled with orgiastic mysteries such as

the cult of Dionysius or ascetic ones such as Orpheus. The Magna Mater cult of Attis and Cybele included the *taurobolium*, in which the devotee bathed in the blood of a slain bull for rebirth.

Ease of conversion from cult to cult was a feature of the ancient world. A common theme was that of the real divine self emerging through a transcendental experience to displace the individual's ordinary social identity. The seeking for a new, transcendental identity and frequent conversions set the stage for the rapid spread of Christianity.

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While beliefs as expressed in ascetic practices and painful initiatory rites were felt to be of great value, transcendental absorption tended to diminish the worth of the individual, and ritual asceticism often became a cover for hedonistic or orgiastic practices. The cultic religions were lonely and impersonal. To their adherents the life and faith of the Christian conventicles made a powerful appeal.[4] Some reasons for this strong appeal are adduced in what follows. The alternative presented by Christians, for example in the writings of apologists such as Justin and Athenagoras, was not only religious but theological and ethical as well. Christianity declared the abiding worth of the individual person. Its view of God and man demanded it. Christianity was essentially person-centered and person-preserving rather than person-reducing or person-transcending.

4. *Philosophical Heritage*. The Greek philosophical schools gave to the Empire not only major segments of its intellectual heritage. They also furnished the philosophical undergirding for its republicanism and the rule of law. While the cultic religions commanded the private religious interests of the individual, the cult of the emperor, combined with the postSocratic view of man and the world which was chiefly Stoic, furnished the intellectual frame of reference for life in the Roman world. It is in contrast to the views of the two larger philosophical traditions of the ancient world, n a m e l y Transcendentalism and Materialism, that the rise and ascendancy of the Christian view may best be understood.

The philosophical Idealism of ancient Greece and Rome was essentially mystical. In it the visible world is a myth. It is the

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world of opinion and unreality, a story half-true and half-false, which nevertheless embodies the *logos*, the truth of which is one. The chain of being expresses the ultimate reality, beauty, goodness, truth of the transcendental world; and the unreality, evil and darkness of the space-time universe. Plato's Myth of the Cave and Parable of the Divided Line identify the plight of man as to Reality and Knowledge, and his dream of the Charioteer pictures the soul's aspiration for release from the earthbound to behold the divine. This heritage is traceable through Gnosticism, Manicheanism, Neo-Platonism including Plotinus, to modern forms of Idealism.

Systems of Idealism have tended to denigrate the empirical world, and their views have been inimical to discrete full-blown personhood. There are important philosophical reasons for the early Christian rejection of Idealism as a philosophical vehicle. Such systems are fundamentally reductionist of important aspects of the world, the soul and God which Christianity teaches to be essential. In them God is seen to be impersonal reason or absolute being which transcends personhood, discrete personhood is denigrated and freedom is an illusion. Man is reduced to appearance or to a transient epiphenomenon which will soon be cured by death and reabsorption into the infinite transcendent reality.

The other major ancient tradition was the Materialistic tradition of Leucippas, Democritus and Epicurus. I t s metaphysic of atoms and the void naturally collided with Christian creationism, but its determinism and fatalism were more immediately felt issues.

Ethical determinism became popular through S t o i c philosophy, which was both pantheistic and materialistic. The Stoics said that the material world is pervaded by a World Soul, Fire or Reason, which is present seminally in all things, but especially in man. Cleanthes' *Hymn to Zeus* eulogizes the life in accordance with nature. He advocates imperturbability in the face of the inexorable course of events.

Thus the Roman Empire provided the political and social

structure within which Christianity made its appeal to man. Christianity displaced the religious cults and the schools to minority positions within three centuries of the apostolic age. To achieve this, Christians in general and the church fathers in particular expressed a world view which was radically different from the received religious and philosophical ones. The Christian view embraced categories which were coherent within the creationist-personhood model.

Consider an illustration in which a line is drawn horizontally across a piece of paper. Let us say that above the line represents the eternal, the world of mind and of ideas, the transcendental world. Above the line represents infinite, changeless, perfect reality, the real that is God's. Let us say further that below, or under, the line represents this physical, imperfect, evil-infected, changing, finite world. How does one solve the problem of the relation between the infinite and the finite, between the perfect and the imperfect, between God's being impassible and the world's being passible?

The Idealist schools solved the problem of how to relate the transcendental world to the phenomenal world by saying that the former is real and the latter is mere appearance. The line between them is absolute. God, however defined, is perfect and impassible and cannot be in touch directly with the physical world. Some

inferior Demiurge created the imperfect world, they said. The tendency, therefore, was to denigrate not only the body because it was part of the physical world and the prison of the soul, but also to denigrate particular personhood in favor of undifferentiated transcendent unity as a higher value than a multiplicity of discrete persons.

The Atomistic schools tended to deny the independent reality of the mind and of the transcendent. For them physical reality was the only reality and was totally explicable by the theory of atoms in motion. They erased the line between the infinite and the finite, and made the former a function of the latter. Inherent in ancient atomism were doctrines of determinism and of its corollary, fatalism. Its ethical form was hedonism.

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Here, too, personhood, freedom and responsibility, tended to be slighted within a materialistic frame of reference that was mechanistic and fatalistic. Thus, in their own ways, both the Idealist and the Materialistic traditions subsumed persons to some other more enduring value or reality.

Christians, on the other hand, said that the world was created directly by God. Hence the logical bridge between the heavenly and earthly realms is not appearance-reality (which is a form of demythicizing) but creation-revelation, and the metaphysical bridge is persons as abiding realities and values. The world, responsibility, freedom, evil and sin are not reducible to other terms. Human life is the art of the Creator and discrete personhood is not only the goal of redemption but is, as well, the highest level of reality.

Christianity became an attractive alternative. In an age of brutality and high inflation, Christians cared about people. The Christian conventicles had a powerful sense of community and were radically egalitarian - each was a drastic social experiment, a cave of Adullum. Emotional and social security were to be found within the Christian communities. Their ethical standards were high, their religious devotion to the one true God was intense, and their discipleship life-encompassing. Converts were carefully examined, confession of faith was public, separation from the world, demonology and cultic practices was total. The power and vigor of such dedication must be seen in relation to their view of God, the world, morality, and man. The existential appeal of the faith was joined inextricably to the defense of essential man qua man within the terms of the creationist-personhood perspective. The Christian categories, including Creation, Fall, Sin, Grace, Incarnation, Redemption, Forgiveness, Hope, Resurrection and Eternal Life appealed to men not only existentially, but they also offered a unique view of man and the world philosophically.

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The truth of this can be shown from the history and literature of the period. For Clement of Rome[5] Christian discipleship (the Rule of Life, which later paralleled

the Rule of Faith) is the chief concern. High Christian living is the fruit of grace and has for its antitype the *humilitas* of Jesus. Ignatius in his epistles appeals to his readers strongly for saintly and prudent living. The reality of the incarnation and sufferings of Christ are contrasted with the docetic "appearance" metaphysic. He stresses both the passibility and the impassibility of the Incarnate Logos. The f u l n e s s (*pleroma*) of God is expressed in the historic, incarnate Lord, whose blood is even called the "blood of God." So strongly does Ignatius react against the appearance versus reality metaphysic.[6] The bridge between time and eternity is not to transcend the appearance versus reality disjunction, but is the incarnation, resurrection and ascension of Christ.

The unknown author of the Epistle to Diognetus not only satirizes futile pagan and Jewish sacrificial acts, but he does so on the ground of the personhood of the transcendent, incomprehensible Creator God who became incarnate in Christ. He employs Greek metaphysics as a parable: as the soul is to the body so are Christians to the world. The world is God's work and concern through the Cross.[7] Like Ignatius, Justin Martyr speaks of God as impassible yet as passible in the incarnate Word. He concedes that this sounds like madness in relation to the categories of the times. Here are essential differences between Plato and the Stoics, and Christians.[8] He says responsibility and freedom, not Stoic necessity and fate cohere with what man really is.[9]

The plea which Athenagoras addressed to Marcus Aurelius about 176-177 A. D. draws the line between the Christian and the non-Christian traditions. While he utilizes traditional Greek philosophical terms, their use is Christian. God is one and is distinct from matter: nevertheless, he is the Creator and the incarnate Logos is His Agent.[10] The world is a beautiful place. Life is precious and should not be violated whether in the Roman spectacles, by the exposure of infants or by induced abortions.[11] Human life has an intrinsic value, a value placed upon each individual by the Creator. Christians have such strong feelings about this, he says, that they abhor watching a legal execution. Thus the charges made against them of incest and cannibalism are grotesque.

Only confusion results if one supposes that the use of Greek philosophical language by the church fathers was d o n e simplistically. The history of early Christianity is the history of a people attempting to create for themselves a language for ideas which the traditional categories could not express. Clement of Alexandria utilizes Platonic and Neo-Platonic language and the conception of the Christian as a Gnostic, but he distinguishes Christian teaching from Platonic and Gnostic ideas. So also Irenaeus, Athanasius, and the Cappadocian Fathers. Important to Augustine's transition to Christianity was his rejection of the old conceptual schemes. He says that in his unconverted past he was troubled by the metaphysical, cosmological and ethical problems the received views raised. Their solutions he found to he inadequate, and they failed also to give peace of soul or to generate in him the lose and humility he sought.[12] He outlines how he came to

see that Christianity entails a distinct set of categories, which center upon the truth that God is Spirit, personal and transcendent;

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nevertheless, that he is the author and sustainer of the world.[13]

In relation to the problems of the soul, God and the world, the Christian categories include creation and fall, judgment and grace, atonement and forgiveness, the Redeemer and the people of God, miracle and the City of God. Faith is not an irrational leap but the path to true understanding through which the distortions and limitations which are caused by evil and sin are redemptively overcome.

Christianity and the Future of Man

The Christian creationist-personhood view may be more important to the future of man than has been assumed. The ancient and modern forms of Idealism have been substantially displaced by varieties of contemporary Transcendentalism, and ancient Atomism has developed into Naturalism and Behaviourism. The pursuit of personal identity in our time reflects the deep concern about the nature and future of man. Corollaries of personhood include issues such as: the reality of moral freedom along with social freedom and responsibility; the philosophical justification of altruism in relation to the ego-centric satisfaction view; therapy and social services which are coercive; and social and biological engineering techniques which tend toward a closed rather than an open society.

Modern establishments must today be subjected to greater scrutiny, not only as to their presumptuous activities, but also their assumptions on what man is and what is proposed by the planners for his pre-set future.

There is an important relationship between the Christian doctrine of creation and the Christian view of personality. For Christians, human life is not a transient mode of existence in which a more enduring system of patterns expresses itself, whether transcendentalist or impersonal cosmic process. The biblical revelation makes it clear in texts like Genesis 1-2, Psalm 8 and 139:13-16 that man is the goal of the divine

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creative activity and the center of God's interest.[14] Both empirical and theological reality are crucial to essential man. Man's relationship to God in Scripture is not m e r e l y psychologically escapist, but is the cornerstone of his reality and preservation. In a unique way the Bible trumpets the call to arms for the defense of modern man. As fashioned in the image of God, man has an ultimate value in himself. What he is and how he treats his fellows falls under a standard that is moral and divine, not a-moral and behaviourist.

While some humanists have vigorously opposed the modern deterministic view of

man and his complete social engineering, Christians bear a particular responsibility in this matter and they have a unique opportunity. By maintaining that man is a spiritual and creative agent, which attests to his being more than a causally determined creature, and more than an ephemeral reflection of another world, Christians do not opt out of the scientific age and neither do they concede the debate to Transcendentalism nor to Naturalism.

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Important to modern man is the Christian view that selfhood is a non-reducible reality which we know ourselves and other selves to be by an immediate intuition. A person is not simply a unity of conscious experiences but the subject of that unity. He is a spiritual agent. Not only is this essential to our understanding of man as created in the image of God, but this truth cuts across the whole range of modern research, theory, behavioural techniques, and planning for man's future.[15]

In higher education we must first resist the intrusion into Christian methods and materials of purely behavioural views and techniques and, second, counter their thrust in society in the techniques of administering social services and political policy, and aim at re-shaping the public mind. The Christian outlook is predicated upon each man's being a spiritual agent. Man is called upon to spiritualize his bodily life; that is, to conduct it in accordance with conscious, intelligent, beneficent purposes.

The Christian doctrine of creation and grace is supremely anti-reductionist and is person preserving. The choices before us are: do we choose theoretical models which increase freedom or those which limit freedom? The higher t h e spirituality of personal life, the less causally predictable are its choices, because as the spirituality of life increases its choices refer less to the antecedents of action and more to moral goals in relation to which directions are taken.

In a little known book by John Dewey entitled *A Common Faith* he complains that the differentiation between Christian and non-Christian must be overcome for fulfillment o f

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democracv. By this argument Dewey reveals not only an historical error, but also the threat of monolithic uniformity which inheres in the contemporary naturalistic thesis. Christianity allows for diversity, and so must democracv. An allegedly benign utopian hedonist society is as optionless and monolithic as its classical medieval and modern totalitarian counterparts. An important difference is that whereas ancient closed societies largely allowed man to be man even if degraded and enslaved, the modern monoliths project re-fashioning man biologically. psvchologically and socially to match their theoretical image of him.

For our generation there is a new poignancy about the Spirit-hearing humanity of our Lord as the sign and power of the New Age. When commenting upon the *anakephalaiosis* (Ephesians 1: 10). Irenaeus says:

the Lord, summing up afresh this man, took the same dispensation of entry into flesh . . . that He should also show forth the likeness of Adam's entrv into flesh, and that there should be that which was written in the beginning, man after the image and likeness of God.[16]

The point of departure for modern Christians is neither polemic nor apologetic but an hermeneutic of creation and redemption which ensures the recovery of man in the 20th century.

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[1]Note on *hermeneia*: In Acts 14:12 Paul is called Hermes by the Lycaonians because they saw him to be "the chief speaker." Following Moulton and Milligan, I take *tou logou* to mean "speech in progress," or "the spoken interpretive word." The god Hermes (Roman Mercury), possessed a complicated array of attributes. He invented the alphabet and the lyre. The latter refers to music carried by the wind, which also connotes the elusive, impalpable character of meaning in speech and musical sounds. "Hermes has come in" was a saying used when conversation among a group suddenly ceased.

The term and its cognates have to do first with semiotic, which is the theory of symbolic elements used to communicate. The group concerns the use of language to express thought or meaning. Language was seen to be a unique divine and human facility. Related uses include a monument or symbol which signifies something, or a glossary of uses or meanings (cf. Acts 9:36).

Second, the group denotes the activity of interpreting, expressing or clarifying, or they identify the one who engages in these activities. At least four activities may be noted: (a) InterpreterTranslator: one who translates from a foreign tongue. Also a gobetween or broker to negotiate a contract, such as a marriage. (b) Interpreter-Renderer: the power or gift of expression, such as Plato's gift of style in writing and dialectic, or gifts of rendition and expression in music. (c) Interpreter-Decipherer: one who deciphers dreams, visions, oracles or occult messages. NT use in 1 Corinthians concerns empathetic (*einfiihlung*) reading out of the mood of another in an ecstatic state, or explaining the unintelligible, hence to interpret or interpretation rather than translation (1 Corinthians 12:10, 30; 14:5, 13, 26, 27). (d) Interpreter-Expounder: to explain, expound, put into words. For us, this entails exposition more than exegesis (the latter being the necessary propadeutic). Thus poets interpret the divine and Paul was called Hermes. That Paul was thought to be a god, or to speak a god-like word is not surprising (cf. Acts 28:6). Like the Areopagus address, Paul communicated the Christian Gospel in the form of an hermeneutic. Note our Lord's activity (Luke 24:27). Sources: Liddell and Scott, Moulton and Milligan, *Theologische Worterbuch zum Neuen Testament* (ed. G. Kittel), and others.

[2]Fuller understanding of the displacement of the ancient world view by Christianity requires the data of social and economic history in addition to ecclesiastical sources. Some of this may never be available to us. Needed is the quantification of social and economic data (cliometrics). Such historical studies are rapidly altering our views about the past. Mention may be made of some books on the early Christian period: Peter Arnott, *The Byzantines and Their World* (New York: St. Martins, 1974); Peter Brown, *Religion and Society in the Age of St. Augustine* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972) Lionel Casson, *Travel in the Ancient World* (Toronto: Hakkert, 1974); E. R. Dodds, *Pagan and Christian in an Age of Anxiety* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965); Michael Grant, *The World of Rome* (New York: Praeger, 1960), and *The Jews in the Roman World* (New York: Scribner's, 1973); Michael Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church* (London: Hodder and Stoughton. 1970); A. H. M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire*. 3 Volumes (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1964); E. A. Judge, *The Social Pattern of Christian Groups in the First Century* (London: Tyndale, 1960); M. L. W. Laistner, *Christianity and Pagan Culture in the Later Roman Empire* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1951); R. MacMullen, *Enemies of the Roman Order* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1967); H. I. Marrou, *History of Education in Antiquity* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1956); S. Mazzarino, *The End of'the Ancient World* (London: Faber and Faber, 1966); A. Momigliano, et al., *The Conflict Between Paganism and Christianity*

in the Fourth Century (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963); A. D. Nock, *Conversion* (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), and *Early Gentile Christianity and Its Hellenistic Background* (New York: Harper, 1964); I. M. Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire*. 2 Volumes. 2nd Edition, revised (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1957).

[3]Note on Christianity, leadership and class: Recognition of gifts which apply to, or are exercised more fully by, one class more than others does not impugn Christianity's egalitarian character. Abilities and activities create the social strata, given the freedom to do so. Aristocratic upper-classes are usually deeply oriented to the past rather than to the future. They conserve values and traditions and build monuments. The lowest classes live by the moment in an uncertain and for them unpredictable world. They are oriented to present needs or to the extremely near future, and these characteristics have been shown to be present at a very early age. The middle classes are taught to set goals in the future, to plan ahead, to schedule, to defer present gratification in favor of achieving future goals. In Christianity's history it has often been the goaloriented middle classes which have pressed for rapid expansion. Examination of the NT data shows that while some adherents were of the lowest classes, leadership came from some who had well balanced social and economic qualifications. A useful discussion of households and associations in the NT age occurs in E. A. Judge, *The Social Pattern of Christian Groups in the First Century* (London: Tyndale, 1960).

[4]That the cults were different from Christianity is, for example, the point of Tertullian who contrasted Christianity with Mithraism in which occurred rituals of baptism, purification and the use of bread, water and wine, when consecrated by priests ca11ed "fathers." On religion and cults in the Roman Empire note the work of Alain Hus, *Greek and Roman Religion* (New York: Hawthorne Books, 1962).

[5]Letter to the Corinthians 16:1-5; 30:1-8; 58:1-2.

[6]*Ephesians* 1:1; 7:2; *Trallians* 9:10; *Smyrnaeans* 2, 3.

[7]7:2-4; 8:7, 9. The beautiful passage on the Christian as a part of the local culture yet religiously distinct from it is found in 5.

[8]*Apology* 1:5, 10, 13, 23, 46; 2:13.

[9]*ibid*., 2:7.

[10]*Supplication for the Christians* 4, 6, 7.

[11]*ibid*., 16, 35. On discipleship and morality see 11-12.

[12]*Confessions* 5:10; 4:7; 7:20-21.

[13]*ibid*., 7:1, 21.

[14]Nevertheless, a certain obscurity characterizes the Christian view and its implications for modern life. We confess that man is created in the image of God, but what the biblical terms on the nature of man mean for the modern Christian psychology and theology of man is uncertain. Like our forefathers, we must express our ideas in the motifs of the time; however there is lacking a strong hermeneutical undercurrent to direct the flow of modern data. We Christians urge one another theologically to think of man as a psycho-physical whole. This rubric, or *cliché*, hides the un-palatable fact that we have an insufficient theological grasp of the biblical terms for a modern understanding of man and his environment. We have tended to avoid intruding on the biblical terminology modern notions of personality, but this reluctance prevents us from seeing that

ancient people thought of themselves as more fully personal than we have supposed. Let us bear in mind that essential features of Christianity include the beliefs that God is personal, that man as a personality is a thing of value in himself, and that love is a relationship between two persons that is more than lust.

[15]The debate has been vigorous:
(a) On the side of the materialists there are Bertrand Russell, I. P. Pavlov, J. B. Watson, B. F. Skinner, E. H. Carr, Stuart Hampshire, Gilbert Ryle, W. Russell Brain, A. J. Ayer.
(b) On the side of a bipartite or tripartite view of man, namely, that he is a spiritual reality as well as physical, note J. C. Eccles, H. Kuhlenbeck, Wilder Penfield, W. H. Thorpe, Ian Ramsey, Cyril Burt, Arthur Koestler, H. R. Price, J. R. Smythies, H. D. Lewis.

[16] *Demonstration of the Apostolic Preaching, 32.*

(5860 words)

CHRISTOLOGY

Samuel J. Mikolaski
New International Dictionary of the Christian Church, ed. J. D. Douglas
Grand Rapids: Zondervan 1974, p. 223-224

CHRISTOLOGY. The study of the person of Christ. Our Lord is unambiguously called God by the NT writers (John 1:1,18; 20:28; Col. 2:9; Titus 2:13; Heb. 1:8,10). The truth of His divinity pervades all strata of NT witness and teaching. He is called the Son of God, and while this does refer to His sonship by incarnation (Luke 1:35; John 1:34; Rom. 1:4; Heb. 1:2), it is not limited to the Incarnation because the terms relate Him to the Father as His "own" Son in a special way (Matt. 11:27; John 5:18). In John the terms "Father" and "Son" are not used only temporally but on the footing of eternity (John 3:13; 17:5; 1 John 4:10). "Son of God" is certainly a title of and claim to deity (Matt. 16:16; 26:63-65; Luke 22:70,71; John 19:7). "Only begotten Son" is to be understood in relation to Christ's preincarnate dignity and privilege (Rom. 8:29; Col. 1:15-18; Heb. 1:6) and in the special sense of "begotten from everlasting," begotten from the being not the will of the Father. The begetting is an eternal fact of the divine nature.

Christ is the Word of God. "Logos" in John 1:1-18 is not explained, but is simply used to declare Christ's deity. Omission of the definite article in "the Word was God" means the Word is identified with the essential nature of God (cf. Rom. 9:5). OT titles ascribed to Him are inexplicable unless Christ is being identified with the nature of Yahweh (cf. Matt. 3:3 with Isa. 40:3; Acts 13:33 with Ps. 2:7, etc.). He is honored and worshiped as God (John 20:28; Phil. 2:10,11; Rev. 5:12-14, etc.). His name is associated with the Father and the Spirit on equal terms in the baptismal formula (Matt. 28:19), in the benediction (2 Cor. 13:14), and in the bestowal of eternal life (John 5:23,24). Finally, the whole biblical structure rests on the claim that redemption belongs to God alone (2 Cor. 5:19; 1 Tim. 2:5). The heart of Athanasius's great argument against Arius was that only God could redeem and reconcile.

The pressure of NT witness to the truth of Christ's humanity is intense, including His birth at Bethlehem (Luke 1:35), boyhood and growth at Nazareth (Luke 2:39-52), fasting and temptation (Matt. 4:1-11), weariness (John 4:6), and death (John 19:28-30; Acts 2:23,36). His true humanity is in part the condition of the work of redemption (Acts 2:22; Rom. 5:15; Phil. 2:7; 1 Tim. 2:5). NT Christology is concerned to show the ideal and normative character of Christ's humanity. His uniqueness is variously shown and emphasized including His birth from the Virgin Mary (Luke 1:34,35), His knowledge and foreknowledge (Matt. 11:27), His moral perfection (Luke 1:35; 2 Cor. 5:21), His teachinW(Matt. 5-7), and His transfiguration and exaltation (2 Pet. 1:16-18).

In the patristic period Christology developed chiefly under pressure of the fourth-century Arian heresy. The creeds of Nicea (325) and Constantinople (381) reaffirmed Christ's full deity and full humanity. They insisted on the faith that

Christ is truly God, not an intermediate being (which safeguarded the biblical doctrine of creation against Greek forms of thought), and that Christology must be adequate to the facts of redemptive experience, i.e., only God can redeem.

At the Council of Chalcedon' (451) the unity of Christ's person was affirmed, influenced by the differing traditions of the Alexandrian' and Antiochene' schools. Chalcedon does not purport to define the mystery, but to set limits outside which believing Christians cannot go: our Lord took on human nature, not an adult personality, the Godhood and Manhood are each whole and perfect, the two natures are united in one person, and we confess the one Christ.

Classical controversies in the early church reflect divergent viewpoints on the divinity and humanity of Christ. Those who started from the Manhood but failed to do justice to the Godhood of Christ included: Ebionites and Cerinthians who said Jesus was a man specially endowed by God for his mission (cf. 1 John 5:6-12); Adoptianist and Dynamic Monarchians who taught the Incarnation as the inspiration of Jesus by the Spirit at His baptism; and Nestorians who kept Christ's natures apart in the union, i.e., they advocated a prosopic rather than real union of the two natures in the one person. Others started from the Godhood but failed to do justice to the Manhood of Christ. They included: Docetists who made of our Lord's humanity merely appearance; Modalistic Monarchians who made of Christ a revelatory mode of the Father; Apollinarians who substituted the divine nature for the human nature; and Eutychians who said the human nature was swallowed up by the divine nature.

Modern christological controversy follows upon the quest for the historical Jesus. While the quest has been largely abandoned, recent NT scholarship nevertheless concludes that the inner witness of faith came to the disciples who knew Jesus of Nazareth in the flesh as a historical personality. It is not possible ultimately to bifurcate Jesus of Nazareth and the Christ of faith. Kenotic Christology has attempted to probe the meaning of Christ's self-emptying (Phil. 2:7). It has been fiercely attacked (W. Temple,' D.M. Baillie'), but most christological formulations attempt to take account of Christ's self-limitation in some way.

Modem Adoptianist Christology (the American theologian John Knox) is widespread. Through Jesus' goodness, the divine broke through into human life historically, which should be paralleled in our lives. This, however, is not the coming of the eternal Second Person of the Trinity into actual human existence. Others deny that revelation implies factual assertions (Paul Tillich'), which means for Christology that it is irrelevant to our faith if Jesus Christ had never actually lived on earth. The Incarnation becomes the projection of the Christ-Spirit into the world within man through the Christ-event. This sets up metaphysical and existential categories of interpretation rather than those of historical fall, incarnation, and redemption.

Christians confess the true and full Godhood and Manhood of Jesus Christ and the

indivisible unity of His person. No theological formula is adequate to this greatest of all Christian mysteries. The Incarnation means the Son of God experienced fully the conditions of personal and individual manhood in such a way that as man He was yet one person with the Son of God. Christians confess they do not know the intensity of unity of the two natures necessary to achieve this, but they accept the apostolic witness. In Jesus Christ is revealed the perfection of God for man (Rom 5:8-21; Heb. 2:14-18) in virtue of whose response to the Father's will men can respond in faith to become like Him by His Spirit

See also ATHANASIAN CREED and TRINITY.

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JESUS CHRIST: PROPHET, PRIEST AND KING

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Christ is Prophet. Christ is Priest. Christ is King.

This three-fold division of the mediatorial work of Jesus Christ has become traditional in Protestant theology. The offices declare the righteousness of God in Christ, the mediation of God for our salvation, and the sovereignty of God in the world.

One of the earliest clear references to the offices in the patristic literature occurs in Eusebius (though the work of Christ in each role was evident to the Church from apostolic days): "We have also received the tradition that some of the prophets themselves had by anointing already become Christs in type, seeing that they all refer to the true Christ, the divine and heavenly Logos, of the world the only High Priest, of all creation the only king, of the prophets the only archprophet of the Father. The proof of this is that no one of those symbolically anointed of old, whether priests or kings or prophets, obtained such power of divine virtue as our Saviour and Lord, Jesus, the only real Christ, has exhibited . . . that until this present day he is honoured by his worshippers throughout the world as king, wondered at more than a prophet, and glorified as the true and only High Priest of God . . ." (*Historia Ecclesiastica*, 1.3).

John Calvin made the offices a point of special attention in *The Institutes* where his discussion though brief is characteristically lucid (II, 15). He remarks that while the concept was not unknown to the papists of his time, they used it frigidly without the accompanying knowledge of the end of the offices nor their use in the exposition of the Gospel. Succeeding theologians, especially of the Reformed tradition, have used it with varying emphasis. For example, Charles Hodge, A. H. Strong, and Louis Berkhof devote but scanty space to the prophetic and kingly offices (the substance of the latter doctrine is usually reserved for elucidation in eschatology); but each expands the priestly role to include a comprehensive statement of the doctrine of the atonement.

The idea of the offices also figures in Eastern theology. For example, in answer to the question "Why, then, is Jesus, the Son of God, called *The Anointed*?" *The Longer Catechism of the Orthodox, Catholic, Eastern Church* (1839) says, "Because to his manhood were imparted without measure all the gifts of the Holy Ghost; and so he possesses in the highest degree the *knowledge* of a prophet; the *holiness* of a high priest; and the *power* of a king." The offices set forward the divine-human nature of the Mediator, proclaiming thus not only his uniqueness but also his prerogatives (I Tim. 2:5).

Christ the Anointed One.

In the early stages of biblical history, the three offices seem to have been joined in the role the patriarch assumed in the family. Each was in effect prophet, priest,

and king to his own household, but under God. Later the division of these roles seems clear, but whether earlier or later the idea generic to each is that of divine anointing to the office. This was as true of prophets and kings as of priests (I Sam. 16:3; I Kings 19:16; Ps. 105:15). Further, Israel's hope was that, in the Messiah all three offices would be fulfilled perfectly and joined harmoniously for the inauguration of the kingly-redemptive rule of God. The claim of our Lord upon such prophetic anticipations is both authoritative and revealing (Isa. 61:1-2; Luke 4:18-19). Prominent figures in the Old Testament point to Christ whether they were anointed prophets, priests, or kings. The Coming One was to be both Jehovah's anointed and a personal deliverer. The revelation at each point of history was revelation, discrete, concrete, actual, and saving, but together the words and events heralded the antitype Jesus Christ.

For this reason sight must not be lost of the fact that the offices interpenetrate. Christ fills them all at once and yet successively in the achievement of his mission for the world in history. His proclamation of the righteousness of God (Rom. 3:21-26; Matt. 11:27; John 3:34) was fulfilled when he purged our sins (God justifying the sinner justly, as Paul says) and then sat down upon the throne of heaven in regal glory (Heb. 1:3), and this trilogy has been seen by Christians everywhere in Scripture, for example, Isaiah 53. Christ comes as the personal word of God, the personal redeemer of the world, and the personal center of the kingdom of God.

The Theological Footing.

Mediation raises the question of its rationale. This should be seen jointly in terms of righteousness and grace, wrath and love, judgment and mercy. Now the revelation of the divine love in Jesus Christ is an important emphasis in contemporary theology, but not infrequently judgment and wrath are reduced to a definition of love that evacuates them of their common meaning. The love of Christ is God's self-giving (John 3:16) and sight must not be lost of its recreating and reconciling power. Certainly the loving concern of God in Jesus Christ for wayward man and an evil-infected world is the dominant note of the Christian revelation. But that note is no monotone, rather, it is the harmonious chord that sin deserves wrath, that grace is in view of impending judgment, and that the divine love is revealed redemptively active not over but through judgment.

The relations between God and man are personal, and to say this is to say that they are moral. Both of these realities bear upon the mediatorial offices of Christ. To say that God loves sinners without saying that God will judge unatoned for and unforgiven sin is a saccharine conception of the divine love that squares neither with the biblical revelation of God's character nor the plain facts of human experience. The judgment of God is real and he claims this both as his prerogative and duty. Personal and moral categories are the highest we know. Here the freedom of God and man is preserved and righteousness vindicated in the judgment of evil. The work of Christ is addressed to these two sides of the issue, and we ignore either one at our peril. The theology of the offices takes account of both and this is a salutary corrective of certain contemporary trends.

Christ as Prophet.

It has been said popularly that the prophet spoke for God to men while the priest acted on behalf of men before God. As the prophets of old, Jesus Christ did proclaim the Word of the Lord, but more than that, he himself was the living embodiment of that Word. The idea of the prophet to come who would sum up both the prophetic ideal and the prophetic message dominated Israelitish thinking from the times of Moses (Deut. 18:15). Our Lord clearly identified himself with the prophetic office in its preaching, teaching, and revelatory functions, as well as with the rejection borne by and sufferings inflicted upon the ancient men of God (Matt. 23:29 f.; Luke 4:24 ff.; 13:33 f.). He called himself a prophet (Luke 13:33); he claimed to bring a message from the Father (John 8:26-28; 14:1024; 17:8, 26); and people recognized him to be a prophet (Matt. 21:11, 46; Luke 7:16; 24:19; John 3:2; 4:19).

Primarily he epitomized the righteousness of God which he proclaimed, and his presence as incarnate joins together mysteriously the working of righteousness and grace for our salvation. A poignant manner of expressing his prophetic role as both proclaiming and being the righteousness of God is the figure of the pierced ear in both testaments of Scripture (Exod. 21:5-6; Ps. 40:6-10; Heb. 10:5-7). His humanity sums up the perfection of the divine ideal for men and in his righteousness and obedience our response is taken up and made actual. He is the true *sui generis:* the one who loves righteousness because he is righteous. The Scriptures forever join the poetic and moral elements of human experience which contemporary positivism and naturalism perpetually try to bifurcate. What a man knows and what he does depends upon what he is, and this moral judgment is what Christ brings to bear upon the race. He can say “Lo! in the volume of the book it is written of me I come to do thy will, 0 God” and “I have preached righteousness in the great congregation . . . I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation.” This is precisely because the divine law is within his heart, and our calling is to the same freedom in righteousness.

Christ as Priest.

The surpassing worth of Christ’s priestly work over the Aaronic priesthood is the theme of the epistle to the Hebrews. The forgiveness of sins in Scripture is peculiarly attached to sacrifice for sin (John 1:29) and, as the prophetic word is the word of righteousness, Christ’s priestly act is the fulfillment of righteousness, under judgment, for the world’s salvation. The conception of his life given for our lives dominates the biblical revelation (Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:33-34, 45).

The analogies and contrasts between the Aaronic priesthood and Christ’s priesthood are clear. He as sinless needed not to offer up sacrifice first for himself as the other priests did; his blood could take away sin whereas the blood of bulls and goats could not; his work was final while theirs must be repeated (Heb. 7, 9, 10). Christ is both priest and victim, both punisher and punished, and herein lies the profoundest mystery of Christianity touching the doctrines of the Trinity, Incarnation and Atonement. The fact is that Christ’s sacrifice does not buy divine love but is the gift of that love where he submits to the judgment of our sin. The

relation we sustained to God because of sin was death, and Christ entered fully into that (I Cor. 15:3; Rom. 4:25; Gal. 1:4; 3:13). This atoning act is his high priesthood where he joins himself to us and makes reconciliation for sin (Heb. 2:17; 3: 1), and, now having entered into heaven he continues his intercessory ministry for us (Heb. 4:4; 4:15; 9:1115, 24-28; 10:19-22). He is a kingly priest glorified with the full splendor of the throne of God and by the distinctive glory of a finished saving work (Heb. 10:10-14; Rev. 1:13; 5:6, 9, 12). He bore our judgment and he died our death; he carried our sorrows and he lives now to succour us.

But a further analogy is drawn, namely, between the Melchizedec priesthood and Christ's in contrast to the Aaronic, because Melchizedec typifies the eternal and kingly character of Christ's work (Heb. 7). The work Christ did had to do not with sprinkling animal blood in an earthly tabernacle where the priest passed beyond the embroidered veil shielding the Holiest place but with presenting His own sacrifice in the very "temple" of heaven, the antitype of the earthly (Heb. 8:2). This priestly order, priestly service, and sacrifice are celestial, eternal, supra-national, and final. It is the prerogative of God in Christ not to receive but to make sacrifice. What God demanded he provided. This is grace not over but through judgment.

Christ as King.

The reign of God among his people was the ideal of the theocratic kingdom witnessed to continually even in the failings of the Israelitish monarchy. The promise of Messianic kingship is clear in the Davidic covenant (II Sam. 7:12-29), in the expectation of the prophets (Isa. 9:6-7; 11:1-10; 42:14), in the ejaculation of Nathaniel (John 1:49), in the care with which our Lord guarded himself from the impetuous crowd (John 6:15), and in the ironic superscription of the Cross (John 18:37; 19:19). He was thought of as a king (Matt. 2:2; Acts 17:7), declared a king (Heb. 1:8; Rev. 1:5), and expected to return in regal power and splendor (I Tim. 6:14-16; Rev. 11:15; 19:16).

This kingship has been taken commonly to be spiritual over the hearts of men in the manner of our Lord's speaking to Pilate, and many theologians have held that the Sermon on the Mount is the declaration of the Kingdom principles and its institution. No ministry, no administration of ordinance or sacrament, no work or gift of the Spirit can be conceived of as operating under less than the suzerainty of Jesus Christ (Matt. 28:1920; John 16:13-14). The Great Commission proclaims not only the standing orders of the church but the lordship of its author. Indeed, Paul, led by the Holy Spirit, advances from the truth that "Jesus is Lord" for every Christian to the declaration of Christ's sovereignty in the universe (Col. 1:16-17; Heb. 1-3).

Thus the Christian hope moves along two planes of comprehension: Christ's kingdom is the kingdom of truth and righteousness bought by his own blood, and the prerogatives he possessed and vindicated in the Cross and Resurrection and now exercises in the Church and the world point to his final assumption of power. His enemies will become his footstool (Heb. 10:13); he *will yet* judge the world

(Matt. 25:31).

Upon the Cross as at his temptation he could not be corrupted by evil. “The prince of this world comes,” he remarked in the night of his passion, “and hath nothing in me.” Evil is borne and overcome, and the finality of Christ’s prophetic, priestly, and kingly work becomes translated into an actual victory in life for the Christian. Sin “shall not have dominion over us” because it “can not” do so any longer. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth.

This is our priesthood, our prophetic ministry, and our victory. As he was in the world so are we. There is for the Christian the suffering *for* Christ and the suffering *with* Christ. And the certainty of the Christian is this, that he is the only soldier in history who enters the field of battle with the victory already behind his back.

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Ecumenism and the Gift of the Spirit

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An ancient question assumes new vitality
in the face of the rapprochement of liturgical and non-liturgical traditions

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Who gives the Holy Spirit? Under what conditions does the Holy Spirit come to the Christian and to the Church?

While it is not often discussed publicly, the question of the gift of. the Spirit in relation to the claims of episcopacy and of the evangelical understanding of the Gospel is crucial to inter-church dialogue.

Questions of church order are important, and not simply the matter of whether churches should have pastors, or priests and bishops. There is a deeper question, the answer to which draws evangelical episcopal Christians of the Reformation tradition, evangelical non-conformist Christians, and Reformation Christians together, against the claims of the catholic tradition in the Anglican communion, in Roman Catholicism, and in Eastern Orthodox theology expressed through its more than twenty distinct churches.

This is the question: Does the Spirit come in response to faith in Christ through the Gospel, or does he come through rite or invocation in specifically designated religious ways at the hands of priest and bishop? Let no one underestimate the significance of this ancient question or its vitality in contemporary church-union dis= cussions. At issue is not only church polity but also the theology of the Holy Spirit.

Most Christians agree that the Holy Spirit was given to the first Christians and to the Church at Pentecost, as recorded in Acts 2. But thereafter there is little agreement on the working of the Spirit. Deep and vexing questions have troubled the Church from the earliest centuries. In the Catholic and Orthodox traditions, great stress has been laid on the function of the episcopacy in the gift of the Spirit, and on the role of the sacraments in the gifts or graces of the Spirit. Two aspects of this teaching that illustrate the point are Chrismation and the Epiclesis in the Eucharist.

In the Catholic and Orthodox traditions (commonly called the liturgical traditions), Chrismation is the event when the Holy Spirit, at the hands of the bishop and priest, comes upon the baptized person. This is also expressed by saying that the baptized person is anointed with, or armed by, the Holy Spirit.

The interrelation between church order (the essential role of the bishop), sacramental teaching (the essential role of the sacraments), and the doctrine of the Spirit has been clearly established in the liturgical traditions by centuries of usage,

though there are significant differences among them.

The Serbian Eastern Orthodox usage (in which I was born and reared) illustrates this. In the catechism the following points link to form a chain of reasoning: (1) The procession of the Spirit from the Father (alone) as Lord and Life-giver is declared. (2) Claim is made of the "lawful hierarchy, i.e., the unbroken chain practice of transferring the grace and authority in the Church from the apostles to bishops and from bishops to priests and deacons by the laying on of hands." (3) Next, Holy Chrismation is defined as "a divine Mystery through which a baptized person is armed by the Holy Spirit with strength and wisdom and other gifts to keep the right faith and to live a holy life." (4) The administration is by the priest, who anoints parts of the body of the baptized person with holy chrism, saying, "The seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit. Amen." The parts anointed, which represent sanctification of the whole man, are forehead, breast, eyes, ears, cheeks, mouth, hands, and feet. (5) The final point is that the priest performs Holy Chrismation after baptism, *but not without the bishop's part in it:* "The bishops prepare and consecrate the chrism, without which a priest cannot perform Chrismation."

Parallels to this rite in the other liturgical churches are clear. Even in the Anglican communion, 'so strongly influenced by the Reformation, the presence of the bishop at Confirmation is mandatory. The claims of the Roman pontiffs on these questions are already well known, both in ancient pronouncements and in encyclicals of recent Roman Catholic history.

The other aspect, the Epiclesis, concerns the invocation of the Holy Spirit, especially in the Eucharist. Liturgical dispute centers upon whether the Epiclesis of the Spirit in the Eucharist was earliest upon the oblations or upon those who offered them; i.e., is it upon things, people, or both in different ways? But a wide range of practice developed in which the Holy Spirit was invoked upon the faithful at times other than in the Eucharist.

"Many evangelicals see an incipient danger in the practice of invoking the presence of the Holy Spirit, especially when the action is tied to the idea that the Spirit is given through the Church and its clergy."

In the Anglican communion, the significance of the words, "Come, Holy Spirit" (derived from the medieval hymn *Veni, Creator Spiritus)* has been debated: Is he to come because not present, or to come because present, and then, upon what or upon whom? However, many Anglicans treat the doctrine with reserve, and some deny that there is such a doctrine among them. They hold that the invocation seems to come into the Communion service rather incidentally in the sense that all Anglican formularies are strongly trinitarian in character. In the Ordinal it is invoked upon people, not things, and that as part of a larger way of life. Party differences within the Anglican communion might lead some, especially those of

the Catholic wing, to construe the doctrine differently.

Many evangelicals see an incipient danger in the practice of invoking the presence of the Holy Spirit, especially when the action is tied to the idea that the Spirit is given through the Church and its clergy.

The importance of these ideas in the history of the Church cannot be exaggerated, especially for established churches that claim their ministry to be the only true one. In the Montanist dispute of the second century, a key issue was: Can the true Church exist without the properly consecrated and consecrating bishop, or is the Church a charismatic society? Throughout the Middle Ages until late medieval times, and even after the Reformation, the empire-church hegemony paralleled the bishop-sacraments conception. Dissent was ruthlessly extirpated. These questions are no less important today, especially for the liturgical churches, which always find self-criticism an agonizing process because of their prior claim to indispensable episcopal succession, even of infallibility.

Evangelical teaching, based on the New Testament, is that the gift and working of the Holy Spirit indispensably involve the preaching of the Gospel. Evangelicals proclaim Christ to men as their Redeemer and Lord and to the Church as its Lord, and call for the appropriate responses of faith and obedience. Evangelicals are reluctant to embrace some features of the ecumenical movement because they wish to honor the prior claims of the Gospel, not simply because they resist Catholic or Orthodox episcopacy. The following points may be noted:

1. The New Testament teaches that the Holy Spirit is Christ-centered, not successionist-centered (John 14:26; 15:26; 16:14; Rom. 8:9-11). This truth runs a collision course with successionist church claims that the Holy Spirit is ministered via the sacraments and sacramentals. The claim that the episcopacy succeeds the apostles includes the claim to exercise the Spirit. But in the New Testament, the Church is subject to Christ, its head, through the Spirit (Acts 2:32-36). The role of the Church therefore is to be subservient and to serve, not Co exercise religious and temporal authority, which concept has characterized the ancient centers of Catholic and Orthodox power. We know the Spirit only indirectly through knowing Christ.

2. The Holy Spirit is where the Gospel is (John 14:27; Acts 1:8; 2:37, 38; 3:19; 5:31, 32; 13:2, 5; Col. 3:16). The New Testament exhibits an interest not in the Holy Spirit alone, but in the Gospel of grace as the first interest and work of the Spirit. Many successionists claim to *continue* Christ's work (via the Mass, for example). This doctrine undercuts the completeness and tiiiality of Christ's Cross. Nothing short of gospel integrity, gospel concern, and gospel ministry can be the prime function of the Church and prime interest of the Spirit. The stress in Scripture is on the Gospel that has been *received* and that is to be *transmitted* by preaching. The Holy Spirit is related to the ministry of the saving faith of Jesus Christ, not to the exercise of princely authority in religion.

This does not deny that Baptism and the Lord's Supper also represent and proclaim the Gospel. Nor does it deny that the ordinances are means of grace-only, however, of the one grace of God that is also ministered in other ways (such as in the singing of a hymn), and that is therefore not restricted to the action of episcopally sanctioned persons.

3. The Holy Spirit confronts the Church with her Lord (Acts 9:31; 20:28; Rom. 10:9, 17; II Tim. 4:8; Heb. 13:20; I Pet. 5:2-4). Jesus Christ is the only Lord of the Church. The Spirit's work is to establish the Lordship of Christ, not the authority of the Church. Traditional Catholic theology is concerned with the authoritative ministry of rites that convey grace. Conversely, New Testament theology is concerned to ensure that the Church proclaim grace and live grace under the authority of the Gospel.

4. The Holy Spirit creates the one koinonia of the Church (I Cor. 12:13; Eph. 1:13; 2-18,22). The Church is *commonly* the koinonia or fellowship of the redeemed. This contradicts an essential principle of hierarchical, successionist religious organization. The Holy Spirit is not transmitted hierarchically *(ad ecclesia* or *extra ecclesia, so* to speak) but is the common possession of the redeemed in Christ. Both the Lordship of Christ and participation in the Spirit are the common experience of New Testament believers, on one plane of fellowship. There is no discernible distinction on these points between ruler and ruled, between clergy and laity, or between hierarchy and believer-priesthood.

5. The Holy Spirit addresses the Church via the Gospel (Acts 5:5, 9; 15:6-12, 19, 20, 22, 28; 20:28, 32; Eph. 3:14-19; Col. 3:23, 24). If the bishop administers the Holy Spirit, who addresses the bishop, or the pope, or the patriarch? That they have needed speaking to is clearly established from the long record of history. Who stands over the bishop? History attests that often it has not been God. In the New Testament, not only does the Church speak the Gospel, but the Gospel is spoken to the Church. The claim to esoteric, ecclesiastical authority in the Church is really a curious form of "private judgment," because it lays claim to apostolic authority while missing the authority of the public apostolic Gospel. Even the apostles stood under, and appealed to, the truth of the Gospel.

6. The distinctness of Christ, the Spirit, and the Church is maintained in the New Testament (Act 9:31; Eph. 3:7-13; 4:1-16). When the Church claims the authority to minister grace, these distinctions are blurred. The claim of the Catholics and Orthodox that they assume and continue Christ's mission and authority in the world must be resisted. The New Testament proclaims that Christ alone finished his own work of redemption through the death of the Cross, and that the Church must now proclaim this Gospel. No question of succession arises, except of the Spirit who makes the Gospel effective to the consciences of men. Christ promised that he would be succeeded by the Paraclete and not by the apostles. It is a mistake to blur the distinction between Christ and the Church, and between the Holy Spirit and the Church; but it is blasphemy for men to claim the sovereignty

of Christ which belongs to the Holy Spirit alone.

7. The Holy Spirit works through the Word of truth respecting the crucified, risen Lord (Acts 2:1-3, 22-24, 36-39; I Cor. 12:3; I Pet. 1:2-5; I John 4:1-3). Scripture, Gospel, and Holy Spirit form a trilogy. The claim to immediacy of episcopal relation to God tends to eclipse the historical Word of truth. It is a highly subjective claim to being right, rather than a claim to faith under the Gospel.

In evangelical teaching, the claim to "private judgment," or "soul liberty," or "liberty of conscience," is never esoteric, as is sometimes alleged. It is always conscience, liberty, and faith under the Word of God. It is not conscience alone, but conscience bound by the Word of truth. Word and Spirit go together. The Holy Spirit is given to bring the historical Jesus Christ, now glorified, to the faith of every man through the sequential conditions of time by means of the Gospel.

8. The Holy Spirit functions independently of the sword (Acts 4:7-12, 23-31; 26:1, 15-18, 24-26, 31; Eph. 6:10-20). The Church under the Holy Spirit must be free of the state and must not employ the arm of the state to further its cause. Through the Holy Spirit, the Gospel is its own authority and vindication. It needs none from man. The Holy Spirit suffices.

While this discussion raises questions about church order and sacramental claim and practice, its main points converge on the issue of whether bestowal of the Spirit can be confined to the action of episcopally sanctioned persons. The contrasting evangelical claim is that the Holy Spirit conies into the believer's life when he receives Christ by faith. For this reason, evangelicals see the interrelation of Gospel, Holy Spirit, and faith as indispensable. Further, they insist that this issue must be recognized as crucial in ecumenical discussion, in the face of growing pressure for rapprochement between the non-Catholic Christian world and its Catholic and Orthodox counterpart.

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ELECT, ELECTION

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It is not clear to me what Tyndale Publishers (IVP), Wheaton, Ill., did with this project.

Not uncommonly, Christians view the doctrine of election with apprehension. In what way can it be said that God chooses some persons to salvation, but not others? Is this reasonable, and is it moral? Conversely, those who affirm the doctrine do not escape anxiety lest their claim to being among the elect generate spiritual carelessness and moral irresponsibility.

Biblical teaching on this subject hangs on a creationist (as against a determinist) frame of reference. In the Bible God acts personally and purposefully in his creating and providential activity. He does this as against that; he chooses this one as against that one for specific tasks. The created order is likewise a reflection of the divine image, though it is not a part of the divine being. Contingency in the world order is real: things can happen this way or that, depending upon the action of some finite will. Hence in the case of moral creatures such as man freedom is real and so is moral responsibility. The biblical matrix of ideas centers upon God's being personal and man's being personal and upon the freedom and responsibility of both. The question concerned with election, predestination and free will converge upon the extent to which and the manner in which God voluntarily limits his freedom by the area of ours. How can we be free and God remain the sovereign Lord of the universe?

In the OT God is the undisputed, sovereign Lord. He takes counsel and acts decisively in relation to his own purpose (Isa 14:24-27; 46: 11; Jer 4:28; 23:18, 22). The OT is permeated by the theme that God chose Israel, not because Israel was better or greater than surrounding nations, but because of his good pleasure (Deut 7:6-8; 9:4-5; 10:15; Amos 3:2). The choice goes back to Abraham, then to the line of his successors in Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and on to David and the promised Messiah. The election of Israel in the OT is an unexplained mystery. God acted in history not only to reveal further elements of the covenant, but also to confirm it as a divine initiative (Ex 3:6-10). The election of Israel is rooted in God's love, glorifies God in the redemption not only of Israel but of mankind (Gen 12:1-3; 15:5-6), and carries obligations of faith and obedience (Lev 18:4-5). They were chosen to magnify God (Isa 43:20-21) Greatest of all, the elect of God in the OT is the promised redeemer who saves his people (Isa 42:1; 43:10).

In the NT the frame of reference is equally that God is the Lord of the Universe (1 Tim 6:15; Rev 19:6) who providentially subordinates all things to his sovereign will (Mt 10: 29; 11:25; Acts 17:24, 26). God's anointed, or the elect one, is Jesus Christ the Spirit-endowed Lord (Mt 12 18). In the last day the elect of God will be gathered from all corners of the earth (Mk 13:22, 27). Though small in number, they will be preserved from the powers of evil. As in the OT the initiative in election is God's, not man's (Jn 15:16). This last passage points to the vocation of the elect which Paul enlarges upon.

Strategic passages in the epistles of Paul concerned with election and the believer include Rom 8:28-39; Gal 1:15-16; Eph 1:3-14; 1 Thess 1:4; 2 Thess 2:13-14; 2 Tim 1:9. It is notably Paul who develops the doctrine in relation to the believer, in a manner that is consistent with the Gospel accounts concerning Christ and the elect. From the start of his missionary journeys Paul and his companions sensed the prevenient working of God's Spirit (Acts 9:15; 13:48; 18:10) to call the elect through the Gospel. As well, Paul deals with the election of Israel, in relation to Christ and Christians in Rom 9-11. The mystery of election and calling are left to the will of God who acts justly (9:14-33) in relation to a gracious purpose in Jesus Christ.

Peter speaks of the Christian's election in 1 Pet 1:2; 2:4'and 2 Pet 1:10. Whereas Christ was elected to service that led to the suffering of he Cross (1 Pet 1:20), we who believe are elected to share the fruit of his redeeming grace and calling, which is blessing (1 Pet 1:1-2).

While the questions that surround the doctrine are imponderable, in the NT election comprises not a confusing conundrum but a vital spiritual datum strategic passage on the election of believers is Eph 1:3-14. In this passage alone there occur six of the even NT terms which are vital to an understanding of the doctrine. Esentially, election is correlated with grace and the divine beneficent purpose in Christ. Paul says that God acts according to his good pleasure (Eph 1:5, 9; note Lk 2:14; Phil 2:13; 2 Thess 1:11) or according to his own will (Eph 1:5,9,11). God chose the believer before the foundation of the world (Eph 1:4, note Mk 13:20 Acts 9:15; Rom 9:11). The election is joined to divine predestination or foreordination to be his sons in Jesus Christ (Eph 1:5, 11). The election follows from the purpose of God which is disclosed as the divine counsel or plan (Eph 1:11; note 3:11 Rom 8:28; 9:11; 2 Tim 1:9).

This last term, namely the purpose of God, may be taken as the key-feature term. Predestination and election are consequent upon God's purpose. The term predestination identifies God's general intention to save. The term election identifies his particular action in the case of any person as that action follows from his purpose (see my *The Grace of God*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1966).

The importance of one's point of departure in thinking about election is crucial. Hence Paul's stress on purpose as the prime category (Rom 8:28). This special Pauline use is amplified by him to be a universal purpose for, as we have noted, it is the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of is will. It is an eternal purpose (Eph 3:11). It is God's own purpose (2 Tim 1:9), which is to say that its rationale and end are found in God alone. It is a purpose which requires choice (Rom 9:11). And it is a purpose which despite its deep mystery is intelligible; however, only in and by Jesus Christ (Eph 3:11). Paul says that we cannot hope to plumb the mysteries of God's will, but we do now what his purpose is for mankind in Jesus Christ.

For this reason recent studies have tended to concentrate upon Jesus Christ as “God’s elect one,” and the election of the believer in him. The identification of Christ with the promised coming one is an important motif of NT theology following on the OT. He is seen to be God's elect (Mt 12:18; Lk 9:35; 23:35; 1 Pet 2: 4-6; 2 Pet 1:17) whose career is known and determined beforehand in the counsel of God (Mt 26:45; Lk 22:22; Jn 7:30; 8:20;12:27; 17:1; Acts 2:23; 3:18; 4:28). It is in relation to the election of Christ and the election in Christ that the pre-temporal election of the believer is to be understood (Eh 1:4; 2 Thess 2:13; 1 Pet 1:2). The believer is taken up into Christ’s work, including Christ’s own obedient response -- a response that sinners are too far gone to make. Involved is a reciprocal identification: Christ with us in our doleful condition, and we, the penitent sinners, with Christ's perfect obedience.

A major problem we face is how to separate election and causation. That God’s saving action is all of grace and is his own initiative raises for us the question of predestination. That God works in an evil-infected world, which is in moral and spiritual bondage, through Christ and the power of his Spirit, raises for us the question of how to relate grace to human freedom. God’s grace is first of all his attitude toward us. It is the way in which he deals with us as guilty and condemned. Also, however, grace is God's action toward us as being needy and helpless.

Whatever answer we give to this question, as an insight from Scripture, ought to follow from the primary NT category of purpose. What God purposes for men in Christ we know through the Gospel. It is to create a community of free good persons who will enjoy God's fellowship and service (1 Pet 2:9). As objects of his grace God chooses not the mighty, but the poor, the unrecognized, the outcast (1 Cor 1:27; Jas 2:5). He calls those with no standing to be is own, to worship and praise him, to love his truth, to share his life and to do his work (1 Pet 2:10). The relationship is intended to be mutually personal (and hence mutually free) not one-sidedly personal. This explains in part the concentration in the NT upon the obedient, Spirit-bearing humanity of our Lord and the intimacies of the trinitarian life of God which Christians are called upon to share (John 17).

We make purpose and grace and freedom, rather than causation, the ultimate principles of interpretation. To say that "God works all things after the counsel of his own will" (Eph 1:11) is not to say that God causes all things. Rather, it means that in relation to his purpose in Christ God works through his world to maximize freedom. Hence the believer has this confidence that God is at work (Rom 8:28) for the purposes of grace; not that events work fatalistically. Similarly, in intercessory prayer we leave events and other people in God's hands simply because we do not know how God can bring about his purpose without either destroying the dependability of his world or inhibiting their freedom. From the standpoint of experience, we know very well that we've made a decision for or against Christ and his Gospel. Nevertheless as we grow in faith and understanding

we reflect on the divine gracious providential dealings which we see to have led us to faith.

Historically, election has figured prominently in church theology. From the days of the Church Fathers, notably Augustine, predestination to salvation by grace was.seen to entail election by God. Protestant theology on the question centers upon the formulation of John Calvin (reflected in Reformed and Presbyterian theology) that the saved are elected by God wholly by grace, and that Christ died only for the elect. Predestination means, says Calvin, that God by an eternal decree has decided in his own mind what he wishes to happen in the case of each individual. Some within the Reformed tradition have gone so far as to affirm gratuitous election even apart from faith, though most Calvinists include faith. The reaction of Arminius is widely shared among most Methodists, Baptists and the Believers Church groups, namely, that God elects by grace those who believe and persevere and that Christ died for all men and for every man. Arminius denied that a true believer could finally fall away from Christ and perish, though the boundaries of this assurance were left open for discussion. In the case of both Calvin and Arminius the number of the elect is equally foreseen and fixed, however.

More recently some have advocated universal election regardless of response in this life. This view derives from F. D. E. Schleiermacher, the early nineteenth century theologian. For most Christians such a view is unsupportable from Scripture At issue are the questions, does God know and choose his own, and can a man say no to God and suffer the consequences of his unbelief? The questions embrace issues of the freedom of both God and man. For any reasonable presentation of the Gospel we must believe that it is a legitimate offer of forgiveness and life to all men who hear it, which may be accepted or refused. As well, we believe that God knows and calls his own. St. Bernard of Clairvaux's sentence is worth remembering, "take away free will and there will be nothing to save; take away grace there will be nothing to save with."

Most Christians reject "double predestination," that is, some to salvation and some to reprobation, despite the charge that the election of some must logically entail the reprobation of others. However, while in Rom 9:22-23 Paul specifically attributes to God the preparation of the elect to glory, he does not specifically attribute to God the fitting of the vessels of wrath to destruction ("fitted to destruction" is a passive participle). Similarly, in Mt 25:34, 41 our Lord identifies the blessed as "of my Father," but he does not do the same of the cursed. The purpose of grace for the believer is directly associated with the work of God, but the destiny of evil men is not.

Some have supposed that the doctrine of election blunts moral effort. This has not been the case historically. Those who hold the doctrine have traditionally also been intensely committed to the ethical and spiritual standards of the NT. This is consistent with Paul who parallels his teaching on election (Eph 1) with lengthy

passages on Christian responsibility (Eph 4: 17-6:20; Col 3:12-17). Election is related not only to assurance, but also to ethical vitality which yields the fruit of a transformed life (Gal 1:4; 5:16-24).

The significance and privileges of election for the Christian are many-sided. Election derives from the compassion of God for fallen humanity and his purpose of grace through Christ's cross to save mankind (Rom 5:8-10). Election teaches that salvation is all of grace, to which the only appropriate response is gratitude, faith and obedience (Eph 1:3; 2:8-9). Those who love God are identical with those who are called according to his purpose (Rom 3:28). Election in Christ intends that Christ's grace and glory be reproduced in the believer as a present reality through the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:29; Eph 3:11; 2 Thess 1:11; 2:13-14; 1 Pet 1:2, 15). Election assures the Christian that nothing can separate him from the love of God (Rom 8:28-39), which truth is foundational to spiritual experience (2 Pet 1:10). Election is the source of encouragement, comfort and endurance in the face of trouble (Rom 8:32-39) 1 Thess 1:210). Election assures the Christian of his vocation as a disciple (Eph 2:10). The believer can live in hope knowing that what he puts his hand to in the name of the Lord will not fail (2 Thess 2:16-17).

CONTEMPORARY SYMPTOMS OF THE FALLENNESS OF MAN

by SAMUEL J. MIKOLASKI

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Note by the Editor, Prof. F. F. Bruce:
This paper by the Professor of Systematic Theology in New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary was prepared for the World Congress on Evangelism (Berlin, 1966) and was presented there in digest form. We are glad to publish the complete text.

[Abridged versions were published in the proceedings of the Congress: Carl F. H. Henry (ed.), *One Race, One Gospel, One Task* (Minneapolis: World Wide Publications, 1967); and in *Religion and Society*, 1.1, February, 1968 (Bayport, Minnesota: Religion and Society Incorporated).]

[The following extracts from the *Religion and Society* abridgment were featured on the cover of *The Presbyterian Journal*, 27.40, January 29, 1969.]

Humanism Leads to Despair

The value judgments of humanism (that they are there in the form of hidden absolutes is incontrovertible) promise freedom in release from traditional moral restraints. But this rosy picture of idyllic life according to nature and of conventions developed on a high intellectual plane is a myth – often a corroding and damning myth.

One needs to have looked into a few burdened faces in a pastoral way and to have sensed the remorse and the pain of soul that burns in the eyes to know that the popularly conceived humanist code for a heaven-on-earth is false. The true child of the modern mood of normless mores and a Godless world is spiritless man, convinced that nothing reigns supreme, and incapable of suicide because even that recourse is meaningless. The true mode of life is despair and the truth of reality is nothingness.

No one should suppose that these ideas represent the opinions of a sophisticated minority. They articulate the despairing mood of our times.

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AN essay concerned with the "fallenness" of man, will evoke a wry smile from some and outright derision from others. After all who but Americans could invent a term like "fallenness" for their religious jargon, and who today takes seriously the idea of man's radical sinfulness? Even if men do things which can be called sinful, the mood 'of our time questions whether one ought to thunder ponderous theological invectives against them.

Among theologians it is customary to begin discussing man's sinfulness at the point of the biblical words for sin, or the fall, or original sin. It is a question whether these starting points will reach the understanding of many men today, so far removed is the public mind from the talk of clergymen and 'theologians. Religious talk and the concepts of twentieth century man seem to be of diverse worlds.

Instead, let us turn to modern man's recourses for an index of his sinfulness.

Examination of that to which men turn in the critical areas of their lives may prove a useful indicator of the human spiritual condition. For the present purpose let us look at human recourses in the intellectual, emotional, political, econonic, and religious realms.[1]

[1]My purpose in this paper is not to slight the technical, theological approach, but to begin with certain conduct of contemporary man that, to my mind as a Christian, points to his sinfulness. Therefore, certain historical questions, even on the activities cited, are not discussed. It ought to be clear also that no theology, including an evangelical one, can exclude contemporary man's conduct from the scrutiny of the Word of God. A further qualification is important. No one can write on these matters except out of experience. My life has been in the West -- in Canada, in the United States, in Britain, and in western Europe. I beg the reader's indulgence to be allowed to write from this background. I do not intend thereby either to slight or to praise other parts of the world. I hope that what I say will be sufficiently stimulating to encourage reflection on man's sinfulness wherever he is found.

I do not intend to say that man's interests in his intellectual, emotional, political, economic, and religious life are distinctly sinful, but within these realms many modern people seek a life independent of God. Independence of the Creator is the essence of sin. Within these realms men can share the divine life and labour; but they do not, and what is worse, many will not. Contemporary modes of life do not take God into account. Though not sinful in themselves, these realms become vehicles through which men can express their indifference to spiritual values, their mistrust and abuse of other men, their squandering of their own resources and those of their environment, and their defiance of God -- in short, their sinfulness.

I. INTELLECTUAL RECOURSE

In a series of Advent talks four years ago in Britain, the American Episcopal Bishop Stephen F. Bayne said that the prime characteristic of our age is a massive demonstration of unbelief.[2] It takes the form of a most impressive demonstration 'of what man can accomplish without any traditional belief in God at all. He added that we are mistaken to suppose that this unbelief is due simply to the challenge of Marxism. Rather, it is a mood of the times of which Marxism is a prominent, militant instance. There is in man that which responds to the secular, the bizarre, the selfishly pleasurable. The spirit of the age is a self-consciousness of the arts of power and industrial skill, but without faith.

It has been popular especially among religious people to blame science for this mood, and the unbelief of scientists in particular. This error is compounded doubly by the tragic and often comic spectacle of religious people zealously hunting skeletons of unbelief in every scientific laboratory closet. In fact, pronouncements of unbelief by reputable men of science have been surprisingly few in the post-war era. It is possible to amass an impressive list of authorities in many scientific fields who have in various ways expressed religious faith. But this

does not mean that most men of science are believers.

More important is the blasé attitude of unbelief that characterizes student reaction to religion. (The basis of the reaction may be justified though the reaction itself may be irrational.) "Scientism" is a happy title for a sceptical outlook on ethical and religious values which conveys the impression that unbelief is solidly grounded **in** the assured results of experimental science. Such attitudes have important philosophical and scientific-claim

[2] *The Listener,* Nov. 29, 1962, p. 914.

bases, though there are many both within and outside religion who believe the claims to be wholly or in part specious.

In the United States during the past half-century a powerful wave of naturalism has engulfed higher education and has seeped down into lower levels. Rejecting the name "materialism" because of its anachronistic billiard-ball conception of the atom, intellectuals use the term naturalism[3] to express the claim that life in this world is of one kind only, namely, natural. Everything, whether biological, aesthetic, or ethical, can be accounted for in the terms of nature and its processes. Religion too must point to some factor of the process which is scientifically identifiable and manipulable. This procedure yields the handy conclusion that naturalists need not deny God, which denial would be as doctrinaire as to affirm his otherwordly existence. Naturalism reduces whatever the term God denotes to nature. God is reduced to the measure of man's comprehension and to the limit of his command.

Psychology, notably behaviourism, is the most publicly prominent discipline which has been naturalistically conditioned. Derived from the parallel research of Pavlov in Russia and William James, John Dewey, J. B. Watson, and B. F. Skinner in the United States, behaviourism interprets all human conduct in terms of the stimulus response (SR). Satisfaction of need and conditioning are alleged to give a total account of human behaviour and therefore of the essential nature of human life.

In recent years the theory has come under vigorous attack, the most famous being that of Arthur Koestler.[4] In a monumental work he examines the behaviourist premise in the light of recent scientific data on the creative actions of animals and the activity and intelligence of human beings. He concludes that fifty years of behaviourism (famous for its study of the white rat in an experimental box) have produced nothing but a ratomorphic view of man.

In the twentieth century man has been animalized and robotized. Nowhere is it more evident than in the advocacy of freedom in sexual mores, including pre-marital sexual intercourse by "responsible" young people. The euphemisms which

envelop this advocacy of change in the public's attitude to sex mores are remarkable for their imprecision and quasi-moral flavour. The appeal is to "adult attitudes," "mutual responsibility," "regard for the other's feelings," etc.

[3]*Naturalism and the Human Spirit,* ed. Y. Krikorian (New York: Columbia University Press, 1944).
[4]Arthur Koestler, *The Act of Creation* (London: Hutchinson, 1964).

But are such situations, especially among youth, really as rational as alleged? Under the impact of naturalistic philosophy and behaviouristic psychology the relativization and jettisoning of ethics means that the present appeal to "liberalize" the public's attitude toward sex mores is in reality an appeal to codify what is regarded as *fait accompli.*

During this past year in America some ranking educators, including a prominent woman college president, publicly endorsed a study entitled "Sex and the College Student" which was produced by 260 psychiatrists.[5] The report urged that sexual activity be regarded as a private matter not of administrative concern, that information about contraception should be provided college students, and that a girl who becomes pregnant and her partner should be able to secure early diagnosis of her condition so as to be in a position to consider alternative plans, apparently including abortion.

Information on contraception, venereal disease, and abortion seems to be a current prime objective. Information is important, nevertheless present programmes seem !to condone promiscuity. Is our primary concern how to live with our sinning rather than how to direct human drives in morally sanctioned ways-ways that answer to the purposes of their Creator? I am opposed to the legislation of religion and morality. But do not present trends encourage development of a planned economy of immorality?

The new code, speciously advocated on the grounds of "freedom" and natural pleasure, projects forms of human behaviour and modes of human relations which many believe attack elements necessary to the integrity of personal life and the best interests of communal life.

Similar attitudes are widespread in Europe as well. In a widely noted radio address, the British professor of psychiatry, G. M. Carstairs[6] advocates revision of attitudes to sex in view of the radically changed situation in Britain, especially among youth. He notes a significant alteration in the public's attitude even in the previous three years. In the published form of the address phrases like "new attitude to contraception" and "experienced newly weds" occur. While the dangers to emotional life and the social life of the community and venereal disease are points of concern to the author, the key feature of the address is that sex mores in

all strata of society have in fact changed considerably and that we may as well accept the revised ways as a new code. This is the reality

[5]*New York Times,* Paris, Dec. 13, 1965.
[6]*The Listener,* Nov. 25, 1965, p. 835.

of the situation, and he adds, "Young people's sexual behaviour can certainly no longer be restrained by appeals to religious tenets in which their parents no longer believe."

The collapse of certain aspects of sex-prudism may be welcomed but the facts of which Professor Carstairs speaks may require an interpretation other than that which he places upon them. One correspondent pointed out that Professor Carstairs' essay bristles with the kinds of value judgments he condemns. Slanted expressions like "religious admonitions," "exalted standards," and "Victorian hypocrisy," occur together with the innuendo that clergymen entertain unreal notions of their influence on society in view of the recent religious boom, while the actual sociological facts are against them. But if not the advocacy, then the acceptance of pre-marital sex experience as "part of the business of growing up," "as a sensible preliminary" to marriage, through which they can "fulfil 'their potentialities" in "deep personal relationships," having "thought about the matter," comprises value-judgments and built-in attitudes calculated to manipulate the listener's response while distorting opposing viewpoints?

In Britain also the animalization of human behaviour has either been based on, or has adopted as its foundation, a powerful surge of popular naturalism. Recently the creation of the British Humanist Association under the apostleship of men like Julian Huxley, A. J. Ayer and A. G. N. Flew has crystallized efforts to make the humanist movement more militant and evangelistic. Concerted efforts have been made to articulate humanist principles by radio broadcasts, pamphlets, and discussion groups. Members of the group have felt (rightly or wrongly) that their cause has been significantly buttressed by the theological perspectives of Paul Tillich, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and Bishop John Robinson.

Such efforts have an admittedly pronounced anti-religious and anti-supernatural stance often combined with a debunking attitude toward "Victorian morality" and normative ethics, or any ethics built on a theistic premise. In recounting his conversion to logical positivism Professor A. J. Ayer[8] makes the point that even earlier he was already a "tremendous proselytizer" in his efforts to debunk religion and the authority of the Bible, which he combined with a sceptical attitude to traditional claims for the foundations of morals. It cannot be said that some pronouncements by clergy and theologians, either then or now, encourage thinking youth to accept

[7]*The Listener,* Dec. 2, 1965, p. 908.

[8]*The Listener,* Nov. 4, 1965, p. 699.

the supernatural basis of true religion or the divine sanction of moral standards.

Is it unfair to suggest that just as Christians and churches must bear responsibility for the diffused results of their acts or inaction, so philosophical humanists and naturalists must bear the responsibility for personal and societal distress which their moral ideas generate? Or does the relative character of their premises absolve them from this responsibility? Not even the most militant of them has been willing to say that.

Similar trends are already well established in western Europe. The Roman Catholic psychotherapist Ignace Lepp has written on the atheistic, nihilistic, and anti-moralistic movements in France. His analysis includes the influence of Nietzsche, Jean Rostand, André Malraux, Albert Camus, and Jean-Paul Sartre. Of the latter he says, "To scoff at all the recognized values, to respect neither country, religion, nor even social revolution -- this is a mission worthy of a true existentialist." Then, on the results of this philosophy, Lepp concludes:

He is perhaps proud that a substantial number of young people recognize him as a master; yet he must be pained to see some of the results of his cogitation. Snobbery has certainly been more influential in creating the existentialist vogue than Sartre's philosophy. 'But the link between this philosophy and the rogue is no *mere* accident. Both bear witness to the failure of the ambitions of the nineteenth-century atheists: to make man the supreme being for man, to build a superior civilization and a humanism that would be dependent upon no absolute.[9]

The value judgments of humanism (that they are there in the form of hidden absolutes is incontrovertible) promise freedom in release from traditional moral restraints. But this rosy picture of idyllic life according to nature and of conventions developed on a high intellectual plane is a myth-often a corroding and damning myth.

One needs to have looked into a few burdened faces in a pastoral way and to have sensed the remorse and the pain of soul that bums in the eyes to know that the popularly conceived humanist code for a heaven-on-earth is false. The true child of the modern mood of normless mores and a Godless world is spiritless man, convinced that nothing reigns supreme, and incapable of suicide because even that recourse is meaningless. The true mood of life is despair and the truth of reality is nothingness. No one should suppose that these ideas represent the opinions of a sophisticated minority. They articulate the despairing mood of the times. The

[9]*Atheism In Our Time* (New York : Macmillan, 1963), pp. 149, 158.

mood characterizes not only personal existentialist outlooks but also an historical or cosmic despair. In contrast to the rosy platitudes of the proselytizing humanists, Bertrand Russell in some eloquent line has given utterance to what is the truth of the atheistic perspective:

> That man is the product of causes which had no prevision of the end they were achieving; that his origin, his growth, his hopes and fears, his loves and his beliefs, are but the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms; that no fire, no heroism, no intensity of thought and feeling, can preserve an individual life beyond the grave; that 'all the labours of the ages, all the devotion, all the inspiration, all the noonday brightness of human genius, are destined to extinction in the vast death of the solar system, and that the whole (temple of man's achievement must inevitably be buried beneath the debris of a universe in ruins-all these things, if not quite beyond dispute, are yet so nearly certain, that no philosophy which rejects them can hope to stand. Only within the scaffolding of these truths, only on the firm foundation of -unyielding despair, can the soul's habitation henceforth be safely built? [10]

These words are known not simply as "I told you so" quotations by clergymen in religious 'tracts. Multitudes of intelligent, prosperous people in our time live by them, as I have come to know in my work first as a pastor and then as a theological professor. They comprise a sort of creed-in-reverse of the times.

That morality can represent many things no one can deny. It can represent a sense of caste-social or intellectual. It can answer to utilitarian demands. It can be connected with our sense of the pragmatic, of the practical, of what works. But essentially morality concerns obligation to right action. P. T. Forsyth, the British theologian of a recent generation said, "The truth we see depends on the men we are."

The final sanction of conduct is that it represents a righteousness unto the Lord, the Creator and Sustainer of life. To deny this, in my judgment, is to express most clearly the radical fallenness of man.

II. EMOTIONAL RECOURSE

To some, what men do in their emotional lives constitutes the most obvious marks of human sinfulness; to others it constitutes landmarks of man's right to freedom and his chief end, which is pleasure.

One of the incongruous aspects of modem hedonism is the tension between its egoism and its altruism. John Dewey saw the world primarily in biological terms. Organisms seek satisfaction

[10]From "A Free Man's Worship," cited in *Selected Papers' of Bertrand Russell* (New York: *The Modern Library*, n. d.), p. 3.

from their environment until new needs arise and the cycle is repeated. Dewey himself is reputed to have been a benign person. In his theory he sought to transpose the highly subjective needsatisfaction activity of human organisms into altruistic behaviour. This can be done only in terms inconsistent with the theory's premise. The same inconsistency occurs in the naturalistic ethics of R. B. Perry.

How does one and why should one pass from concern with one's own need to concern about the needs of others? A. L. Hilliard[11] has applied the principles of the hedonist ethic much more consistently when he remarks that since the activity of organisms is directed to the satisfaction of need or pleasure, altruism marks the death of an organism.

The general public has been much less prone to make subtle and inconsistent distinctions. This view of man has in our time triggered a powerful impulse of egocentric, hedonistic behaviour marked by significant sensual overtones and social irresponsibility. So great are the dimensions of this trend that of recent years Bertrand Russell, no friend of the Christian faith, has remarked that what the world needs is a strong dose of Christian love.

When I visited England for the first time, I was immediately impressed by the privacy of the English home. With its small walled garden the Englishman's home is his private kingdom. In the United States most new suburban subdivisions have an openness about them because often there are no fences let alone walls between properties. At least in architectural planning communal life or "togetherness" is suggested. In fact neither plan may suggest the truth of the matter.

The real walls between people are not of brick and mortar, and they may be as much there when the breeze can blow from garden to garden unimpeded by masonry. The real divisions are in the lives of people, not the divisions of the petty, quarrelsome kind, but deep-seated isolation which is due sometimes to bitter loneliness and sometimes to selfish living.

Egocentric behaviour dominates modern, especially urban life; but media of public communication have disseminated this spirit to all parts of society. The philosophy is "get while the getting's good", "play now pay later", and "let's have fun". The tragedy is that people lose while they're getting, they pay while they're playing, and the more they get, the less they enjoy it.

A vast restlessness has engulfed well-to-do Western man, which

[11]A. L. Hilliard, *The Forms of Value* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1950), p. 156.

says more about his travel-craze than that he is simply interested in new people and lands. One wag has commented that Baptist preachers especially have of recent years rewritten the biblical text to read, "Go ye into all the world and photograph every creature."

The abject sadness of tourists with whom I have spoken is appalling. How many, especially older people, pay thousands of dollars for trips they neither need nor enjoy simply to be with other people for a few weeks?

Frustration seems to intensify where affluence and pleasure-seeking are in the ascendancy. With this frustration there sometimes is combined a desire to break 'through the often self-created barrier of isolation by philanthropic interests, but these deeds are done "at a distance", requiring no personal involvement of the donor.

The symptoms and diseases of frustration are many. They include drug addiction, alcoholism, mental breakdown, obsession with sex, criminal activity, and cruelty. The recent book *The Group* charts the course of similar behaviour. The final outlet of frustration is suicide. There have been noteworthy instances in recent years of people taking this outlet, including several world renowned beautiful women. Recent sociological and law-enforcement agency studies indicate that all the foregoing symptoms show marked and continuing escalation in recent years.

Absorption with sex has assumed public epidemic proportions. Pornographic literature has become a subject of widespread concern. Other equally pernicious material is offered on an ostensibly acceptable social level, such as in *Playboy Magazine*, in Bunny Clubs, and in other private "'art appreciation" groups. The re-publication and extensive distribution (even at food store check-out counters in the U.S.) of *Fanny Hill* and *Lady Chatterley's Lover* are instances of the dissemination of material which portrays sex as idyllic pleasure with no reference to the personal and medical consequences of sin. The book Sex and the Modern Girl is seen by some as a manual of instruction on the exploitation of sex both for personal gratification and for business advantage.

The movie industry has established its own censorship, as have certain sponsors of TV programmes and the TV outlet themselves. But this censorship does not touch the small independent producers nor the many approved films which are dubious and unfit for family viewing.

In a pointedly titled article published in *Reader's Digest* (one of many such articles in current literature), O. K. Armstrong asks, "Must Our Movies Be Obscene?"[12] What used to be fare shown

[12]*Reader's Digest*, Nov., 1965

furtively only in slum theatres is now standard diet in many "respectable" movie houses. A routine survey of lurid theatre marquees, he said, yielded such scenes as almost nude embraces, strip-poker parties, torrid love, and sadism; lesbianism and homosexuality were openly suggested. Such films are now booked at regular prices at neighbourhood theatres where they attract the teenage audience most of whom have money to spend.

The bitter harvest of such influences is now being reaped. Statistics show a startling rise of crime among youth. Youth with little or no moral foundation comprise large segments of society. Fearful predictions are being made that law and order are breaking down, especially in large metropolitan areas. Let him who is sceptical feel at first hand the ruthless force of unbridled lust and violence before he heaps scorn on the predictions.

During the past year England was shocked at the disclosure of bestiality connected with a multiple murder case. Newspaper headlines read,"'You should have seen his eyes', said Myra" (one of the accused speaking of a victim). And, "Brady kept hitting him until the lad stopped screaming," said by a young witness. During October last year, the news wires carried the story of a helpless paralytic waiting outside a Florida shop who was accosted by some youths and severely beaten. As the victim died in the arms of his wife he was heard to murmur, "They kicked, and kicked, and kicked." Such stories can be multiplied endlessly. They attest a harvest of hate, indifference to suffering, and outright sadistic cruelty which depends on a view of human life under-girded by no spiritual values, the physical, mental, and emotional resources of which can be triggered to abysmal depths of evil action.

Vital to the foregoing tendencies is the loss of the sense of sin, which must be put down to more than secular influences. It is ironic that in our time clergymen have aided in undermining the sense of sin in the name of religious psychology.

Chiefly through Freudian theory, a reverse meaning has been assigned to the function of conscience. It is said that anxiety is due to evil wishes the individual represses rather than commits, not from acts he has committed but wishes he had not. Freedom therefore has been interpreted as liberation from repressing a super-sensitive conscience. I am acquainted with clergymen who counsel clients to do things they have not dared to do because these things have appeared to be immoral. This advice is based on a naturalistic understanding of personality and value.

Recently O. Hobart Mowrer, a former president of the American Psychological Association, has called for a more traditional

doctrine of sin, guilt, and forgiveness, urging clergymen to "return to a sounder, less fantastic position." He writes,

> At the very time that psychologists are becoming distrustful of the sickness approach to personality disturbance and are beginning to look with more benign interest and respect toward certain moral and religious precepts, religionists themselves are being caught up in and bedazzled by the same preposterous system of thought as that from which we psychologists are just recovering.[13]

Professor Mowrer claims that the patient who condemns himself, even to the point of thinking that he has committed the unpardonable sin, is likely to get well. It is the patient who blames others who does not get well.

The Christian Gospel has always proclaimed that a deep sense of one' sinfulness is the first step to peace with God, with one's self, and with one's neighbour.

III. POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC RECOURSE

A significant concern of recent times is the emergence of the "organization man" in modern industrialized society. To be "part of the team" often means to be a cog in the works. The humanitarian concerns that pressed for the social securing of basic human needs seem to have carried with such procurement the radical impersonalization of life.

Pressure to conform is enormous in all societies. Increasingly sophisticated methods are being devised to keep complete "tab" on any man at any time. Various electronic devices are now so efficient and so widely used that some believe personal privacy has disappeared in civilized society. The traditionally despised eavesdropper and snooper has been baptized into a highly competent-indeed to some, necessary-technician. Serious discussions have been undertaken at the government level in Britain, Canada, the United States, and elsewhere on how to cope with this growing menace to freedom.

The increasing use of propaganda techniques is universally apparent. This term is simply a euphemism for "brain-washing" and "thought-control". Few aspects of modern life receive the skilled attention of more professional and highly paid executives than do the search for what the public is thinking and the attempt to direct or redirect that consensus. At a consumer conference last year, Louis J. Lefkowitz, Attorney-General of New York State, said:

"Truth in lending" or "truth in packaging," "truth in advertising" or just plain "truth in the market place" is shockingly absent in the dealings of a broad fringe element of business with the consumer.[14]

[13]O. Hobart Mowrer, *The Crisis in Psychiatry and Religion* (New York: Van Nostrand, 1961), pp. 52-53.
[14]*New York Times*, Paris, Dec. 13, 1965.

Aldous Huxley's Brave New World need not wait long for fulfilment.[15]

One irony of the foregoing techniques is the brainwashing of the brainwashers. Any pattern of advertising or of political thoughtcontrol or of sociological or religious ideas tends to influence other as yet non-participating outlets until the outlets of propaganda become themselves victims of their own creation. So intolerant can attitudes become (they can be created with remarkable speed) that criticism of them is often tantamount to political, economic, or sociological suicide.

For example, during the Kennedy-Nixon political campaign, a powerful climate of opinion was created which made it virtually impossible to ask penetrating questions on the religious and political involvemen is of a Roman Catholic president for the candidate and for the country. This climate was as irrational an ethos as that which had rejected the idea a priori. A similar wave of opinion is now dominant in America and Canada so that it is highly unpopular, especially in religious circles, to criticize Roman Catholicism in the light of the Vatican Council.

When Governor Nelson Rockefeller attempted to oppose the candidacy of Barry Goldwater at the Republican National Convention in San Francisco in 1964 by means of radio and television, the public was treated to the hysterical reaction of a crowd previously conditioned by an amazingly resourceful technique. At the present time a different propaganda machine is attemping to efface this image and to create one of the party more politically acceptable to the voter.

Another problem is discrimination. Racism seems to be a problem as old as recorded history. In modern Western history racism derives specifically from the European white-supremacy colonial policies. Racial discrimination is on the increase and is now compounded by prejudice in reverse where whites are discriminated against in the emerging non-white countries. With this is combined a new militant chauvinism.

I have often sat in the French Market of old New Orleans drinking coffee and pondering the fact that human beings were actually sold there in recent history. In some parts of the world they are still being sold or are being held in equivalent economic and social bondage. I lived in the Deep South of the United States for five years and frequently visited the rural areas, where I had oppor-

[15]Similar books are: George Orwell, *1984*; and C. S. Lewis, *That Hideous Strength*.

tunity of intimate contact with the people. It is heartening that despite generations-old ingrained attitudes, rapid strides are being made to overcome the worst elements of the social and political isolation and mistreatment of the American Negro. On a national scale probably more advance is being made in America at the present time than in any other predominantly white country. But the progress is agonizingly slow in comparison with the enormity of the problem. World-wide racial tensions probably will become far worse before they become better.

A year ago a centenary occurred which few cared to remember. It was the final end of the transatlantic slave trade. From the sixteenth century until 1865 it is estimated that about 15,000,000 African slaves were carried to North and South America in about 50,000 voyages. While the pattern of slave ownership in America is well known, it is not well known that the largest single slaveholder in South America during this period was the wealthy Jesuit order.

The shippers of slaves were predominantly the British (and Americans after 1783) and Portuguese, who shipped about equal numbers, followed by the Dutch, French, and Spanish; but there were significant Danish, German and other shippers also.[16] The record of the slave-era is excruciatingly painful to read. It was justified sociologically, thought to be economically necessary, and approved by the leading religious bodies. The voices of dissent were easily suppressed or dared not to speak at all. The current harvest of racial hatred can be understood only in the light of the past record.

The problems generated by racism and nationalism continue in widespread ways. Housing for "coloured people" in Britain, in America, and on the 'Continent is a constant irritant. Ghetto-like conditions keep local feeling at high pitch and near-riot circumstances prevail almost constantly in many urban centres. I read with much appreciation the Rei'th Lectures in 1965 by the prominent Ghanaian, Robert Gardiner, **in** which he analysed contemporary race problems.[17] I was disappointed however that while he criticized the colonial powers and contemporary racist attitudes, he scored the current anti-white tendencies by certain emergent nations, the attitudes to the outcasts in India, and the attitudes of many Arabs to Negroes only lightly. Is this casual !treatment due to political

[16]Hugh Thomas, "Slave Trade," *The Observer*, Oct. 17, 1965.
[17]"A World of Peoples," *The Listener*, Nov. 11, 18, 25. Dec. 2, 9, 16, 1965.

reasons, just as white supremist attitudes are often expressed for political reasons?

Many contemporary nationalist attitudes in fact reflect racism. The treatment of Italian, Yugoslav, and Greek labourers in the industrial countries of central Europe is in my judgment sometimes neither enlightened nor Christian. I have often travelled on the trains of central Europe and have noticed the painfully prejudiced attitudes taken toward foreign labour,

whose services in burgeoning industry are welcomed, but who are carefully kept disenfranchised, and who enjoy little of the rights of other citizens. The extent of chauvinistic attitudes in certain countries of Western Europe against most foreigners is quite astonishing.

An economic malaise of the modern world is the wasteful exploitation, sometimes involuntary, of natural resources. Water and air pollution alone have become problems of immense proportions. Sometimes the destruction of landscape and the undermining of public health that follow exploitive measures in industry and agriculture change the balance of nature, with the evil consequences fully felt only by the succeeding generations.

The senseless destruction of wildlife during the past century has threatened the extinction of scores of animal and bird species. It is reliably reported that since 1900 over 100 species of wild creatures have become extinct.

Spike Milligan, the well-known British entertainer, in a biting article, attempts to awaken the public conscience and to stimulate action to save wild animals. The mass extermination of vast stores of animal life (witness the buffalo in Northern America and the oryx in Arabia and Yemen which have been near extermination) are due to man, the wasteful predator who loves to kill senselessly. Mr. Milligan cites the incident when 800,000 pounds sterling was paid (350,000 by public subscription, and 450,000 by the British government) to "save" a Leonardo da Vinci cartoon from being sold abroad, though up until then it had been kept in a cellar. Then he adds

With that sort of money the future of *living* masterpieces, that not even Leonardo could create, might be secured: the orangutan, the panda, the Javan rhino, the cheetah, the whooping crane, the Tasmanian tiger. The fight for wild life is no crank struggle : it is as much a battle to save man's morality as it is to save the world of animals he is constantly destroying.[18]

New questions are being raised on the moral as well as the medical and economic implications of factory farming. In Britain

[18]*The Observer,* Dec. 12, 1965.

the Brambell Committee reported somewhat negatively on factory farming last year. It recommended a ban on mutilations (debeaking chickens) and on iron-deficient diets to produce anaemic white-fleshed calves. It proposed minimum standards for cages and pens housing fowl and animals. Important **in** the report is that suffering not only physically but also socially can be caused to animals when basic instincts are frustrated commercially. Thus the exploiting tendencies of man in relation to the creatures that furnish his livelihood and food are brought under moral scrutiny and judgment. The Committee concluded that there should be legislation to make infliction of unavoidable stress an offence. It seems that man who brings frustration on himself aims also to pass on his malaise by mechanizing the lives of the creatures that sustain and feed him.

When writing on the political challenge of an over-populated world, Sir Geoffrey Vickers drew two lessons from a familiar story. The story is that a man who fell from the top of the Empire State Building was heard to say to himself as he whistled past the second floor, "Well, I'm all right so far". The story points, first,

to the absurd speed with which we come to accept as normal almost any outrageous condition once we have actually, though briefly, lived with it. Second, it points to the absurd slowness with which we come to accept any impending change which has not yet happened.[19] We are at the end of free fall.

The use of war to settle international disputes is exercising many minds in all political camps, because the holocaust which nuclear devastation would unleash cannot be imagined. Failures of judgment are among the most feared causes of war, especially as recent history shows how rapidly new factors make issues peripheral which were once thought to be decisive.

Edward Crankshaw, the journalist on Russian affairs, pointed out early this year that the role of Russia as peacemaker between Pakistan and India is a curious twist of history, while America, the peace-lover, is engaged in an ideological war. Who remembers the Japanese-Russian war now that China has emerged as the third world colossus? Who remembers that once Tashkent and a short rail line to Merv were thought by Whitehall and Delhi to be a threat to India? How many bastions felt to be strategic by nineteenth-century generals have slipped out of reach and importance by forces neither they nor their political leaders could foresee? Then Crankshaw adds, "The more things change the odder they become."

[19] *The Listener*, Oct. 28, 1965.

The political disillusionments of the past generation comprise a sort of quiet revolution. No one has articulated the failure of a political ideal recently more dramatically than has Milovan Djilas. In his most recent book Montenegro, an historical novel, Djilas describes the collapse of the Serbian ideal during World War I, but implies the collapse of all political ideals. Throughout the book is the plaintive cry of the heroic heart which is incapable of giving up an ideal though it is hollow, yet which is incapable of not dying for the ideal. Despite its naturalistic assumptions this heart cannot escape the force of moral good. Djilas puts these words into the lips of Milog who tomorrow morning is to be hanged as a patriot at the hands of the Austrians.

> The footsteps continued to drip. In books there is always a dripping of water before an execution. And ithe beating of drums. They'll beat for me, too, to announce my death, to measure out the time, the time of our emergence onto the stage of Europe and the world, the time of my hanging.
>
> But I have not many sins. I use the word "`sin" as if I were religious. But the expression isn't important. We atheists, for that matter, haven't yet invented a substitute for it. The idea is important. It is important what I think-if I can still think. I don't really believe in sin, yet I remember mine as if I were a believer, and a devout believer at that.
>
> My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? Christ on the Cross in his last moments. Ha, I may become 'a Christian yet.[20]

The human sense of sin is the first glimmering ray of heavenly light, the first caress of God's Spirit.

IV. RELIGIOUS RECOURSE

Some have named our age "The Post-Christian Era", so impotent has seemed the impact of the Christian message through the Church. It is more likely that the Fallenness of Man is exhibited with astonishing clarity in institutionalized religion, including the Christian religion.

Interest in religion, especially in the United States and Canada, has been booming since the war. But this boom only obscures world-wide scepticism that the Church has any vitality to affect world affairs.

There is good reason to wonder whether the Church can expect the respect of men. The Church has increasingly intruded into areas of public affairs and social action, while staging a dramatic retreat on the need of godliness in its own life, the need of morality, and the need of a concerted effort to get the Gospel to the common man, especially at -the central urban level. It is easy to pontificate as the

[20]*Montenegro* (London: Methuen & Co., 1964), p. 245.

growing tendency of the religious establishments seems to be, especially when newspapermen telephone church offices to know what the "Baptist" or "Episcopal" or "Catholic" view is on any particular question; but it is hard to see how human problems will be solved by words.

Tragically the most common recourse of man is religion. By its very nature religion may obscure the truth 'of God's revelation, or it may become an escape hatch 'to release native pressures to conform which simply shield the fact that little or no personal faith in God is held. There is such a thing as the unbelief of believers or religious atheism.

Many Christian bodies in their public acts and pronouncements have withdrawn from the issues of sin and redemption. The spiritual life of the Church has been petrified into social strata which parallel divisions in society. To me, withdrawal from the world into religious orders tends to make a mockery of the Christian commission, but I must say that prominent Protestant bodies in the Western world have staged tactics of withdrawal. One department of evangelism of a prominent religious denomination in the United States proclaims piously that the denomination's programme is not to reach the most but to be the best. This kind of stress on "quality" is to opt for exclusivist, esoteric Christianity and in reality constitutes a confession of failure.

A favourite Marxist motto is "Religion is the opiate of the people." This statement is true. Between the non-Christian religions and the various forms of institutionalized Christianity (especially where religious establishments prevail), uncounted millions of people live in religious paralysis and economic depression, which are abetted and imposed by religions. In my youth I was part of a prevailing Eastern Orthodox religion and personally can attest to the stultifying effects of lifeless religious form, especially when allied with politics.

In recent months a furious debate has broken out in Canada over the best-selling 1965 Lenten paperback, *The Comfortable Pew*[21] commissioned by the Department of Religious Education of the Anglican Church of Canada. Pierre Berton is a popular journalist, radio and TV personality in Canada, and self-confessed agnostic. The Commission decided to invite his services for an "outsider's" view of the Church. Mr. Berton had in his youth been an Anglican. Later in disgust he gave up religion, though he now belongs to the United Church of Canada.

[21]Toronto : McLelland & Stewart Ltd., 1965.

Clergymen, theologians, and informed theological readers will hold in reserve their agreement with Mr. Berton's theological ideas which are expressed in the currently popular demythologizing language of Bonhoeffer, Bultmann, Bishop John Robinson, and Paul Tillich. That certain perspectives of these men are hospitable to Mr. Berton's convictions is apparent, but one can withhold agreement with these perspectives while still appreciating a major thrust of his book.

While there has been a violent reaction to Mr. Becton's book, religious people would do well to read carefully what he says. Chiefly he indicts religious establishment, esoteric language, deadness, isolation from the world and the common people, prudishness, and social exclusiveness.

He points to the irrationalities of war where religious leaders of the conflicting sides claim God for their respective causes. He is sharply critical of the colour bar which prevents non-whites from worshipping in most white churches and of the social barriers which keep out lower class people from most churches which are predominantly middle class. The alliance of the Church with business interests (often shown by the failure of the Church to judge its members), the ecclesiastical caste system, and the shallow concern with the outcasts of society all constitute indictments of midtwentieth century "comfortable pew" religion.

How many central city churches have been closed down or moved out by itheir congregations simply because the congregation has lost touch with the community the church was built to serve? *This pattern is characteristic of churches of all theological persuasions*. The Church stands more as the symbol of affluence than

of service to humanity. To play little religious games in church with those of one's own kind may well be a prime index of man's fallenness.

A peculiar type of withdrawal from the lists of combat is indirect evangelism by radio, newspapers, tracts, or the support of missionaries. All these may be legitimate efforts to spread the gospel, but there is in some quarters a grotesque impersonalization of Christian work. To be sure, modern means should be employed for preaching the gospel, *provided such means are not deputies for the non-involvement of Christians and churches*. Dropping tracts over jungle areas by airplane or balloon or subsidizing Christian work is no excuse for one's own inaction. I know of many prominent evangelical churches which contribute handsomely to various missionary causes but which make little effort to reach the people

around them. This is a sinful distortion of the Christian calling and task.

About five years ago in New Orleans I represented the Christian side on behalf of the New Orleans Council of Churches in a dialogue with a notable Jewish leader. He spoke on the attitudes of Christians to Jews, and I was invited to reply. In the interesting exchange that ensued, the question of the evangelization of Jews by Christians was raised. I shall never forget one of his comments, which went something like this, "If you Christians are so anxious to win us Jews to your faith, why do you give us tracts; why don't you take us out for an hour on the golf-course?" The point was well made: many Christians would like to win Jews, but those same Christians really don't wish to have anything to do with Jews. One cannot really blame the non-Christians, who so often suspect the motives of Christians.

A further mark of man's sinfulness in religion is discrimination and outright persecution. Many religious bodies, including the Roman Catholic Church, the various Eastern Orthodox churches, some segments of the Episcopal communion, and others, still maintain the post-Constantinian mediaeval view of the co-extensive church and state. In order to preserve political stability, as well as religious uniformity, multitudes of people were cruelly exterminated because they held ideas contrary to the establishment.

The vision of many mediaeval martyrs has approached realization only in recent generations. They envisioned the separation of church and state and 'the achievement of composite societies where differences of religious views are not merely tolerated but where religious establishment with all its attendant evils is banished.

In the name of all that is holy, how can the *Christian* church have anything to do with enforcing religious beliefs? The alliance of religion and political power has

perpetrated some of the worst evils in history. These practices were true of the Catholic church in the middle ages and later of the Roman Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran, and Reformed Churches.

The play *The Deputy* has occasioned an outcry, but little by way of rebuttal of what playwright Hochhuth criticized in the alliance of the Papacy with the Nazi regime of Hitler and the Fascist regime of Mussolini. The recent book by the historian Guenther Lewy, *The Catholic Church and Nazi Germany,*[22] makes depressing reading. In this unique and thoroughly documented book the overriding impression I had is that the topmost Church leaders were concerned with the image of the church and

[22]New York: McGraw Hill, 1964.

the maintenance of advantage in the future rather than with the ministry of Christ.

The recent Vatican Council has adopted a Declaration on Religious Liberty which all men will welcome. It reads in part:

> This Vatican Council declares that the human person has a right to religious freedom. This freedom means that all men are to be immune from coercion on the part of individuals or of social groups and of any human power, in such ways that no one is to be forced to act in a manner contrary to his own beliefs, whether privately or publicly, whether alone or in association with others, within due limits.

Does it need pointing out that tens of thousands of Christians were martyred during the middle ages for such beliefs by the same church, and is it not remarkable that it has taken until the midtwentieth century for this. statement finally to be made? No one who has not been actively persecuted for religion's sake can know the beastly horror that persecution is.

Ignorance, intolerance, and religious persecution form an astonishing troika. In a recent book entilted *Opium of the People* by an English Anglican theological student, Michael Bordeaux, we have the personal reminiscences of one who spent a year inside the Soviet Union. A key feature of the book is that the author went to Russia because he was enamoured of the Orthodox ritual, but he came away sadly disappointed with the Orthodox, while praising the evangelical groups like the Baptists. He remarks that forty years of persecution have taught the Orthdox little.

No fair evaluation of recent history can escape the conclusion that religious establishments, through their own corruption, indifference to the higher values of the spiritual life, political alliances with evil, dictatorial regimes, have sown the wind and have reaped the whirlwind. This harvest is the judgment of God, and it will ever be thus.

In religion, history attests the fact that the fall is the greater because the claim is higher. The Church can never be at peace with society but must always have its own life and the life of the world under the judgment of God's Word. World-wide revival is possible in our time. Let men seek the God who redeemed them, who as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is worthy of all praise now and ever.

New Orleans, Louisiana.

HERESY

Samuel J. Mikolaski
Written in 1995 for the proposed
Encyclopaedia on the Modernist/Fundamentalist Controversy
Thomas Nelson Publishers
(as of 2003 this project is apparently still in process)

In its generic sense heresy is the denial of biblically taught and legitimated truth which is deemed to be essential to the Christian faith. Later, heresy is also defined as the denial or deliberate distortion of church-mandated doctrine which may or may not be specifically biblical such as the early Christian creeds, and teachings such as the Roman Catholic doctrines of the bodily assumption of Mary and papal infallibility.

The use of the Greek term in pre-Christian times indicates choices of beliefs or the tenets held by a particular philosophical school. New Testament usage includes tenet-identified religious groups (Acts 5:17), factions (1 Corinthians 11:19), and teachers holding false views (2 Peter 2:1). Paul's rebuttal in Romans and Galatians against the heretical doctrine of justification by works clarifies and sharpens the truth of the Christian gospel.

In his Bampton Lectures of 1954 (*The Pattern of Christian Truth*), H. E. W. Turner has expounded the variegated patterns of early Christian belief including the place in orthodoxy of the Bible, tradition and reason. This is shown to be richer and more consistent, as well as more complex, than modern sociological and contextual theories have supposed. Early orthodoxy exhibits continued devotional experientiality within the context of the *Rule of Faith* (received apostolic teaching), normed by the Scriptures, which in their entirety of Old and New Testament books were understood to be Christian. They were seen to prefigure Christ, prepare for him and to find fulfillment in the incarnate Lord. The writings of the apostolic and post-apostolic Fathers are replete with references to doctrines such as the incarnation, trinity, creation, the fall, atonement, the church and authentic Christian discipleship. Views which denied central doctrines were designated in fathers such as Ignatius and Irenaeus as poisonous; as deceitful persuasive talk which results in schism.

Heresy is a concept specific to professed adherents of a particular religion or philosophy—in this case alleged aberrations among Christians. Medieval canon law distinguished formal heresy (willful adherence to error) from material heresy (involuntary adherence to error in good faith due to upbringing or religious or cultural conditioning). It was also distinguished from apostasy (forsaking beliefs or vows of consecration or ordination) and from schism (deliberate rupturing of the unity of the church), though one could lead to the others.

The fundamentalist-modernist controversy of the twentieth century focused sharply upon issues of orthodoxy and heresy. Evangelicals, and theological conservatives within the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox traditions, fought vigorously against attenuations of belief. These were chiefly: denial of the supernatural, textual-critical theories which undercut the infallibility of the

Scriptures, denial of the deity of Christ and his virgin birth, denial of the sufferings of Christ as atonement for sin and disparagement of the sacrificial view as "slaughterhouse religion," denial of the resurrection of Christ, denial of the creation of the world by God ex nihilo, denial of human depravity and the need for conversion and regeneration, denial of the second coming of Christ; and, substitution of the Social Gospel for evangelism.

Among evangelicals, theological activity has always been seen as a risk, nevertheless for most a necessary risk. Thus the Bible Schools which early in the century claimed to concentrate upon biblical knowledge not theological speculation have increasingly become theological institutions, and groups which shunned the formal theological disciplines such as the Mennonites, the Salvation Army and the Quakers have in recent years embraced such studies in their curricula.

Western Christianity has entered upon a new phase of theological soul-searching because doctrines such as the foregoing are publicly deemed to be chiefly matters of privately held belief or opinion. Public concern about heresy in all major branches of the Christian church is related today more to issues on a grand, world-view or paradigmatic scale, such as the claim that God is dead, moral relativism, secularism as the offshoot of American philosophical Naturalism and panentheism in the form of New Age mythologies. These deify human nature and proffer new versions of human perfectibility apart from divine grace.

Central to this debate for Christians is the person of Christ. First, is Christ unique religiously? More than as an example of faith, is he properly the object of faith? Or is he to be correctly understood contextually on a non-supernatural footing as an unusual religious figure within the social, cultural, religious and political milieu of first century Palestine? Second, is the concept of incarnation an invention of the early church, a myth, metaphysically impossible, and an offense to the modern mind? Resistance to such ideas is heightening theological awareness within all the major Christian denominations and is fostering canonical, historical and philosophical discussion.

Conservative Christians of all persuasions - evangelical, fundamentalist, Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox - are reaffirming belief in the incarnation of Christ in biblical and creedal terms. Nevertheless they are not claiming to be able to explain the incarnation; rather, they feel comfortable within the fenced pasture created by the Creeds of Nicea and Chalcedon, the four corner posts of which enclose ample space, they believe, to graze and cogitate without straying into error: Christ is true God, true man, of two unconfused natures, yet is one person. Contemporary discussion has turned full circle. To the question "Does the Christian religion have boundaries?" modern Christians are increasingly saying "Yes" and at the same time are also saying that naturalistic and sociological explanations, which attenuate witness to the unique divine revelation in Jesus Christ the incarnate Son of God, are wrong.

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NOTE ON EVANGELICAL, EVANGELICALIS

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While the term "evangelical" derives from the period of the 16th century Protestant Reformation, evangelical concepts are deeply rooted in the apostolic faith (the Bible) and in the theology of the early Church Fathers.

Evangelical faith is orthodoxy come alive in the world-interest of the Gospel of Christ.

Basic Concepts: they stand at the heart of confessional Christianity.

1. The authority and sufficiency of the Bible; i.e., of the apostolic faith. That in the Bible God has given the meaning of his saving acts clearly in the Gospel of Christ.

2. The heart of the Gospel is the uniqueness of redemption through the death of Christ upon the Cross for the sins of the world. The Cross is the *conditio sine qua non* (the condition without which not) of salvation. Without the saving Cross there is not Christianity or authentic Christian faith.

3. The necessity of personal conversion. That God speaks to us in Christ person-to-person. That Christian faith entails conversion which leads to public, identifiable discipleship, not merely to cultural nationalism with a religious veneer. In short, to authentic spirituality and meekness before God and in social relations.

4. Obedience to Christ's commission to evangelize. That is, obedience which is necessary, urgent and world-wide, and that evangelism results in true freedom for humanity.

5. The world-interest of the Gospel. This is not culture-based, but is an ecumenical movement which cuts across barriers, rather than being merely a (fundamentalist) counter-culture, religious and political action movement. It is a "seeding" movement, discipling, and local-church forming.

The Gospel content is clearly stated in 1 Cor 15:3: *Christ died for our sins*. Every word is filled with meaning.

1. It was *Christ* the incarnate Lord who died.

2. He *died* for our sins. His death was essential to our salvation.

3. He died *for* our sins. His death was vicarious, substitutionary, representative.

4. He died for *our* sins -- for me, for me. Child-like faith: *Jesus died for me*.

5. He died for our *sins*. No verbal cure, only a judgment death, for sin will do.

Note: re the Colson/Catholic dialogue and statement. In my *Theological Sentences* I note the following, which shows that the core of the Gospel re the Cross is not stressed, nor is conversion stressed, to say nothing of the centrality of the Scriptures.

10.1.51 Roman Catholics and Evangelical Protestants are urged to cooperatively contend on behalf of critical issues, not as religious agenda but as public stands to take for the common good of society. 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.

In my first chaper, on Revelation, I summarize key elements of the faith in the following way.

2.1.4 Three axiomatic truths follow from trustworthy interpretation of the scriptures:
(a) That there is only one true and living God who is creator and sustainer of the world.
(b) That Jesus Christ is the incarnate Son of God who came to redeem the world from its sin and evil.
(c) That God in his own time will establish his kingdom upon a redeemed earth and will raise the dead to life and final judgment.

ON THE NATURE OF MAN

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'I am a man and count nothing human as indifferent to me.'[1] What is it that I as a man assert myself to be? Answers given to this question are strongly influenced by the three major Western philosophical traditions.

To begin with, systems of Idealism generally maintain that the universe is pervaded by mind or is ultimately of the nature of mind. The tendency in Idealism to denigrate the physical world has largely passed, though the ultimate value of particular personality is usually denied.[2] Recent theology which is expressed in the idealistic categories of the Heidegger-Tillich-type questions that God can be meaningfully called personal. For them God is not personal in the sense of being one with whom we co-operate as we do with our fellows. God is the Ground of our Being. The relation of the human self to the Ground of its existence is not an interpersonal relation.

Non-personal or supra-personal language such as that God is our Ground of Being does not strike me as being either higher or more meaningful than personal language. The denial that God is personal seems to be an important implicate of Idealism in which He is usually thought of as the rationale of the cosmic process. I agree that the process gives evidence of an individualizing tendency but disagree that this should be thought of as the self-realization of the divine perfection in some way. Systems of Idealism are thought to be hospitable to Christian thought because of their stress on spirit as against matter and

[1]Homo sum: humani nil a me alienum puto. (Terence, *Hauton Timoroumenos* I, 77).
[2]A. N. Whitehead attempts to give a scientific account of the world in terms of God making Eternal Objects (Ideals) available to Actual Entities which are developing in the cosmic process. Nevertheless, on their demise Actual Entities become food for other Actual Entities. Thus the discrete individual is not of ultimate value.

because they accept the reality of values. But at a critical juncture they jettison the ultimate value of personality. Personal existence is viewed as ephemeral or temporary as a means to some higher end.

Second, to my mind Naturalism is dominant in the ethos of our time. Its history from the time of Leucippas, Democritus and Epicurus is a consistent one. Everything can be accounted for by nature and its processes, including man and his values. J. H. Randall says of contemporary Naturalism:

It carries the idealistic emphasis that man is united to his world by a logical and social experience.

But it rephrases the idealistic scheme of man's activities and environment in biological and anthropological categories. While like the idealists it makes them all amenable to a single intellectual method, it formulates that method in experimental terms. [3]

It is claimed by many that Naturalism is the only viable alternative in the scientific age which can develop a modern view of man for his future. Its advocates may be divided into two broad camps : (a) Behaviourists and (b) Humanists. The Behaviourist's view of man is dominated by the premise that all human activity and human nature can be adequately accounted for by the stimulus response (S.R.). Strident voices have been raised against this on the grounds that man has been thereby mechanized and made bereft of any creative capacity. However, R. H. Thouless sees a subtle dilution of the absolute rejection of mentalistic language among some post-Watsonian behaviourists.[4] Humanists like Arthur Koestler and J. Bronowski hold that there is a spiritual dimension to man as a creative agent which attests to his being more than a casually determined creature in all his activities.

Christians, I believe, can neither opt out of the scientific age nor concede the debate to Naturalism. The critical point for modern man is whether personality involves for essential human nature more than our discussing the function and dissolution of the body.

[3]The Nature of Naturalism, in *Naturalism and the Human Spirit,* ed. E. Y. Krikorian. New York, 1944, p. 373
[4]R. H. Thouless (1963), pp. 15-16.

Konrad Lorenz's attempts to enter into more than ethological relations with animals have established a new trend in biological studies. Leonard Williams, who recently published a study of the Woolly monkey, says

Friendship and mutual trust that develop as a result of personal contact on a social plane yield a particular kind of knowledge, one that cannot be acquired through the bars of a cage, nor by field studies in the wild. It belongs to a dimension that cannot be experienced by the laboratory worker who is faced by a row of cages, or by the curator who makes his daily round of the zoo and shakes hands regularly with the orang-utan . . . I am concerned with the importance of personal relationship, as distinct from the attitudes of the scientific observer of the wild animal and the pet owner ... intellectual affection, and the dread of anthropomorphism, of humanizing about animals, are stock ingredients of an immature sophistication which imagines itself to be representative of the scientific attitude.[5]

This claim that personal relationship yields a certain kind of knowledge is an important divergence from received modern scientific tradition and one that the tradition will not be able to assimilate without important revisions of its outlook.

Based upon the biblical revelation, the third tradition is the Christian doctrine of the *creatio ex nihilo*. This implies that ultimate reality is of the nature of personal life and personal relations. The existence of the person depends on more than

process; it depends on the divine sovereignty. For most Christians the doctrine of the creatio ex nihilo also implies that the world is not eternal as God himself is, but that it had a beginning.

There is an important relationship between the Christian doctrine of creation and the Christian view of personality. Neither the personal life of God nor the personal lives of human beings are transient modes in which a more real and enduring system of psychological patterns expresses itself. God and man should not be thought of as united in some more ultimate reality. This view is neither unphilosophical common sense nor anthropomorphic mythology but expresses a valid option about the reality of God and the individualizing world process which is under God's providential oversight. It is easier, I

[5] Leonard Williams (1967), pp. 16, 53.

believe, to think that the will of the intelligent, purposing Creator is the source of all the personal and impersonal modes of existence in space and time than to entertain other alternatives.

From texts like Genesis i-ii, Psalm viii. and cxxxix. 13-16 we learn that man is the goal of the divine creative activity and the centre of God's interest. Empirical and theological duality appear noteworthy in the biblical teaching: (a) Man is aware of his biological or empirical origin. He is fashioned from the dust of the earth (Gen. ii. 7; iii. 19; Job xxxiv. 15; Ps. ciii. 14; Eccl. xii. 7). (b) Man is also made aware of his uniqueness in relation to God his maker within the context of the biblical revelation (Rom. i. Ig-23). He is fashioned in the image of God (Gen. i. 26-27; ii. 7). In mind, in feeling and in willing, man is akin to God. He has his origin from God.

Given man's divine origin, what is his nature? The Hebrew word *nephesh* has a wide variety of physical and psychical connotations including throat, breath, sensation, emotion, desire, and even a dead body.° Primarily it denotes 'life principle' (Lev. xvii. 14) but can also denote all living creatures (*naphshim,* cf. Gen. i. 24, 30). Nephesh is the inner vital principle of the body and the body is the outward aspect of *nephesh*; nevertheless, it is distinguishable from its bodily vehicle (Deut. xii. 23; Is. x. 18). While it is predicable of both man and animals, in regard to man it also designates the person as a centre of self-conscious life, or as a living being. At his creation man became a living being, a living person, or a distinct spiritual reality (Gen. ii. 7; cf. Job xvi. 4; Is. i. 14). The term *ruach* (breath, wind, air) means spirit or breath of life (Gen. vi. 17, vii. 15). It denotes the energy or power of conscious life. *Neshamah*, the noun which corresponds to *nephesh*, and *ruach* occur together in Gen. vii. 22, `all in whose nostrils was the *neshamah* of the *ruach* of life.' *Ruach* is used over the entire range of human and divine powers, including the personal influence of Yahweh's Spirit and the human

person, whether of his intellectual, emotional, or volitional

[6]A. R. Johnson (1964); cf. Eric C. Rust, *Nature and Man in Biblical Thought* (1953).

life, or of any one of these as representative of the entire person. Through these powers the vital, purposeful individual is known.

Thus seen, man is a self-conscious spiritual reality. Spirit as a constituent element of personality occurs in Job xxxii. 8; I Sam. xvi. 14; and Ps. civ. 4. The Hebrew term *basar* identifies the flesh, and its equivalent in Greek is *sarx*. Many parts of the body are commonly used as representative of the whole, but these are primarily the face, hand, reins, and heart.? The body and its parts are instruments of the self, denoted by the Hebrew, and Greek pronouns *'ni, 'noki,* and *ego*.

In both the Old and New Testament the heart is uniquely the centre of self-conscious life and psychical activity (cf. Ps. 51; Rom. x. 9-i o) and is therefore equivalent to the mind or self. In Greek the immaterial part of man is the *psyche* (soul) and the *pneuma* (spirit).[8] Whether these are synonyms or two distinguishable yet vitally related aspects of the person continues to be vigorously debated. The biblical terms are nowadays usually understood to denote aspects of a unified bodily life, through which man is aware of himself, his environment and God. The uniqueness of man's spirit centres upon his being created in the image (*tselem*) and likeness (*demuth*) of God.[9] Both terms occur in Gen. i. 26 and v. 3, *tselem* in ix. 6, and *demuth* in v. i.

What the biblical terms mean for a modern Christian psychology and theology of man is uncertain. We are urged, properly I believe, to think of man as a psycho-physical whole. Nevertheless, I question that we have a sufficient theological grasp of the truth of the biblical terms for a modern understanding of man. It is not legitimate to intrude modern notions of personality into ancient patterns of thought, but the fear of doing this may be preventing us from seeing that ancient

[7]Other parts so used are the flesh, head, mouth, eye, nostrils, forehead, internal parts, marrow, blood, and belly (cf. A. R. Johnson, 1964) .
[8]All three Greek terms occur in I Thess. x. 23, while soul and spirit occur together in Heb. iv. 12.
[9]The later Greek and Latin equivalents are *eikon* and *homoiosis*, and *imago* and *similitudo*, respectively.

people thought of themselves as being individually personal much more fully than we have supposed.

We who stand within the Christian tradition tend not to fully appreciate how much its teaching has transformed our thought patterns on personhood. Nirad Chaudhuri says that the British brought new richness of life to India beyond

economics and politics through concepts which were previously unknown in Sanskrit and among Hindus. Of the six he cites, three are (a) the Christian idea that God is personal, (b) the idea that man as a personality is a thing of value in himself, and (c) the idea of love as a relationship between two people which is more than lust.[10]

If human personality originates in the creative act of God, awareness of our nature has grown within the context of God's self-revelation to men. Those times and places where men sensed that God was speaking and acting, especially when they were called to be his chosen instruments, are the classic instances through which the unique nature and destiny of man have been gradually more fully grasped. These occasions serve as the pattern of our undertanding that a personal relation between God and every man is the divine intention through grace, and that this relation carries with it the truth of the ,unique spiritual nature of man as a personal being. Key instances of God meeting man in the Old Testament include Abraham (Gen. xvii. 1-8; Jacob (Gen. xxviii. 13); Moses (Ex. iii. 6, 13-14); Joshua (i. 1-9) ; David (I Sam. xxiii. 4) ; Elijah (I Ki. xix. 9-18); Isaiah (vi.) ; and Jeremiah (i. 4-6). 'I am the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob' expresses this, not only for each of the patriarchs in succession, but also for the whole of Israel and ultimately for the whole human race.

That God is personal is for Christians best shown in the Incarnation of the eternal second person of the Trinity, which throws light not only on the triune nature of God but also on the nature of man under God. As one ponders the mystery of Christ's life it is possible to infer that the divine image for man is freedom, which is consistent with the idea of a conscious

[10]*The Listener* 78.2017, p. 664 (Nov. 23, 1967). The other three are patriotism, a purifying concept of Nature, and the idea of physical beauty.

purposing spiritual reality. The inference may also suggest that an important goal of God's working in creation, providence and redemption is freedom, i.e., a community of free good persons who live in fellowship with God and share his work.

Far from being simply an abstraction, freedom is historically revealed in the life of Jesus Christ who as the `second Adam' or `last man' is the divine paradigm, analogue, or pattern for man (Rom. v. 12-21). Christ exhibits in his life the true freedom of God's man which he brings us through his life, death, resurrection and gift of the Spirit. He says, `you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free ... so if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.' (John viii. 32, 36 R.V.). When this is coupled with `lo, I have come to do thy will, O God' we have the heart of freedom. It is exemplified in the Old Testament figure of the pierced ear of the voluntary slave (Ex. xxi. i-6). This image is carried forward to Ps. xl. 6-8 and Heb. x where it forms a bridge to the New Testament so as to show the inner Christological unity of the Bible. The pierced ear is the mark of the slave

who has publically and voluntarily pledged life-long devotion to his master.

Two preliminary points seem to be inferences from the biblical data. First, each man is a personal being who enjoys a self-conscious existence and is capable of purposeful action[11], He is a thinking, feeling and willing creature. We cannot

[11]Boethius (d. 525 A.D.) defined persona as `an individual substance of a rational nature' (*naturae rationalibus individua substantia*). *Individua substantia* is the latinization of *hypostasis*. I take it that Boethius' definition of persona converges upon two points, namely, individuality and rational nature. It should not be thought that language like *substantia* and *hypostasis* when applied to creatures ignores the world seen as developing process and that it expresses a static cross-section of it. The Cappadocian fathers were well aware of the danger of lifeless categories and ' they qualified their use of the ancient terms by dynamic concepts, including *energeia*. Thus the classical terminology is not necessarily materialistic, and we should not read back modern associations of the word substance into the classical and patristic uses. More recently Leonard Hodgson's definition of man parallels that of Boethius but it more realistically takes account of man's bodily life. Hodgson says, 'to be human is to be the conscious subject of experiences mediated through a particular body in space and time.'

arrive at a definition of man through a concept of his undifferentiated unity nor by reducing the distinctions within his nature to one or other of them, but neither dare we allow the distinctions to grow into divisions of man's nature. In the life of Christ we note his own self-conscious relation to the Father: `I come' is the correlative of 'thy will'. We can get nowhere in Christian theology unless individual selfhood is a permanent and non-reducible reality.

Second, the spiritual reality of the self seems to imply a psychical realm which includes God and spirits and which transcends the physical realm. The human parallel concerns the duality of mind and brain which some recent neurological opinion allows.[12]

God is Creator of both body and mind and He has sanctified both. The doctrine of the resurrection shows what value is placed by the Christian faith upon the body. The doctrine of the Christian life corroborates this truth because the bodily life of man is the material of which the spiritual life is built. The Christian view of man is not to be ultimately free of the body, but the daily self-offering of the whole man to God and the ultimate redemption of body and spirit together.

Human personality involves the activities of thinking, feeling and willing, but none of these occurs without involving the others. I suggest a four-fold way of understanding human nature. Man is a self, an intelligent self, a valuing self, and a purposing self, within the context of a bodily life.

[12]Note: J. C. Eccles (1953 and 1966); Ian Ramsey (1965), p.161; Wilder Penfield in *Control of the Mind* (ed. S. M. Farber and R. H. L. Wilson, 1961); W. H. Thorpe (1961); R. H. Thouless (1963); and Sir Cyril Burt, `Mind and Consciousness', in *The Scientist Speculates* (ed. I. J. Good, 1962). In each of these works argument is developed against the mechanistic or physicalistic view of man

and in favour of postulating an agent other than the mechanism itself. The tripartite view of man has recently come back into discussion in the work of H. H. Price, Ian Ramsey, and J. R. Smythies. The latter expresses this division as body (extended), mind (partly extended, e.g., visual and somatic sense-data and images and partly not, e.g., auditory and olfactory sense-data and images) and spirit (i.e., Pure Ego, the Witness, which is not extended at all but which is the essential core of the human personality), in *Biology and Personality*.

I. Man is a Self

To be a personal is to be a self which the pronoun `I' expresses as a commonplace of language. It would be wrong to make the commonplace incomprehensible. I take the self to be a non-reducible reality which we know ourselves and other selves to be by an immediate intuition. A person is not simply a unity of conscious experiences but the subject of that unity. He is a spiritual agent.

The scientific study of human behaviour tempts some to reduce mind to functions of the brain and the total person to functions of the body. Important advances have been made in exploring and charting the working of the human brain. Physiologically, thinking is based upon the patterned transfer of electro-chemical energy in the cerebral cortex and other related regions of the brain. Human behaviour when analysed at a given instant is a highly complex and multi-level reality, not only as to its complexity at a given close, but also as to the anterior processes which have produced it. These include thinking of which a person is consciously aware and also activity in the deeper parts of the brain and in the central nervous system which are not part of a man's conscious awareness. While many facts about the operation of the central nervous system are now known, we are no closer to being able to give a scientific account of self-conscious life. In the following extract W. Russell Brain describes perception as a physiological process:

The neurologist observes the brains of animals and of other people. From the behaviour of both and from the answers which patients give to his questions, he discovers that when an object is perceived, a series of events occurs successively in time, beginning with an event in the object and ending with an event in the subject's brain. If the series is interrupted at any point between the object and the cerebral cortex (brain surface) of the subject, the object is not perceived. If the relevant area of the cortex is destroyed, the object again is not perceived. But if the relevant area of the cortex is electrically stimulated while the subject is conscious, sense-data of the kind aroused by an object are perceived by the subject. Thus it is held that the event immediately preceding, or perhaps synchronous with, the perception of an object is an event of a physio-chemical kind in the subject's cerebral cortex. The cortical neurones are normally excited in the way

just described from the external world, but if they should exceptionally be excited in some other way - for example by electrical stimulation or by an epileptic discharge the appropriate sense-data would still be experienced. The only independently necessary condition for the awareness of

sense-data, to use Broad's term, is thus an event in the cerebral cortex.[13]

What is the status of mind in the light of such a scientific statement? Some recent views are: (a) Traditional dualism maintains a single, fundamental barrier between mind and body which view, Bertrand Russell[14] remarked, does have a basis on certain data of our experience. The modern dynamic view of matter and the neurological study of the brain have encouraged those who lean toward non-Cartesian dualism to discover ways in which mind and brain interact[15] (b) Bertrand Russell himself postulates two kinds of space, that of physics and that of perception, though he understands man's nature in wholly materialistic ways.[16] (c) Further variations of materialism are Behaviourism, like that of J. B. Watson who rejected mind as an unnecessary element in describing human nature similar to William James's rejection of consciousness, and Gilbert Ryle who reduces mind to predictable activity and jettisons the inner world of private perceptions. (d) Arthur Koestler postulates the ego-environment dichotomy in a serialistic not single way so that at its upward end the hierarchy is openended or infinite.[17] (e) W. Russell Brain holds a monistic view. He sees mind and brain as two aspects of one reality and expresses the faith that new knowledge will likely be able to explain mental activity in terms of physics and chemistry.[18]

[13] W. Russell Brain (1951), p. 4; cf. p. 72-73
[14] Bertrand Russell, *Human Knowledge. Its Scope and Limits*, 1948, p. 217
[15] cf. J. C. Eccles (1953 and 1965), J. R. Smythies (1956) and H. Kuhlenbeck (1961).
[16]Bertrand Russell, *Op. cit*.
[17] Arthur Koestler (1967), pp. 208-219. cf. J. Bronowski (1967), p. 17.
[18]W. Russell Brain (1966), pp. 79-80, cf. pp. 51, 97-98. Lord Brain discusses consciousness and the unconscious briefly (pp. 70-72, 74-76, 78), but I have not found a discussion of the meaning of self-consciousness in this or in his earlier books.

Does a neurological account of perception furnish an adequate statement of the nature of mind and by implication of the self? I do not think that we can ever escape from the reality of the self or ego as a primary datum of experience. My conviction of this truth is "reinforced by the logic of scientific accounts such as the one which I cited from Lord Brain. Some comment on this is needed.

First, we note the frequent occurrence of personal pronouns as the subject of actions. In my judgment this points to the self as an existing reality which can grasp the meaning of things in the manner described by Lord Brain and which is also able to initiate courses of action purposefully. In The Nature of Experience (1959) Brain says, `what I have just been giving you is a scientific account of what goes on in the nervous system when we perceive something,' (p. 8). To me such language shows how difficult it is to escape from the truth of the reality of the person who is more than the observable phenomena. The self intrudes into language patterns not simply out of habit, but because it is impossible to speak humanly without the reality of our personality showing itself. The intrusion is not

simply verbal but logical. The matrix calls for it; indeed, the sense would vanish without the reality of the self.[19]

[19']I used to regard the gulf between mind and matter as an innate belief. I am quite ready now to admit that I may have acquired it at school or later. But I find it more difficult to regard my ego as having such a second-hand basis. I am much more certain that I exist than that mind and matter are different.' E. D. Adrian, in J. C. Eccles (ed.), 1966, cf. also D. M. MacKay, *Ibid*., pp. 252-253; W. Kneale (1962); John Beloff (1962); J. R. Smythies, in I. Ramsey (ed.) 1965; and H. Kuhlenbeck (1961), pp. 1, 114-115, 122. A. J. Ayer makes the personal subject `literally identical with that to which we also attribute physical properties. If we ask what this subject is, the only correct answer is just that it is a person.' He admits that no solution has yet been found to the problem of how discrete experiences which are separated in time are nevertheless the experiences of the same self. The logical difficulties one faces when attempting to avoid that the discrete self is not identical with the physical attributes may be illustrated also from his language, 'these particular experiences can then be identified as the experiences of the person *whose* body it is.' (Italics mine. *The Concept of a Person* (1963), pp. 85-86, 113-114, 117).

Second, the foregoing is reinforced by the fact that Lord Brain uses the term `subject' in more than one way. To speak of interrupting a series of events which occur between an object and the `cerebral cortex of the subject' is a different use of the term subject from that where he talks of an object `perceived by the subject.' In the first, `subject' is used in the sense of a creature who is the object of scientific study and in this sense the use is indistinguishable whether it be of an experimental animal or of a man; whereas in the second, `subject' is used in the sense of the conscious person. This difference is also shown by the distinction implicit in his opening remark where he says that the neurologist observes the brains of animals and people (here they are both objects of scientific study so far as their behavioural responses are concerned); and then adds `and from the answers which patients give.' This last is a statement about and data of the reality of the self as more than the behavioural responses. I feel that the term subject is used by Brain in the sense (a) object of study, and (b) discrete personal reality.

Third, Lord Brain refers to the production of sense data and motor responses by artificial electric stimulation of certain cortical areas. Although the sense-data can be artificially produced they are nevertheless experienced as the appropriate sense-data. Does this furnish a sufficient account of mind and personality as extrapolated solely on the basis of electrochemical discharges in the brain? The experiments conducted by Wilder Penfield of McGill University in Montreal yield important qualifying data.[20] Using conscious patients, Penfield has artificially stimulated selected areas of the cerebral cortex by means of low-voltage currents. Because the cortex is insensitive, the patient does not feel the current, but he is aware of the movements which the current causes him to make. Penfield says:

When the neurosurgeon applies an electrode to the motor area of the patient's cerebral cortex causing the opposite hand to move, and when he asks the patient why he moved the hand, the response is: `I didn't do it. You made me do it.' . . . It may be said that the patient thinks of himself as having an existence separate from his body.

[20]Wilder Penfield in *Control of the Mind* (eds. Farber and Wilson, 1961). Cited by Arthur Koestler, *The Ghost in the Machine* (1967), pp. 203-204.

Then follows an attempt by the patient to regain control of those motor responses which were not his own:

> Once when I warned such a patient of my intention to stimulate the motor areas of the cortex, and challenged him to keep his hand from moving when the electrode was applied, he seized it with the other hand and struggled to hold it still. Thus, one hand, under the control of the right hemisphere driven by an electrode, and the other hand, which he controlled through the left hemisphere, were caused to struggle against each other. Behind the `brain action' of one hemisphere was the patient's mind. Behind the action of the other hemisphere was the electrode.

Penfield concludes on his demonstration as follows:

> There are, as you see, many demonstrable mechanisms [in the brain]. They work for the purposes of the mind automatically when called upon ... These mechanisms that we have begun to understand constitute part, at least, of the physiological basis of the mind. But what agency is it that calls upon these mechanisms, choosing one rather than another? Is it another mechanism or is there in the mind something of different essence? ... To declare that these two things are one does not make them so. But it does block the progress of research.

Thus when Lord Brain says that `mind is the function by which the living organism reacts to its environment,[21] one feels compelled to qualify this statement by his other comment that personality comprises a pattern like other energy patterns in nature but in some mysterious way it possesses a life of its own.[22]

My fourth comment departs from Lord Brain's paragraph. The conscious subject with its freedom of choice and sense of responsibility for choices is a primary datum of experience which has no valid alternative in our limited attempts to apprehend man's essential nature. When we jettison the personal reality to which personal language points we end up with curious results. The full-fledged application of the behaviourist motif to human nature as a rubric into which the personal

[21] W. Russell Brain (1966), p. 80.
[22] W. Russell Brain (1951), p. 70.

reality and purposive intention are telescoped as mechanical reflexes, produces a highly comic effect. What would be gained, Williams asks, by saying:

The Bavarian peasant made the emotive sound of "Ich liebe dich," or "George displayed the pre-copulation ritual to Bill's mate, but was inhibited by Bill's appeasement posture." [23]

Koestler also cites the lengths to which behaviourist predilection can go when accounting for the language of the self. The following is from a contemporary American College textbook and it is offered by the authors as the essence of the scientific approach to the nature of human discourse:

Once the psychologist discovers the principles of learning for simpler phenomena under the more ideal conditions of the laboratory, it is likely that he can apply these principles to the more complex activities as they occur in everyday life. The more complex phenomena are, after all, nothing but a series of simpler responses. Speaking to a friend is a good example of this. Suppose we have a conversation such as the following:

He: `What time is it?'
She: `Twelve o'clock.'
He: `Thank you.'
She: `Don't mention it.'
He: `How about lunch?'
She: `Fine.'

Now this conversation can be analysed into separate SR units. `He' makes the first response, which is emitted probably to the stimulus of the sight of `She'. When `He' emits the operant, `What time is it?', the muscular activity, of course, produces a sound, which also serves as a stimulus for `She'. On the receipt of this stimulus, she emits an operant herself: `Twelve o'clock', which in turn produces a stimulus to `He', and so on ...

In such complex activity, then, we can see that what we really have is a series of SR connections. The phenomenon of connecting a series of such SR units is known as chaining, a process that should be apparent in any complex activity. [24]

[23] Leonard Williams (1967), p. 54
[24] F. J. McGuigan, `Learning, Retention and Motivation,' in *Psychology* (ed. A. D. Calvin, 1961), p. 375. Cited by A. Koestler (1964), pp. 603-604

The unity of the self is made up in part of the linkage by memory of its conscious states and by the preservation of the continuity of that awareness through a lifetime, which includes spanning periods of unconsciousness due to sleep, anaesthesia, and other causes. The self is known in the immediacy of one's own intuition and in personal relations where there occurs reaching out to the personality of another. The self cannot, be observed in the way in which ordinary phenomena are observed. The mind is a private world but it is nevertheless one which can be made public by the agent himself. It is the public character of the agent's communication about his external world, as well as of his inner life including his purpose to act, which given to the self its empirical status and which demands for it recognition as a fact of experience. The self furnishes its own empirical criteria which are a part of its being truly known.

Most Christians agree that so far as we know a human self is complete only in a

bodily life. A person is a spiritual agent which term points to the powers of his bodily life to act, and acts have to be somewhere. While he is spirit, this does not imply for man the goal of escaping embodiment in matter. On the contrary man is called upon by God to spiritualize his bodily life, i.e., to conduct it in accordance with conscious, intelligent, and beneficent purposes. An aspect of this bodily life is its affective side. The feelings are not a segment of personality or divisible from it, but function as perceptors of the mind through the brain, and from the mind to the brain and body as expressions of kindly or other feeling. Consciousness includes awareness of one's self as existing. Our emotional and perceptual experiences include this same awareness at successive stages of remove from this immediate intuition. We are aware of our self in emotional states such as love, happiness, or anger; or, as a self of having sensations of discomfort such as a stomach ache or a headache. But contact with objects, or with conditions or changes in our environment yield the awareness that the things we sense are not ourselves. Awareness of the self is a different awareness than awareness of objects which are beyond us, and in being aware of objects we are aware also of the self being aware of objects.

The various forms of relation point to a dynamic conception of the self and of the image of God for it. We experience relations which are to varying degrees personal: (a) a mutually impersonal relation is like that of stone striking stone; (b) a one-sidedly personal one is like that of a man striking a nail; and (c) a mutually personal one is like that of two persons conversing. But persons are to varying degrees personal depending upon their relationship to God as well as to one another. We have a distinctive character that is an index of our self-identity, but for Christians the pattern for this character is given historically in the Incarnate Lord who in the perfection of his spirituality knew fully what he did. In Christian faith is involved a heightening of personal distinctness and awareness not the absorption of personality, as the doctrines of the Incarnation and the Trinity imply.

II. Man is an Intelligent Self

While rationalism is obviously not the basis of the biblical revelation, this trite saying obscures that the biblical message is everywhere a rational appeal to intelligent beings. To be sure, it is more than this. It is a moral and emotional appeal as well; none the less, it cannot be less than an appeal to creatures with minds.

In the Old Testament the wisdom literature, especially the Book of Proverbs, is a well-known example of this. It appeals to common sense and understanding (Prov. i. 2-6) as much as to spiritual insight which derives from God (v. 7). These are two sides of one coin. To many theologians Wisdom in Proverbs viii. is a double *entendre*: it has the force not only of spiritual insight, but also personal or messianic overtones analogous to the Logos figure of the Fourth Gospel. The

historical and other materials of the Bible are equally an appeal to the mind. Elijah’s satirizing of the Baal prophets on Carmel indicts the irrationality of idolatry (I Kings xviii. 27). An identical satirical take-off on the illogicality of idol making and worship

is found in Is. xliv. 14-18. My point (which needs no defence or justification because it is obvious) is made in Is. i. 3, `the ox knows its master, and the ass its master's crib; but Israel does not know, my people does not understand.' What animals know instinctively, men ought to grasp better because they are creatures having intelligence. This neither makes revelation and reason antithetical nor does it base revelation upon reason; it simply states that man is a creature capable of rational thought. The revelation is addressed to creatures who are rationally capable of grasping it.

In the New Testament a parallel to Is. i. 3 is Lu. xii. 56-57, `you hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of earth and sky; but why do you not know how to interpret the present time? And why do you not judge for yourselves what is right?' It is reasonable to conclude that power and authority to forgive sins is equivalent to power and authority to heal (Lu. v. 23), Jesus points out. While Paul argued in a rational fashion about justice, self-control and future judgment Felix became convicted in his own heart (Acts xxiv. 25). The inference one draws from seeing a house is that it had a builder (Heb. iii. 4). Paul's attack upon the wisdom of the world in I Cor. i. 2 is in no sense an attack upon intelligence but upon the abuse of reason. The wisdom of the world and the foolishness of God are conflicting viewpoints, but the foolishness of God in the Cross comprises an intelligible whole which reflects God's wisdom when seen in its true light.

Behaviourists vigorously oppose philosophical rationalism, but this attitude spills over into denigration of intelligence which is expressed in highly rationalistic ways. For them habit-formation not intelligence is the essence of mental progress. Novel ideas do not occur as insights grasped by creative minds, but are simply lucky hits among random tries, which are then repeated because they are useful, usually in a biologically satisfying way. Nevertheless, most naturalists today hold to the primary role of intelligence for man's contemporary life and for his future.

We may regard the brain as a machine which operates in accordance with the known laws of physics and chemistry, but the machine view of the brain does not adequately account for

the mind which is the spiritual agent or self. We do not know nature of mind, nor how the brain affects the mind in perception nor how the mind affects the brain in

willed action. However, Eccles thinks that the delicate and complex neuronal net of the brain in which a very tiny impulse can be inherently accelerated and magnified in the network is the kind of system with which such interaction could take place.[25] A logical condition of defining intelligence is circularity we cannot define it without employing it in our definition, just as we cannot even commence thinking rationally about our universe without assuming that it is a universe in which things make sense. Intelligence is the power of rational thought. It is our ability to deduce or to induce conclusions from evidence. It is a process of thought by which truth is grasped. It is the power of mind capable of adapting rational acts to ends and is in this sense an ability, more or less, which man shares in common with other creatures. Aristotle comments that Anaxagoras was like a sane man in relation to the haphazard comments of his contemporaries because he was the first among the ancient Greeks to introduce the concept of mind into philosophy.

Thinking is not a simple, uncomplicated process. The role of the unconscious as the seedbed of new ideas has yet to be more fully investigated. We are all swamped by restricting habits of thought which must somehow be by-passed. The inspiration of a novel idea often comes like a flash of insight. Even in abstract disciplines such as physics crucial theoretical advances occur as the result of intuitive creative imagination rather than by deduction. Examples can be cited, including the work of Max Planck.

We cannot ignore the role of conditioning in mental processes, which establish frames of reference as habits of thought in terms of which we see the world as a coherent and meaningful pattern. Habituation and the functions of the lower human brain in relation to the upper parts of the brain must be taken into account but they become meaningful only to a personal

[25] J .C. Eccles (1953), pp. 281-285.

intelligence. Intelligence is not solely cold, deductive reasoning. It is a highly fluid and imaginative activity.

The importance of imagination to human progress in the creation and development of the arts, and in the discovery of new ideas in science and philosophy is firmly established and widely acknowledged. But imagination can never be sheer flight of fancy else it ends in fantasy. Mankind has been led into grievous errors by his flights into unreason. History shows that imagination uncontrolled by reason has propelled mankind into tragedy, as in the irrational religious mythologies of the ancient civilizations or in the more recent doctrines which have shaped social, religious and political life such as the divine right of kings, the infallibility of the Pope, the Marxist theory of the relentless course of history independent of the human will, or the Nazi doctrine of the master race.

Imagination is crucial to human creative activity because no progress is made by purely logical steps, essential as these are. In the drama or novel the author mirrors life. The people and events which he creates by his imagination are often not real, or they are only partly historical, but the effect is of real life which can be rationally apprehended. The scientist is confronted by a vast array of facts which must somehow yield a frame of reference but no pre-set rules exist on how to arrive at the key-feature of the pattern. Nevertheless, the solution is not an irrational one. He must sense in at least a tenuous or preliminary way an intelligible pattern which yields an hypothesis to account for the pattern. This he proceeds to test. Literature is not simply a factual enumeration of the details of life and neither is science a simple listing of the facts of nature. They both demand the imaginative ordering or grouping of facts into intelligible patterns which involves a strong personal element. But this is a process of reason not of unreason for the creative flights of imagination are functions of intelligence, though they may easily fall into unreason.

Intelligence involves a free ranging activity of observing one's own life and the world around. Intelligent activity is exploration, observation, noting and taking account of what is around us. The higher primates and man have the capacity to be visually and dextrously curious about factual detail and

not primarily olfactorily, as are dogs. Correlation of hard, factual work and free-ranging imagination is a part of all creative achievement. Between the two occurs a period of incubation in which is generated the flash of inspiration. The whole creative process is a struggle of intelligence which often is guided by what seems to be only a hunch or an aesthetic sense of beauty or harmony somehow to be achieved.[26]

To speak of intelligence as the crown of man should not be understood as deification of reason. I do not say that one develops skill in understanding or in living simply by the acquisition of logical tools. It is dangerous to leave any one of us alone with a discipline so that it becomes a distorting obsession. As thinking beings we are concerned not only with creative advance or new discoveries about nature, but also with the logic of life, with imaginative insight as to how all that we create can be used. There is a connection between morality and our apprehension of truth because to grasp truth is not a purely intellectual act but a moral act also. Scientific progress depends upon moral commitment to truth. To be a good scientist a man must be an honest scientist, as the Piltdown Man hoax points out sharply. In his well-known aphorism P. T. Forsyth remarked that the truth we see depends upon the men we are. Response to evidence involves a moral commitment to the truth and to act on the basis of the truth involves a moral commitment to do what is right. In the New Testament the natural man who is conditioned by the wisdom of this world is contrasted not with a Christian who is

intellectually obtuse but with the man of the Spirit who has the mind of Christ (I Cor. ii. 16; cf. Eph. i. 17-18; Col. i. 9).

III. Man is a Valuing Self

It sounds odd to argue that man is a moral creature in the sense of being responsibly moral or responsible to the moral

[26]John Beloff thinks we cannot ultimately reduce mind to cybernetics, though he sees this as the most serious challenge to mind, because of three reasons: (a) lack of plausibility with respect to the facts of creative originality, (b) inadequacy to account for meaning and intention, and (c) inability to do justice to the unspecifiable component of human thought (1962, pp. 124-125).

law in view of the profound revolution on morals which we are undergoing in western society. In our time man is viewed ethologically in terms of mores not morals. This trend is based upon a powerful surge of naturalist sentiment. When one presses beyond inflammatory clich6s like `Victorian morality' and `otherworldly ideas' which are contrasted with an allegedly scientific view of man, one discovers a fundamental rejection of any theistic premise and of its corollary, normative ethics. Is man not only biologically but also morally no different from other creatures, or does selfhood include a moral dimension which makes of him a valuing creature in a sense beyond that of values being motor affective responses? Present trends are generating a resurgence of egocentric behaviour which is articulated in behavioural-biological terminology.

In his address to the British Psycho-Analytical Society in 1965 the chief justice Lord Devlin said : [27]

There is no doubt, surely, that a sense of guilt about some things at any rate, exists in most human minds. I imagine that a great part of the time of psychoanalysts is spent in tracing mental aberrations back to irrational feelings of guilt. It is something that exists as a fact, and itis with its existence as a fact -something that exists in the human mind - that I want to deal here. There are those who hold that as there is no such thing as free will, there can be no justification for a sense of guilt.

The sense of guilt depends on a sense of right and wrong and I believe that when we talk about a common sense of right and wrong we mean more than mores. I refer to the moral law which is a condition of personal life in the world. To talk about the moral law is not the same as to talk about traditional morals, though these two things are related. There is a moral order which determines the nature of human selfhood and which, for Christians, comprises the life. blood of the, community of persons in which God and man share their lives.

The rejection of normative morality derives not only from the behaviourist oriented approach to human nature but also from the depth approach associated

with the name of Freud. Mowrer, a recent president of the American Psychological

[27]*The Listener*, 25th March, 1965, p. 438.

Association, challenges the Freudian reversal of the meaning of conscience which has profoundly influenced pastoral psychology studies for a generation:

> At the very time when psychologists are becoming distrustful of the sickness approach to personality disturbance and are beginning to look with more benign interest and respect toward certain moral and religious precepts, religionists themselves are being caught up in and bedazzled by the same preposterous system of thought as that from which we psychologists are just recovering.[28]

Mowrer contrasts ‘guilt’ and ‘impulse’ theories of anxiety as follows. Freud’s theory, in brief, holds that anxiety derives from evil wishes which the individual would commit but which he dares not commit. Mowrer’s alternative is the guilt theory of anxiety, namely, that it derives not from acts which the individual would commit but dares not, but from acts which he has committed but wishes he had not.[29] Later he wonders whether we have lost faith in God because we have lost faith in conscience.[30] Thus a new look is being taken at distortions of the nature of sin and guilt.

At issue is more than relative standards of traditional moral behaviour. The ethological approach to human conduct is an indispensable tool to our enlarged understanding of man. The question is, can all that man is be accounted for ethologically? Is man a moral creature and related to his fellow men and to God in moral ways which are more than habit formed reactions to stimuli ?

Let us approach this question from within the citadel of the naturalistic perspective on value in order to ascertain how normative values like goodness and love are handled. For John Dewey thought and valuation arise only in problem situations.[31] They originate in the biological matrix of the

[28]O. H. Mowrer, *The Crisis in Psychiatry and Religion* (1961), p. 52.
[29]*Ibid*., p. 26.
[30]*Ibid*., p. 37. He quotes A. T. Boisen, ‘my observation is that the patient who condemns himself, even to the point of thinking he has committed the unpardonable sin, is likely to get well. It is the patient who blames others who does not get well.’
[31]John Dewey, *Theory of Valuati*on (1939).

organism's relationship to its environment where intellectual activity and

valuation are instruments for securing satisfaction of need. Values relate to means employed to achieve ends. Hence, that is good which promotes or furthers a course of activity, and right in the sense of being inherently connected with that which is needed. The converse meaning is applied to the meanings of bad and wrong.

R. B. Perry's argument is similar. He defines value as interest, which expresses for him the motor-affective responses of organisms. Interest includes instinct, desire, feeling, will, and all their states, acts, and attitudes.[32] After examining various combinations of value and interest, Perry concludes that value is `any object of any interest'. Value is the motoraffective response of the organism to objects of interest in its environment, so that a sufficient account of value requires a precise account of interest. At this point Perry introduces a scale which norms interest but which cannot derive from the motor-affective response base from which he professes to work. He says that interest should be judged by its correctness, intensity, preference, and inclusiveness. He defines moral good in terms of comprehensiveness or commensurability of interest. It is achievement of an all-inclusive harmony of interests. Personal interest must be submerged to universal benevolence which works toward universal harmony.[33]

How can the interest of others become one's own interest in a system where value is simply the motor-affective response of organism? Unresolved tension between egoism and altruism remains. Perry pleads that a situation where one outsider and the million are happy is better than just the million being happy. A harmonious society is to be found in love or benevolence.[34] Similarly Dewey was deeply concerned about the needy millions of people in India. How does one move from the egocentric behaviour of an organism natively satisfying its needs from the environment to the premise that it ought to be concerned about the interests of another organism? This

[32] R. B. Perry, *General Theory of Value (1926),* p. 27
[33] *Ibid.,* p. 669.
[34] *Ibid.,* p. 676.

is to ask again whether ethics can be built successfully upon a non-ethical footing. Naturalism does not furnish a rational justification of altruism on its behaviour-biological view of man and of value.

In saying that man is a moral self I mean that we share a common sense of right and wrong and a common sense that it is always better to do right than to do wrong. The sense of guilt depends upon our being affected by the difference between right and wrong. Can we conceive of a situation where men organize a society on the basis that it is always better to do wrong rather than right? To re-define the words ‘good’ and ‘right’ and ‘bad’ and ‘wrong’ to mean respectively what is useful to satisfy me or not is thereby to pre-empt the words of meaning

which remains none the less. ‘Good’ and ‘right’ stand for values which are above my interests and modes of satisfaction. Can anything be wrong with genocide on the naturalist’s premise? If that is ‘right’ which conduces to satisfaction of my need then men are expendable to the achievement of that satisfaction as the Nazis claimed, and genocide therefore becomes ‘right’. I agree with Lord Devlin that a sense of guilt is indispensable to maintaining order in human society and would add that guilt is established by the moral law which is an essential constituent of the world order under God. Without it we would cease to be human. Lord Devlin says:

> I would therefore conclude that a sense of guilt is a necessary factor for the maintenance of order, and indeed that it plays a much more important part in the preservation of order than any punishment that the state can impose. If, with the wave of a psycho-analytical wand, you could tomorrow completely abolish the sense of guilt in the human mind, it would cause, I think it is no exaggeration to say, an almost instantaneous collapse of law and order.[35]

I can illustrate this from the contemporary Marxist, Milovan Djilas. In his novel *Montenegro* he grapples with the problem of the collapse of his own political ideal. Despite his naturalistic assumptions he cannot escape the moral issue and the force of

[35]*The Listener*, Ist April, 1965, p. 480.

moral good. Djilas puts the following words on the lips of the key character, Milos, who tomorrow morning will be hanged as a Serbian patriot by the Austrians:

> The footsteps continued to drip. In books there is always a dripping of water before an execution. And the beating of drums. They'll beat for me, too, to announce my death, to measure out the time, the time of our emergence onto the stage of Europe and the world, the time of my hanging.
>
> But I have not many sins. I use the word `sin' as if I were religious. But the expression isn't important. We atheists, for that matter, haven't yet invented a substitute for it. The idea is important. It is important what I think -- if I can still think. I don't really believe in sin, yet I remember mine as if I were a believer, and a devout believer at that. My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? Christ on the Cross in his last moments. Ha! I may become a Christian yet.[36]

The moral law is described in Scripture as the righteousness of God. God's holiness is first his majestic, transcendent separateness from his creatures (Is. vi. 1-3; Hos. xi. 9). He is the Holy One of Israel. Second, it means his ethical perfection as the moral law-giver of the universe (Is. v. 16; I Pet. ii. 9).

The righteousness of God is more than moral rectitude or justice because it includes grace. Jesus summarized the meaning of the divine righteousness as more than justice (Mt. v. 20). Justice is an essential and fundamental demand of

the law, but God's own righteousness, which according to Paul is `apart from the law', includes justification of the sinner. In Romans i. 16-17 the power of the Gospel of Christ saves men through righteousness working by grace. This dimension of love as a part of righteousness is what makes the Christian message so distinctive. Christ did not merely fulfill the law. To be sure, he did fulfill it perfectly, but his righteousness surpassed that of an eye for an eye, or love reciprocating love (Mt. v. 38, 46). It did not give to men what was their due rectorally but absorbed judgment through grace so that they might receive justification through forgiveness (Rom. iii. 21-26). The righteousness of God is the norm which must judge men

[36]London, 1964, p. 245.

rectorally (Rom. i. 18-19; iii. 19-20). It is the condition of moral, personal life. But in the Christian revelation it includes the freedom of God to love and redeem the sinner by means of grace which exhibits the unique' character of that righteousness.

That man is a moral creature does not diminish the importance of his ethological study, it rather magnifies that importance. But a distinction needs to be made between moral law and mores, between righteousness and traditional morals. The conscience more or less accurately attests the moral law. Conscience gets its content from outside itself, hence it can be developed and conditioned in various ways even to approving of evil. But it recognizes a universal moral order to which it stands related. The moral law is a condition of discrete spiritual life's existing. It is the foundation of the ethical relations among men and of those between man and God. The moral law has its life in God. It derives from God but does not stand above Him. If we reject the moral law then the meaning of right and wrong collapses and, for Christians, such concepts as righteousness, sin and forgiveness are rendered meaningless. The final sanction of conduct is that it represents a righteousness unto God.

IV. Man is a Purposing Self

As an individual personal reality man is capable of conscious, free, purposeful action. This action utilizes both the casual dependability and the contingency which we observe in the world order. Plato said that man is a self-moved creature who acts in relation to certain ideals. Man's nature and actions register the use of qualified freedom but for the Christian they point to more perfect freedom where all man's acts will be under the control of a morally and spiritually oriented intelligence.

The doctrine that man's mental development is the result of successful random

tries is a derivative of the doctrine that man and all other organisms respond to their environment by conditioned reflex activity. In this view the initiative derives from the environment. The organism's chief end is to develop passive-response techniques which keep it in a state of problem-

free euphoria. The cycle is repeated endlessly every time the equilibrium is disturbed. Needs or problems generate response. Some organisms adapt effectively, others fail to do so. By natural selection those which fail to adapt are weeded out. In this way the myths of freedom and of purpose are discarded.

In his novel *Walden Two*, B. F. Skinner develops the theme of a behaviourist utopia. The mythical community is set in the American north-east and furnishes for its inhabitants a completely controlled environment, including their thoughts, habits and satisfaction of needs. Recourse to individual initiative therefore is regarded as harmful. Skinner has made his point crystal clear : he looks forward to the creation of a society where the idea of freedom will be only a bad dream, if it is allowed to be remembered at all. Skinner aims to control and predict all human behaviour just like natural phenomena.

We are, I believe, compelled to allow for contingency and freedom as real aspects of our experience and of the world order. All sane men assume that they have the ability to control or to modify their own actions by willing to do so and that they have the power to exercise control over the direction of events under given conditions. There is no scientific basis for denying the freedom of the will, which must be assumed if indeed we have the power to investigate our world intelligently and to act in purposeful ways. There is a difference between unaware habituated activity and sources of inspiration of which we are not fully aware which quicken creative activity. Habituated acts derive from constant repetition or pressure from above which establishes patterns of electro-chemical response. These can be simple or complicated such as the skill of driving a car or of touch typewriting. But in creative activity there is pressure from within the mind to break out through and beyond the barriers which conditioning has imposed upon our ways of acting and of seeing things. This is far different from habituated patterns of even skilled activity.

I should not be understood as being opposed to the principle of habituation but only to its misuse in mechanizing man and denying to him freedom and creativity. Our experience I believe demands a view which will combine the idea of a dependable world order (expressed roughly in the idea of cause

and effect) with the reality of contingency and the resultant place for freedom which contingency affords. To be sure, Christians have tended to ignore the force of the habituation principle as an explanation for certain kinds of behaviour, but I do not think that this charge can be laid against certain biblical teaching, notably its doctrine of sin. If, on one side, sin involves the conception of freedom and moral responsibility for the use of that freedom then, on the other, the doctrine of sin reinforces the conception of a dependable world. The habituating effects of sin on the body and on the spirit of man are everywhere warned against in Scripture. Paul says, `all things are lawful to me, but I will not be brought under the power of any' (I Cor. vi. I2).

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Personal life spiritually qualified has a capacity for purposeful creative activity. Sheer intellectual brilliance, as in the case of a child prodigy who is a mathematical wizard, is not the apex of manhood's achievement. This is expressed better by a concept of the capacity for creative imagination combined with a feeling for life. It is to know the nature and value of life and to harness the powers of life for good. Related to this is man's ability to grasp the meaning of time and to make it his own. Man is able to think out of time, out of the present moment to the past, and to relate both to the future.

To be personal includes the power to choose between kinds of action, i.e., whether to choose to act with increasing freedom or to choose to act in such ways as increase habituation and hence limit freedom of action. One can also opt for habituated acts which constitute an increase of freedom. The higher the spirituality of personal life the less causally predictable are its choices, because as the spirituality of life increases its choices refer less to the antecedents of action and more to moral goals in relation to which decisions are taken.

The terror of our moral life is that we are responsible for the ways in which we condition ourselves. The terms 'thy law' and `my heart' in the Christologically interpreted text to which I referred point in part to the causal and volitional elements of our experience. The dependable world of which we are a part is real, and our choices which can determine whether things go this way or that are real. We are responsible for

the right use of life but once we have made choices we cannot always control the course of events which ensues. This is due to our inability to see the ends of our actions fully and clearly.

For men as spiritual beings the world should become increasingly transparent to thought. Then we will know more fully what the effects of our choices are and will therefore be able to make them with greater freedom. In our Lord's life we note his self-conscious purpose to do the Father's will: `neither came I of myself, but he sent me' (John viii. 42; vii. 28-29). This purpose issues from an inner core

of righteousness where knowledge of the will of God and positive response to that will unite: `my meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work' (John iv. 34). Our Lord's life powers and the powers of the world around him were put into captivity to the will of the Father. He knew fully what he did : `the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me' (John v. 36; ix. 4).

The Christian doctrine of grace is relevant to our discussion at this point because grace means that the relations between God and the world are personal and moral. Through grace God remains God and man can be free. The Christian revelation claims in part that God is fashioning a race of free men and women who in co-operation with their Maker will maximize goodness in the universe. Men are value-creating creatures. Their acts should increase not decrease freedom.

The uneasy tension between man's lower and higher self will not, I believe, be cured by chemical means alone, though we look forward to the day when more is known and more can be done about man's brain and some of his tendencies. Fundamentally, man needs a transformation of his inner life. In Christ this redemption is provided by God not only through the death on the Cross but also in the perfection of our Lord's normative humanity. To be truly spiritual involves the capacity to decide rightly. Put into common language it means knowing fully what one is doing. This calls for an increase of our scientific knowledge of the world as well as for the redemption and re-direction of our capacities and interests so as to use all our knowledge according to God's will.

Conclusion

The individual person exists only in community with other persons. Our personality is in part the product of interpersonal relations, therefore our liberty must be subsumed under the laws of God to have regard for the use of the world and of our relations with others for the highest ends. This is in part the significance of the one and the many in the Church conceived of as ecclesia and as soma. In the New Testament there are no granular Christians because they are all members of a body which functions under Christ its head. The same applies to the highest levels of interdependent family life (Eph. v. 22-33). Interdependent personal life is expressed in Scripture ultimately in the trinitarian life of God which life Christians are called to share. The prayer of our Lord in John xvii. concerns distinct selves in the unity of interdependent life. Here I find the clearest biblical definition of unity which also demands full recognition of the ultimate value of discrete personal life: `I in them and thou in me, that they may be perfect in one ... that they may all be one; as thou, Father, are in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us.'

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SUPPLEMENTARY MEMO
to students beginning the study of Christian Theology:

The essay which follows was an attempt early in my theological studies to write on a critical issue: the knowledge of God and the attributes of God. Today I would frame the issue differently. It is not clear to me that we should say, as both Barth and Brunner appear to say, that the Bible gives us credible witness to divine confrontation, not statements which disclose the essential nature of God. Only God can reveal God, the aphorism goes. But, does God reveal, or, has God revealed information about himself? How are we to understand the biblical format as to knowledge of God's nature?

At bottom it is not possible to have knowledge of God without knowledge about God because true knowledge of the true and living God is knowledge of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ – and this we know historically. Language functions to convey truths about the essential nature of God. The truths written are the form the eternal realities take.

Argument that the essential divine nature is totally veiled leads to uncertainty that any positive statement can be made about the divine attributes on grounds that the aseity and simplicity of God will be threatened. In the case of Crisis Theology, denial that God has disclosed divinely inspired truths about his nature leads to identifying God with his actions. The result is to exclude any essential knowledge of God. It constitutes a re-definition of the biblical revelation which becomes testimonies to immediate, episodic confrontations, but do these confrontations convey no truths?

In this early attempt to comment on the issue, I had thought that to overcome the essence-attributes disjunction which is inherent in medieval thought, which attempts to shield the impenetrable divine reality, one should, as Barth and Brunner say, identify the being of God with the totality of his actions. However, reflection on the biblical form of God's revelation as self-revelation conceptually and verbally communicated, undercuts such Nominalism as not good enough.

If the hidden God can become incarnate and this does not jeopardize his aseity or his simplicity, why can he not disclose truths about himself in propositional form? Such a thesis cannot cope, for example, with the plain biblical statement that "God is love." Surely this proposition is axiomatic, but it has been not at all self-evident to philosophers of the Idealist traditions and Plato, for one, goes out of his way to deny attribution of such a thing to the impassible Good. Is the proposition that God is love true? Is it true only in the sense that God's actions show love? Or, is it true as to the essential nature of God, and if one deems it to be merely analogical, of what is it analogical, and is it true that it is analogical in precisely the way that warrants the statement that God is love?

Oceanside, CA, July 2003

SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF GOD

by SAMUEL J. MIKOLASKI

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HOW IS GOD KNOWN ? This important question stands behind the whole of our Christian faith, and the answer to it provides the fundamental distinction between the Biblical and secular philosophical approaches.

The answer in a nutshell is simply this: the Scriptures claim that God has revealed Himself in a way more direct than in nature and man God has not only *done* something, but He has *said* something. On the other hand, the philosophical approach posits an abstract principle arrived at by speculation, for which a philosopher must find a name. The Biblical view witnesses to the fact that "God has spoken" and to a strong "Thus saith the Lord;" whereas the concept of a God in philosophical systems is introduced to "save significance for" or to "give coherence to" a system. Christianity does not introduce a God -- He enters in unannounced and the force of His entry by His own declaration is recognized for what it is -- the Word of God. For example:

God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son ...1

Thus we must forever keep separate in our minds the important contrast between the God of speculation and the God of revelation, yet it is precisely this confusion which is so characteristic even of conservative thinking on the doctrine. A fine example of the contrast between these two concepts may be seen in the following quotations. The first is from a well-known and significant book written by A. N. Whitehead, one of our generation's most important philosophers ; the second is from the book of *Exodus.*

1. *Hebrews 1 : 1-2.*

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Aristotle found it necessary to complete his metaphysics, by the introduction of a Prime Mover-God . . . For nothing, within any limited type of experience, can give intelligence to shape our ideas of any entity at the base of all actual things, unless the general character of things requires that there be such an entity. . . . In the place of Aristotle's God as Prime Mover, we require God as the Principle of Concretion.[2]

I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty ; but by my name Jehovah was I not known to them.3

The first quotation epitomizes the philosophical approach -- God is The First Cause, The Principle of Concretion, The Absolute, The One, The Prime Mover. He is an abstraction necessary in the construction of a conceptual framework for the completion of the system, and not the Intruding One who comes to us, and speaks for Himself as the text from Scripture clearly indicates.

The tragedy is that the philosophical method stands behind a great deal of our theological literature and this is worsened by the fact that often we are so ignorant of the basic Biblical principles of the method of the Divine self-disclosure that we don't know that our conclusions and thought-patterns are often not Biblical but philosophical. This fact may be illustrated in two approaches frequently taken to this doctrine.

First, in respect to proofs for the existence of God. Most theological texts begin a study of the doctrine with an enumeration and explanation of the classical proofs

for the existence of God, namely, the Ontological, Cosmological, Teleological, and Moral Arguments. Almost without exception it is stated that these are not "proofs" in the real sense, but are only corroborative arguments. Of course they are not proofs, for the term "proof" is ambiguous for one thing, and even if the meaning of the term were clearly defined, we could not prove the existence of God rationally, for then we would enclose Him within the limits of a syllogism, and when we think the matter over carefully we find that any ultimate fact is not amenable to "proof;" it just is and is seen to be such immediately.

The Bible does not set out to prove God's existence; it declares it on the basis of His self-disclosure. He does not reveal Himself as the One, the Absolute, the Prime Mover, but as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Further, it is important to note that the mode of the divine

2. A. N. Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World* (cheap edition), pp. 173-174.
3. *Exodus* 6 : 3.
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self-disclosure is in terms of the NAME of God. In philosophy the name of God represents a term of abstraction summarizing the views of the philosopher on deity, whereas in the Christian view, the "name of God" is not something given by man to his view of God, but the means by which God reveals Himself to man. The reason for this is the stress given to the meaning and use of NAME in the Bible. For example, note the following texts:

1. Exodus 3: 13-14, "And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the Children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you ; and they shall say to me, What is his name ? what shall I say unto them ? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you." (In this passage note that I AM THAT I AM does not mean the abstraction 'I am he who is,' but 'I am the mysterious one.' Cf. Judges 13: 18, 'Wherefore askest thou after my name, seeing it is wonderful?')
2. Exodus 15: 3, "The Lord is a man of war: the Lord is his his name".
3. Isaiah 42: 8, "I am the Lord : that is my name : and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images".
4. Isaiah 51: 15, "But I am the Lord thy God, that divided the sea, whose waves roared: The Lord of hosts is his name."
5. Jeremiah 33: 2, "Thus saith the Lord the maker thereof, the Lord that formed it, to establish it; the Lord is His name ; Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not."

Throughout the Old Testament the NAME of God meant to the Hebrew far more than just a term of distinction by which he distinguished Jehovah from the heathen gods of nature such as the Baalim. The NAME of God confronted Israel with the real mystery of the self-disclosure of God and holds the central point of the revelation of God to His people. The NAME of a thing for the Hebrew was a revelation of the nature of the parson or thing named, and in some instances was taken to be equivalent for the thing itself. Hence names were jealously guarded because they were the reflection of the character.

Herman Bavinck, in his monumental work *The Doctrine of God,* is right when he says: “All that which can be known of God by virtue of his revelation is called by Scripture God’s name.”4 Exodus 33:19 reads: “I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee ; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy to whom I will show mercy”.

The New Testament carries in it the same emphasis. Our Lord

4. Herman Bavinck, *The Doctrine of God* (Grand Rapids, 1951), p. 83.

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taught his disciples to pray by saying, “Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.” In John 17 our Lord prays and in that prayer He sums up all that He came to accomplish in the words of verse 6, “I have manifested Thy Name unto the men which Thou gayest me out of the world . . . ,” which surely involves their and our redemption. And in continuing His prayer our Lord entreats the Father for the preservation of His disciples in a similar vein, “Keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.”

The rationale of this is clear. Because God is revealed in His name, He is not discovered but is given. No man can know God truly apart from revelation. NAME implies that God is not an abstract principle, but a Person who discloses Himself to us, and the very use of the concept involves the idea of communication. The personification of the name of God to us is the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ, and this relationship is clearly shown in the verses quoted from John 17. In the name of God stands the covenant of God with us, and Christ’s accomplishment of the work of redemption.

I urge strongly upon you the study of the names of God-both the single and compound names. Such names as El, Adonai, El Shaddai and Jehovah convey to us the progressive divine self-disclosure. Again, to quote Bavinck:

> The name Elohim designates God as Creator and Preserver of all things ; El Shaddai represents Him as the Mighty One who makes nature subservient to grace ; Jehovah describes Him as the one whose grace and faithfulness endure forever; Jehovah Sabaoth characterizes Him as the King in the fulness of His glory, surrounded by organized hosts of angels, governing the entire universe as the Omnipotent One, and in His temple receiving the honour and adoration of all His creatures.[5]

Surely such a grand declaration must raise within us words of praise to this One who revealed Himself in the past, who to us in the Lord Jesus Christ has revealed Himself as Father through the atonement wrought by Christ, to whom all honour is due, and a larger part in the preaching and teaching in which we engage.

The *second* aspect of the problem is the way in which the attributes of God are to be conceived.

The philosophical approach to the doctrine of God with the various definitions of being involves an attempt to abstract the essence or being of God from the attributes. It is the attempt to view the essence of God without all qualities, but never as the

[5] *Ibid., p. 108.*

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Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our Father through faith in the name of Christ.

Historically, while the problem was not serious in the early fathers, it has assumed an importance out of proportion to its value, due to the infusion of Neo-platonism into Christianity through Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, who in medieval theology is more quoted than Augustine. It is clear that Greek philosophical speculation on the essence/attributes problem as applied to the being of God finds its way into Christianity through the Alexandrian School, notably from Plotinus and Dionysius, and in later medieval thought, through Scotus Erigena, becomes firmly established as an integral element of Christian theology.

The problem involved is, how are the attributes of God conceived to be related to the being of God, and this at once involves the presupposition that attributes may be abstracted from essences, which is a legacy of the Greek system. The Platonic system involved the abstraction of the attributes of a thing, so that one might arrive at what is its inmost essence, being, or ousia. The same method was applied to the being of God.

Three methods of arriving at a description of the essence of God have come down to us from Neo-platonism in the writings of the Pseudo-Dionysius. These are well-known, and are mentioned here:

1. The *Via Negationis*, or the way of negation. This is the 'negative Theology', so often spoken about, something like the self-emptying of the mystic. The thinker is to abstract away from the object all that is attribute, or change, until he comes to the irreducible essence, which is the core, the being, or the ousia. This is unchanging, and as far as God's being is concerned, ineffable, to be expressed only in negative terms.

2. The *Via Eminentiae*, or way of analogy. It is a system of analogy drawn from experience, that degrees of wisdom, power, being, imply an absolute wisdom, power, being. It is this concept which stands behind the Ontological Argument for the existence of God as devised by Anselm of Canterbury and is the basis for a Natural Theology. For example, the argument: Man knows ; Angels know more ; God is all-knowing.

3. The *Via Causalitatis*, or the way of cause/effect relationship. Through the idea of cause/effect relationship we work back to the first Cause, its essential nature, and its attributes.

It is significant to note that the speculative approach by which the so-called essence is abstracted from the attributes dominates
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the consideration of the attributes of God in most of our theological textbooks. Usually it is exhibited in attempts to classify the attributes of God into two groups, that is, those that apply to a description of His so-called essence, or *ousia*, and those involving the transitive relation of His person to creation and moral creatures. For example, A. H. Strong, among others, takes this position by dividing the attributes into Absolute or Immanent, and Relative or Transitive. The Absolute are those applying to the being of God, whereas the relative are those applying to God's relations to other things, and persons. In the first he groups Spirituality, Infinity, and Perfection; while in the second, Relation to Time and Space, to Creation, and to Moral Beings.6 Strong adopts the essence/attribute distinction as suggested in the following, "The attributes have an objective existence" and, "The attributes inhere in the divine essence," while at the same time declaring, "We cannot conceive of attributes except as belonging to an underlying essence which furnishes their ground of unity."7 These sentences indicate the presuppositions on which Strong is working and also the problem he faces in this position.

Now when we speak of the `essence' of God, if we are to speak Biblically and not after the fashion of Greek philosophy, we must not speak of a central core or *ousia* or being, in which the other attributes inhere and from which they may be `abstracted' to leave an `absolute.' Rather, the Christian theologian must have in mind the sum of that which God has revealed about Himself and the mode of that revelation, which is not abstraction, but self-disclosure in terms of His NAME. The philosopher arrives at his conception of God by a process of abstraction, whereas the Christian theologian arrives at his conception by a process of addition -- adding together what God has revealed about himself in terms of His name, to construct a sum of knowledge. Thus we may not follow the method of abstraction, else we shall be bogged down in the unbiblical problem of what is meant by `essence,' but we must conceive of the attributes of God as identical with His being. God's attributes do not differ from each other or from one another. God *is* what He *has* .8

The contrast of these two points of view may be seen in the two following quotations, the first taken from L. S. Chafer, and

6. A. H. Strong, *Systematic Theology* (Philadelphia, 11th ed., 1947), pp. 247-8.
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 244-6.
8. Bavinck, *op. cit.*, p. 121.

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the second, from Emil Brunner. Now I have not pitted Brunner against Chafer in order either to discredit Chafer or to vindicate Brunner. In my own thinking there is much that I can learn from both without subscribing to certain of the underlying

premises of each of them. My purpose is to make us aware that we must be willing to acknowledge truth where we find it, particularly in days when we need as much light as possible thrown upon our study of Biblical Theology. Also, we must be aware of our presuppositions, and dependence on authorities, and hearsay evidence. Just because Dr. So-and-So said it may make it noteworthy, but not necessarily true. And on this subject of the Doctrine of God, particularly on the questions of the evidence for the existence of God and the character of God disclosed in His self-revelation, a doctrine which stands at the core of our Christian Faith, we need to be particularly careful that our thought patterns are Biblical. But first, to Chafer's position:

> An attribute is a property which is intrinsic to its subject. It is that by which it is distinguished or identified. The term has two widely different applications, which fact is evidenced by the twofold classifications already named. It seems certain that some qualities which are not specifically attributes of God have been included by some writers under this designation. A body has its distinctive properties, the mind has its properties, and in like manner, there are specific attributes which may be predicated of God. The body is more than the sum-total of all its properties, which is equally true of the mind; and God is more than the sum of all His attributes. However, in each case these peculiar definitives retain an intrinsic value in the sense that the body, the mind, or God Himself would not appear to be what He is. On the other hand, while any true conception of God must include His attributes, it is required that the attributes themselves must be treated as abstract ideas.9

This extended quotation epitomizes the brief section on the attributes in Chafer's Systematic Theology and I note the following questions and problems that arise in my mind respecting his position:

(a) Note that the essence/attributes dualism is apparently maintained, yet Chafer can say at the end of his discussion, without qualification, "The whole of the divine essence is in each attribute and the attribute belongs to the whole essence."10

(b) Chafer retains a mind/body dualism which appears partly Platonic and partly Cartesian. What can be said to be the useful

9. L. S. Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, vol. I, p. 190.

10. L. S. Chafer, *op. cit*., p. 191.

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ness and the implications of the infusion of such systems of thought into Christian Theology, particularly in the light of changing opinions both in Theology on the Biblical teaching as to the constitution of man, and also in modern psychology ?

(c) What is the meaning of the statement, "God is more than the sum of all His attributes"? May this in some respects be designated as an infusion of Hegelianism into Christian Theology?

(d) May an analogy be drawn, legitimately, between bodies and their properties and God and His supposed properties ? For example, he says, "A body has its distinctive properties ... mind has ... and in like manner, there are specific

attributes which may be predicated of God."

(e) What meaning may be assigned to the following paradox, ".. . God Himself cannot be conceived apart from the qualities attributed to them. By abstract thinking, God may be conceived apart from His attributes ; but it remains true that He is known by His attributes and apart from them he would not appear to be what He is"?

(f) What does it mean to say that "attributes themselves must be treated as. abstract ideas"?

To the writer there are serious difficulties logically in the metaphysics employed and also in the Biblical data which bear on the problem, militating against Chafer's position. The contrasting position is that of Brunner, which follows:

> Anyone who knows the history of the development of the doctrine of God in "Christian" theology, and especially the doctrine of the Attributes of God, will never cease to marvel at the unthinking way in which theologians adopted the postulates of philosophical speculation on the Absolute, and at the amount of harm this has caused in the sphere of the "Christian" doctrine of God. They were entirely unaware of the fact that this procedure was an attempt to mingle two sets of ideas which were as incompatible as oil and water: for each view was based on an entirely different conception of God.
>
> They did not perceive the sharp distinction between the speculative idea of the Absolute and the witness of revelation, between the "God of the philosophers" and the "God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob".
>
> . . . But this contradiction does not first emerge when confronted with the Biblical language about the attributes of God, it occurs as soon as fundamental definitions of Being are formulated. The God who is without all qualities, who is above all Being, is never the God who makes His Name known, never the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, whose Nature is Holiness and Love. . . . **It** is hardiy an exaggeration to say that the theological doctrine of the Divine Attributes, handed on from the theology of the early Church, has been shaped by the Platonic and Neo-platonic Idea of God, and not by the Biblical Idea. . . . The theologians of the Early Church were all

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> more or less educated in Greek philosophy -- and no intelligent person will blame them for this, or even suggest that there was anything wrong in it! But in their eagerness to present the Christian Idea of God in "pure", "exalted" and "spiritual" terms, they failed to notice the contradiction between the speculative method of the Greek thinkers and the way of reflection prescribed for the Christian theologian by that which has been "given" in revelation. Thus, without realizing what they were doing, they allowed the speculative idea of the Absolute to become incorporated in the *corpus* of Christian theology.11

While I find it impossible to go along with other facets of Brunner's theology, I cannot help but agree on this question which he discusses here.

To conclude: It is important, therefore, that we re-read the doctrine of God in the light of the Biblical thought patterns, and not those handed down to us through Greek philosophy. Just as it is the case that God is known through His self-disclosure in His NAME, so His NAME includes the idea of what we have traditionally called attributes, and which really are pictures of what God conveys to us of Himself, without involving ourselves in the metaphysics of essence/attributes problems. Just as God's Name is El, Jehovah, El Shaddai, so

also is His name the Holy One (and not abstract holiness), the Almighty One, Love, the Eternal One, the Faithful One. He is Lord of all and Lord over all, and may ever our study and preaching seek to exalt Him who is our God, revealed in Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, one God, blessed forever, worthy of our adoration, devotion, and service, world without end. AMEN.

Oxford, 1957

11. Emil Brunner, *The Christian Doctrine of God* (London, 1955), pp. 242-243.

REVELATION, SCRIPTURE AND AUTHORITY

in Professor Richard Swinburne's *Revelation: From Metaphor to Analogy*
Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992

Professor Samuel J. Mikolaski, D.Phil. (Oxon.)
Presented to the Conference on the Philosophy of Religion
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In what I found to be moving passages at the beginning and ending of this book, Richard Swinburne states the purpose of his enquiry: to understand the nature and form of the Christian revelation in relation to its missionary task (p.3). He is concerned as much with Christianity's kerugmatic thrust; that is, authentic proclamation of the revealed message which has been legitimately conserved and transmitted within the Christian community, as he is with the logic of the Christian revelational claim. The object is to tell: that some tell others about the revelation (p.223) for "the harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth labourers into his vineyard" (Matt 9:38). The mission inevitably combines grasping correctly what the essential revelation is with the never-ending, on-going search to uncover the richness of the meaning of that revelation by people who seek guidance within their cultural and historical contexts by a process of searching out and reflection.

I will examine Swinburne's argument along three lines: first, revelation as a claim to truth; second, truth in relation to the authority of Holy Scripture; and third, Holy Scripture and trustworthy judgment in interpreting the essential Christian revelation. This analysis addresses what I believe to be matters of importance to Swinburne. They focus upon the missionary task of the church: how the authentic Christian message is to be identified, received, conserved and propagated in a culturally specific manner.

I Revelation and Truth

Swinburne has taken a strong stand against current fashion in some quarters of philosophy, historical studies, theology and literature on the nature of truth. Truth is not, as Heidegger and his followers claim, self-disclosure in contrast to knowing. On this view meaning or significance is not assigned by human subjects (or presumably God) to things; rather, it emerges. It just happens to happen. When the deconstructionists and post-modernists extend this we have the current flight from any factual base for knowledge, whether of authorial intent in a text, of a canon of literature, of correspondence between statement and reality, or of narrative history as anything more than what an historian wants to make of it.

For Swinburne truth concerns correspondence with facts and is objective. It is a property of theories, of pronouncements about states of affairs, of statements about reality, rather than simply experience or belief or some similar subjective state. Truth is not merely the self-manifestation of God; it is disclosure

by God (p. 2). Swinburne's chief concern is with propositional revelation, i.e., the revelation of propositional truth (p. 1, 3, 101-102, 212). If revelation is historical, then in the nature of the case it is propositional (p. 4). The claim is that something is so (p.1). My own formulation of this is: Revelation has something to do with truth and truth has something to do with language which purports to state that which is actually the case. It follows that the Bible is a collection of such sentences and that Christians must engage all the arts and sciences at their disposal to get at the truths of the Scriptures. As historical, the propositional revelation (by which Swinburne means biblical in a canonical sense) of necessity involves interpretation of events, such as who Jesus of Nazareth is and what the significance of his death is[i], as the objective truth of what was going on in the things that were happening. In the words of Clement Webb, the events and the narratives are the actual forms the eternal realities take[ii].

II Truth and Holy Scripture

At issue is the *husteron/proteron* , the chicken/egg, question: Which comes first, the Church or the canon? Who controls what? Does the church control the Bible because she is the womb which brought forth the canon, or is the canon as daughter of the church now mother and judge of the church's teachings?

Swinburne says that while in the church's view "God was the ultimate author of the Bible," "the church put the Bible together," (p.175). The emergent nature of the canon, the late-canon-date argument and ongoing questions as to what the actual count of books should be (due to the disputed and apocryphal books), has led some, like A. C. Sundberg[iii], to rehabilitate inspiration within the life of the church rather than canon as the primary norm for the church. Sundberg argues for the ongoing possibility of authoritative religious writings, opening every Christian age to verisimilitude. The church inherited Scriptures, he says, but not a canon and the continuing, inspiring work of the Holy Spirit in the church should be recognized.

Swinburne's argument might at first appear to be hospitable to such a conclusion: the biblical books gained status through the church's recognition of their inspiration by God and they have no authority for Christians unless seen as deriving their authority from that recognition (p.192-193). Nevertheless, he is careful to stress the theological nature of the church's task (a crucial element in the canonization process) by stating that the task of interpreting scripture must take place "in the light of central Christian doctrines proclaimed by the church as codifying in precise and clear form the essence of the Christian revelation," (p.192). He resists any shift away from the norming character of the Scriptures in the life of the early church and he attempts to give it logical and theological form. In the controversy with Marcion, he points out, Irenaeus and others quickly pulled back from inventive doctrinal deviation (p.163). As well, Swinburne rejects the imposition of blank authority, for example Barth's comment that the canon is the canon because it is so.[iv]

I do not think that the appeal to Scripture should get bogged down in the late and emergent canon issue. To downplay the importance of the canon has become fashionable, but I think that a prior factor needs reviving and restating, the crucial function to early Christians of Scripture *qua* Scripture as the written form of the divine revelation. Included in this is not only their understanding as to the inspired nature of Holy Scripture; there is also implicit in that understanding a correlation between inspiration, canon and authority.

The canonical issue continues to be vigorously debated.[v] More important to the present discussion is to re-discover how Christians have seen the Bible to be a theological whole and then how that unity should be expressed today.[vi] Recent studies have sought to trace ancient, especially Jewish, hermeneutical elements in early Christian handling of Scripture. For example, Richard Longenecker's *Biblical Exegesis In The Apostolic Period* (1975) and Earle Ellis's *The Old Testament In Early Chrstianity* (1991). While Ellis probes hermeneutical questions he does not address adequately the place of the concept of Holy Scripture in the early church. He does not discuss *I Clement*, the earliest of post-apostolic documents, nor engage Irenaeus's wide-ranging discussions on the nature and role of Scripture. I note that Swinburne makes no reference to the 1954 Bampton Lectures of H. E. W. Turner, *The Pattern Of Christian Truth*. in which Turner probed deeply into the nature of theological deviance in the patristic period and norms for judging it including Reason, the Bible and Tradition, along with attention to canonical formation and authority.

I propose to turn attention to three early Christian authors to highlight early understanding of Scripture and, hopefully, to extend some aspects of the continuer community issues Swinburne has raised. The three are *I Clement* as an example of a rich store of biblical and other metaphors and images on grounds of which a theological appeal is made to an erring congregation and what the letter implies as to the relationship between congregations so far as the authentic apostolic tradition is concerned. The second, Irenaeus, is probably the most important early example of a leader's correlating the missionary and theological tasks of the church in interpreting the authentic Christian message to pagans as a biblical message and pitting its truths against deviant opinion. The third, Tertullian, is important as a key developer of Latin vocabulary to communicate the central doctrines of the faith, especially against the modalists. But also, as a Montanist in later life, he reflects the tension over what is authentically Christian in relation to conflicting successor claims. All three represent the Christian community within a century and a quarter of the close of the apostolic age.

1. *I Clement*

The earliest (c.96 A.D.) of the post-apostolic writings is the letter from the church at Rome to the church at Corinth, commonly known as *I Clement.*[vii] A re-evaluation of church relations which the letter reflects in light of Swinburne's

theses, especially his concept of the continuer community, would be a helpful study. The letter, revered by some in the early church on a par with Scripture, is not an episcopal letter but an inter-church fraternal letter.[viii] It is fundamentally an appeal from one congregation to another, focusing upon dissension not unlike the tone of Paul's letter to Corinth two generations earlier. Great churches become canonical centers; centers, that is, not only where the Gospel is powerfully preached but, as well, centers which tend to norm the truths of the Christian message for a whole area or constituency of churches. Examples include the great sees of early Christianity such as Rome, Constantinople, Caesarea and Alexandria, and subsequent centers of Christian influence such as Milan, Luther in Germany, Calvin in Geneva, Spurgeon in London, and many others. Augustine's anecdote about the vibrant, confessional warmth of the church at Rome which drew Victorinus forward to make public confession of his faith illustrates this spiritual and theological influence of a landmark church.

The aim of *I Clement* is to turn back an errant congregation. The authority cited is fundamentally that of Christ and the apostles. While it is not only possible but likely that some, including leaders within the congregation at Rome, could testify to earlier personal contact with key apostolic figures such as Peter and Paul, the primary appeal is to Scripture.

First, the letter appeals to an informed Christian conscience: the Scriptures teach that God's Spirit searches us inwardly (21:2). Meekness and silence and holiness follow from "the instruction which is in Christ" (21:8). Included are appeals to reason and common sense (4:7). Turner notes that even so non-speculative a writing as this employs the term knowledge (γνωσις διάνοια σοφός) freely and unselfconsciously.[ix] The writer is at ease citing common sense lessons from the myth of the Phoenix (25), the solidarity of the military (37) and pagan sources (55.1-2).

Second, while appeal to Apocryphal and other sources is made comfortably to illustrate common sense issues, it is the Scriptures themselves which take pride of place as embodying authoritative divine truth (the occurrence of textual variants should not mask this fact):[x] "all things which the Master commanded us to perform," (40:1). Scripture is not only prominent; it is pre-eminent: "you have studied the Holy Scriptures, which are true and given by the Holy Spirit. You know that nothing unjust or counterfeit is written in them," (45:2). This passage stands at the summit of the argument, which is followed by exhortations to obedience.The letter is replete with terms such as Scripture, Holy Scripture, the Oracles of God, the Word of God.[xi]

Third, the authentic scriptural faith is conserved in the Rule of Faith, the "rule of our tradition," (7.2; 13; 15). Elements of the tradition include: teaching about God, Christ and the Holy Spirit (8.1, 22.1, 58.2, 63.2, 64); Christ our redeemer and helper (20.11, 36.1-2); the creation of the world by God (19.2); man created in God's image (33.4); redemption through Christ's sacrifice, connected to

Isaiah 53 (16, 49.6); the unity of the church as the body of Christ (38.1); justification by grace (32.4) and calling (2.4) to holiness and obedience as the true paideia (15, 21.8-9, 22.1, 30.1-3); true gnosis demands more than casuistry, namely, pure conduct, which is motivated by love as the highest virtue (49).

Fourth, a wide range of the early Christian stock concepts is employed by the writer to limit and fill out the content of belief. A few of these are: rebellion with its resulting strife, sedition and judgment (3.1); Cain and Abel, Jacob and Esau as instances of rivalry (4.2-11); Noah and Jonah as preachers of repentance (7:6-7); Abraham the friend of God and man of faith (10.1); Lot's wife an example of looking back (11.1-2); Rahab and the scarlet cord as a symbol of the blood of Christ (12.7); the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53 as referring to Christ (16),

The Roman congregation is not the source but the channel of the apostolic tradition. The letter is a reminder, an exhortation, a persuasion. The primary authority is Scripture, which authentically conveys the word of the Lord about salvation and behaviour through the prophets and apostles.The Christian mood should be that of standing under the authority of the Scriptures. All appeals to conscience from whatever source, whether Jewish or pagan, are intended to subject conscience to the Scriptures, which is to say dominical and apostolic authority.

2. Irenaeus

Irenaeus is relevant to the questions Swinburne raises because his primary concern was to communicate the authentic Gospel to a predominantly non-Christian world. He was in the forefront of the massive expansion of the church into Gaul in the late second century A.D. As well, he had to devote considerable energy to refute deviations from the authentic apostolic faith. I shall draw my observations chiefly from well-known passages in the *Against Heresies* [xii] which, despite our familiarity with them, bear repeating in connection with the themes of Swinburne's book.

First, the concept of Scripture and the authority of Scripture are at the heart of Irenaeus's statement and defence of authentic apostolic faith: "I shall adduce proofs from the Scriptures," he says.[xiii] "The truth," "Scripture," and "the tradition of the apostles" coincide (1.22.1, 3.3.1-2, 4.33.8). This is a living tradition which has been accurately transmitted from Christ and the apostles. The measure of other claims are the four authentic Gospels along with the remaining apostles, by which he means the apostolic writings (2.27.2; 3.11.9; Book 5, Preface). In contrast to the secret knowledge claims of the Gnostics, these concern data in the public domain accurately handed down in the Scriptures (3.1.1, 2.27.2).

Second, core beliefs include the following: Triadic understanding of the

essential nature of God.[xiv] The promise of the Old Testament that God the Creator would redeem humanity. The incarnation of Christ is a recapitulation; he is the Second Adam, the Last Man, whose incarnate life is the means and form of our redemption.[xv] Redemption through the sacrifice of Christ for our sins.

Third, these core beliefs comprise an hermeneutic which is buttressed by many stock concepts from the Old Testament all of which are given shape by the apostolically conserved and interpreted teachings of Christ. Included are: Abraham the double parent (as Wingren puts it[xvi]), who foresaw Christ and is the progenitor of the generations of faith[xvii] in both the old and the new covenant. Paradise as the locus of man's creation and disastrous fall and the symbol of the life to come, which is parallel with the Jerusalem that was and is to come.[xviii] Solidarity with Adam in sin and death and with Christ for obedience and redemption.[xix] The re-clothing of Adam with (sacrificial) skin tunics to recover his lost sanctity.[xx] Successive dispensations which reflect the providential dealings of God with the world,[xxi] especially in regard to God's self-adaptation to the needs and conditions of humanity.[xxii] God the artificer and his handiwork.[xxiii] Corruption and incorruption.[xxiv] King and subjects, master and servants.[xxv] Captivity and restoration.[xxvi] Lot, incest and the seed of faith.[xxvii] Joshua as a type of Christ to lead his people into the promised land.[xxviii] These are representative of the persons and events drawn from the Old Testament which, interpreted in light of core Christian teaching, became the stock of standard Christian symbols used to unlock truths from the Bible as the book of revealed truth.

Fourth, in a controversial passage (A.H. 3.3.2) Irenaeus discusses conveyance of the authentic Gospel along lines not unlike that of Swinburne's "continuer community" concept. For some the passage affirms the primacy of Rome as the legitimate successionist community:"that every church should agree with (or be in harmony with) this church." Irenaeus's point is somewhat different, namely, that Rome as a landmark church in the empire's capital is a mirror, as A.C. Coxe puts it,[xxix] of the church universal. The truth Irenaeus insists upon is the succession of the authentic Christian message in all the churches, of which Rome is a prominent but not the only or exclusive instance. Rome reflects a common successionist tradition; is one norm among many others; nevertheless, such prominent congregations tend to focus the various lines of the Christian tradition upon a common center. Like *I Clement* Irenaeus conveys the mood of standing under the common authoritative scriptural teaching.

3. Tertullian

Tertullian's views on the primacy of Scripture are fashioned also by his battles against heresy and concern for the missionary task of the church. His voluminous and influential writings in the western church became controversial because of his move to Montanism. Vincent of Lerins, a framer of the Catholic doctrine of authentic tradition, wrote that Tertullian's later error discredited his former writings. Neverthless, on core doctrines he is still regarded as a bulwark

against heretical opinion.

His *The Prescription Against Heretics* is a pre-Montanist work. Analysis of just three passages (1.30-32) epitomizes the argument of the whole.The questions he raises are: who are these late teachers, on what grounds do they peddle their wares, and how should the authority and truth of their teachings be judged?

First, Christians have inherited Scriptures which comprise the unity of the Old and New Testaments: Marcion could only separate what was previously united. He practised criticism with a knife not a pen.[xxx] The Scriptures are pivotal. They ("the writings") belong to the God against whom the heretics preach. How then can they prove themselves to be new apostles?

Second, the critical issue is the priority of truth:[xxxi] the original (apostolic and scriptural deposit) is dominical and true, while what was introduced later is foreign and false.

Third, the authenticity of the true apostolic and scriptural teaching is validated by the "originals," i.e., the roll of the churches. This is not succession within a particular see, but transmission of the apostolic seed throughout the churches by, first, the conveyance of the true message directly by an apostle or apostolic man and, second, "by those churches being founded every day" which agree in the same faith and are no less apostolic. Tertullian wields a two-edged sword: Scripture does not support the claims of the deviants and such claims are not the faith of the church. In *Against Hermogenes*, a later work from his Montanist period, he advances an identical argument about the late appearance and claims of doctrinal innovators (ch.1). For example, the Holy Spirit has made it the rule of usage "of his Scripture" to mention when something is made from something else but, contrary to Hermogenes, this is not what is meant by the Scriptural revelation that God made all things out of nothing. To posit underlying matter which God used "Hermogenes' shop" must declare where such a statement is written, and if nowhere then to fear the judgment decreed upon those who tamper with the written word (ch.21-22). For Christians, "seek and find" is no longer applicable so far as formation of doctrine is concerned. Christ has come, the Gospel is preached, henceforth one need only believe the truth as embodied in the Rule of Faith.

Doctrinal statement which is derived from and is consistent with apostolic truth is the substance of Tertullian's summary of the Rule of Faith.[xxxii] These core truths are: Belief in one true God who created the world out of nothing by his own Word. That the Word, his Son, as God spoke to the prophets and then became incarnate through the womb of the Virgin Mary. That as Jesus Christ he preached the new kingdom and worked miracles. That he was crucified, rose from the dead on the third day and then ascended to the right hand of the Father. That he will come with glory to receive the redeemed and judge the wicked

following their bodily resurrection.

Tertullian's style is less allusive than direct, bearing upon theology, metaphysical issues, and questions of logic. He is succinct with little inclination to neutrality or compromise. An exception is his accommodation to local custom on fasting as a concession to non-essentials (*On Fasting*, 13) which suggests an increased tendency to compromise as he adapted strict Montanism to real life situations. He frequently probes the lives of biblical persons for guidelines on customs or for practical moral principles. A metaphor he employs not infrequently is that of good seed representing the Word of God[xxxiii] in contrast to the false seed of those who deviate from the true faith. The concept of the economy *vs* the monarchy as applied to the triune nature of God bears not only upon rejection of the divine metaphysical solitariness but also upon understanding the household of faith as interpersonal communion not single-source rule.[xxxiv] Tertullian employs the various type figures for Christ in the Old Testament such as Joshua[xxxv] and makes extensive use of the messianic prophecies regarding Christ. A frequent analogy is that of the old age and the new, of Adam and Christ, of the old birth and the new birth, the flowering of the new man in the flesh.[xxxvi]

In the essay *On Modesty* he stridently writes against Roman successionist claims to religious authority from the standpoint of his later Montanist views; nevertheless, a certain consistency is evident. The question raised concerns the right to forgive sins. He distinguishes between the right to discipline and the power to forgive (which belongs to God alone, 21). He attributes the right to bind and loose to Peter personally and thenceforth to a church which is spiritual not merely a collection of bishops. It belongs to a church which properly confesses the trinitarian faith, which faith is expressed in genuine spirituality among its leaders not merely blanket ecclesiastical authority.

4. Summary of Conclusions

First, the concept of Holy Scripture should be regarded as a crucial factor in all our attempts to understand the eventual role of the completed canon in the church in early Christian times. The terms Scripture, Holy Scripture, the Word of God, the oracles of God are freely and widely employed.

Second, these refer to the triad of the received Old Testament Scriptures, the Gospels and the Apostolic Writings, of whatever books of these were available to any congregation of Christians. Pagan books and sources were used in so far as their concepts rationally and in a common sense fashion support Christian argument as to the truth of the matter on any point being made.

Third, the unity of the two testaments is regarded as axiomatic on a Christological footing of interpretation. This, as Turner has shown in some detail, was comprehended in two ways: (a) By means of the παιδαγογο′ς figure, namely, that the Old Testament is the schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. To

understand the Old Testament one must see it as preparation for the fuller realities of the Gospel; preparation through several economies or periods of revelation. (b) The foreshadowing concept, namely, that the Old Testament prefigures the New Testament and that Christ is the bond of union between the two economies. These two views lie side by side in the post-apostolic writings.

Fourth, the authoritative Scriptures as revelation are that because they convey to us the authentic Gospel of Christ. This Gospel is prefigured symbolically throughout the Scriptures by means of a well-used list of stock concepts. History, notably that of the Old
Testament, presents God's dealings with humanity. The experiences of people in the past and the significance of past events may properly become symbols and lessons which are relevant to the needs of Christians in their own times. The prophetic and apostolic writings tell us authentically and correctly what was going on and how previous divine economies are to be understood. These truths are embodied in the Rule of Faith, the Rule of Life, the Rule of our Tradition, which express the insightful apprehension by the churches of their authentic, public inheritance.

Post-apostolic leaders and congregations defer to Scripture.They stand under Scripture as the oracles of God. Scripture as Scripture is in a class by itself. One senses no unease over what we regard as the incipient and uncertain canonical process, only vigorous effort to ensure that apostolic testimony be the measure of the church's beliefs expressed as the Rule of Faith.

Upon this foundation of what Scripture is there is built, through a long process, what we call the canon. We, as Christians in later times, have endeavoured to deduce what principles and tendencies were at play in this process. The consensus among scholars is that, chiefly, these were: authorship by an apostle or apostolic man; knowledge by the ancients; general utility and orthodoxy where doubt arose; a gradual process of clarification; interaction between the leading sees as to their holdings and reading lists. Thus Athanasius's Festal Letter of 367 A.D., the first complete listing of our present New Testament canon, is the capstone of a process which had been going on for generations. Canonization of the Holy Scriptures was less the work of councils and synods than the work and expression of the faith of congregations, scholars and church leaders.

III Holy Scripture and Trustworthy Judgment

Professor Swinburne began with two questions: whether we have reason to expect revelation of major propositional truths and "what would show that we have got it," (p.3). His discussion of the "continuer community" and trustworthy interpretive judgment within that community addresses the latter. His premise is that if God gives a revelation for later generations to interpret, he must provide a church in which interpretations have some chance of being correct, (p.119).

That the true church is the one which correctly interprets the original revelation is not enough for Swinburne (p.119-120) because we have only a "slender and vague" picture left on what Jesus Christ said and did is, on its face, troubling to evangelical Protestants and, I should think, to many others. He says that this is not enough to guide conduct in later centuries (presumably to make the guidance culturally specific), hence there is needed an independent guarantee of the reliability of interpretation. I am uncomfortable with the argument that a test other than fidelity to the original revelation is crucial. Perhaps his reference here to "guide conduct" not "fundamental beliefs" directs his point to the extrapolation of truth rather than the seminal credal truths which he has so vigorously defended as forms of concise, clear, direct propositional revelation. He questions Calvin's doctrine on the self-evidence of Scripture based upon the inner witness of the Spirit:"we need a context to make the meaning of the sentences clear,"(p. 117). That context is the true continuer organization.

How is the true continuer organization to be defined and identified? He employs Nozick's "closest continuer" or "identity over time" concept: sameness over time, continuity of aim and organization are twin criteria which determine what the true church is. Once the original society has split none of the splits is the original society. Only together do they constitute the church (p.122). Theoretically, this sounds like P. T. Forsyth's plea for a United States of the Church; practically, it reflects his conviction that across the splits the various Chrstian churches exhibit greater similarities than differences (p.123).

With regard to aim, continuity of doctrine dictates it (p. 123). Fundamentally this is determined in a kerugmatic way: the church which applies the apostolic Gospel to worship, convert, teach and practise charity. The focus is upon continuity of doctrine in its core elements. For Swinburne this church appears to be an ideal theological composite; ideal, that is not faultless but having over time faithfully taught the revelation (bodies whose teaching is wildly out of line with the teaching of all earlier Christian bodies cannot be the church, p.124). For me, the ambiguity of this position historically is heightened when Swinburne applies the organization test (p.125). He makes quick work of the aberrations, ambiguities and inconsistencies in the Roman Catholic (Papal authority), Orthodox (fidelity to the Creeds), Anglican and Protestant (doctrinal appeal to Scripture) claims to authenticity and succession and moves to ways in which the various traditions have handled the Scriptures. Approaches to interpretation are the critical factor. While I agree with the importance of interpretation, I am left with a nagging feeling that the concept of continuity of organization needs fuller development.

Swinburne's view is that the Protestant doctrine of Scripture self-sufficiency is implausible (on grounds of the late canon theory). My view is that the concept of Scripture as Scripture needs to be taken more seriously. That which is Scripture was already canonical as shown from the patristic examples I have

cited.[xxxvii] The fourth century date of the completed canon does not mitigate against the early authority of Scripture as the canon of the authentic Christian message. Nevertheless, I believe that despite Swinburne's tipping of the hat to the late canon theory (p.127), the authority of Scripture is for him critical in establishing the credentials of the authentic continuer community. This is evident from the weight he places upon the church's role in interpreting the revelation (beyond validating the canon) and correct Scripture interpretation and appears to place him closer to the sufficiency of Scripture doctrine than might at first blush appear to be the case, except that he is attempting to take issues of contextualization for interpretation more seriously than advocates of Scripture self-evidence appear to him to have done. Is this a doctrine of the function of authoritative interpretation by the authentic continuer community (even in earliest times) or is it a matter of legitimate interpretation from within the context of the authentic continuer communities, normed by the seminal, propositionally revealed (Scriptural) doctrines, or are these two things the same?

First, interpretation of what? Answer: the (evident) unwritten tradition of the original revelation, the early written (Scriptural) revelation and, finally, the entire canon of Scripture.

Second, what rules have been followed to accurately state and expound the revelation? His answer takes the form of an historical review of Catholic hermeneutical procedures centering upon the claim to derivation (basically an appeal to correct remembering of the original datum) and the claim to deduction which often results in amplification based upon inductive inference (p.131). Rational coherence with the original revelation does not necessitate logical deductibility (he agrees here with Newman, p.139). Intellectual systematization and reflection go hand in hand. He is uncomfortable with what he regards as the traditional Protestant view because he believes that the doctrines of the later creeds are not explicit in Scripture and cannot easily be deduced from Scripture. Rather, he finds in the early church a procedure something like the following (p.136): An unwritten tradition which includes specific interpretive linkages between Old Testament and New Testament teaching; development of clear statements which do justice to this data; interpretation of other parts consistent with the initial statements; development of incipient metaphysical statements which systematize the understanding within the context of contemporary life; focusing the core beliefs upon the various biblical texts and traditions to bring them into harmony. He then applies this to the formation of doctrine regarding the Trinity and the Incarnation (pp.136-139). His conclusion is that such procedures demonstrate that the very idea of canon is an hermeneutic. The concept of canonical Scripture includes "Scripture with a certain tradition and balance of interpretation," (p.139).

It seems to me that this view is in principle very much like the traditional Protestant view that no Scripture is of a by-itself interpretation; that interpretation of given passages entails what is in Scripture as a whole; and, that what is in

Scripture as a whole reflects the "intuitive sense" of the church. Swinburne clearly wishes to maintain maximum continuity with apostolic teaching, and he clearly allows for legitimate breaches in historical continuity where there are breaks in doctrine or where on important matters greater similarity of doctrine to that of the early church can be shown (p.142). He seems to conclude reluctantly that there is no closest continuer and that in the present condition of splits and irrational political forces the test of authenticity is fundamentally apostolic and should be restricted to a limited scale of values, namely: the truth of one living Creater God who has intervened in human history incarnate, the resurrection as a chastening and conserving doctrine in the church, the priority of the doctrine of the Trinity, and the historical evidence for the teaching of Jesus. Much of the rest remains for argument, reflection and prayer (pp.142-143).

In his conclusion Swinburne amplifies this into a scale of values in hermeneutical procedure along three lines: first, axioms of a general theory; second, the formation of a modern *depositum fidei*; third, the exercise of trustworthy judgment in the ongoing task of the church to make the Christian message culturally specific.

First, the axioms of a general theory. His second point on whether there has been a revelation, namely, what general theory of the world is supported by the Christian claims buttressed by the comment that "general theory is crucial for assessing particular claims" is no overstatement (p.217). The many key analogies and metaphors which highlight and amplify core Christian beliefs and comprise the stock of interpretive concepts which Christians draw on have their meaning within such a frame of reference. Augustine found that leading to and as part of his conversion he must reject old conceptual schemes such as those of the Platonists and the Manichaeans and embrace new αρχαι′ which included belief in God the Creator; the Incarnation; the Fall, Wrath and Grace; the Atonement; the Redeemer and the People of God; Miracle; the City of God.[xxxviii] I suggest that axioms of a general theory which today require reinforcement and amplification are belief in one God, one world, one history and one morality. These, it seems to me, are at the core of the prophetic message and are foundational to New Testament teaching.

Second, the key truths of the *depositum fidei* (as appears clear also from the early sources cited) are apostolically validated. Their credibility rests upon the "credit of the proposer,"[xxxix] These doctrine are the big ones, the important ones. They are belief in one God, the Incarnation, the Trinity, the Atonement, and Salvation. Inevitably the critical ones "include aspects of historical eye-witness," (p.218). Leonard Hodgson had two felicitous phrases to express this truth: the apostles tell us what was going on in the things that were happening," and "what must the truth have been and be if men such as they were spoke as they did?" The key doctrinal statements are inevitably metaphysical: This is the way God is and not that. This is who Jesus Christ is and what he has done. This is the path of truth and of life. While I may have some reservations about Swinburne's concession to

uncertainty about how explicit key doctrines are in the New Testament, his stress on apostolic credibility, the concreteness of the core elements of their teachings, and more generally that these doctrines are implicit in the New Testament is welcome. The "process of making them specific is a reasonable one," (p.220).

Third, this task is an on-going one. The church is responsible to exercise trustworthy judgment in interpreting to the world correctly in each generation the authentic Christian revelation. Swinburne calls this a process of refining as we have had to redefine biblical concepts of cosmology, the ceremonial law, social regulations, the practice of sacrfice, the ideal of the Kingdom of God, the Sabbath and many other matters. In what ways will Christian teaching inform cultural, political, economic and religious practices and development in the future?

With a delicate touch (p.223) he outlines the terms and conditions and frame of mind entailed in this venture of communal understanding. It involves diligent searching out and faithful telling others about it. This commitment, done with some vigour, must be characterized by a certain diffidence. We see only in a mirror darkly, until that day when vision will be clear. As deeply moving as these sentences are, which focus upon a growing understanding of the revelation through reflection as a community activity, I wonder whether attention should be paid to the individual as interpreter who, often as an odd-ball, must fight against traditions and organizations which believe and teach things inconsistent with the truths of the Christrian revelation.

Responsibility for trustworthy judgment[xl] weighs heavily upon Swinburne's mind. The church has always been constrained to justify interpretation as an "extrapolation from an original revelation," (p.221). That is the test of authentic guidance (p.163) in face of great difficulty to understand specific passages of the Scriptures. What is more or less important is a value judgment and the test of the validity, accuracy and appropriateness of opinion finally can be only the core truths of apostolic teaching along with caution not to multiply inferential beliefs so as to make the practice of religion a burden. Which core doctrines are important enough to justify schism? How much of the teaching was culturally specific and how do we make its key elements culturally specific today? The answer to these -- indeed, the most imporant factor to blunt the edge of disunity and to keep the ship steering in the right direction -- is for Swinburne communal understanding.

To what end is the refining process of ongoing interpretation and extrapolation directed? I am reminded of similar questions which the Cappadocian fathers asked as they immersed themselves in the new philosophical studies of their time and sought to put metaphysical feet to the core Christian doctrines, or of Wycliffe who believed that the true job of the pastor is to feed his sheep spiritually, to purge them of disease, and to keep them from ravening wolves.

Swinburne distinguishes central doctrines, near centre ones and peripheral ones (pp.212-215). He cites the science and religion controversy and the issue of civil persecution of non-Christians and heretics and abuses of civil rights as issues which though important do not of themselves discredit the revealed character of the church's teaching (pp.214-215). Rather, core elements of the revelation bear statement, interpretation and repeating in a confessional manner (pp.220-221). It would be indelicate to offer criticism at this point following what has been for me a rewarding spiritual experience as well as challenging intellectual exercise in reading this book. I express only the hope that Professor Swinburne will continue to remind us of the total goodness which Jesus Christ gives us as an ideal along with the hope of eternal life, and that he will fill out with increased specificity what that ideal of total goodness should be for Christians as they enter the world of the twenty-first century.

[i]Note Paul's "we thus judge", 2 Cor 5:14 (AV), "we have reached the conclusion" (NEB), "we are convinced" (RSV).

[ii]I draw the reader's attention to my essay "Of And About" in which years ago I sought to make similar points. It was published in *Faith and Thought*, the journal of the Victoria Institute, Vol. 93, No. 2, Winter, 1963, and reprinted in *Calling* (Vancouver, Summer 1970). An abridged version appeared under the title "Revelation and Truth" in *Christianity Today*, Vol. 8, No. 7, January 3, 1964.

[iii]*Interpretation* 29.4, p. 358 (October 1975).

[iv]p. 229. I'm reminded of an anecdote a friend of mine related from a conversation Barth had with a group in which my friend participated. When asked how he knew that the Bible is the Word of God Barth replied "In the same way a baby knows its mother."

[v]R. K. Harrison argues for the correctness of the traditional conservative view that the Old Testament canon was for all practical purposes complete and closed by the time of Ezra. Sundberg and others challenge this view. They argue that Christians inherited Scriptures from Judaism but not a canon. D. N. Freedman proposes a very creative view: that different canons (or collections) reflect the needs and interests of the religious communities in Israel at various stages of her history; themes such as survival, restoration, hope. S. Z. Leiman maintains that the talmudic and midrashic evidence is consistent with a second century B.C. dating for the closing of the biblical canon. F. F. Bruce and Roger Beckwith believe that the final closing of the Old Testament list occurred at Jamnia at about 90 A.D.; nevertheless that for all practical purposes the Jewish canon and the canon of New Testament Christians generally correspond. H. E. W. Turner, F. F. Bruce, Bruce Metzger, Donald Guthrie and John A. T. Robinson, among others, pick up the debate on New Testament canonization. Conservative scholarship continues to maintain concrete early canonical formation, which Robinson's dates tend to reinforce. Theological questioning of the concept of canon persists following Sundberg's claim that inspiration is not used in the early church to judge between canonical and non-canonical writings, on grounds that the very concept of canon is too limiting of the Spirit's speaking in the church today about matters which are of concern now if not in ancient times. So also Lee MacDonald in his *The Formation of the Christian Biblical Canon*, 1988.

[vi]Helpful studies include: R. V. G. Tasker, *The Old Testament in the New Testament*, 1963, revised; B. F. C. Atkinson, *The Christians Use of the Old Testament*, 1952; Paul and Elizabeth Achtemeier, *The Old Testament Roots of Our Faith*, 1962; F. F. Bruce, *The New Testament Development of Old Testament Themes*, 1968; H. M. Shires, *Finding the Old Testament in the New*, 1974, as well as the body of literature which has emerged from the American inerrancy controversy as participants were inevitably compelled to grapple with hermeneutical issues.

[vii]Text and translation by Kirsopp Lake in the Loeb Classics. A recent translation with comment is Cyril Richardson in *The Apostolic Fathers* published simultaneously by SCM and the Westminser Press in 1953.

[viii]Clement's "my brethren": (14:1) does not mask episcopal authority. This form of address occurs at least 14 times, the exhortative "let us" over 60 times, and "beloved" six times. Renewal of brotherly love is the focus of the letter. Presumably the Corinthians could persist in their behaviour and Rome could do nothing about it.

[ix]H. E. W. Turner, *The Pattern of Christian Truth*, (The Bampton Lectures for 1954), p.395. He cites five passages: 1.2; 36.2; 40.1; 41.4; 48.5.

[x]7.5, 8.33, 23.2, 30.4-5, 55.4. The statistical data alone are impressive. A preliminary, rough count shows the following references or quotations: Approximately 160 from the Old Testament including 56 from the five books of the Law (except Leviticus, but note the citations from Hebrews), 11 from the Former Prophets, 27 from the Latter Prophets (chiefly Isaiah), and 66 from the Writings (40 from the Psalms alone). I counted approximately 57 references to or quotations from the New Testament, including 12 from the Gospels, 18 from Paul, 16 from Hebrews, 8 from the General Epistles and 3 from Acts. A more detailed and accurate analysis of Scripture use in *I Clement* needs to be made, including non-canonical sources such as the Apocrypha (6), pagan sources and questions about conflated or corrupt text citations.

[xi]Referential language includes: "word of Scripture," (3.1, 27.4-5); "Holy word," (56.3); "Scripture runs thus," (4.1); "the Master of the universe himself spoke," (8.2); "Scripture reads," (16.3); "for it is written," (14.4, 17.3, 29.2, 36.3, 39.3); "Holy Scripture says," (13.4; 23.3, 5; 28.3; 34.6; 42.5; 53.1); "all who received his oracles," (19.1, 53.1); "Oracles of God's teaching," (62.3); "this is how Christ addresses us by his Spirit," (22.1). "Pick up the letter of the blessed apostle Paul," "who wrote under the Spirit's guidance;" what Paul wrote is Scripture, (47.1-2, 13.1). "The sayings of Jesus are to be revered," (13.1-2, 42.1, 46.8). The writers of the Old Testament are "ministers of the grace of God," (8.1). The Psalms are Scripture (28.3) as is the Wisdom literature, cited Prophets and the Law. This combines with the primacy of place for the teaching of Christ and of the apostles.

[xii]Hereafter designated A.H. References are to the text of A. C. Coxe in the *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 1.

[xiii]A.H. Book 3, Preface. This includes recognition of the two testaments (4.32.2). Deviants mutilate Scripture (1.27.4) while claiming to improve upon the apostles (3.1.1).

[xiv]*Proof of the Apostolic Preaching*, 6 (transl. J. P. Smith. London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1952. Hereafter designated *Proof*).

[xv]A.H. 2.22.4, 3.18.7.

[xvi]Gustaf Wingren, *Man and Incarnation*. London: Oliver and Boyd, 1959, p.72.

[xvii]A.H. 4.5.3-5, 4.7, 4.25.1, 4.32.2.

[xviii]*Proof*, 12; A.H. 5.35-36.

[xix]A.H. 3.21.10, 5.16.3, 5.20.2.

[xx]A.H. 3.23.5.

[xxi]A.H. 3.17.4, 3.24.1, *Proof* 47.

[xxii]A.H. 4.6.6.

[xxiii]A.H. 4.39.1-2, 5.6.1, *Proof* 11.

[xxiv]A.H. 5.8.1-2.

[xxv]A.H. 4.34.1-2.

[xxvi]A.H. 4.34.4.

[xxvii]A.H. 4.31.1-3

[xxviii]Fragment 19 (*Ante-Nicene Fathers* I, p.571).

[xxix]*Ante-Nicene Fathers*, I. p.415, note also pp.460-461. Cyril Richardson uses the phrase "the Roman church is a microcosm of the Christian world," *Op. Cit.*, p.372.

[xxx]*The Prescription Against Heretics*, 38 (hereafter designated *Prescr.*).

[xxxi]*Prescr.*,31. Note *Against Hermogenes*, 1.

[xxxii]*Prescr.*, 13. Note also *Against Praxeas*, 2 and *On the Veiling of Virgins*, 1. As well, Turner cites Rule of Truth, *regula Scripturarum, regula Dei, regula spei,* and *regula sacramenti* (p. 351; note also p.393). Turner agrees with Ernest Evans that the Rule of Faith in the writings of Tertullian represents "not a form of words, but a set of ideas, a guide for teachers rather than a test for neophytes." Hence, if you are merely a private Christian, believe the Tradition (what has been handed down to us), if you profess to be an apostolic man think with the apostles (*On the Flesh of Christ*, 2).

[xxxiii]*Prescr.*, 31

[xxxiv]*Against Praxeas*, 3.

[xxxv]*Against Marcion*, 3.16.

[xxxvi]*Ibid*, 5.8. Note also *Treatise on the Soul*, 40.

[xxxvii]Persecuted Christians and Christians who have had limited resources have shown the truth of this in most ages of the church. Generations of Russian believers in this century had few Bibles and often only hand-written segments of Scripture.

[xxxviii]*The Confessions*, especially Book 8.

[xxxix]p.3 (A citation from Locke). Note Swinburne's review of Scotus on credibility, p.218.

[xl]note Paul's use of γνω′μη: "I give my advice (opinion, judgment), 1 Cor. 7:25, 40; 2 Cor. 8:10; Philemon 14. Note also 1 Cor. 1:10 where it is joined with νοι.

THE CONTEMPORARY RELEVANCE OF THE PRIESTHOOD OF ALL CHRISTIANS

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[This essay was written in relation to the new, growing trend among Baptist Churches in the United States and Canada to downgrade the office of Deacon to "waiters at tables" (meaning chiefly sub-administrative and non-teaching roles) and elevating a revised version of the office of Elder to a higher level of authority than Deacons had been thought traditionally to fill, but in principle somewhat lower than that of the "senior" Pastor. I argue that this movement is a bid for power by pastoral leadership in churches which is biblically and historically unfounded. I have taken the liberty of putting the notes at the end of the essay, rather than as footnotes as the editor had done

Note also my essay "Pastors and Deacons" written for the Inter-Church Relations Committee of the Baptist Federation of Canada (1987); and, "Universal Ministry in the Global Village," a paper presented to the Eighth Believers Church Conference, Bethany Theological Seminary, Sept. 2, 1987.]

Have you ever attended an Eastern Orthodox service? It could be Russian, Greek, or, as in my childhood in Canada, Serbian Orthodox. No matter. Among the more than twenty-five Orthodox groups worldwide the pattern is the same. The richly-robed priest performs the sacrament of the Lord's death on behalf of the people. Behind him is a partitioning screen which is adorned with Christian symbols. The screen seals off the "holy place." During the course of the sacrament he enters the holy place through two swinging doors. As a child I used to wonder what was in there and what the priest did there. In fact, the entire ritual was developed from early medieval times to symbolize the worship of the Old Testament. The priest enters the holy place on behalf of the people. He acts for the people in relation to God. He is the divine representative, the sacramental and mediating agent, who is authorized to perform religious service. The screen represents the separation between God who is holy and man who is sinful.

Rejection of exclusive priestly representation and affirmation of the finality of Christ's sacrifice were key theological factors in the Protestant Reformation. The issue is still very much alive in the continuing claim of the episcopal churches (chiefly Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Anglican) that only episcopally authorized persons can minister in the church. Baptists and other evangelicals reject the claims of apostolic succession and say that every Christian is a priest. There is only one kind of Christian, and every Christian is called to ministry.

The symbolism of the screen between God and man is instructive. In Hebrews the tabernacle worship of Exodus and Leviticus is contrasted with the work of Christ, wherein Christ himself, not an animal, is the final sacrifice. He opens the way into God's presence not with animal blood but with his own. The screen which keeps us from the holy presence of God is rent (Mark 15:38). The way into God's presence is now freely open to every Christian (Heb. 10:19-20).

Not only is Christ's sacrifice efficacious and unrepeatable (Heb. 9:11-14, 23-28; 10:11-14, 19-25), his priestly act ends priestcraft because he continues his priestly ministry for us, which no one else can perform. The divine intention is to create a new priestly function: not that of a select religious group to mediate between God and his people, but that all of God's newly redeemed through Christ should be priests to mediate the gospel to the world (1 Peter 2:9; Rev. 1:6; 5:10). Christians are a "kingdom of priests."

The trend which undermined the doctrine of the priesthood of all Christians began early. For example, the late first century document *I Clement,* which was a letter from the church at Rome to the church at Corinth, distinguishes the roles of high priest, priests, and Levites and then adds, "the layman is bound by the layman's code ... each of us brothers, in his own rank ... we must not trespass the rules laid down for our own ministry" *(I Clement* 40-41).

The appeal for order and the need to regularize ministry created orders. The single most important factor in this trend was the post-apostolic distinction between bishop and presbyter and the emergence of the monepiscopacy. City and regional bishops usually ordained subordinate clergy. Dispensing of sacraments only by authorized clergy reinforced the division between priests and laity in the public mind.

With the consolidation of religious authority, clericalism showed itself variously from the middle ages on. It is now difficult for us to grasp the extent of influence, wealth, and power which accrued to clergy in the late middle ages. They did not marry. They dressed differently and cut their hair distinctively. They were often exempted from the civil courts and submitted only to papal courts. They virtually became *a tertium quid.* Theology, money, and power became intertwined, especially as regards masses for the dead, for which immense amounts of capital were built up by bequests, all of which was managed by the priests. The power to withhold religious service in face of the doctrine of purgatory and the possibility of money-secured indulgences had an immense impact upon people generally.

Morningstar and Reformation

The key to unlocking the chain which held Europe and Britain in religious thralldom was fashioned by John Wyclif. Fully 130 years before Luther's essays rocked Europe, John Wydif's theological essays were profoundly influencing not only England but Bohemia through John Hus and Luther. Wyclif and the Lollards of England and Hus and the Hussites of

Bohemia were important components of the evangelical awakening which fed into Reformation theology. Historically, at strategic points British theology has shaped European theology.[1]

Wyclifs ideas have proved to be seminal. Today, many of them are widely held, even among Catholics: the dangers of an endowed clergy rather than one

supported by people's gifts, a eucharistic doctrine not unlike that later adopted by Luther which rejects transubstantiation, rejection of the distinction between bishop and presbyter, rejection of the infallibility of the pope, rejection of papal power, including the power to excommunicate, and a realist metaphysics which places him closer to the relation between language and reality, as discussed today by linguistic analysts, than to the nominalists who were his contemporaries.

Of great consequence was Wyclif's teaching about dominion. He argued that true lordship belongs to God alone, who gives it to men, but not to men in sin. This undercut claims to absolute authority and laid the foundation for subjects to withdraw their support from unjust rulers. The more immediate impact was to challenge church and papal authority. God gives spiritual, not civil, authority to the church at large, that is, to the totality of God's people. Hence, no discrete church or person can claim it. The pope commands obedience only insofar as he is apostolic, which means so long as he obeys the Scriptures. Arbitrary papal authority is absurd.

This line of argument led to the thesis for which Wyclif was most detested: prelates and priests who habitually abuse wealth can legitimately have it taken away by the civil power. Prelates and priests are stewards not masters. This thesis threatened church control of immense reserves of wealth. The papal response against Wyclif and Hus was immediate and unrelenting. Money is a hidden hand in religious affairs. Theological challenge can result in tortuous, unending disputation, but where money is at stake the response of religious power is swift and decisive.[2] Wyclif formulated concepts which under Henry VIII eventually resulted in the separation of the English church from Rome and confiscation of vast holdings.

A thesis parallel to that of dominion concerns the authority of the Scriptures, for which Wyclif is best known by modern evangelicals. He argued for and reflected in his writings total trust in the Bible. His exposition of the Scriptures was a landmark in English theology. It was "a massive enterprise which had no parallel among English academics for several centuries before and after," says Kenny.[3] Wyclif began the process of making the Bible accessible to the common man, which led to the later work of Tyndale and finally the preparation of the King James Version. The Bible ought to be put into the language of the people, he said. Everyone must become a student of the Scriptures. Scripture is for Christians the book of first principles which, like the first principles of logic, test for truth and correct error. The first office of a priest is "to feed his sheep spiritually on the Word of God." [4]

Wyclif was a restorationist. Though a child of his times, he believed that the church had moved too far from its apostolic origins and evangelical simplicity. Priests and laymen attracted to his teaching became itinerant preachers[5] who gathered people into groups in town and country to read and study the Bible. His essay "On The Pastoral Office" demands high intellectual, spiritual, and moral

qualifications for the pastoral office.

For him, however, such competence reinforces rather than diminishes the place and function of all Christians as believer priests: “No faithful person (I say) doubts that God could give a layman the power to perform the sacrament, just as a layman, since he could be a priest (as the logicians say), could perform the sacrament. Surely it seems according to the testimony of Augustine, Chrysostom, and other saints that every predestined layman is a priest, and a much more devoted layman performing the sacrament, since he would give sacred ministry to the Church, would have the *raison d’etre* ... of a priest.”[6] Wyclif’s reform

was more populist than the later Reformation traditions, and more mission-oriented and spiritually renewing in character.

The Protestant Reformers’ emphasis on the priesthood of all Christians is well-known; more pertinent is the question of how effective has been implementation of the ideal in the ministry of the church and the mission of the gospel.

In his address “To The Christian Nobility of the German Nation” (1520) Martin Luther attacked the wall of the interlocking arguments erected by Rome to shelter its authority by asserting: that spiritual power transcends temporal power, that only the church (pope and prelates) can authoritatively interpret Scripture, and that in any event only the pope can call a council. Of particular interest is what he says about universal ministry He began with Paul’s metaphor (1 Corinthians 12) of the interdependent members of the church body. Each member does his own work and serves others. The foundation of this is the common ground of the gospel: “We have one baptism, one Gospel, one faith, and are all Christians alike; for baptism, gospel, and faith, these alone make spiritual and Christian people.”

Luther recognized the truth which in our time has suddenly raised new questions about Christian initiation and qualifications for ministry - something which Baptists need to recapture as foundational to the doctrine of Christian vocation - namely, “we are all consecrated as priests by baptism.”[7] Entrance upon ministry is first and foremost not by ordination but by baptism.

Nevertheless, in Protestant ranks generally the doctrine has been honored in the breach as often as in practice. This is partly due to the heritage of the Reformers, who presented the priesthood of all Christians as a devotional matter more than as practical and programmatic. Priesthood is seen as intercessory ministry before the throne of God, which has been made accessible by the prior mediation of Christ. For example, Calvin, expanding upon the participation of Christians in the Lord’s Supper and referring to 1 Pet. 2:9, says, “From this office of sacrificing, all Christians are called ‘a royal priesthood,’ because by Christ we offer that sacrifice of praise of which the apostle speaks, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name.”[8] Zwingli said the same, “But Peter’s real meaning was that the Lord Jesus Christ has called all Christians to kingly honor and to the priesthood, so that they do not need a sacrificing priest to offer on their behalf, for they are all priests,

offering spiritual gifts, that is, dedicating themselves wholly to God."[9]

This powerful devotional concept, that is, priesthood as the "sacrifice of praise," has been influential through the deeper life movements of modern times, such as the British Keswick movement and the Bible conference and retreat centers in the United States and Canada. However, the movement often fails to come to grips with the actual church-centered ministry which ought to follow. The Anabaptists of Europe held similar views. They surely stressed the importance of public discipleship and the principle of the priesthood of all Christians. But as a general rule in North America they have not until recent times seen universal ministry to be as much a commission to evangelize outside their own circle as to carry on social service within and outside their ethnic boundaries.

Another element of the Protestant mind-set should also be noted, namely, the strict Calvinist influence among Baptists which, through a doctrine of predestination and limited atonement, proscribed freely offering the gospel to all men. This mood found the devotional interpretation of believer-priesthood congenial to its purposes. It evoked the passionate appeal of William Carey and Andrew Fuller that the commission to evangelize and teach all nations is laid upon all Christians.

Historically, Baptist and similar churches have seen themselves as being essentially populist and missionary in character rather than as the established church of the land, even though Baptists have rejected the sectarian label (i.e., insisting that they are part of the mainstream of apostolic Christianity). Baptist structure -- local church, association, convention -- is in part intended to be expansive in the sense that mission-mood pervades the life of the churches. Every believer is a servant of Christ -- that is the principle. Some service will be in the church, while other service will be in the world. Universal ministry means that every believer expresses his or her faith every day in how work is done, social and political obligations are fulfilled, help is given, witness is made, and the joint work of the church is accomplished. The vision is of all Christians upbuilding one another and practicing missionary, evangelistic priesthood, not that of a restricted group of priests performing correct religious service, or only of devout self-dedication in worship.

Contemporary Traditions

Three distinct Christian traditions dominate contemporary Christendom: Episcopal, Reformation, and Believer's Church. It is instructive to note trends within the churches of each of these as interest in universal ministry interacts with received traditions, especially in the West. In some cases theological interests are allied with current efforts to equalize the political and

economic status of women in society, but, for the most part, there has arisen

within modern Christian denominations concern to break down the wall between professional and lay ministry by asking whether there are really any ministries from which lay people are in principle excluded. This is forcing a re-examination of traditions and the shape of earliest Christianity, as has occurred in the ecumenical dialogue which produced the BEM document *(Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry).*

1. Episcopal Traditions

The Episcopal traditions are represented chiefly by the Eastern Orthodox churches, the Anglican communion (the Episcopal Church in the United States), and the Roman Catholic Church. These are the modern heirs of the post-Constantinian Christian traditions which sought to preserve visible, hierarchical, palpable ecclesiological continuity in a church which is conceived of as sacrament-dispensing, liturgical (formalized spiritual expression), societally (i.e., ethnically or nationally) inclusive, and politically approved.

The Eastern Orthodox churches comprise separate autocephalous national bodies which historically have been seen as conservers and perpetuators of ethnic and national identity. The centuries-long restriction of power and influence of these churches to Southeastern Europe, Russia, and the Near East has suddenly changed during the past generation. Following the defeat of the liberal theological cause when the World Council of Churches adopted a firm incarnational statement at New Delhi in 1961.[10] Eastern Orthodox theology has filled the vacuum left by the preceding European and American Liberalism. This is evident in the form and content of the BEM document, in which repeated appeals are made to the incarnational and trinitarian theology of the early ecumenical councils of the church, especially the Nicene and Chalcedonian creeds.

In the Orthodox tradition, the clergy, especially bishops, represent Christ, but they cannot officiate without the people, hence "the church *as such* is mission."[11] As a liturgical community of faith, clergy and laity witness through the presentation of the liturgy. There can be no liturgy without the people -- the Laos -- because it is the prayers of the people that the priest presents to God.

Article 30 of the traditional Anglican confession (The Thirty-nine Articles) rejects Catholic withholding of the cup from the laity in the eucharist. W. H. Griffith Thomas insisted that actual ministry is essentially pastoral, never mediatorial; that the terms priest, sacrifice, and altar are not characteristic of apostolic teaching. The mediatorial ministry of Christ is undelegated and untransmissible. "The truth, therefore, is that Christianity is, not *has,* a priesthood."[12] Nevertheless, apart from the minority Low Church tradition, emphasis upon priesthood in Anglicanism rests chiefly upon the ordained priests. Traditionally, the eucharist and the liturgy are where and when clergy and laity witness to the Gospel; additional lay ministry is primarily social service. Some months ago the wife of an English Anglican rector whom my wife and I know commented to us that members of her husband's

parish were demanding more to do in connection with church ministry, including evangelistic missions, witness teams, Bible study groups, and other forms of lay ministry. He was puzzled, confessing that he did not know what they wanted. After all, he said, he celebrated the Eucharist and conducted the liturgy. What more was needed? In the liturgical traditions there remains a centuries-old mood that congregational witness is primarily eucharistic celebration.

One of the most dramatic changes in Roman Catholic teaching since the Second Vatican Council (1963-65) concerns the role and ministry of the laity, called "The Apostolate of the Laity," that is, the mission of the laity.[13] The importance of this decree, which is one of only nine passed by the council, has been highlighted by numerous Catholic authors. Teaching on the role of the laity is enlarged upon in "The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World," which was the only document developed from the floor of the council. In conjunction with the document on the church (known as "Light of All Nations"; note Chapter IV on The Laity), "The Church in the Modern World" reflects the concern of Catholic leadership with renewing lay participation and witness in face of sweeping international secularization of Christendom.

How are laity to function? By holy life and example to penetrate the secular world. There follows a remarkable passage (paragraph 3) in which gifts of the Spirit are discussed and their recognition and balanced use encouraged. In the church, laity are to strengthen the ministry of pastors, participate in the liturgy, witness in the community, offer catechetical instruction, care for souls, and deal with social problems in the community. They should foster a positive parish mood, participate is diocesan projects, and

assist in national and international Christian ventures. In particular, married couples have a responsibility to maintain exemplary marriages and family life as bearers of God's grace and as responsible citizens. The closing exhortation urges the laity to see themselves as Christ's "co-workers in the various forms and methods of the church's one apostolate."[14]

It is interesting that the original form of the decree proposed to the council was roundly criticized for being too clerical, too paternalistic, and too oriented to economic and political action at the expense of spiritual, didactic, and other ministries. Catholic laity should be allowed to grow up, it was said.[15]

In the United States last year, the Vatican's withdrawal of key episcopal prerogatives from Bishop Hunthausen of Seattle drew national attention and evoked such a powerful backlash that a compromise reinstatement was agreed upon which included appointment of a coadjutor bishop alongside Bishop Hunthausen, evidently to monitor diocesan policy and activity and to signal that after a decent interval the coadjutor would succeed Bishop Hunthausen. These events concern far more than Bishop Hunthausen's holding of a mass for

homosexuals or protesting the use of his tax dollars for nuclear weapons. The backlash came from thousands of local lay Catholics who have tasted the heady wine of lay power in church affairs.

The Vatican's reaction to libertarian trends among American Catholics may reflect long-standing suspicions that American Catholic Christianity can easily run amok. In the nineteenth century the French Catholic bishops dubbed it the “Americanist Controversy" or "Heckerism." Isaac Hecker, the founder of the Paulist Fathers, was New York born, the son of a devout Methodist family who knew something about the populist evangelistic techniques of Charles G. Finney. As a young man he converted to Catholicism and vowed to evangelize America and the world for the Catholic Church. He created a powerful movement in the American Northeast, but his preaching raised the ire of European Catholic bishops. He said that European Catholicism was on the wane, that American Christianity and methods were to be the wave of the future, and, as one of his interpreters said, that "all churches become more evangelical the more they become modern and American."[16]

2. The BEM Synthesis

It remains to consider the place of universal ministry among Protestant churches, particularly those, like Baptists, of the Believer's Church tradition. This follows in connection with discussion of the BEM document and the concluding points about the doctrine's contemporary relevance. Rapid growth of evangelical churches occurs in direct proportion to the extent to which the laity become part of the vision and mission of the church to nurture Christian faith and evangelize non-Christians.

The most important event in the ecumenical movement in this generation is the preparation and circulation to the world Christian community of the study entitled *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* (known as the BEM document) under the aegis of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches. Along with this the Lima Liturgy[17] was prepared, an order of service based on the Nicene-Constantinopolitan creeds and other historic and contemporary confessional materials.

In an effort to reconcile historical controversies, BEM reverts to the classical language of the early creeds. Apostolicity rather than catholicity is stressed.[18] Baptists are grateful for its powerful incarnational, trinitarian, and atonement emphases. What about the sections on ministry?

BEM affirms that believer's baptism is the "clearly attested pattern in the New Testament documents (on Baptism, 11), but nevertheless invites acceptance of infant baptism as an equivalent alternative which emphasizes the corporate faith of the church. As problematic to Baptists as is this concession to infant baptism, it is important to see that in BEM identifiable discipleship, which Baptists

historically claim to be the prime mark of authentic churchmanship, carries with it the prime meaning and obligations of ministry. It points out that in the New Testament priesthood is never used of the ordained ministry but always for the priesthood of the church. "In the New Testament, the term is reserved, on the one hand, for the unique priesthood of Christ and, on the other, for the royal and prophetic priesthood of all baptized" (on Ministry, 17).

Further, the authors argue that the New Testament does not present a single pattern of ministry. While this runs the risk of claims that the Holy Spirit creates non-New Testament structures and offices, BEM proposes that a certain historic pattern become a stabilizing factor, namely, the three-fold office of bishop, presbyter, and deacon.

This three-fold pattern leaves the door open to episcopal claims for the continuing primacy of bishops and succession and has drawn considerable critical notice from Protestants who reject, on biblical grounds, the formal distinction between bishop and elder. Baptists affirm that the normative New Testament pattern is that of bishops (i.e., elders, pastors) and deacons (Phil. 1:1).

Questions raised by Baptists parallel those raised by other Protestants. For example, Morris West[19] principal of the Baptist Theological College in Bristol, England, and one deeply involved in ecumenical affairs, says that Baptists have traditionally had forms of ministry wider than that of the local pastorate. Despite historical allusions the three-foldness of ministry advocated in BEM cannot simply be taken for granted. As well, the document seems to assume a particular - and unacceptable - definition of the term " bishop" for discussion to proceed. Mostly West faults BEM for its failure to discuss the function of deacons and the meaning of diakonic ministry in the New Testament. Regrettably, he merely states without discussion the need for wider consideration of the lay-diaconate as Baptists have conceived it.

The official response of the American Baptist Churches[20] defers to the primacy of the local church, saying at the outset that Baptist fellowship is not creedal and that their formal response does not bind their churches. The respondents feel compelled to rephrase a basic question: not whether in BEM readers recognize the faith of the church through the ages, but whether BEM is agreeable to the Scriptures. As to ministry, while the document acknowledges that all of the people of God are called to ministry, there is such emphasis upon ordained ministry that the ministry of the laity is nearly obscured. While Baptists acknowledge gifts of pastoral ministry, they also insist that "there is no function which is exclusively reserved to the ordained clergy." God calls all believers to the ministry of reconciliation; "to this ministry we are all ordained." Attention is called to the indifference of churches to women's ministry or the marginalizing of that ministry.

The Canadian Baptist Federation response has been published in a paper commissioned, following study sessions and papers, by its Inter-Faith Relations Committee and prepared by Ronald Watts, former executive secretary of the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec.[21] The concept of Christian ministry is rooted in the New Testament, beginning with the apostles and moving rapidly to the pattern of the epistles, namely, the planting of new churches led by pastors (bishops or elders) and deacons. Paul emphasizes function, not office. A comma should not follow "saints" in Eph. 4:12: "with this comma inserted after `saints,' the sentence implies that the pastors (and other church leaders) have three responsibilities: to train believers, to do the work of ministry and to build up the church. In the Greek text, however, they have but one function: to prepare the believers for *their* ministry, in order that the church through them might be strengthened" (p. 25). This text stresses that all Christians have a personal ministry to perform and that the pastor has the prime responsibility to train, equip, and guide his people for and in ministry. Baptists hold to one ministry: that of believers, every believer. The pastor exercises a special function, recognized by the church, within the ministry of all. To sum up, says Watts: "Baptists believe that ministry -- the task of making Jesus Christ known in word and deed -- is the responsibility of the entire church of Christ. Every believer is a minister" (p. 27). Despite this historic truth, Baptists often fall into the habit of regarding the pastor as the (only) minister of the church, at times even as an authority figure. Oversight can be furnished through offices other than successionist bishops (such as denominational officials). Openness calls for safeguards against unbiblical aberrations.

A recent trend among Baptists which bears upon ministry in the church may be cited. There has arisen a disturbing trend toward authoritarianism which is altering Baptist practice so as to diminish the importance of congregational decision-making and to undermine the principle of universal ministry, namely, the creation of lay-elders as a governing body in the church. These are claimed to have spiritual authority above deacons. Pastors, as we have known them, are said to be "equals among equals" but, in fact, are made subservient to such presbyteries in Baptist churches. The result is a new form of authoritarian tribalism patterned after the elders of Israel, not the concept of the local body of which Christ is the head and in which pastors and deacons are fellow-workers with the congregation.

In Britain this is taking two forms, at opposite ends of the religious spectrum; namely, boards of elders

("the Elders") in Reformed[22] (Calvinistically inclined) Baptist churches and a similar injection within radically charismatic Baptist churches. Among the latter in England leadership has adopted an hierarchical chain: this leader is "in

subjection to" so-and-so, and he in turn is “in subjection to” someone else, and so on. All of this is claimed to be under the aegis of the Holy Spirit. It is ironic that at a time when monepiscopal churches are striving to implement collegial leadership and at least are discussing universal ministry, others of radical movements are making strident claims to personal authority.

In Western Canada attempts are currently under way to inject authoritarian eldership into the life of Baptist churches, chiefly as a fall-out from Plymouth Brethren influences at Regent College in Vancouver.[23] Parallel with this, the creation twenty years ago of an executive minister (rather than an executive secretary) and area ministers (instead of associational secretaries), which is seen by some as the creation of regional Baptist bishops, has accelerated this trend. The operations of the Baptist Union of Western Canada have become conciliar in nature displacing its historic populism.[24]

Such influences upon Baptist polity and practice are not small. In a recent paper presented to the Interchurch Relations Committee of the Canadian Baptist Federation, Douglas Moffat, the executive minister of the Baptist Union of Western Canada, strongly advocated the injection of boards of lay elders who would have authority greater than that of deacons. Such a trend flies in the face of the fact that biblical scholarship reinforces the conclusion that pastor, bishop, and elder are synonymous terms and that deacons, far from being merely waiters at tables, play a crucial spiritual and theological role in the New Testament. The move among Baptist churches to lay boards of elders enhances authoritarianism and tends to weaken, not strengthen, lay participation.

Contemporary Relevance

The church is not a tribe under elders, an enclave under overseers, an assembly of worshippers correctly performing sacrament, a congregation offering charismatic praise, or a gathering of penitents hopeful of mediation by a consecrant. Surely leadership, oversight, care, praise, intercession and dedication are all important elements of church life. Their meaning must be qualified by the New Testament definition of the church as the body of Christ and the function of its members as believer-priests for universal ministry in respect of the mission given by Christ in the Great Commission.

That the church is a body means that each local church ought to function as a body. In 1 Cor. 12:27 Paul does not mean that Corinth is an eye, Ephesus an ear, and Thyatira a foot of some universal, mystical body. That makes nonsense of the metaphor. As precious as is the conception of the oneness of all Christians in Christ, Paul means that Corinth, Ephesus, and Thyatira ought each to function as a body. Every believer has an appropriate function within the local body. As effective as has been Baptist church ministry in the past and as powerful as has been Baptist defense of the principle of universal priesthood, it still remains for Baptists to fill out today more fully the challenges of universal kerugmatic and

diakonic ministry in the modern world. Education, prosperity, and technology increase that potential enormously. Specific elements to consider in fleshing out the principle include:

1. Breadth of Understanding

The definition and scope of New Testament charisms are broad. They include all spiritual gifts and talents[25] and suggest an intimate relation between the two, for example, improvisation (1 Cor. 14:26). They ought to be cultivated (1 Cor. 14:1). They are diverse (1 Cor. 12:6). They are not all universal, though every believer is endowed (1 Cor. 12:11; the only possible answer to the rhetorical questions of vv. 28-30 is "no"). They are church-oriented for edification and the common good, not for self-worth or self-aggrandizement (1 Cor. 12:7, 26). Only one is universal, namely, love (1 Cor. 12:31 through to 14:1), and the most treasured gift is the gift of preaching or teaching, because thereby the gospel is communicated (1 Cor. 14:1-5).

The qualifications and qualities asked of church leaders, that is, pastors and deacons (1 Tim. 3:1-13), are remarkably parallel, with the chief difference being that pastors must be capable teachers: both pastors and deacons must be spiritually mature, emotionally stable, theologically astute, of proven

character, and effective managers.[26] The chief purpose of this range and balance of qualifications is to "equip saints for the work of the ministry" (Eph. 4:12) along with the pastors' and deacons' own preaching, witness, teaching, and leading.

Diverse New Testament ministries include: managing helping ministries *(prohistemi,* Rom. 16:1-2; 1 Tim. 3:12) such as that of the deaconess Phoebe; co-ordinating and administering duties to keep ministries operating smoothly and effectively *(kubernesis, 1* Cor. 12:28); helping and caring ministries *(diakonia,* Rom. 12:7; 1 Cor. 16:15); teaching *(didaskalia,* Rom. 12:7); exhorting *(paraklesis,* Rom. 12:8); contributing *(metadidous,* Rom. 12:8); giving aid *(prohistamenos,* Rom. 12:8); extending merciful help *(eleon,* Rom. 12:8); assisting, as an expediter or co-ordinator *(huperetes,* Acts 13:5); leading, overseeing *(egoumenos,* Acts 7:10); managing, as a steward or treasurer *(oikonomos,* 1 Cor. 4:2; 1 Pet. 4:10; note *epitropos,* Matt. 20:8); and dutiful serving *(doulos,* Rom. 1:1). There was a class of senior widows who were assisted by the church and who rendered spiritual service in the life of the church (1 Tim. 5:3-10). Prisca and Aquila were evidently an effective didactic team whom Paul regarded as fellow workers (Rom. 16:3). Examination of Paul's greetings in Rom. 16:1-16 suggests a wide range of ministries by both men and women in the service of the gospel. These are all in addition to the blanket injunction that all of Christ's disciples are to be witnesses to his saving grace.

2. Corporate Culture

This is an inadequately recognized factor in church growth which is directly related to the believer's priesthood. In the New Testament it is described as the unity and interdependence of the body. It is deferential egalitarianism. Equality in the body does not mean in the first instance equality of rights, but recognition of the mandate to universal ministry for all believers and deference to one another to allow space for that service, and encouragement of personal development for service. Recent studies show that administrative authority is not the prime factor for success in business. A business has clients. But within an organization workers are clients of one another. What each does affects another directly. Awareness of and commitment to the goals of the enterprise must pervade the organization and will affect the way people deal with one another. This is created by the people themselves.

William Ouchi, in a widely read study of successful Japanese and American corporations *(Theory Z, 1981),* says that three factors are crucial to success; intimacy, subtlety, and trust. These are spiritual qualities. Historically they are reflected in all church growth movements, such as the Methodist "classes" of John Wesley and the Evangelical Awakening. Mood comes before method.

Within this corporate culture key, New Testament concepts such as worship *(leiturgeia),* fellowship *(koinonia),* teaching *(didache),* loving care *(diakonia),* and evangelism *(kerugma)* take on their most cogent and most powerful meaning. As an invisible umbrella named "mission" is hoisted over the entire congregation, pastoral staff, deacons, other leaders, and members sense a common purpose within the ties - like fingers of love - which draw them together in Christ's service. Then the structural and material elements of program have life breathed into them. Then the narcissistic self-seeking of our times, the inability to love, and the "alone together" syndrome are displaced by self-giving. Such dedication evokes extraordinary ingenuity from ordinary people.

3. Kingdom Witness

Universal ministry means, finally, that every Christian should incarnate Christian faith and principles in the world. There is a parallel and a historical connection ideologically between the Protestant doctrine of universal priesthood in democratically constituted local churches and the concept of citizenship and citizen-constituents which created the American Constitution, the bicentennial of which was recently celebrated. On the dark side, as Reinhold Niebuhr reminded us, democracy guards humanity from the universal inclination (attributable to original sin) to abuse power. The primary right within a democracy is not only the right to elect; it is as well the right to eject rulers and leaders, whether in the church or in the state, who delude themselves that they have inalienable or divinely sanctioned rights to power. The priesthood of all Christians and the concept of the citizen-constituent both entail the consent of the governed,

enfranchisement, a sense of ownership, commitment, and responsibility to preserve freedom, justice, and constitutional government together with dedicated service to the purposes of church and nation.

Baptists are not Anabaptists. There are elements common to both; however, British and American Independency had different perceptions about the scope of public, identifiable discipleship and the priesthood of all Christians. The Anabaptists espoused inner freedom as the haven of the soul for oppressed Christians and usually created countercultures. The genius of British and American Independency lay in nurturing the principle of a democratic society, political

freedom, and religious liberty, rather than passivity and neutrality to government. For Baptists, Christianity was organic to the ideals of national life even though Baptists espoused toleration, pluralism, and the separation of church and state. Hence Baptists have never regarded themselves, or have wished to be regarded, as sectarian within American and Canadian society.

P. T. Forsyth, the British theologian of a generation ago, highlighted this truth: in the English-speaking lands, inwardness and subjectivity could not be all. Faith and discipleship meant more. Leavened by free grace, that inwardness became "the mother of public liberty in the modem world."[27] Like the twin strands of the genetic helix that is the foundation of life, universal priesthood and responsible citizenship are interlocking elements, whether in the church or in the state.

Universal ministry means that Christians are salt in the world. They are to be Spirit-bearing men and women, proleptically signs of the kingdom, instances of the new man for the new age, dedicated privately to holiness and publicity to righteousness, goodness, and truth. At bottom, this priesthood is the priesthood of the cross, not the flaunting of ersatz joy or the appurtenances of a comfortable life. It is ministry based not on assumptions of power, or assumptions of rights to personal well-being, but on priesthood which accepts suffering and absorbs it, "to fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh, for the body's sake" (Col. 1:24). It is the grace of Christ made public in the world.

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Notes

[1]To be sure, there was a pool of common ideas forming in Europe and Britain. For example the Parisian exegete Nicholas of Lyra influenced Wyclifs biblical exposition. Nevertheless, direct influence from Wyclif upon the indigenously forming reform movements of Hus and others is evident.

The spelling of Wyclifs name continues to be a variant: Wyclif or Wycliffe. Anthony Kenny, the present and 63rd master of Balliol College, Oxford, has written an excellent introduction (*Wyclif.* Oxford University Press, 1985) on his predecessor, who was the 13th master of Balliol. Kenny, the former Catholic theologian who left the Roman Catholic Church (see his *A Path From Rome*. London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1985), has also translated Wyclifs *On Universals* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985). The introduction to Wyclif by the British Baptist, Edwin Robertson, is helpful (*Wycliffe*. London: Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1984).

From December 1984 to April 1985 the Bodleian Library, Oxford, presented an exhibition of "Wyclif and His Followers," to mark the 600th anniversary of his death in December 1384. Copies of the informative catalogue which described the exhibition were still available from the Bodleian a year ago.

[2]The current financial crisis in the Vatican illustrates the point (*New York Times*, June 23, 1987). This crisis may result in a shift of power. It caps a ten-year deficit trend. At present the Vatican spends twice its income. The annual international "Peter's Pence" offering covers scarcely half the expenditures. American Catholic bishops' demands to see the Vatican budget have thus far been refused. The papal appeal for funds, especially to American bishops, is eliciting a strategy developed by the senior American cardinals to create an endowment fund. However, the fund will be controlled from the United States; only the income will go to the Vatican. This will reduce the Vatican's financial independence and suggests a gradual shift of power. Money may presently serve as a democratizing catalyst in the Roman Catholic Church.

[3]Kenny, p. 58.

[4]Anthony Kenny, "On The Pastoral Office," in *Advocates of Reform*, ed. Matthew Spinka. (London: SCM, 1953), p. 48.

[5]They were known as Lollards, which originally was a term signifying "mumbler" or "mutterer." It denoted contempt for a pious manner.

[6]Spinka, p. 84.

[7]Martin Luther, "To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation;' in *Documents illustrative of the Continental Reformation,* ed. J. B. Kidd. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), pp. 63-64.

[8]John Calvin, The Institutes of the Christian Religion, vol. 2, transl. by Henry Beveridge. (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1957) p. 618.

[9]Ulrich Zwingli, "Of the Clarity and Certainly of the Word of God," in *Zwingll and Bullinger,* tr. and ed., G. W. Bromiley (London: SCM, 1953), p. 88.

[10]The Basis of the World Council which was adopted reads: "The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures and therefore seek to fulfil together their common calling to the glory of One God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit." *The New Delhi Report.* (New York: Association Press, 1962), p. 152.

[11]James J. Stamoolis, *Eastern Orthodox Mission Theology Today.* (Maryknoll, N.Y: Orbis Books, 1986), p. 117.

[12]W. H. Griffith-Thomas, *The Principles of Theology: An Introduction to the Thirty-nine Articles.* (London: Church Book Room Press, 1945), p. 316.

[13]Some Members of the Council sought to change the name of this decree to "The Participation of the Laity in the Mission of the Church." The Commission decided to retain the term "Apostolate"

because it heightened the importance of the decree, allowing to it sacral language parallel with other crucial pronouncements (Walter M. Abbott and Joseph Gallagher, *The Documents of Vatican II.* New York: Guild Press, p. 489). Note that pre Vatican II studies of Catholicism, such as that of Jaroslav Pelikan *(The Riddle of Roman Catholicism,* 1959) do not discuss the laity in Catholic church ministry.

[14]*Documents of Vatican II, p. 521* (Apostolate of the Laity, final Exhortation).

[15]Zavier Rynne, *Vatican Council II.* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, *1968), pp. 322-28.*

[16]David J. O'Brien in *Hecker Studies,* ed. John Farina. (New York: Paulist Press, *1983), p. 90.* John Farina's full-length study of Hecker details of the nineteenth century background: An *American Experience of God.* (New York: Paulist Press, *1981).* Farina completed the doctoral research for this study under Robert T. Handy, the Baptist historian at Union Theological Seminary, New York.

[17]BEM (1982) and the Lima Liturgy (1983) aim at "convergence," which is the term used to express the current aims of ecumenism - to find common theological and liturgical grounds for worshipping and acting together. It is noteworthy that at the Sixth Assembly of the WCC, Vancouver *1983,* Eastern Orthodox leaders, who represent an influential tradition in the work of the Faith and Order formulations, declined to participate in the Eucharist, though it was celebrated by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

[18]The committee was not prepared to confront the question of succession and the papacy, which it left for future dialogue. Instead, succession of the apostolic tradition is stressed, of kerugma rather than of office.

[19]W. M. S. West, *"Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry:* A Baptist Comment," *Catholic Ecumenical Quarterly* (England) 20.1 (1984).

[20]"The Response of the American Baptist Churches in the USA to the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches regarding *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry."* This was adopted by the General Board of the ABC at their June 1985 meeting and dispatched by the General Secretary, Robert C. Campbell, Sept. 9, 1986.

[21]Ronald F. Watts, *The Ordinances and Ministry of the Church: A Baptist View.* (Toronto: Canadian Baptist Federation, 1986.) The Canadian Baptist Federation is made up of the United Baptist Convention of the Atlantic Provinces, the Union of French Baptist Churches, The Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec, and the Baptist Union of Western Canada. The Inter-Church Relations Committee of the Federation published this study.

[22]Some Reformed influence has been felt among Baptists in the USA and Canada through the publications of the Banner of Truth Trust, which majors on republishing Puritan literature. J. I. Packer has attempted to popularize these views, particularly limited atonement and opposition to the free offer of the gospel to all.

[23]The dominant ethos at Regent College, a parachurch interdenominational graduate school, is Plymouth Brethren. The Baptist Union of Western Canada has aligned itself with Regent College through Carey Hall, its own theological college, for joint offering of the M.Div. degree.

[24]In a powerful critique of recent trends Walter E. Ellis, a well-known Canadian Baptist historian and pastor, asks, "The question now posed is whether the Baptist heritage can survive the pull of a powerful evangelical transdenominationalism?" ('A Place to Stand: Contemporary History of the Baptist Union of Western Canada," a paper read before the annual meeting of the Canadian Society of Church History held at the University of Manitoba, June 5, 1986).

[25]For example: any act of service, 1 Pet. 4:7-15, Rom. 12:6-7; some favur or blessing, 2 Cor. 1:11; sexual continence or celibacy, 1 Cor. 7:7; spiritual truth, Rom. 1:11.

[26]These are the qualities and capacities which exegesis of the passage yields for both pastors and deacons. It is time to get past the tiresome litany that deacons are merely "waiters at tables," e.g., Gerald L. Borchert, *Today's Model Church.* (Forest Park: Roger Williams Press, 1971) which erroneous popularization is being employed by some today to justify the creation of authoritarian boards of elders above deacons. This ignores that Phil. 1:1 lists officers as pastors and deacons and that Paul specifies theological (i.e., capacity for spiritual ministry) astuteness among qualifications for deacons. There are at least three crucial statements on this in 1 Timothy 3: (a) They are to hold the mystery of faith, i.e., be instructed in the faith and be spiritually discerning, v. 9. (b) Boldness, that is, confidence as knowledgeable to exhort spiritually, v. 13. (c) "In the faith" combines faith and doctrinal understanding in the one who transmits the faith to others, v. 13.

[27]P. T. Forsyth, *Faith, Freedom and the Future.* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1912), p. 101.

THE CROSS OF CHRIST:
The Atonement and Men Today

SAMUEL J. MIKOLASKI

(Published in *Christianity Today,* V.12, March 13, 1961)

Discussion of the Atonement involves some of the most complex problems of Christian theology-problems that challenge a theologian's deepest insights, dialectical skills, and painstaking expression. Nevertheless, simplicity must be the watchword, yet a simplicity that takes to itself the fullness of the New Testament affirmation that "Christ died for our sins," and its expression in the personal faith that "Jesus died for me."

There is the fact of the Atonement, and there are theories about the Atonement. It is patently clear that the bare historical fact of Christ's death is not the Atonement at all; the "fact" of the Atonement is the apostolically interpreted fact that "Christ died for our sins." This is both its simplicity and its mystery. There may be insights of the Atonement for us and our generation that the Apostles may not have seen for theirs. But the fundamental principles of the Atonement expressed in the conceptual motifs of the apostolic witness remain as valid now as then. Leonard Hodgson never tires of saying, 'What must the truth have been and be, if men with their ways of thinking and speaking wrote as they did?" The reality of the Atonement both as doctrine and experience is the faith of the child or man who has learned to say trustingly, "Jesus died for me."

THE CROSS AS SACRIFICE

Of vital significance is the emphasis in recent literature upon sacrifice as the pervading idea of the Cross. To this idea can be attached the names of scholars like Oliver Quick, C. H. Dodd, Vincent Taylor, and A. M. Hunter. Here sin is related to the sacrifice of Christ in the shedding of blood as the great and redeeming act of His life. Jesus Christ's fulfillment of the suffering Servant role of Isaiah 53 is viewed as the norm of the apostolic witness, the thread tying that witness into a coherent whole. The positive side of this doctrine is devout and extremely valuable. It is that Christ died vicariously in the interests of sinful men, and that the forgiveness of sins is mediated through his sacrifice.

Some scholars seek to develop a constructive objective theory-and surely that last must be conceded as the sine qua non of any doctrine purporting to be really biblical-but without, they say, the "morally objectionable" penal and substitutionary elements of traditional orthodox theology. But for all the erudition and devoutness of such scholars, we are left here with one of the profoundest mysteries of life and faith. What is the relationship of Christ's vicarious sacrifice and death to God's righteousness, the human race, and human sin? How. is sin cleansed by vicarious sacrifice? What is the moral dynamic of a vicarious act and specifically of Christ's qualitatively infinite and eternal act?

Can one really argue with the theologians who say that "shed blood" means, in part, life outpoured and made "available" for sinful men and women? It is not what is said that needs correcting so much as what the image implies in addition.

This idea is based upon an interpretation of certain statements made late in the nineteenth century by William Milligan and Bishop Westcott to the effect that since Leviticus 17: 11 says "the life of the flesh is in the blood," sacrifice in the Old Testament conveys, therefore, the idea that the offerer shared in the victim's life released by sacrifice, not in the victim's death. However if, as Westcott and Milligan have written, the blood is alive, remember that the latter wrote "ideally alive," and that both declared that as shed the blood confesses sin and desert of punishment. Now this refers both to "life" in the blood and to death by blood being spilled violently.

But more, the blood testifies. The blood "speaks" of life voluntarily yielded in death for sin; it says "this life is yielded to death in loving obedience to the Father's will," and thus, by reason of the Incarnation, it binds to itself our lives and makes possible our actual response in His. We died **in** that death; his death was the death of sin and our death to sin,, and in his life we are alive.

SACRIFICE AND JUDGMENT

Does this not confess another vital and indispensable aspect of the Atonement, namely, that Christ's death was a judgment death? that he died the loathsome, horror-death of sin under the wrath of God? and that in this death it is as true to say that Punisher and Punished are one as that he is our substitute dying the death of sin?

This is the stumbling block, but why? On the one hand, the traditional propitiatory significance of the Atonement as turning away the wrath of God has often been modified by contemporary theology and reduced to the idea of expiation. But why expiate if no propitiation is in view? Curiously, the more we grind down our teeth to painful stubs over the traditional meaning of propitiation, the more the old bone seems the better for wear. Unfortunately it is not too often sensed that the piacular elements of the Atonement, whether viewed as expiation or propitiation, are not isolated terms which can be brought to unlamented death by vivisection in the laboratory of lexicography, but they are basic ideas of a vast complex of New Testament notions that do not permit fragmentation. Wrath, propitiation, expiation, and substitution are as much a part of New Testament morality in Atonement as is justification by faith. It is curious how a principle like Zenophanes' notion of "what is appropriate" underlies so much of our teaching about God. Is wrath appropriate to God? On what sort of sea is rejection of the notion floated? It is just here that the norm of Scripture teaching for the Christian shows itself, not as a "proof-texting" of archaic and pagan notions, as is sometimes charged, but upon a scientific accounting of the sense of Scripture borne out in the insight granted to biblical men and to us by the Holy Spirit. In our treatment of the terms and ideas of the New Testament, we require a more empirical approach "conserving the phenomena" of the Bible.

Why not wrath? What possible attitude *can* God take toward evil and sin but wrath in righteousness? Let us see evil and sin for what they are, not as postulates providing a necessary contrast for the good as in the world of idealism but as the issue of perverted wills disobeying God and releasing the power of corrupting evil

and sin in the world. Unless God is angry with sin, let us put a bullet in our collective brain, for the universe is mad. Surely we can agree that "anger" and "wrath" are poverty-stricken words to describe God's attitude, but find better words if you can! Only on the ground of the wrath of God can we maintain a fundamental optimism. Contrary to the contemporary saccharine conceptions of divinity that pre-empt the divine attitude of wrath toward sin, the biblical teaching, as Leonard Hodgson has stated, goes far beyond even modem notions of penalty **in** law being deterrent or reformatory; punishment *qua* punishment is retributive and vindictive (retributive, that is, as looking back upon an evil deed and meting out judgment commensurate to the act and the divine disapproval of it and vindictive in the sense of vindicating the divine standard of righteousness). This is both the guarantee for maintaining the divine righteousness and for preserving and perfecting human freedom as the divine objective. "If the Son shall make you free ye shall be free indeed." Let us not cut off our noses to spite our faces. By the maintenance of the divine righteousness in law and penalty, God allows the maximum opportunity for the development of human moral responsibility without inhibiting freedom while he is establishing his own righteousness; and on the same terms through grace he provides salvation for men in the perfection of Christ's life, the efficacy of his death, and the finality of his resurrection. God is "just and the justifier of him who believes in Jesus." Redemption comes to us not over but through judgment; Calvary does not buy the love of God, it exhibits its true character.

To press the penal, sacrificial, substitutionary, or mediatorial imagery (or any other idea) too far distorts the truth. But the whole doctrine will never be known unless each part is conserved and grasped. The moral implications of the metaphors and images of Scripture yield the whole. But the whole is in each part as an insight generated by the truth. Certainly it is true that Christ sacrificed himself for us, that he died the death of sin, that he made satisfaction for sin b_y 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 death is the objective ground of our reconciliation, and that his blood is the precious ransom or price of our salvation that seals the covenant of grace. When we have comprehended these terms in their bearing on the life of the triune God and upon the race (in Christ's humanity as an atonement to be received, and generating its own appropriate response by the Holy Spirit), we will be grasping the truth.

Happy is the man who allows the moral realities of Christ's work on the Cross to impinge upon his life. That man is hard indeed whose heart weeps no tears of penitence whenever the account of Christ's passion is read. For the power of this Gospel breaks sin's power and sets men free. The finished work of Christ is replete with moral appeal. Let us stand before that Cross, wondering at the spectacle, rejoicing in its simplicity, and amazed that Christ died for **our sins.**

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END

The Outline of the chapters of my book on grace is as follows:

THE GRACE OF GOD

Samuel J. Mikolaski

Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Co., 1966

CONTENTS

[*The Triune God* was widely circulated as a pamphlet insert in *Christianity Today*, June 10, 1966 on invitation of the editor, Dr. Carl F. H. Henry, then republished in *Fundamentals of the Faith* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1966) of which he was the editor. Pages 1-2 were the cover and inside cover page editor's memorandum.]

THE TRIUNE GOD

SAMUEL J. MIKOLASKI

No one should suppose that the doctrine of the Trinity perches incongruously on the periphery of faith. Far from being nonsense, a fussy but obscure dogma, or an irreverent logical stumbling block, this doctrine is indispensable to the Christian understanding of God, Christ, salvation, and the divine purpose in creation. All that is Christian hinges on the truth of the biblical revelation that God is one, eternal, personal, and triune.

The cruciality of the trinitarian conception of God may be grasped by considering the inner structure of many primary doctrines. To begin with, scholars of every age have seen that it makes little sense to speak of God as personal and moral unless he is more than unipersonal. What is personhood in isolation, whether of God or of man? Also, the doctrine of creation-that is, creation out of nothing *(creatio ex nihilo)*which declares God's nondependence upon the world, points to the perfection of communal divine life prior to the creation (John 17:5). Even more crucial is the problem of how to fit in the Incarnation unless God is triune. Do not Christians confess the twin truths that God sent his Son into the world and that God is revealed incarnate in Jesus Christ? To contemplate the Incarnation in relation to the Cross is to see that the Son, not the Father, died on the Cross; that the Father raised the Son from the

dead, thus vindicating both Father and Son (Rom. 1: 1-4); and that the ascension, present session, and promised return of Christ mean little apart from trinitarian faith.

To beg the questions by reducing full trinitarian belief to unipersonal monotheism touches more than the doctrine that God is triune; it compels rephrasing the entire vocabulary of faith because the essential Christian realities have been jettisoned. In the Bible, trinitarian faith is not an intellectual conundrum but a vital spiritual datum.

THE ANCIENT CONFESSION

During the third and fourth centuries of the Christian era, formal doctrinal statements were developed to protect the Church from heretical opinion. (Note the carefully documented Bampton Lectures of H. E. W. Turner, *The Pattern of Christian Truth,* London, 1954.) This is not to say that the Bible was consciously eclipsed nor that doctrines such as the Trinity were post-apostolic innovations.

The lines of biblical authority in the Fathers are clearly traceable in the extant literature from the beginning. To them the whole Bible was a Christian book, and by various interpretative procedures-many of which were surprisingly modern-they exhibited the truth of Scripture.

Far from suffering the burden of Hellenization (the view that original simple Christian faith became overlaid by the alien complexities of Greek philosophy, which produced the creedal statements), the Church strove to express Christian realities in the language of the times. They could not, nor can we, opt out of contemporary dialogue. Drawing upon their life and worship, nurtured by Scripture, hedged about by the rule of faith, baptismal, and catechetical formulas, Christian scholars, often under attack both from within and from outside the Church, shaped the creedal statements. Creedal formulation did not come as an alien force imposed from the outside; the creeds expressed the growing faith and understanding of Christians, sometimes apologetically oriented, sometimes polemically oriented, but usually grounded in the truth of Scripture. What Scripture says is what the Church believes, they said.

The most famous trinitarian formula derives from the Athanasian era of the fourth century. The first part of the confession commonly known as the Athanasian Creed declares: "We worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity; neither confounding the Persons, nor dividing the Substance." To comment on certain important terms in this statement is to see that the early Fathers knew very well what questions their beliefs and

language raised in relation to the Bible and philosophy. Often this is not recognized now.

First, Christians employ the term "God" in more than one way. We believe in one God, we say. By this we mean God the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, or at times, God in the sense of the Father only (Rom. 15:6). But so astute a mind as the Cappadocian father Gregory of Nyssa said that the term "and" only joins the terms expressive of the persons of the Trinity, so that it is not a term that expresses the essence of God. We always use the term "God" in the singular with the name of each Person. By the term "God," therefore, Christians designate the essence or being of God, not the persons. The Godhead of the Father is not that which distinguishes him from the Son. Similarly, the Spirit is not God because he is the Spirit, nor is the Son God because he is the Son, but the Spirit and Son are God because their essential nature is what it is. We properly speak therefore of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

Secondly, no one should suppose that because the formulators of the Athanasian Creed used the term "substance," they meant materiality; rather, they meant reality. (See Part 11 of Austin Farrer's *Finite and Infinite*, Westminster, 1943.) We must not read back popular modem materialistic associations of the word "substance" into ancient times. The classical terminology was devised to express

the distinctions between different kinds of reality, whether of God, of man, or of animal, and modern dynamic cosmologies must not obscure the truth of these distinctions. The Greek and Latin terms for substance, quality, and nature respectively are: *ousia, substantia; poiotetes, qualitas; physis, natura*. Each kind of being, they said, has its own qualities and nature. When we use the terms "substance,, or "essence" we simply mean reality of a certain kind, whether of God, or of the created order.

Thirdly, the term "person" was devised to indicate that each particular instance of being has an individual reality of its own. In early trinitarian doctrine this individual reality was called *prosopon,* but later the term *hypostasis* in Greek and *persona* in Latin became equivalents, so that the formula of the Trinity read, "three persons in one substance" (*treis hypostaseis en mia ousia*, and *tres personae* in una substantia). These terms do not impose static concepts upon the doctrine. The Fathers, especially the Cappadocians, qualified their use significantly by the dynamic term *energeia*.

It is unrealistic to charge that all patristic writers fell short of our notions of personality because they lacked the modern term "person." Enough has been said to indicate that the works of the Fathers do stand up under

modern critical analysis, and, as our argument proceeds, evidence will be adduced to show that the biblical writers thought of persons in **fully** modern ways.

Fourthly, the terms "one" and "unity" raise the question of number and the dangers of applying numeration to deity. The problems were fully apparent to earlier theologians. Opponents of trinitarian doctrine were quick to point to the tritheism implicit in the language, let us say, of "three in one." Orthodox Christians replied that number could be used of God only in a guarded, highly qualified way, because the indivisibility of the divine essence is axiomatic. Nyssa's brother Basil and their friend Gregory Nazianzus both urged caution in the use of number (Basil, *De Spiritu Sancto, 41-45;* Gregory of Nazianzus, *Fifth Oration: On the Spirit, 7,* 13-20, 31, 32; Gregory of Nyssa, *On "Not Three Gods").* Gregory of Nyssa said that number cannot strictly be applied to God because the personal distinctions cannot be enumerated by way of addition. Nevertheless, since we see no other way of preserving the distinctness of the persons, we must use number guardedly; but we must not transfer enumeration from the *hypostaseis* to the *ousia*, i.e., from the persons to the substance. The nature of God is altogether beyond our grasp. We can express it only as simple and indivisible.

What Christians can mean by "unity in trinity" will occupy our attention later. However, it is unambiguously clear to any student of the New Testament and of the Church Fathers that tritheism was never a threat to the Christian faith. Forms of modalism and subordinationism that attempted reduction of trinitarian faith were threats, but never tritheism. It is a point of some significance to observe that

Christianity began as a sect of the Jews and that it was thoroughly monotheistic, yet the plethora of trinitarian language in the New Testament yielded not a trace of embarrassment from Jewish attack.

Our task must be, not to displace the full-fledged trinitarian language of the New Testament, nor to reduce it to other terms, but to try to understand it and to believe its truth. Only rarely has full trinitarian faith been achieved in the history of Christendom. Where it has, the vital redemptive, ecclesiastical, and eschatological realities that it communicates to Christians have generated a quality of life that reflects the holy fellowship of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Trinitarian religion yields a depth of theological insight that makes the truth grasped timeless, despite the language that clothes it. One may cite the quite remarkable statement of Evagrius, whose words bear striking resemblance to the exposition that follows:

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Against those who cast it in our teeth that we are Tritheists, let it be answered that we confess one God not in number but in nature. For everything which is called one in number is not one absolutely, nor yet simple in nature; but God is universally confessed to be simple and not complex [Basil, *EPistles*, *VIII, 2* (attributed to Evagrius Ponticus; cf. B. Altaner, *Patrology*, London, 1960, p. 307).

REVEALED DOCTRINE

The truth that in the unity of God there is a trinity of persons can be affirmed only on the ground of revelation by God. On any other footing this audacious claim would be utter folly. Let him who approaches the thrice holy One (Isa. 6:3) do so out of reverent awe, for the deeper insights into the nature of God come only to the contrite in spirit.

For Christians, "the knowledge of God by revelation" means not less than "the historically revealed truth of God." This at once projects the Holy Scriptures to the center of the stage. To say anything about God is to say something about God; and to say something about God demands that what we say come under the judgment of Scripture. It is difficult, indeed impossible, to see what Christians can hope to say about God's nature and redemptive action unless the historical data of the **Bible** are taken seriously.

One might even concede that terms such as "being," "person," and "substance" are highly sophisticated mythology-if he is also prepared to be mythologized out of existence. Two points seem inescapable in the Christian claim: First, the Christian narratives must be taken not just as illustrative stories or myths but as the actual forms that the universal principles have taken (cf. C. C. J. Webb, *The Historical Element in Religion*, London, 1935, pp. 31-51, 80-83, 89-91); and second, we must therefore grasp the truths that the language of the Bible conveys. If the biblical revelation does not tell us what is actually the case about God as one and triune, then we are left forever in ignorance of his true nature. Revelation involves

truth, and truth is a function of language. We require devout, rational reflection upon the historical data of the divine self-disclosure, for this is the kind of evidence God has chosen to give us.

1. The Father is God. "Hear, 0 Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord" (Deut. 6:4). This much quoted kerygmatic utterance, the famous Hebrew *Sh'ma,* epitomizes the deeply embedded monotheism of the Old Testament. When joined to the equally firm monotheism of the New Testament (I Cor. 8:6; Jas. *2:19),* such teaching is the foundation

of the one biblical faith in the true God, There is but one God, the true, living God, who is Lord of creation, of life, and of destiny.

The truth that God is one can be documented voluminously from the Old Testament . .. . . . the Lord he is God; there is none else beside him" (Deut. 4:35, cf. v. 39; Ex. 20:1-3; Isa. 45:5, 18, 22). (Note the famous passages that extol the unity and character of God and mercilessly satirize idolatry-Isa. 40:12-31; 44:6-20.) By nature he is righteous and holy (Deut. 4:24; 10: 17, 18) and mighty to act on behalf of his people (Deut. 4:37, 38), and he keeps his covenant promises (Deut. 4:31; 7:8, 9). By these attributes God is declared to be one, not many; personal, not impersonal; ethical, not morally neutral. As the Holy One he is high, transcendent, separate from the world he made; yet he condescends to us, especially to the humble in heart (Isa. 57:15; 46:4). His knowledge is infinite, his word is sure, his judgments are just, his works are perfect, and his mercy is everlasting (Deut. 32:4; Ps. 33:9; 102:26-28; 139:1-14; Lam. 3:22, 23). These truths demand from men utmost allegiance of mind, heart, and will (Deut. 6:5).

The signification of God as one, personal, moral, and self-revealing is made in Scripture through the terms of God's name. This is theologically profound and philosophically astute. In this way men learned of him through the progressive unfolding of his person, character, and relations with them. God's names connote the truth about him in his mighty acts (Gen. 17: 1; Ex. 3:14, 15; 6:3).

The grammar of the names of God and the language of the designations of God have led many to conclude-albeit in the light of New Testament truth-that the Old Testament does yield important clues to plurality in God or even outright indications of it. At the least, the data that prompt Christian scholars to see trinitarian overtones in the Old Testament prove very troubling points indeed to those, whether Christian or Jew, who maintain that God is impersonal or is unipersonal.

The extent of this evidence is not small[4] but it can be only touched upon here. The *Sh'ma* itself poses such a question. "Hear, 0 Israel: YHWH our *Elohim is* YHWH a unity." Now *Yahweh,* or Jehovah, is singular, but *Elohim is* a plural noun. Despite various explanations of what this plural form means, no

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indisputable criterion for choosing one solution as against another has yet been found, including the offensive but gram-

Footnote 1: See, for example, G. A. F. Knight, *A Biblical Approach to the Doctrine of the Trinity* (Edinburgh, 1956); D. L. Cooper, *The God of Israel* (Los Angeles, 1945); Edmond Jacob, *Theology of the Old Testament* (London, 1958); Th. C. Vriezen, *An Outline of Old Testainent Theology* (Newton Centre, Mass., 1962); G. Vos, *Biblical Theology* (Grand Rapids, Mich., 1959).

matically correct translation, "Hear, 0 Israel: Jehovah our Gods is Jehovah a unity." If this plural form were an isolated instance, and if no other evidence remained, proponents of the unipersonal God theory could shrug it off; but this is not so.

Two instances may be cited in the creation narrative where the plural *Elohim is* joined to the singular verb bara (i.e., to create). Furthermore, the passages suggest communion in God, for angels do not seem to have been associated with God in the act of creation: "Let us make man in our image . . . " and "man is become as one of us (Gen. 1:26; 3:22). There is also the Babel passage, "Let us go down (Gen. 11:7). Parallels in the New Testament where plural subjects are combined with singular verbs are First Thessalonians 3: 11 and Second Thessalonians 2:16.

The appearance of the angel to Hagar (Gen. 16:7-14) and to Abraham (Gen. 17:22; 18:1-22; cf. 19: 1); the Captain of the Lord's Hosts who spoke to Joshua (josh. 5:13-16; cf. 6:2); and the celestial visitor to Manoah and his wife, whose name was "full of wonder" (judges 13:2-23), have prompted some to see these as pre-Incarnation theophanies. The "Spirit of *Yahweh"* references, especially since Spirit in the Old Testament is seen to be life-giving power with a moral emphasis, are thought to signify the Spirit as the agent of *Yahweh* in the Old Testament (cf. Gen. 1:2; Isa. 40:13; 58:8-14). The personification of the divine wisdom in Proverbs 8 is tied by some to the *logos* doctrine of John I and the wisdom of God in First Corinthians 1:24. (In Scripture Christ is identified with the Word of God [*logos*] and the Wisdom of God *[sofia]*, but never with the Spirit of God *[pneuma theou].)* The use of the threefold name of God in the benediction (Num. 6:24-27), in relation to the presence and activity of God (Ps. 29:3-5), and in the threefold invocation (Isa. 6:1-3) is significant also. (Note the striking words of Isaiah 48:16 [cf. Zech. 2:10-13], which seem to apply to *Yahweh's* redeeming Servant [cf. Keil and Delitzsch, and G. A. Smith, among others].) While such evidence as the foregoing is not strong, certainly not conclusive, it cannot be sloughed off if we regard the Bible -- as Christians must -- as a Christian book.

Historically, the doctrine of the Trinity originated in the necessity laid on the first Christians to distinguish Jesus from God, yet to identify him with God. Through the incarnation of Christ and his teaching, Christians learned to distinguish the Father and the Son while maintaining the faith that both are God. That God is Father was no new doctrine (cf. Ps. 103:13; Isa. 9:6; Jer. 31:9; Mal. 1:6); but that

the Father is God and that the Son is God became clear through the Incarnation in the truth that God is "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 15:6; 11 Cor. 1:3; Eph. 1:3; 1 Pet. 1:3; cf. John 20:17; Acts 4:24-30). Hence

Christians test the truth of the doctrine of the Trinity by the truth of the doctrine of the Incarnation, and not vice versa. We do not assume a concept of unity by which to determine what the Incarnation can mean. Rather, because we confess unreserved faith in the Son as God Incarnate revealed for our salvation, and attested by the gift of the Holy Spirit, we affirm that God is triune.

The Old Testament revelation of God leads to the deepest insight of all, which is the truth of the New Testament that God is the Father of the Son and our personal heavenly Father. God the Father is defined in Scripture with reference to the redemptive work of the Son (John 14:9). Through Christ we cry "Abba," or "Father" (Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6). God is no abstraction, whether impersonal or suprapersonal, but the living, Holy Father. This truth eclipses doctrines of impersonal causation, or of a God who shows no concern, or of a finite God imprisoned in the world, or of a God identified with the world as in pantheism. Fatherhood means not only that God is the Creator but also that he exercises loving care of the world (Matt. 11:25-27). It is he whom the Son reveals and at whose behest the Son came to be sacrificed for sin (John 1: 1, 18; 3:16; 17: 1; Rom. 8:31-34; Col. 2:2; Phil. 2:5-11). Through his incarnation the Son declared the Father. Through the death and resurrection of the Son, the Father declared the boundless love, grace, and power of his Fatherhood. Therefore we pray, "Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name" (cf. Matt. 6:8, 9; 7:21; 18:14; Luke 2:49; 23:34, 46; John 14:6; 16:16; 20:17; Col. 1: 19; 1 John 1: 3).

A word of warning on the doctrine of God and of the Father needs to be added. We must not suppose that the doctrine of the Trinity has been devised to solve the problem of creation-i.e., the problem of how to relate the infinite changeless God to the finite changing world-nor to solve the problem of revelation. The same applies to the Incarnation. Hence the Trinity is not merely an economic division of divine labor, nor do certain members of the Trinity simply bridge God's way to the world. The Trinity is the way God is essentially in himself. The Trinity is immanent and eternal. Two viewpoints of which there are both ancient and modern examples err precisely at this point: they use the Trinity as a device to relate God, failing to see that God reveals himself to be essentially triune and that all three persons are consubstantial to the Godhead.

First, the Christian doctrine is not derived from emanationist conceptions such as those of the ancient Gnostics and neo-Platonists, the former of whom related God to the world by sub-deities or aeons and the latter of whom made the world out of the "overflow" of the divine

being. Both these theories aimed at a logical unity behind what they considered the superficial multiplicity of experience. The Gnostic theories postulated intermediate divine beings to shield the ingenerate divine principle from the physical world, which they supposed to be evil because finite. The neo-Platonic schools concludo-d with three levels of existence: God, the world soul, and the physical universe. Thus, if the world is the way God is externalized, then one might speculate that the Father is God-in-relation-to-himself, and the Son is God-in-relation-to-creation. But the doctrine of creation denies that the world is the necessary expression of the being of God in space and time. The *creatio ex nihilo* declares that the world is the product of the will and act of God, that it is not derived from the being of God. Recent idealist approaches like the philosophy of E. S. Brightman reflect this same error. The views of Dr. Paul Tillich seem to reflect elements of the ancient neo-Platonic teaching in that God as Father is viewed as a relational name, as the ground of man's being, not as the revelation of a personal distinction in God (see his *Systematic Theology* [Chicago, 1951] 1, 287-89).

Second, neither is the Trinity to be explained by modalistic monarchianism, which is an attempt to solve the problem of revelation. Deriving from the beginning of the third century through Noetus of Smyrna, Praxeas, and especially Sabellius, modalism declared that God is one in number, that the Father and the Son are one identical person. The Godhead is one individual monad, but the Father, Son, and Spirit express three operations of God, or are three modes of the divine activity. As Creator and Lawgiver, God is Father. As Redeemer, God is Son. As Inspirer and Bestower of grace, God is Spirit. Modalism, which was born of a legitimate passion to preserve the oneness of God and the deity of Christ, has persisted to the present time as the most active alternative to full trinitarian theology. It is small wonder that Tertullian made the famous jibe at Praxeas, "He drove out the Paraclete and crucified the Father" (Tertullian, *Adversus Praxeas, 1).* Modalism cannot take adequate account of the personal distinctions that pervade the biblical teaching. The *Prosopa* are not masks or modes but *hypostaseis.* They identify real personal distinctions in God; otherwise the complex pattern of Christian doctrines to which we alluded earlier is destroyed.

This debate is a live one today. Not a little contemporary theology is frankly modalistic, and much contemporary preaching and popular literature is implicitly modalistic by default, through fear of tritheism.[5]

The key to the truth and the reply to both errors is the real incarna-

Footnote 2: Dr. Leonard Hodgson, former Regius Professor of Divinity at the University of Oxford, has been openly critical of the theology of Karl Barth as modalistic (L. Hodgson, *The Doctrine of the Trinity, 1955, p. 229;* and "Trinitarian Theology: The Glory of the Eternal Trinity," CHRISTIANITY TODAY, May *25, 1962, p. 3).* The dialogue extends to C. Welch, whom Professor Hodgson also charges with Sabellianism (L. Hodgson, *For Faith and*

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Freedom, 1957, H, 225-33; C. Welch, *The Trinity in Contemporary Theology, 1953).*

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tion of Jesus Christ. As a real historical event, the Incarnation sufficiently answers the Gnostic denigration of history and matter. As the real coming of the Son of God sent by the Father into space and time, it demands acknowledgment of the New Testament distinction between the Father and the Son. The early Christians were unable to deny either the unity of God or the Godhead of the Son, and neither can we (John 17:3).

2. The Son is God. Jesus -Christ is the eternal second person of the holy Trinity who became incarnate at Bethlehem. Christian faith stands or falls with the truth that Jesus Christ is really God the Son and distinctly God the Son. Upon this the doctrine of the Trinity rests firmly. He is called God unambiguously by the New Testament writers (John 1:1, 18; 20:28; Col. 2:9; Titus 2:13; Heb. 1:8, 10).

First, the reality of Christ's divinity pervades all strata of New Testament teaching. It is impossible to understand the faith of the first Christians without the truth that they recognized Christ to be the Incarnate God. The titles of his deity especially harbor this deep-seated conviction of faith.

Christ is called the Son of God. Although this is used of his Sonship by incarnation (Luke 1:35; John 1:34; Rom. 1:4; Heb. 1:2), it is a mistake to limit the Sonship to the Incarnation, because the terms relate him to the Father as his "own" Son in a special way (Matt. 11:27; John 5:18; Rom. 8:32). Especially in John, the terms "Father" and "Son" are correlatives, each being placed on the footing of eternity (John 1:1, 14, 18). Thus, God "sent" forth his Son (John 3:13; 17:5; 1 John 4:10). The term "Son of God" is certainly a title of deity, as was made clear when the Sanhedrin condemned Christ on the grounds of claims not to messiahship but to deity (Matt. 16:16; 26:63-65; Luke 22:70,71; John 19:7; cf. John 8:58,59; 10:32-38). The expression "only begotten Son" is to be understood in relation to Christ's pre-incarnate dignity and privilege (Rom. 8:29; Col. 1:15-18; Heb. 1:6) and in the special sense of "begotten from everlasting" or "begotten from eternity," i.e., from the being, not the will, of the Father. Therefore he is essentially one with the Father. This begetting is an eternal fact of the divine nature; otherwise, if there was a time when the Son was not the Son, then there was a time when the Father was not the Father.

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Christ is called the Word of God. In the Prologue of John (1:1-18), the term *logos is* not explained but is simply used to declare the deity of Christ. "In the beginning was the Word" means that before creation the *logos* existed. The contrast between "was" and "became" in John (cf. 8:58; Ps. 90:2) clearly

establishes the distinction between Abraham's finite "becoming" and Christ's eternal "being" (cf. John 6:20; 8:24, 28; 9:9; 18:6). Lacking the definite article, the construction of the phrase "the Word was God" marks "God" as the predicate, which means that the Word is identified with the being of God (cf. Rom 9:5), or the essential nature of God. No other English translation will suffice save "and the Word was God." (Greek does not have the indefinite article, but this anarthrous [used without the article] construction does not mean what the indefinite article "a" means in English. It is monstrous to translate the phrase "the Word was a God." For a perceptive discussion of this, see Victor Perry, "Jehovah's Witnesses and the Deity of Christ," *The Evangelical Quarterly*, Jan.-Mar., 1963.) These phrases state the eternal substance of the Word, and the eternal oneness of the Word with God. The phrase "and the Word became flesh" (John 1:14) identifies Christ with the Word. Thereby the mystery of the Incarnation is proclaimed and we are led on to the climatic utterance, "God no one has seen at any time; the only begotten, who is God, who dwells in the Father's bosom, this is he who revealed God" (John 1: 18).

In numerous other ways our Lord is proclaimed to be true God. Old Testament titles are ascribed to him that, in the light of strict Jewish monotheism, are inexplicable unless Christ is being identified with the nature of *Yahweh* (cf. Matt. 3:3 with Isa. 40:3; John 12:41 with Isa. 6:1; Acts 13:33 with Ps. 2:7; and Eph. 4:6-8 with Ps. 68:18). The works and attributes of God are ascribed to Christ (John 1:3, 4; 8:58; 14:6; Col. 1: 17; Heb. 13:8; 7:26). He is honored and worshiped as God (John 20:28; 5:23; Acts 2:36; 7:59; Rom. 10: 9; Phil. 2: 10, 11; Rev. 5:12-14). His name is associated with the Father and the Spirit on equal terms in the baptismal formula (Matt. 28:19), in the benediction (11 Cor. 13:14), and in the bestowal of eternal life (John 5:23; 14:1; 17:3). Finally, the whole biblical structure rests on the claim that redemption belongs to God alone (I Tim. 2:5; 11 Cor. 5:19). If Christ were not God, then regardless of how great a being he might be, there wou ' id really be no contact with God through him. This is the heart of Athanasius's great argument against Arius: only God can redeem and reconcile.

Secondly, the foregoing data establish equally well the personal distinctness of the Son from the Father. This is precisely the meaning of the middle clause of John 1:1, "and the Word was with God." The thought

is reiterated in verse 2. The sense is relational, and the divine nature of the subjects of the clauses conveys the sense that the relationship is eternal. Thus the emphatic "he" in verse 18 is consistent with the theological climax that this concluding verse registers: the Son from the bosom of the Father -- specifically he alone -- interprets or declares the Father. It is impossible to avoid the distinct interpersonal relationships of which this and other passages speak (cf. John 17:1-5, 18, 21; Acts 2:33; 3:13,26; 9:20,22; 1 John 5:20).

Unless the Son is viewed as distinctly personal, we fail to grasp the theology of the New Testament when it builds upon and freely assumes the reality of this distinction. The Son, not the Father, is made incarnate (I john.1:1-4). The Son, not the Father, suffered the Cross (Mark 14:36; 15:34; Rom. 5:8-11). The Father raised the Son from the dead (Acts 2:22-32). In his glorified state the Son ascended to the right hand of the Father (Acts 1:11; 2:33), where he acts as our great High Priest (Heb. 3:1; 6:20; 7:24,25). The Son will return in power and glory to gather the Kingdom unto the Father's hands **(Heb. 9:24-28; 1 Cor.** 15:24). The interpenetration of these doctrines in the whole that constitutes biblical teaching cannot be brushed aside. When one part is touched, the whole is affected. Thus, if our doctrine falls short of full trinitarian faith (cf. Rom. 15:30; 1 Pet. 1:2), we are left with the problem of reinterpreting, not only isolated concepts, but the entire body of theology.

Nevertheless, attempts to account for the language of the Son on other than a trinitarian basis have always comprised active, polemically minded alternatives. There are two of these: subordinationism and adoptionism. Both are attempts to account for Jesus Christ in view of the impassibility of God. In my judgment both fail, but both have their modern exponents. Subordinationism and adoptionism derive from attempts to preserve a concept of the unity of God that is supposed to be indispensable to faith. However, as noted earlier, we must start from the truth of the Incarnation rather than from a presupposition concerning the meaning of "one."

Subordinationism is represented chiefly in the ancient doctrine of Arius of Alexandria and in the heretical opinions of the Jehovah's Witnesses today, though any doctrine that reduces Christ to less than God is subordinationist. Virtually nothing has been added to the terms of this debate since Athanasius opposed Arius at Nicea in A.D. 325. The subtlety of Arius's opinion is that he threw the derivation of the Son back to the pre-incarnate state. Beginning with the premise of the mathematically single unoriginate divine being, Arius agreed that Christ existed before Bethlehem, that he was the agent of creation, and that as the foremost

of created beings he should be worshiped. But, Arius said, Christ had a beginning. There was [a time] when the Son was not. Therefore Christ cannot be called God in the sense in which we apply this designation to the Supreme Being. He is like God *(homoiousios)* but not of one substance with the Father *(homoousios).* Out of this distinction there sprang the famous Nicene Symbol, the first great formal doctrinal confession in defense of Christ's deity.

On the basis of a certain logic of terms, Arius's contention is consistent. If God is indivisible and not subject to change, then, on one reading of "begotten," whatever is begotten of God must derive from a creative act, not from the being of God. Hence it has a beginning of existence. Therefore, the Son is not cometernal with the Father. Fastening upon the term "begotten," Arius said that

because he is begotten he must have had a beginning; Athanasius countered that because Christ is begotten of the Father, he could not have had a beginning. To say that a father begets a child is one thing, but to say that the Father begat the Son is another. The one is temporal, the other eternal. The one is of the will, the other from the being of the Father; hence the Nicene Creed insisted that Christ is of the substance of the Father, thereby sacrificing neither the impassibility of God nor the deity of the Son. To say that the Son is begotten from the Father from eternity is not to divide the indivisible God but to accept the testimony of the apostles.

Adoptionism derives from a unitarian view of God as not only one being but also one person. (Adoptionism is of two types: adoptionist monarchianism, the attempt to preserve the *monarchia* or primacy of the one divine principle; and dynamic monarchianism, the view that Jesus *became* the Son of God as a Spirit-energized man after his baptism.) This doctrine has elements common to the Cerinthian aberration of the first century but was articulated clearly at the end of the second century by Theodotus at Rome, and later by Paul of Samosata. To them Jesus was a particularly virtuous Galilean but not God incarnate. Rather, he was chosen by God for a special mission and endowed with the Spirit at his baptism, or "adopted" as the Son of God. He did not pre-exist; nor is he essentially of the nature of God. Usually a sharp distinction was drawn between Jesus and the Christ, as is commonly done in contemporary existentialist theology.

Adoptionism is advocated today under the guise of the teaching that Jesus was a man of such goodness that God exalted him to divine status. This view holds that Jesus is divine because he lived a perfect life, not that he lived a perfect life because he was true God and true man.

Biblical Christianity makes the Incarnation dependent not upon the earthly choices of Jesus but upon the coming of the eternal Second Person of the Trinity into actual human existence.

3. The Holy Spirit is God. It is universally acknowledged by Christians that the Holy Spirit is God. There is no reluctance to see the activity of the Spirit as the activity of God, but some are reluctant to acknowledge the personal distinctness of the Spirit. To distinguish the Father and the Son but not the Spirit is to maintain in practice, if not in theory, a binitarian rather than a trinitarian conception of God.

There is a consensus that early uses of Spirit in the Old Testament mean the active power, or invasive force, of God (cf. H, Wheeler Robinson, *The Christian Experience of the Holy Spirit* [London, 1930, p. 81: "The primitive and fundamental idea of spirit *[ruachl* in the Old Testament is that of active power or energy *[energeia,* not *dynamis],* power superhuman, mysterious, elusive, of which the *ruach* or wind of the desert was not so much the symbol as the familiar example"). Crucial to this concept is the idea of energetic action, not immanence;

of invasive, not pervasive, power. No one wishes to make of the Spirit impersonal force; rather, the Spirit is the personal God acting, or the personal activity of God. We are left therefore with two levels of difficulty: namely, is the Spirit personal, and is the Spirit distinctly personal?

The fact remains that no Christian scholar is content to make of the Spirit simply divine invasive power. It is widely recognized that an idea other than the apparent controlling idea of the Old Testament must control interpretation of the New Testament data. The moral character and life-giving prerogatives of the Spirit demand definition couched in some form of personal language. The question is, Do the new controlling ideas that emerge in the course of revelation history compel thinking of the Spirit in more personal or fully personal terms?[3]

Footnote 3: The fact that the Greek noun for Spirit *(Pneuma)* is neuter need have little hearing on this, no more than, let us say, the fact that the German word for young lady *(das Mädchen)* is neuter should cause us to think that a young lady is not of the female sex. I must dissent from the view of Professor Eduard Schweizer *(Theologisches Worterbuch Zum Neuen Testament, V1, 432),* who says that the question of how far the Spirit is personal may be a false one because the word "personal" does not exist in either Greek or Hebrew. Neither do such words as "monotheism," "existential," and "confrontation," occur, but this does not prevent our asking whether what these terms denote is in Scripture. Are we to suppose that Abraham and Moses were not persons, and did not think of themselves as persons? The question is, What evidence compels us to conclude full personhood in any given case, or prevents us from doing so? Professor Schweizer himself is reluctant to understand Spirit as impersonal power but rather understands the Spirit as the way the personal Lord is present in his Church.

The Christological revelation of the New Testament and the new life in the body of Christ are such a significant advance over Old Testament thought that new revelational ideas that control the *meaning of* Spirit in the New Testament are commonly assumed to exist. (For example, Professor Eduard Schweizer says that the Lukan materials pass beyond the Matthean and Markan emphasis on the "man of the spirit" Christology to the "Lord of the Spirit" conception. In other words, Luke *[including Acts]* and presumably subsequent writers [including Paul] go beyond the *conception of* divine power possessing a man.) What are these, and how do they handle the data of the new covenant? We may consider the data in the following way:

Two strands of New Testament evidence are noteworthy. First, there are those passages where the personal pronoun is distinctly used of the Holy Spirit, i.e., the "he" passages (e.g., Mark 3:22-30; Luke 12:12; John 14:26; 15:26; 16:7-15; Acts 8:29; 10:19,20; 13-2; 15:28; 16:6,7; 20:28; Rom. 5:5). Second, there are other passages, i.e., the "it" passages, that may allow of a personal reading but do not-demand it (e.g., Matt. 1:18; 4:1; 12:28; Luke 1:15; John 7:39b; Acts 1:8; Rom. 8:26, 27).

After carefully considering the data, one must conclude that reluctance to assign full personhood to the Spirit is unwarranted. The main current of New Testament interpretation is in the line of the "he" passages. These compel us to think equally of the Spirit as God with the Father and Son. One can account for the "it" passages in terms of the "he" passages, but it is simply impossible to account for the "he" passages in terms of the "it" passages. Otherwise, language fails of sense, for, as in the Johannine texts on the Spirit, we are left without meaningful denotation of terms if we impersonalize the pronouns referring to the Spirit but retain the pronouns referring to the Father and to ourselves as personal. There are other kinds of spirits also referred to that cannot be accounted for on an impersonal reading (cf. Matt. 8:16, 29; John 4:24; Heb. 1:14; 12:23). In the light of the evidence, the real question seems to be the Spirit's distinctness, not his personhood.

Even if we should reduce the Spirit to the indwelling Christ in the New Testament, the problem of persons in the Godhead is not relieved (saved by Christological subordinationism or adoptionism) unless we move from a trinitarian *to* a binitarian formula. This is logically no less severe. While the risen Christ is not sharply distinguished in the New Testament, he is not identified with the Spirit. The New Testament never says that Christ is the Spirit of God; and if the distinction between Christ and

the Spirit is made before the resurrection, why not maintain it after the resurrection?[4]

Footnote 4: The only doubtful exception is Second Corinthians 3:17, where the term "Lord" has been understood in both extremes, as Christ and as the Holy Spirit. The sense of the passage is probably the "spirit of freedom" as against the "spirit of bondage" of Judaism (cf. Alan Richardson, *New Testament Theology, 1958, pp. 105, 120;* and A. Plummer, *Second Corinthians* in the *International Critical Commentary, 1948, p. 103).* If, as Professor Schweizer says *(op. cit., pp. 402, 403),* the Lukan conception is crucial to New Testament theology, then the remark by Alan Richardson that among the gospel records Luke alone itemizes and dates the resurrection and ascension of Christ and the coming of the Spirit as separate historical events, assumes distinct significance. Lionel Thornton states the truth of the matter: "Both Christ and the-spirit dwell in the Christian soul, but not in the same way. Christ is the indwelling content of the Christian life. . . . The Spirit is the quickening cause; and the indwelling of Christ is the effect of the quickening" *(The Incarnate Lord, 1938, p.* 322)

It is very difficult to know what to do with the personal language of the New Testament unless the Spirit is personally distinct. Not only in formulas such as that used at the baptism of Jesus, the benedictions, the salutations, and the baptismal symbol is the Spirit put on an equal footing with the Father and the Son, but numerous trinitarian passages join his work -to the one work of the

Godhead (I Cor. 12:4-6; Eph. 1:3-5,6-12,13; 4:4-6; 1 Peter 1:2,3). In particular, our Lord. clearly indicates that he will send the Spirit from the Father (John 15:26) and that the Spirit will not attest himself but Christ (16:13). A further point of some importance is the parallel established theologically between Christ's relation to the Spirit and our own.

TRINITY IN UNITY

In the light of the foregoing data, it should be clear that for Christians the incarnation of the Son at Bethlehem and the descent of the Spirit at Pentecost compel radical revision of unipersonal monotheistic belief. God is not a person; there are persons in God. The immanent, eternal Trinity, known by divine self-disclosure, means that God is not the lonely God whose world becomes the logical "over-against-himself" to make him personal. Nor does the Trinity suggest that God is "comifig-to-be" in the world through the modalities of Son and Spirit. The eternal Son and Spirit are God. They have their reality on the other side of the gulf that separates the infinite being of God from the finite world. The triune God is infinite, changeless, eternal, the glorious Creator, Sustainer, and Redeemer, who has full resources within himself for the perfection of his inner life.

Nevertheless, the early Christians affirmed faith in the Son of God on

the basis of unflinching monotheism. We cannot grasp the theology of the Gospel unless we see that New Testament Christians believed in both the eternality of the Son and the unity of God. The theological struggles from the second to the fourth centuries are best understood as attempts to articulate this faith in face of the difficulty of utilizing terms and categories unsuited to the inner realities of the Gospel. It is false, therefore, to say that the simplicities of early Judean faith in Jesus were corrupted by alien Greek metaphysical speculation. Rather, through the Christian Gospel that proclaimed the self-revelation of God there was injected into the intellectual climate of the time evidence about the nature of God that the existing categories could not assimilate. The Church was compelled to decide whether to jettison the evidence or to revise the categories. Christians chose to do the latter. The choice we confront is very much the same.

We must think of unity in terms of persons and interpersonal relations, rather than in terms of a certain kind of logical abstraction. (An excellent discussion of this point which has influenced my thinking is that of Leonard Hodgson, *The Doctrine* of *the Trinity*, London, 1955, pp. 89-96, 104, 105, 183.) There is more than one way of speaking about unity; more, that is, than the undifferentiated abstraction "one," or the absence of multiplicity. There are inclusive as against exclusive conceptions of unity, such as the unity of personal life in the complexity of being a thinking, feeling, and acting creature; the unity of husband and wife; the unity of the Church; the unity of Christ and the Church; and the unity of the Godhead.

Further, the question is greater than simply exclusive or inclusive, or simple or complex conceptions of unity. We must ask also whether analogies that are personal or impersonal, dynamic or static, living being or abstraction are more suited to the case in point, The revelation of God as living and acting is something other than a conclusion derived by subtracting away elements of multiplicity (i.e., the *via negationis).*

Professor Hodgson's point therefore is a good one. That internal complexity is a sign of imperfect unity could be said only if all approximations to unity were to be measured by a scale of degrees of absence of internal multiplicity. But this is not so, if the degree of unity achieved is to be measured instead in proportion to the intensity of the unifying power in the life of the whole.

Even a monadic conception of God must cope with the problem of the duality of thought and thinker. If God is revealed as tripersonal, then it may be best to think that the unity of the Godhead is more intense than any finite unity known to us. In human personality, the degree of

normality achieved depends upon how intense the unification of the elements of personality is. In God, the revealed elements unified are each fully personal. The fact is that so far as we know, no one can be personal in isolation; God is revealed not as the lonely God but as tripersonal.

Should we fall back upon a conception of unity that is undifferentiated, the problem remains that we have no actual experience of such a thing. At least it is doubtful that we do, and I can think of no instance of such a thing's existing. Such abstract unities cannot approximate the internal complexity of living beings. The higher tip we go on the scale of living beings, the more complex they are, and the more intense must be the power of their inner unification.

From personal experience we know what inclusive types of unity are. In Scripture the comparisons between the divine life and human life, especially in the body of the Church, suggest that more than mere analogy is involved. We believe that the essential realities of divine and human life are revealed by God in terms of the complex unity of persons in interpersonal relations.

TRINITARIAN FAITH

By accepting at face value the evidence that demands thinking of the full personhood of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we can give a rational, though partial, account of the personal God. As indicated earlier, the doctrine of the *creatio ex nihilo* tells us not only that the world had a beginning by the will of God but also that the world is of such and such a kind. This means that God's personhood is self-sufficient in the perfection of his inner life. The relations of the Trinity are inscrutable to us, but the doctrine that God is love and the doctrine of the *creatio*

ex nihilo are fully consistent with the doctrine that God is triune. In God there is the mutuality of perfect communion. What is love to an unipersonal being? The doctrine of the Trinity is therefore the high point of revelation about the nature of God. It declares that no matter how vast or how important the universe is, none of it is necessary to the perfection of the inner life of God.

The completeness of revelation in the doctrine that God is triune leads us to say that tripersonal monotheism is more intelligible than unipersonal monotheism. When we see that in the Incarnation the eternal second person of the Trinity actually became man, then we arrive at an apprehension of the essential nature of God. Christians cannot avoid the primacy of Christological interpretation for the whole range of their theological ideas.

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Because of faith in the finality of the Christological revelation, Christians affirm with confidence that God is not seven or twelve or fifty-one but triune. That God is triune rests not upon inherent natural trinities in logic or nature but upon the faith that God has fully revealed himself in Jesus Christ and the descent of the Spirit. When we share this life in the Father by the Son and through the Holy Spirit, we are convinced that the biblical revelation is terminal and complete.

Thereby also we perceive the significance of the truths that God sent his Son to the Cross and that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself. As the author of redemption, God is not only the object of sacrifice but also the subject of sacrifice.

Finally, the distinctness of tripersonal life in God is fully consistent with the doctrine of the resurrection and eternal life for the individual. Contrary to views that reject the continuance of discrete personal life, Christian belief in the future life as perfect, personal, and distinct rests on the doctrine that it will be essentially of persons in interpersonal relations.

TRINITARIAN LIFE

Christians should enter more fully into the significance of the Trinity as a way of life and not only as a theological dogma. The foregoing data should encourage us to (to so without hesitation. Historically, trinitarian theology simply attempted to express the new way of trinitarian religion that the New Testament Christians knew in Christ. The doctrine is not metaphysical obscurity hung on a skyhook. It declares God to be more than numinous mystique.

Trinitarian worship enriches Christian experience. We are helped best if we grasp the biblical truth of the unity of interpersonal relations that characterizes not only the life of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit but also our lives in God and in one another. The crucial passage, rarely seen in this light, is John 17. In fact, the entire Gospel can be subtitled "the Gospel of the Trinity." If we wish to discover the biblical definition of unity, then it stands in the significance of these words,

"I do not pray for these only, but also for those who are to believe in me through their word, that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. The glory which thou hast given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and thou in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that thou hast sent me and hast loved them even as thou hast loved me" [John 17:20-23, RSV].

"I in thee," "thou in me ... .. that they may be one in us"-these phrases indicate integrity of discrete personal life and unity of interpersonal life. Love is the bond of perfect union (Col. 3:14) that joins us to God in the redeeming work of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Eph. 4:2-6).

The perfection of our Lord's humanity is the revelatory historical instance of this, In Scripture his life is the parallel to our lives. One may note passages like Romans 8:4-11, and especially verse 11, for this truth. While the phrases "Spirit of Christ" and "Spirit of God" are used interchangeably, this is done in a special sense. As Jesus received the Spirit, so we receive the Spirit from Jesus. As the Spirit who came upon the Messiah was God's Spirit, so the Spirit who indwells us is God's Spirit. We are partakers of his humanity as members of a new race and body by the same Spirit.

Paul says that the Father who raised up Jesus from the dead quickens us also because the Spirit who quickens us is the Spirit of him who raised up Jesus Christ from the dead. Our God is the Lord of life and death, of time and eternity, of past, present, and future. What he did for Christ lie will do for us because we share the same indwelling Spirit. By this Spirit we are made partakers of Christ and joint heirs with Christ. By this same Spirit we cry "Abba, Father" (Rom. 8:14-17) and look to the day of glory when we shall know as we are known, giving praise that is justly due to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God, blessed forever.

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TRINITY

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TRINITY. The central tenet of the Christian faith is that God is one, personal, and triune. Trinitarian theology coheres with belief in the personal nature of God, the Incarnation, the Atonement, the life in the Spirit, and the ultimate relation of redeemed men to God in Christ.

The Athanasian Creed states: *We worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity; neither confounding the Persons, nor dividing the Substance*. The truth that in the unity of God there is a trinity of persons can be known only by revelation, but the truth is seen as neither irrational nor peripheral to faith. Trinitarian faith does not derive from the Church Fathers, but from the apostolic faith and teaching. The controversies of the first four centuries do not comprise attempts to impose alien Greek or other ideas upon Christianity, but attempts by the Fathers to assimilate adequately the empirical facts of the Christian revelation in an age which had neither categories nor language adequate to the new Christian realities.

The faith that the Father is God is held by all Christians. Monotheism is deeply embedded in both Old and New Testaments, but the OT does contain important clues to plurality in God, including the Sh'ma, *Hear 0 Israel, Yahweh our Gods (Elohim) is Yahweh a unity*; the plural in Genesis 1:26 and 3:22; the three visitors to Abraham (Gen. 18:1-22); the captain of the Lord's hosts (Josh. 5:13-16); the Spirit of Yahweh passages (Gen. 1:2; Isa. 40:13); the triune invocation of the divine name (Isa. 6); and the striking words of Isaiah 48:16.

Historically, Trinitarian doctrine originated in the necessity Christians faced to distinguish Jesus from God, yet to identify Him with God. With the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the empirical facts were all in hand for the subsequent formulation of the doctrine. Hence there is no hint of embarrassment in the NT to Jewish Christians due to Trinitarian theology. The doctrine is solidly embedded in the fabric of the NT (Matt 28:19; 1 Cor. 12:3-6).

Through the Incarnation the first Christians learned to distinguish the Father and the Son while maintaining the faith that both are God. The Fatherhood of God was known in the OT. The unique NT teaching is that the Father and the Son are God, and that Sod is "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 15:6; 2 Cor. 1:3; Eph. 1:3; 1 Pet. 1:3).

Thus the doctrine of the Trinity is derived from the truth of the Incarnation and is to be tested by it. Jesus Christ is truly God the Son and distinctly God the Son (John 1:1,18; 20:28; Col. 2:9; Titus 2:13; Heb. 1:8,10). Subordinationism and Adoptionism (Dynamic Monarchianism) comprise two active, polemically minded erroneous alternatives. In the former the Son has a derived existence, in the latter he is only a man divinely energized for a mission. Neither of these

alternatives adequately handles the empirical data of apostolic experience and witness. Their anti-Trinitarianism derives from a presupposition regarding the meaning of unity, rather than from the truth of the Incarnation.

While all Christians acknowledge the Holy Spirit to be God, there remain two further levels of biblical understanding: the Holy Spirit is personal, and He is distinctly personal. Recent biblical studies are reluctant to make of the Spirit simply divine pervasive or invasive power. Some tend to identify Christ and the Spirit, although the Scriptures nowhere say that the Spirit is Christ. While some biblical passages do not demand a personal reading of the Spirit's reality, the controlling passages unambiguously declare the Spirit to be distinctly personal (Mark 3:22-30; Luke 12:12; John 14:26; 15:26; 16:7-15).

The most intractable problem faced by Christians has been how to conceive of the Trinity in unity. Traditional presuppositions that unity is simple and undifferentiated have forced many (including Subordinationists and Sabellians) to jettison Trinitarian faith. However, if one sees unity as inclusive rather than exclusive, the problem is at least mitigated. If all approximations to unity are to be measured by a scale of degrees of absence of internal multiplicity, then Trinitarian theology and monotheism are irrevocably incompatible. But if the degree of unity is to be measured by the intensity of the unifying power in the life of the whole, then there is the prospect for at least partially comprehending the unity of the Godhead (cf. John 17:20-23) and other complex unities.

That God sent His Son to the cross and that God was in Christ is comprehensible on Trinitarian terms alone. Athanasius declared that only if Christ is truly God do we have contact with God in Him. Trinitarian faith in the NT enriched Christian experience. The Christian is said to be joined to the Trinitarian life of God through the redeeming work of Christ and the fellowship of the Spirit (Eph. 4:2-6).

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WHO GIVES THE HOLY SPIRIT?

(Pentecost 1981)

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Who-gives the Holy Spirit? Under what conditions does the Holy Spirit come to the Christian?

Does the Holy Spirit come in response to faith in Christ through the Gospel? Or, does He come through a religious rite which requires the presence of priest or bishop?

These are old and vexing questions, and they continue to divide Christians. This is one of the hidden issues which most Christians hardly think about. Attempts were made to resolve it in the early .stages of ecumenical discussion, chiefly in the 1930s. However, little progress was made then and the issue remains a barrier between traditions. Why this is so is important to observe. It is equally important to understand biblical teachings which control and shape evangelical thinking.

Christians of all traditions agree that the Holy Spirit was given to the first Christians and to the Church at Pentecost, as recorded in Acts 2. Thereafter, there is little ageement on some aspects working of the Spirit.

Catholic and Orthodox Tradition

In Catholic, Orthodox and most Anglican traditions great stress is laid upon the function of the episcopacy in relation to the gift of Spirit. In the Orthodox tradition (in which I was born and reared), the event is called Chrismation. Priest and Bishop anoint the child with oil after its baptism (sometimes by immersion), and the child is then said to be armed by the Holy Spirit. A key point and claim is that the bishop must be present: “the bishops prepare and consecrate the Chrism, without which a priest cannot perform Christmation.”

This is one of the critical issues in the claims made for apostolic succession by Catholics, Orthodox and Anglicans: the authority to convey the Holy Spirit is vested in the bishop. Thus he need not be present at baptisms, but must be present at Christmation or Confirmation. (In the East, Baptism and Chrismation are performed together. In the West, Confirmation is postponed usually to about age twelve). The issue is authority to convey the Holy Spirit, or to mediate the Holy Spirit, or to invoke the Holy Spirit.

Evangelical Teaching

Evangelicals teach that the gift and working of the Holy Spirit indispensibly involve preaching of the Gospel and response to the Gospel. Evangelicals proclaim Christ to men and women as their Redeemer and Lord and to the Church as its Lord, and they call for the appropriate responses of faith and obedience.

Consider the following:

1. The New Testament teaches that the Holy Spirit is Christ-centred. (John 14:26; 15:26; 16:14; Romans 8:9-11). This truth collides with the claim that the Holy Spirit is mediated by bishops. Christ gives the Spirit. The Church is subject to Christ, its head, through the Spirit (Acts 2:32-36). The role of the Church is to serve, not to exercise authority as has happened, sadly, in history. The Lord and giver of the Spirit is Christ himself. We know the Spirit only indirectly through knowing Christ.

2. The Holy Spirit is where the Gospel is. (John 14:25-26; Acts 1:8; 2:37-38; 5:31-32; 13:2,5; Colossians 3:15-16). In the New Testament the Gospel of Christ is the first interest and work of the Spirit. Nothing short of gospel integrity, gospel concern, and gospel ministry can be the prime function of the Church and the prime interest of the Holy Spirit.

3. The Holy Spirit confronts the Church with her Lord. (Acts 9:31; 20:28). Jesus Christ is the only Lord of the Church. The Spirit's work is to establish the Lordship of Christ, not the authority of the Church as an institution. New Testament teaching centres upon ensuring that the Church proclaim grace and that it live grace under the authority of Christ and the Gospel.

4. The Holy Spirit creates the one koinonia of the Church. (I Cor. 12:13; Eph. 1:13; 2:18, 22). The church is commonly the fellowship of the redeemed. The Holy Spirit is not transmitted by or through the hierarchy, but is the common possession of the redeemed through each person's personal faith in Christ. The Lordship of Christ and participation in the Spirit are the common experience of the New Testament Christians, on one plane of fellowship. There is no discernible distinction in the New Testament on these points between ruler and ruled, clergy and laity.

5. The Holy Spirit addresses the Church through the Gospel. (Acts 15:6-12, 19-20, 28; 20:28, 32; Eph. 3:14-19; 3:23-24). Who will address the bishop? History attests that this has been needed. In the New Testament, not only does the Church utter the Gospel, but the Gospel is spoken to the Church. Even the Apostles stood under, and appealed to, the truth of the Gospel.

6. The distinctness of Christ, the Spirit, and the Church is maintained in the New Testament (Acts 9:31; Eph. 3:7-13; 4:1-16). Where churches have made exclusive claim by religious rite to minister grace, these distinctions frequently have been blurred. Christ promised that he would be succeeded by the Holy Spirit, not by the apostles. It is a mistake to blur the distinction between Christ and the Church, or between the Holy Spirit and Christ. However, it is a grievous error to claim sovereignty or right to dispense the Spirit, which right belongs to Christ alone.

7. The Holy Spirit works through the word of truth concerning the crucified, risen Lord (Acts 2:36-39; I Cor. 12:3; I Peter 1:2-5; I John 4:1-3). The word of truth and the Spirit go together. The Holy Spirit is given to bring the risen Lord, now glorified, to the faith of every man by means of the Gospel. This happens over again through the changing conditions of history.

Joy in the Spirit

Pentecost, which celebrates the advent of the Spirit, is for rejoicing. This joy in the Holy Spirit is the joy in Christ the Lord whom the Spirit is given to magnify. The Spirit is given in Christ's name, not his own (John 14:26). The Spirit interprets Christ's teaching to us. He is sent by Christ (John 15:26). He will not exercise his own authority (John 16:13). Rather, he will affirm the authority and word of Christ. Our Lord said, "He will glorify met' (John 16:14).

This is the high point of New Testament teaching about the Spirit. The Holy Spirit glorifies the Lord, Jesus Christ, in us. Those who believe in Christ do so by the Spirit and they are endowed with the Spirit. The Spirit of Christ lives in each Christian to quicken new life. Paul relates this to conversion and baptism in Romans 6 and Romans 8:

If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit which dwells in you (Romans 8:11).

THE BIBLE
IN
EVANGELICAL FAITH AND LIFE

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The Bible is supposed to be at the center of evangelical faith and life. In what ways is this apparent confessionally, in the life-style of Christians, and in behavior? What should be the place of the Bible in evangelical life today?

As I think about it, the Bible in the hands of dedicated lay Christians was the crucial factor in the conversion of my parents, then in my own conversion and re-orientation in life as a young teen-ager. The turn of the wheel in attitudes toward the Bible during the past hundred years (my life encompasses most of those years) has been remarkable.

In the early 1900s the Modernist theological impulse, particularly from Europe, undermined confidence in the Bible and its key doctrines and resulted in rupturing most of the major Christian denominations. The reaction to this was swift, in the formation of new evangelical denominations and the development of the Bible School and Christian College movements. Through all of this, the *King James Version* (KJV) was the text in the hands of most Christians. It furnished a sense of common heritage and internalized language of faith.

Meanwhile in Britain Modernism intruded only on the fringes of traditional theological commitment. During the period of the 1920s through the 1950s new biblical scholarship emerged which trumped the undermining theologically liberal ethos. I can easily count over one hundred names of prominent British biblical scholars from this period. These generated the impetus and furnished literature which fostered interest in biblical studies and new translations of the Scriptures in America as well as the emergence of new scholarship.

In America strong defence of Scripture during the rise of attacks on the Bible included B. B. Warfield's essays (later published as a collection in *The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible,* 1948), and the subsequent work of evangelical scholars such as compiled by Carl F. H. Henry in *Revelation and the Bible,* 1958. Along with the rapid development of missionary outreach within America and overseas the demand for the Bible and for new translations increased exponentially.

The Bible is the book of the people. It has always been this. Putting the Bible in the hands of the people in the language of the people began with John Wycliffe in England (1320 – 1384), long before the Protestant Reformation. The most lasting influence was that of William Tyndale who may be regarded as the father of English Bible translation. His work emerged publicly in 1523 and his complete Bible was published in Cologne in 1534. In 1536 he was arrested in Brusssels, strangled and his body burned. His translation served as the foundation of the KJV, which became the standard English language text until modern times.

Meanwhile Baptists in Europe in 1529 completed the first German language version, the *Worms Bible* (by the Anabaptists Ludwig Hetzer and Hans Denck) which quickly went through seventeen editions and was commended by Luther. Luther himself completed his New Testament translation by 1522 and the complete Bible by 1534, which became standard use among German-speaking Protestants.

The first Bible printed in America was the Eliot Bible (1623), an Algonquin Indian language translation, long before an English language Bible was printed in the American colonies.

Following World War II public demand and the new scholarly resources which were becoming available in the United States led to the current plethora of new Bible translations, the sale of which has massively increased English language Bible circulation world wide, and has stimulated the production of hundreds of new language translations.

The *Revised Standard Version* (RSV: N.T. 1946, O.T. 1952; revised 1989) was well received at first, but circulation decreased when many readers felt that the Old Testament renderings published later tended to diminish or sidestep messianic implications of Old Testament texts as traditionally understood by Christians (I continue to use the complete 1952 RSV as a basic study tool). The *New International Version* (NIV 1978, revised 1984) is probably the most widely circulated translation among evangelicals and conservative Christians. I use it regularly as a study text, though I feel that neither the RSV nor the NIV approach the elegance, or literary and liturgical value of the KJV.

The Bible is fundamentally a “peoples book.” What is its place in modern evangelical life?

But first,

What is the Bible?

The Bible comprises the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament (the books of the Hebrew Scriptures) and the twenty-seven books of the New Testament (the writings which derive from Christ’s apostles and their associates).

Fundamentally, Christians accept the Old Testament to be God's Word because these are the Scriptures handed down from generation to generation in the life of Israel. The word "Testament" is used in the sense of "Covenant;" the Old Covenant of God with his people Israel, and the New Covenant with God's people in Christ (Luke 16:17).

Jesus identified the Old Testament as sacred Scripture comprising "the Law," "the Prophets," and "the Psalms" or Writings (Matthew 5:17-18; 11:13; Luke 24:44). The customary arrangement of the Old Testament was:

(1) The Law:
Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.

(2) The Prophets:
(a) The Former Prophets: Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings.
(b) The Latter Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the twelve minor prophets.

(3) The Writings:
Psalms, Proverbs, Job; Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Ezra-Nehemiah, 1 and 2 Chronicles.

Jesus affirmed this scope and limit of the Hebrew Bible when speaking of the Old Testament martyrs in Luke 11:51 he said *from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zachariah*, which encompasses the first martyr (in Genesis) to the last. In the order of books in the Hebrew Bible Zachariah is the last martyr to be identified in the last book of the Hebrew Bible, 2 Chronicles 24:21.

Subsequent to the resurrection of Christ the Apostles, either directly or through those associated with them, transmitted the story of Jesus' life and his teachings, and the significance of the events surrounding his birth, life, ministry, death, resurrection, their commissioning to mission, the promise of his return, and his ascension.

The key criterion which determined what was included in the Canon or excluded from the Canon is the concept of Holy Scripture: the Old Testament comprised the received Scriptures of the Hebrew Bible, and the New Testament comprised Apostolic writings, or writings attributed to those associated with the Apostles, and so acknowledged by their use among the early Christian churches.

Early Christian writings are replete with such data. To be sure, the writers were in many cases well educated and cite texts and practical wisdom from pagan sources, but their citation of the Scriptures stands on a higher plane: these are the authoritative Word or Oracles of God.

Thus Clement of Rome, when writing from the congregation at Rome to the congregation at Corinth about 96 A.D. about dissension in their ranks, cites or makes allusions to over 180 biblical references, from both Old Testament and New Testament writings to buttress his argument – a remarkable display of biblical literacy. The authority to which he appeals is not that of the church at Rome, but the wisdom which comes from Holy Scripture and accumulated practical wisdom.

Similarly, in the latter part of the second century A.D. Irenaeus, who led in the rapid expansion of Christian witness in Gaul, emphasized that the truth which the Church preached was conserved by the prophets, fulfilled in Christ, and then handed down by the Apostles.

Along with the books of the Old Testament the completion of the Canon included writings authored by an apostle or apostolic man, knowledge of use of such writings in early church congregational life because of their utility and orthodoxy, and interaction among the leading church centers as to their holdings and scripture reading lists.

This was not a mechanical process, nor did any one Church Council decree the final shape of the Canon. It was, I believe, the on-going action of the Holy Spirit to conserve Holy Scripture: the books of the Old Testament and authentic Apostolic writings.

It remains to add a word about "nine-day-wonders" – proposals dismissive of all previous knowledge, intended to make a mark for their authors. During my life-time we have had some notable ones.

After World War II Charles Templeton rose to become a popular preacher and founder of Youth for Christ in Toronto (I ushered in those splendid rallies). A superb Christian and Missionary Alliance preacher, he decided to "get an education," then went left-wing, forsook his wife, became a media celebrity in Toronto on the side of atheists and skeptics, ending up unhappy about the final resolution of his skepticism. I listened to him at both ends of his intellectual venturing while I was pursuing an advanced degree in philosophy only to feel sorry for a man who had critically not plumbed deeply enough.

In the 1950s John A. T. Robinson proposed his "God is Dead" hypothesis, which became a media number for months; except that years later in a volume which shocked his skeptical friends he proposed dating New Testament sources earlier than some evangelicals have done.

I recall flying to Chicago in the autumn of 1963 to hear A. Q. Morton describe his use of a computer (they were then new and regarded as wondrous gadgets which would revolutionize all previous knowledge) to evaluate biblical texts statistically on the basis of sentence length and common word occurrences such as

prepositions and conjunctions. R. M. Grant of the University of Chicago and frequent critic of evangelical use of the Bible, introduced him. Morton said that his method had nothing to do with the way words and sentences are used – in other words the sense is irrelevant – only distribution is the clue as to authorship and authenticity. But as data which he used to support his claims gradually emerged critics quickly undercut his conclusions that a great deal of the New Testament is a pastiche of disjointed pieces arbitrarily joined together by scribes.

I recall his answer to the question as to what doctrinal issues he had in mind when he claimed that changes to core New Testament theological teaching would occur as a result of the use of his method. He replied simply that they were inevitable.

For years during the 1980s and 1990s, like clockwork, each Easter in Britain the media sought comments from David E. Jenkins, the Bishop of Durham, regarding his denial of the resurrection of Christ in order to feature his skepticism on their Easter pages and in their programming. However, he tended to confuse the nature and effects of the resurrection, with inadequate attention to the data supporting the resurrection, which Murray J. Harris, the Warden of Tyndale House in Cambridge, pointed out in his rebuttal (*Easter in Durham: Bishop Jenkins and the Resurrection of Jesus*, 1985). It is ironic that the current Bishop of Durham is N. T. Wright, whose comprehensive study defends the historicity of the resurrection of Christ (*The Resurrection of the Son of God,* 2003).

In America the recent nine-day-wonder is the work of Bart Ehrman of Duke University, *Misquoting Jesus: The Story Behind Who Changed the Bible and Why*, 2005, which is an extension of *Orthodox Corruption of Scripture*, 1993, with little attention to critics of the earlier work. Ehrman, of earlier evangelical background, now classifies himself as a happy agnostic in his view that there is no authentic historical record of Jesus and that variants in the extant New Testament texts undermine the credibility of the scribal tradition. He no longer attends church but teaches New Testament from the standpoint of the unreliability of the extant manuscripts.

According to an interview with him published by Neely Tucker in the *Washington Post*, March 5, 2006, Ehrman enjoys needling his students to go beyond what their parents have taught them. He has developed a roster of stock variances which, he claims, discount the authenticity of what existing manuscripts report or any concept of the inspiration of originals.

However, on close examination his premises are on shaky ground, though examination of these becomes an irritant when one is so popular on the skeptical circuit. He has produced no variant that changes any core New Testament doctrine.

Consider two examples:

For over a century scholars of the New Testament texts have known that the pericope (short passage) concerning the adulterous woman (John 7:53 – 8:11) is not present in the oldest available manuscripts. The Metzger/Aland editors exclude it from the text, but place it as an addendum to the text of John with extensive textual notes both there and in their *Commentary on the Greek New Testament*. In my case, I cut my teeth on textual apparatus using Alexander Souter's Greek text, first published in 1910, which puts the pericope in brackets along with notes.

Why is this a problem to Ehrman? Metzger/Aland concede that the pericope has an ancient provenance but cannot be retained because it not in the most ancient and most important extant manuscripts. Case closed! We accept the fact. Does this now mitigate against the whole of John?

Apparently so for Ehrman. He proceeds to undermine the doctrine of Christ's divinity by claiming that only John advances it and that it is an unsustainable hypothesis. But where is the work of Murray J. Harris (*Jesus as God: The New Testament Use of Theos in Reference to Jesus*, 1992) who demonstrates that the divinity of Christ is not an exceptional concept but is the foundation of New Testament theology, which is unimpeachably evident in many passages?

He then calls into question the doctrine of the trinity on grounds that Trinitarian additions in 1 John 5: 7, 8 are not in the earliest manuscripts. However, no modern translation, including the NIV and the NASB, includes those words in the text. By implication to suggest that trinitarian teaching is a late addition because of this variant is disingenuous, to say nothing of its ignoring the extensive exegetical work of Athanasius, the Cappadocian Fathers, and all who worked to formulate the Nicene and Chalcedonian Creeds on grounds of wide-ranging, solid biblical exegesis.

I am reminded of yet another nine-day-wonder when years ago at the International Patristics Conference in Oxford many of us sat mystified as two American scholars attempted to rehabilitate Arius against Athanasius. That proposal got short shrift in the ensuing literature.

Ehrman's methodology cannot stand. Beyond the provocative nature of his writings, overstatement, failure to take account of critics of his textual decisions, failure to answer critics of his earlier work, and failure to answer

questions about his interpretations suggest that *Misquoting Jesus* is simply an attempt to popularize a previously advanced set of skeptical hypotheses.

Whether in Classical Studies or Biblical Studies we all must deal with received texts. It is amazing that new discoveries relating to biblical studies have for over a century tended to push the dating of received texts closer and closer to apostolic times, such data reinforced often by archaeological discoveries. Textual studies

such as those published and on-going at Tyndale House, Cambridge, England, have tended to reinforce confidence in the authenticity of the texts we have.

We have far more texts, and older texts, for Old Testament and New Testament studies than we have for studies in the Classics. My love of study of Plato, Aristotle, the Stoics, and Epicurus and his heritage (which reaches into apostolic times and called for rejoinder by the Apostle Paul) is not blunted by the fact that most of our sources originate from mid- or late-medieval times.

My experience and suggestion is to follow the advice of the University of Virginia philosopher and educator E. D. Hirsch (*Validity In Interpretation*, 1967) that we accept a received text, confident that future work will gradually refine it, and work toward gasping its meaning not tearing it apart. Tearing apart does not educate. Give credence to authorial intent, Hirsch urges. To grasp the sense is to educate oneself.

A Universe of Meaning:
The Bible's Transforming Paradigm

The failure of modern nine-day-wonder critics, in contrast to Christianity's antagonists when the Apostles carried the Gospel into the ancient world, is that they and the media who mindlessly feature them are nit-pickers. They are too shallow. They don't get to the essentials. And the essentials embrace key feature elements of human existence and of life in this universe. The Bible presents a world-view; its message comprises a transforming paradigm for modern human beings and society.

This is true in two important practical respects: First, the Bible furnishes a set of guidelines for personal behavior; standards which define good and evil, right and wrong. Second, the Bible sets forth a set of practical guidelines for society, for governance; a set of standards for public policy.

Consider, first, biblical guidelines for personal behavior:

While the Bible is replete with ethical teaching, the Decalogue as a set of standards and the Book of Proverbs as a set of maxims embrace what I mean. At Sinai the Israelites were brought into a covenant relationship with God,
which the "Ten Words," the Ten Commandments, epitomize. Idolatry of whatever kind is proscribed. They must worship the one and only true God of the universe whose covenant with them entails concrete ethical and moral precepts (Exodus 34:6-7).

Thus the Bible conveys this seminal truth: that in the universe which God has created right and wrong stand for objective characteristics which attach directly and inalienably to acts and their consequences. Moral judgments are more than

culturally fashioned and biologically induced responses, defined situationally as that which is right in any one person's eyes. They relate to the rightness or wrongness of acts which are normed by what God wills; neither capriciously nor arbitrarily, but reflecting God's own nature as holy, just and good.

From many sources in Israel's life, the Book of Proverbs presents practical maxims on how to live morally, in harmony with others, a life pleasing to God. It is a manual for living which praises the surpassing worth of wisdom and highlights the tragedy of folly. These are basic principles to guide the prudent person who has a powerful sense of dependence upon God (Proverbs 3:5-12). The good life is the moral life, which contrasts with a life geared purely to amoral behavioral responses. Wisdom leads to pursuit of that which is good (Proverbs 6:20-23). Rejection of moral standards opens one to the pitfalls of moral impurity, violence, dishonesty, duplicity, deviousness, insincerity.

In the past men like Benjamin Franklin taught America practical morality, though today's ethos eschews criticism of anyone's behavior. But what is wrong with the following, from Proverbs: be concerned for the poor (22:22-23), avoid violent persons (22:24-25), retain societies landmarks (22:28), avoid covetousness (23:4), guide and discipline children (19:18), refrain from drunkenness and gluttony (23:20-21), honor parents (23:22), flee immorality (23:26-28), seek good friendships and shun bad ones (24:1-2, 19-20)?

Second, what about matters of public policy?

On this matter the message of the prophet Amos is pivotal. Bear in mind that, as Amos prophesied in the mid-eighth century B.C.E., his fundamental public policy thesis is *let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an everflowing stream* (Amos 5:24), which was uttered centuries before the Milesian philosophers speculated about the nature of reality, or Athenians such as Plato and Aristotle debated the nature of justice.

While he urges compassion for the poor and oppressed, he argues that the fundamental issue concerning social evils is not inequality. Inequality is the result; injustice is the cause. If there were justice, freedom and opportunity there would not be so many poor.

His list of evils is astounding: genocide, barbarism, ethnic cleansing, judicial bribes, excessive penalties, arbitrary government, extortion, fraud, perjury, exploitation, fraud, moral and religious corruption, curtailing freedom of speech and, generally, subversion of justice.

In Amos justice, righteousness, and that which is right are correlatives. Justice (*mishpat*, 5:7, 15, 24; 6:12) is that which is one's due. Righteousness (*tsadaq*, 5:7, 24; 6:12) is that which is equitable or right; in societal matters it identifies that which is due, equitable, or right in the execution of social, judicial and

political obligations. Right (*nakoach*, 3:10) means that which is right, straightforward, upright. It is our obligation (5:14-15) to seek good (*tubh*) not evil (*ra'a*).

Amos was a keen observer of human affairs and well informed about evils within the life of his own people the Israelites, and of surrounding nations. His indictment is unsparing, especially about the fraud of celebrating religious festivals while exploiting the oppressed. Amos was a tract of the times for many centuries in the rise of Christian Europe which helped move Europe from barbarism to civilized societies and helped America, in part from its British Christian heritage, to develop a constitution that honored the dignity of humans created in the image of God.

Further, Amos is among the first of the prophets to say that God is not only Lord of Israel but also of history. All nations are seen to be responsible to God. Thus the teleological character of history is declared. God is not removed from the movement of history and he will achieve his purposes. And though Amos sounds solemn warnings, his final word is one of hope based on God's unchanging justice and unending love (9:11-15).

Unlike their forefathers, modern American evangelicals have been pushed to the fringe of American culture. Early- and mid-nineteenth century evangelicals in Britain were strong enough to disestablish the Church of England, but instead of pursuing political power they devoted themselves to abolishing slavery, caring for the sick and widows and orphans, feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless during the social and economic upheavals associated with the Industrial Revolution, and seeking to diminish the abuse of women. Our American evangelical forefathers were part of the mainstream of American culture.

Today's evangelicals, usually despised by left-wing progressives who enjoy the social benefits of past evangelical compassion and are cynically pandered to for their votes by some on the right, ought to renew their God-given mandate to create a revolution against today's sexploitation, the abortion of uncounted millions of innocents, the redefinition of marriage, divorce, the staggering illegitimacy rate, the tragedy of enormous numbers of fatherless children, inadequate education of our children, overseas poverty, ethnic cleansing, and genocide. But this can best happen not by political clout in Washington or in the courts. Acquiring political power does not equip one to change America morally and spiritually.

The hatred of George W. Bush so palpable in the media has as much to do with snobbish despising of evangelical faith as any other factor. The philosophical materialists and transcendentalists have not and, indeed, cannot produce moral change in America. Only the willfully blind fail to see in our world that religious terrorism, mafia-type economies, repression and exploitation of women and girls, ethnic cleansing, caste systems, transcendentalist myopia in the midst of

unspeakable poverty and suffering, walk hand in hand with religious, economic and metaphysical systems that America's cultural and academic secular reactionary elite like to play with but do not comprehend. Absorption with comparative religion has become a variegated quilt that covers a multitude of sins.

Change can come about only by seeding the main segments of American culture with key biblical ideals and values. If Mel Gibson can roil and challenge thinking in Hollywood with his film *The Passion of the Christ*, even temporarily, then others can do it in politics, business, education, the media, science, medicine, the judicial system, and social services. Abortion and divorce are receding in numbers, but the rate of change in these and other social evils could quicken if evangelicals again enter the main-stream of American life, exhibiting lives of goodness, intelligence, balance and compassion -- in short, Christ-infused principles - and then slowly by give and take, and by judicious compromises, seek to turn America toward higher ideals.

But there is more to the transforming Biblical paradigm, beyond distinctive personal moral teaching and the concept of justice in regard to public policy: it is philosophically distinct and, in my judgment, the paradigm of choice for the future of mankind.

That we are now supposed to be in the post-Christian era suggests the loss of the biblical hermeneutic; we are witnessing a massive demonstration of unbelief the spirit of which is self-conscious use of power without faith. And anyone who proposes to limit power in line with faith is mocked. Despite secular rejection of them, it is time to ask whether Biblical categories are in fact the viable intellectual alternative for the future.

Christianity's "way of arranging the world" is what overtook the ancient world views, in a world richly furnished with ideas, and it is instructive to note parallels with today's mind set.

In apostolic and post-apostolic times during the inception and rapid expansion of the Christian faith, Christians were confronted by two large philosophical traditions: Transcendentalism and Materialism.

First, Transcendentalism characterized the religions of the Empire, but was centered chiefly in the Idealism of the ancient philosophical schools. These tended to denigrate the empirical world and sought release from earthbound existence to behold the divine (Platonists, Gnostics, Manicheans, Neo-platonists, among others). Fundamentally their views were *inimical to full-blown individual personhood.* For them, God is impersonal reason. Human personality is a transient epiphenomenon which will soon be cured by death and re-absorbed into infinite transcendent reality. Freedom is an illusion. In modern times, the parallels include various forms of Panentheism (Paul Tillich) and Process Philosophy (A. N. Whitehead).

The other major ancient philosophical tradition was the materialistic atomism of Leucippas, Democritus and Epicurus: all that exists is matter in motion. This yields a philosophy that is totally deterministic and fatalistic and, when put into psychological and ethical forms, totally hedonistic. Its exact parallel in our time is the Behaviorism of Ivan Pavlov and B. F. Skinner. For them, as well, human freedom is an illusion. This view denies the existence of the soul or spirit and views the termination of human life as the end of everything. The hedonist model of the good life is, “eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die.” This is what the media in America foster today.

Karl Marx created a parallel economic and social theory out of the traditional materialist categories and, while he rejected teleology in favor of historical determinism, he nevertheless espoused a gospel of the inevitable movement of human history toward a classless society.

It is time to draw the contrast between these two deterministic models - Transcendentalist and Materialist – and the Biblical model.

The Biblical model is indeed a manifesto: it rejects determinism, whether metaphysical, psychological or economic. God is the creator of the universe. Human beings have a spiritual nature. They are created for freedom and are responsible to God for their actions and their stewardship of the world.

The Christian view centers on three important points: First, the nature of reality derives from the creative act of God. It is essentially moral and spiritual in nature, fashioned for persons and interpersonal relations. The whole world is the object of God's love and concern. Its genius is not the behavioristically conditioned ant-heap, but the creation of free human beings in Christ who will know and serve God righteously.

In other words, conservation of humanity and stewardship of the created order is inherent in the biblical model, but has no intellectual foundation in either Transcendentalism or Materialism. Thomas Kuhn, physicist and philosopher of science, has said that science proceeds by occasional paradigm shifts. It is time for the West to shift away from the reductionist tendencies of the modern materialist view of human nature and re-affirm the truth of the biblical model: that each human being has a spiritual nature which is created in the image of God, and that recognition of this truth affords the best protection of human beings as free persons from modern manipulators who propose re-fashioning humanity biologically, psychologically and socially into their motor-affective response reconstruction of human nature.

Enhancing the Role of the Bible
in
Modern Evangelical Life

The most important factor regarding the Bible in evangelical life is its use privately and in public worship *in the hands of the people.* At issue are four key factors: how to facilitate the internalization of the content of Scripture, how to affirm key Scripture doctrines, how to conserve faith in the authenticity of the Scriptures and in their being the norm of the Christian faith, and how to best propagate the biblical message.

Habits of private use are mostly shaped by the role of the Bible in public worship. About this one can register concern about aspects of modern evangelical worship practices.

To begin with, which Bible (translation) to use? This is a most perplexing question. Currently there is no resolution in sight, given the plethora of translations and paraphrases available. I will by-pass paraphrases, the use of which I discourage whether for private or public use. These often reflect the ideological slant of the paraphraser, and in use they often reflect the predilections of the reader who is looking for the rendering of a text to confirm a previously formed opinion.

As to translations, the NIV is the most commonly used modern version. Though the *New American Standard Bible* (NASB) often yields a more literal translation it has not enjoyed the circulation of the NIV. The same can be said for the *New King James Version* (NKJV). The use of the RSV and its successor, the NRSV, and the *New English Bible* (NEB) among evangelicals is limited.

The many available translations inhibit the internalization of scripture. An important aspect of the KJV heritage was its *common use in the hands of the people* during public worship. The many translations now in the hands of the congregation militates against congregational responsive reading. Projecting the reading on to a screen or printing it in the church bulletin, does not facilitate familiarization with the pages of the Bible as does having one in one's own hands in the pew.

Internalization of Scripture is best facilitated through familiarity which is fostered by repeated exposure to a commonly used translation. And the translation must be lyrical enough to facilitate memorization, as well as accurate enough to merit memorization. In my judgment modern translations are not designed as literature for oral reading and easy memorization. That was a key aspect of the private and public use of the KJV. I cannot imagine memorizing the Twenty-third Psalm or 1 Corinthians 13 in anything but the KJV.

At this point I offer a personal anecdote: Following the conversion of my parents to personal Christian faith in Canada at my age ten, I remember the first day I was taken to Sunday School. For a period of two years the leaders of the Sunday School sponsored a Memory Work Contest. As my parents were new converts, it appeared to them that the only thing to do was that their children should enter the contest and win! So my sister and I spent each Saturday morning memorizing upwards of 12-20 verses of Scripture to recite the next day.

During those months I committed about 1000 verses of Scripture to heart. This created a reservoir of instruction on the back shelves of my mind that has proved to be life-directing. Included were the Ten Commandments, many of the Psalms (including the entire 119th Psalm), Isaiah 53, the Beatitudes, parts of the Gospel of John, and many parts of the Epistles, including 1 Corinthians 13.

Consider Acts 2:41-42: upon their conversion and baptism, new converts *devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and prayers.* Add to this Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16 where Paul speaks of *addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs.* Liturgical practices not only reinforce faith in one's head, they deposit a rich store of truth in the heart.

Such worship practices were common in the evangelical tradition of recent generations, whether Baptist, Methodist, Congregationalist, Presbyterian, Reformed, Christian Missionary Alliance, Pentecostal, or Independent churches. The Bible was not detached from worship, such as a text thrown up on a screen to reinforce the point of a topical sermon. It was integral to all that went on in worship as reflected in prayers, responsive readings and expository sermons. The hymns, especially, reflected biblical language and motifs, without unseemly familiarity with God, such as some who today refer to God as "the Guy upstairs."

What I speak of embraced many differing liturgical patterns, whether that of Baptists and others who for generations used the Ira D. Sankey collection of hymns *Sacred Songs and Solos* which originated with the Dwight Moody revivals, or more traditional denominational hymn books, or other traditions of music such as Black Gospel Music, or Blue Grass. Worship had its confessional base which emphasized the greatness of God, the divinity and saving work of Christ on the Cross, the fellowship of the saints, and the call to holy living and committed Christian service. It must be, as Rick Warren warns in the *Purpose Driven Life*, "not about you, but about God."

Here are suggestions on how to increase the use of the Bible in public worship:

1. Utilize biblical sentences as a call to worship such as: Psalm 1:1-2; 8:1, 3-4, 9; 19:1-4; 23:1-3; 24:3-5; 32:1-2, 11; 34:1-3; 40:1-3; 89:1-2; 100; Isaiah 40:28-31; 45:5-7; 55:1, 3; 61:1-2a; 66:1-2; 1 Corinthians 1:3.

2. Utilize biblical benedictions and blessings at the end of the service such as: Numbers 6:24-26; Psalm 4:6b, 8; 73:23-26; John 14:27; Romans 1:7b, 11:33-36; 16:20b; 1 Corinthians 16:23; Galatians 1:3-5; Ephesians 1:2, 17-20a, 6:23-24; Philippians 4:4-7.

Such sentences can be adapted and printed or projected for joint congregational reading.

3. A congregation should be trained to know the books of the Bible and be able to find them quickly. It should not be thought undignified from time to time to jointly recite the O.T. books and the N. T. books as an exercise, or have young children lead the congregation in such a recitation. While identifying the page number of a passage in the Bible may be helpful to persons totally at sea on how to find the passage for a point in the sermon or for a congregational reading, that should be a muted announcement. Congregations should develop familiarity with the Bible so that they can instinctively and quickly find the passage in the Bible in hand.

4. Re-emphasis of at least the two key Christian annual festivals is in order, namely, Christmas to celebrate the birth of Christ, and Easter to celebrate Christ's resurrection. In some churches these have become so muted that traditional, biblically-based Christmas carols and hymns concerning Christ's passion and resurrection are unfamiliar. I recommend also extensive use of biblical passages in the church services and sermons associated with these festivals. It seems in recent years that other special observances have taken precedence over those of the traditional church year, such as women's events, men's events, youth events, social service events, and many others.

5. Brief expository series, and Bible biography series, along with informing historical and geographical reference, are splendid aids to increase Bible literacy.

6. I recommend that the church decide on a translation which will be placed in the pews or hymn book racks behind the chairs. Whatever translation or paraphrase people use as a personal Bible is not at issue. Joint congregational use is important in conveying solidarity as to what the Bible means to Christians as joint members of Christ's body.

Whether one of the newer Bible translations will become dominant to most Christians in the English-speaking world remains yet to be seen. For biblical teaching to embed itself in the minds and hearts of the people a church ought to settle on one translation and use it regularly in all the venues of worship and teaching so that its language becomes "second nature" to the people. The Bible in the hands of the people is its best defense, conservation, and propagation.

How can teaching of the Bible be maximized in church life? Small groups do not reach all, or even most people in any given congregation. The decline of Sunday

School in many churches and loss of expository preaching in favor of topical preaching has been disastrous for levels of biblical knowledge among many in modern times. This is true despite the enormous increase in the circulation of new translations and paraphrases of the Bible and the publication of Christian literature some of which has reached the best seller lists.

The cure for absorption with pet themes, narrow-mindedness and tunnel vision as to grasping the message of the Bible is canon-wide study and appreciation of the plenary scope of the teaching of the Scriptures. Systematic book by book study sets the message of the Bible in its historical contexts and makes the application to today all the more incisive -- the concepts are not merely lifted out of context, bare-bones. Consistent, canon-wide study is the best cure for narrow, mind-shackling, brain-washing obsession.

But what should be one's attitude to the scriptures in light of the never-ending modern tension between scholarly and devotional uses of the Bible? It is quite remarkable how derisively dismissive secularists are in academic circles whenever the word "Bible" is heard. This attitude is simply proof of sustained ignorance of one of the most potent intellectual and cultural influences in the history of mankind. No one can think of himself or herself as an intellectual who does know the contents of the Bible. To be an educated person the study of the scriptures purely as classical literature which has profoundly affected the development of western civilization is mandatory.

My advice: take the biblical texts as we have them and study them with care. Give even a modicum of credence to authorial intent. Leave the weightier academic questions about manuscripts, variant readings, source criticism, form criticism, in abeyance. This is no different from my taking Plato's *Republic*, or Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, or Marcus Aurelius' *Meditations* at face value and then striving diligently to grasp what the author has written in the text I have in hand (or, for that matter, what the editors of the text have compiled). Bear in mind that in the case of the canonical scriptures, we have manuscript copies which extend the range of likely early textual authenticity far beyond anything available in classical studies. Give credence to the text, and diligently search out its sense in the form in which we have it.

Along with other teaching programs, I urge return to a Canonical Curriculum strategy. By this I mean that each minister, each lay person, resolve that at some point in life he or she will make a serious study of each book of the Bible. And, that in the case of each book, one should prepare several pages of notes on the historical background of the book and author, outline the literary and story structure of the book, and make notes on its major themes and permanent values.

I have found this to be a rewarding aspect of church ministry. If you log in to my website [www.drsamstheology.com] you will find a BIBLE tab. Under that tab are files named Canonical Curriculum where there are notes on each book of the

Bible. These were developed in connection with pastoral ministry in an attempt to convey the structure and content of the Bible. If I were to teach such a series today, would I revise them? Of course! It takes hours and hours of study to prepare such material, but it is eminently profitable to do so both for the doer and the listener.

CANON AS THE AIR WE BREATHE

Samuel J. Mikolaski

For the volume:
From Biblical Criticism to Biblical Faith:
Essays in Honor of Lee Martin McDonald
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Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2007.

Why is the concept of the Canon crucial to Christians? Because the canon limits inclusion into the Bible only writings that are Scripture and, despite today's distrust and often rejection of external religious authority, Scripture remains indispensable as the didactic and unifying element in Christendom.

Two main streams of thought have been formative elements in contemporary North American theology: British theology (the Anglican, Presbyterian, and Evangelical traditions – in the case of the latter, chiefly Baptists, Congregationalists, and Methodists); and European theology, particularly the critical schools of the past century and a half. Few English-speaking theologians were competent interpreters of all three traditions, though Hugh Anderson, one of Lee's professors in Scotland, was one of them. The displacement of the more balanced British theological perspectives by radical, especially German, biblical criticism in North America is well known.

Many are less aware, however, that during the heyday of the European radical critics, another movement was in play: the British biblical theology movement which flourished in Britain during the sixty year period after World War I. Lee McDonald is heir to that movement.

While I was in Oxford 1956-1958, Leonard Hodgson wryly commented to me that there was a curious disjunction between European and British theology which had impacted theology in North America. The Liberal theological influence came chiefly from the Continent where radical critics had focused primarily on textual problems and historical data, with little attention to the message of the Bible – a complaint which Peter Stuhlmacher made later (1977).

However, earlier in the century as a result of his commentary on *Romans* Karl Barth and Emil Brunner were lionized in North America for urging the church to get back to the Bible as conveying God's word to humanity, which calls for obedience and thus comprises more than a series of ancient texts which scholars spend their lives dissecting critically.

Hodgson wondered what the fuss was about because for most of two generations previously during the 1920s to the 1960s there had developed a powerful tradition of biblical – especially New Testament – theology in Britain. I casually drew up a

list of about one hundred, but need mention only a few to call to mind a memorable list and range of competent scholarship: James Denney, James Moffatt, the two Mansons (T. W. and William), E. C. Hoskyns, R. V. G. Tasker, A. C. Headlam, William Barclay, J. K. S. Reid, Vincent Taylor, C. H. Dodd, A. M. Hunter, Austin Farrer, C. F. D. Moule, James Barr, F. F. Bruce, Donald Guthrie, George Beasley-Murray, R. P. C. Hanson.

Lee McDonald's work was shaped by British biblical scholarly tradition at Edinburgh, reinforced later by his post-doctoral studies at Harvard under Helmut Koester. British biblical theology has profoundly influenced North American evangelical theology during the post-Barth era, and has contributed to the emergence of many new translations of the English Bible in both the United Kingdom and the United States.

In the course of this, there occurred a rupture within North American evangelicalism over inerrancy. In an attempt to resolve the issues a conference was convened at Gordon College near Boston in June 1966, organized by Harold Ockenga, pastor of the Park Street Baptist Church, Boston, and one of the founding group of Fuller Theological Seminary. Over sixty scholars participated, several of us traveling from outside the United States (I was teaching in Switzerland). At the time I was impressed by the fact that the windows of our meeting room were taped with paper to keep what was going on in the room away from the prying eyes and ears of students!

Today as I review the large collection of papers that were circulated and discussed I wonder what a great deal of the fuss was about. Divisions deepened. Subsequently, the inerrancy movement appeared to flourish, and then quickly faded away and after a few years was disbanded without leaving behind any significant body of literature to help the church at large on the issues that had been raised. Some who had been instrumental in the movement's founding revised their views. It was of great interest to me that Carl F. H. Henry declined to participate in the conference, even though he and Harold Ockenga were friends. I had written often for *Christianity Today* under Carl's editorship. When I asked him why he declined to participate he said that inerrancy is not the end of the issue, merely the beginning. Controversy would intensify because of the manner in which the debate was framed and the results would inevitably be inconclusive. And this from a man widely known for his insistence that the Bible is God's Word and that it is authoritative for the church in matters of faith and practice.

Lee McDonald did not allow himself to be side-tracked by the internal evangelical controversies. He had cut his scholarly teeth on the British biblical theology tradition and had long since concluded that Scripture is Scripture and that his task was to affirm the authority of the Scriptures and expand the use and understanding of the Scriptures among the churches. The question of canonical formation became for him an absorbing issue during his post-doctoral studies at Harvard. This led to the publication of *The Formation of the Christian Biblical*

Canon in 1977, followed by its expansion and re-issue in 1995. In 2000 he and Stanley E. Porter published *Early Christianity and its Sacred Literature*; then in 2002, along with James E. Sanders, *The Canon Debate* was published.

In his address at the autumn Convocation of the North American Baptist Seminary in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, on September 7, 1978 (where he was Professor of New Testament studies) he said: "Many Christians spend a lot of time talking about the historical facts of the Bible, seeking to authenticate its message, but in the final analysis it is only when we submit to its message and experience the forgiveness and peace of which it speaks that we can say with confidence that this is indeed the very Word of God." The use of Scripture as Scripture must be our overriding concern in theological education and teaching in the churches. He added that neglecting the Bible as the Scriptures they are creates grave dangers because "neglect is the logical consequence of the rejection of the Bible's authority." Dangers of neglect include loss of Christian identity, the creation of what James Smart called the "imagined" rather than the remembered Christ of the Scriptures, and loss of Scripture prophetic impact upon our lives as the Scriptures call us to obey God's will.

Scripture *qua* Scripture is the meaning and scope of the Christian canon. On Scripture perceived as comprising a recognized body of sacred, authoritative literature by the church, I turn to three early Christian writers, namely, Clement of Rome, Athenagoras, and Irenaeus, each of whom utilizes Scripture to distinctive ends.

CLEMENT OF ROME

The subscription to Clement's letter, commonly known as *I Clement*, reads "*The Letter of the Romans to the Corinthians*" (65) which, as preserved in the Coptic, appears to be its original title. This is an "in house" document which encourages, rebukes, disciplines, and instructs fellow Christians, rather than being a communication to non-Christians. *I Clement* is deemed by many to be the earliest extant substantial non-canonical piece of Christian literature.

We know very little about the way the Christian assembly, or assemblies, in Rome were organized or how they functioned. Were they one congregation of several score persons, or had they grown by the hundreds so that they could no longer meet at one time in one house? For purposes of my discussion, the question of class, raised by James Jeffers (1991), of the University of California at Irvine, is not pertinent. Jeffers asks whether class consciousness had effectively divided the Roman Christians into those who were of lower economic and social standing such as servants, slaves and traders, from those of the upper strata of society such as Christians within Caesar's household – it is known that Domitilla, the wife of Titus Flavius Clement, was a Christian, and he was cousin of the cruel despot, the Emperor Domitian. Thus the question raised is whether the writer

represents an upper-class version of religious authority patterned after Roman civil bureaucracy.

The fact is that *I Clement* is not an episcopal letter. Clement was probably an elder of the church, perhaps because of his emphases on church order he represents the upper social strata of Rome but, nevertheless, he was one elder among other elders. He was likely the elder who "liased," or connected, with other congregations which coheres with our understanding that large congregations such as Caesarea, Ephesus, Alexandria became landmark, or mothering, churches to smaller assemblies of Christians within and beyond their own geographical areas.

The fundamental premise of Clement's letter is fraternity and the importance of tradition of a very particular kind: common sense alongside the norms of Scripture which should be heeded on any major question raised by or among Christians. This is a congregational letter written on behalf of the church at Rome to a sister church, which intends to foster the principle of "let each be subject to his neighbor, according to his particular gifts," (38).

The issue Clement addresses does not surprise anyone familiar with Paul's letters to the Corinthians. The congregation at Corinth was again in disarray. A faction led by younger men had unseated the elders of the church. Clement appeals for order, reconciliation and restoration.

How does Clement frame his argument?

He marshals appeals to common sense and to scriptures of both Testaments to awaken the conscience of the Corinthians (which he calls "the hidden depths of the heart," 21:2) regarding the schism. Clement apologizes for the delay in writing to them (1:1) due to misfortunes at Rome, which raises the interesting question as to what troubles the Roman Christians were experiencing. His range of citations from and allusions to biblical texts is remarkable (see note on Richardson 1953). *I Clement* represents extensive, comprehensive, biblical literacy, as well as secular literacy.

He cites folk wisdom (6:2) and practical examples (55), heathen mythology (25:1), cosmology (20:13; 53) – "the sun and the moon and the choirs of stars roll on harmoniously," – unknown religious sources (23:3-4), and the Apocrypha (7:5). The force of the truth to any rational mind is inescapable, from whatever source.

That having been said, in *I Clement* Scripture is not only prominent, it is pre-eminent: "let us act as Scripture bids us, for the Holy Spirit says …" (13:1) is the pervading theme. Noteworthy is that the Holy Spirit spoke, and still speaks in and by Scripture (16:2-3, 8:1) as the agent of Christ (23:1). Clement's summation on the functions and authority of Scripture is found in 45:2-3: "you have studied

Holy Scripture, which contains the truth and is inspired by the Holy Spirit. You realize that there is nothing wrong or misleading written in it."

A body of sacred literature is in view. The Scriptures are the "oracles of God's teaching," (62:3). They are the Holy Scriptures and are God's oracles (53:1). Here are some of the ways in which Scripture is identified and described: God's laws (1:3); God's words (10:2); Christ's words, rations (2:1); rules of his precepts (3:4); words of the Lord Jesus (13:1); word of Scripture (2:3, 13:1); Scripture (4:1, 30:2); it is written (14:4, 36:3, 39:1, 46:1); it says (15:2-4); and, Christ's "irreproachable orders," (37:1).

These and other allusions reinforce the concept of enscriptured truth, which is of abiding value and authority. Awareness of the historical divisions of the Scriptures is evident: the Old Testament characters were "ministers of the grace of God" (8:1), the sayings of Jesus are revered as Scripture (13:1-2, 46:8), as are the writings of Paul (47:1-2).

As to the use of Scripture, there is evidence in *I Clement* of a carefully devised selection process which is patterned after New Testament uses of Old Testament data to yield a comprehensive Christian interpretation model. The structure is ethical, doctrinal, messianic and Christological.
The process yields a body of stock concepts which detail and round out the content of belief: Examples are drawn regarding envy, strife, sedition, and anarchy (13:1-3). The jealousy of Cain ending with the murder of Abel, and the strife between Jacob and Esau yield lessons (4:2-11). The call of Noah and of Jonah for their hearers to repent (7:6-7). Abraham's obedience (10:1; 31). The doublemindedness of Lot's wife ((11:2). Rahab's piece of scarlet as a symbol of Christ's sacrifice (12:7). The ethical impact of messianic promise and obedience to God (13). Integrity, singleness of mind and heart (15:3-6). Isaiah 53 in relation to Christ's sacrifice is cited as a paradigm (16:1-14). The recounting of Old Testament heroes of faith as in Hebrews 11 (17). Injunctions from the Psalms as words of Christ (22). Christ our High Priest (36:1).

As well, core theological concepts are derived from and validated by the Scriptures. Passages which describe the nature and attributes of God pervade the text. Other teaching validated by Scripture includes the uniqueness and priesthood of Christ (36:1-5), the triune benediction (1:1), God the Creator and humanity created in God's image (19:2; 33); redemption through Christ's cross (16; 49:6), the church as Christ's body (38:1); the concept of the elect (2:4), and justification by faith (32:4).

All of this leads to a key concept: the rule of our tradition (7:2) or, as it is commonly known today, "The Rule of Faith." This is the word, the truth of the Gospel anticipated in the Old Testament, fulfilled in Christ, and transmitted by Christ through the apostles to us: "we should give up empty and futile concerns, and turn to the glorious and holy rule of our tradition," Clement urges. This is not

an appeal to the dead hand of tradition; rather it contends that the living word of truth conserved in the Scriptures has been transmitted to them, and is continually being transmitted from one generation to another (note also 2:1; 13:1-2; 22:1; 42:1).

Finally, Clement connects the Rule of Faith to the Life of Faith. Christians should attach themselves only to those who are religiously devoted to peace, not to those whose lips hypocritically honor God while their hearts are far removed from God (15:2-3). The Spirit of the Lord is like a lamp which searches out the hidden depths of the heart through Christian *paideia*: "let our children have a Christian training" (21:8-9), which is a distinctly biblical curriculum (22). Clement's appeal is premised on their knowledge of "the Holy Scriptures;" on their having "studied God's oracles" (53:1).

ATHENAGORAS

Athenagoras' *Plea* is an apology addressed to the Emperor Marcus Aurelius and his son co-regent Commodus on behalf of persecuted Christians and the rationale of the Christian faith. Marcus Aurelius was probably the most notable Stoic philosopher of his day. The *Plea* differs from Clement's "in house" use of Scripture, though the status of Scripture for Christians as the norming expression of Christian beliefs is parallel to that which Clement elucidates. Athenagoras does not cite Scripture as an authority which the Emperor should acknowledge. Rather, he argues that key biblically mandated beliefs of Christians accord with the highest insights achieved by the classical philosophers. On that ground alone they deserve respect and interest, in contrast to the metaphysical and moral confusions of polytheism.

It would be fascinating to know how Athenagoras, an Athenian philosopher, was converted to Christian faith; and, as well, whether the *Plea* was ever brought to the attention of the Emperor on the occasion of his visit to Athens around the year 177 C.E.

The structure of the argument is five-fold.

First, on grounds of the Stoic concept of Natural Justice, Clement pleads for toleration for Christians, the same toleration accorded other religions within the Roman Empire.

Second, he argues that it is more rational to believe in one God than in many gods. He then adds specific content to the Christian concept of God as transcendent and as Creator. Monotheism is superior to polytheism, which many pagan poets and philosophers had already abandoned, and the Christian doctrine of divine providence is superior to (Stoic) determinism. Christians had received their monotheistic beliefs from the biblical prophets. His list of biblically-derived concepts about the nature of God and his attributes is impressive. It easily

parallels modern Systematic Theology formulations we commonly employ: God is one. He does not consist of parts. He is himself uncreated, eternal, impassible, indivisible, illimitable, and triune. He made the universe. He made the world through his Word. Tertullian a few years later furnishes us with a Latin theological vocabulary, but here earlier still Athenagoras creates for the reader in Greek a biblically based vocabulary of Christian theism (4, 7, 8, 10).

While for Athenagoras both the logic of monotheism and the biblical source of his monotheism are critically important, he lays emphasis upon the rationality of the biblical teaching rather than upon its authority as divine revelation.

Third, he lays a rational basis for believing Jesus Christ to be the incarnate Son of God (10), on grounds of the Logos concept, the principle of divine reason which pervades the universe, a metaphysical concept critically important to Stoics. Jesus Christ is the incarnate Logos, says Athenagoras. He is the creative agent who gives form and actuality to all things. Athenagoras' statement of Trinitarian co-inherence is remarkable: *And as the Son is in the Father* (the being of the Son is in the Father) *and the Father is in the Son* (the being of the Son is in the Father) *in the unity and power of* (the) *Spirit, the Son of God is the mind and word of the Father*.

Fourth, he declares that human beings are moral agents created in the image of God. Evil is due to a primal fall away from God. Thus core elements of human existence include freedom, sin and responsibility. Athenagoras focuses intensely on Christian moral purity. He satirizes the disjunction between endless philosophical babble about behavior by ethicists of the day and their egregious evil acts, such as the sexual abuse of children (12, 25).

Fifth, in light of Christian belief in the resurrection, future judgment, and the life to come, accusations by their pagan opponents of incest are ridiculous (25). Human life should be viewed as purpose driven and morally accountable to God, not simply as inexorably moving toward extinction or absorption into non-identity.

This frame of reference relates to three main charges that were being made against Christians: atheism, because Christians deny the reality of the pagan pantheon; cannibalistic feasts, because Christians say they partake of the body and blood of Christ in the Eucharist; and incest, a scurrilous charge made because Christians met in secret due to persecution.

How are Athenagoras' rejoinders developed; and in particular, what role does Scripture have in his arguments?

Regarding the atheism charge, Athenagoras displays profound and extensive knowledge of Greek philosophy, literature and mythology. He cites Euripides, Sophocles, Philolaus, Lysias, the Pythagoreans, Plato and Aristotle, that many of

them had concluded that God is a single principle, eternal, uncreated, invisible, boundless, and ineffable. Such transcendental concepts from pagan sources are rich testimony to God's transcendence versus the crass materiality ascribed to the gods and their images (5-8). He points out that Marcus Aurelius' own Stoicism predicates the non-material, singular reality of the divine causal Spirit which pervades the universe.

Such transcendental and spirit nature of the divine principle parallels that which Christians teach from their Scriptures. He interjects, "we too affirm that he who arranged this universe is God," (7). However, what pagans learned by conjecture having "deigned to learn about God from God," Christians on the contrary attest not to superior, self-attained knowledge, but to thought and belief predicated on what prophets spoke "by the divine Spirit about God and the things of God." It would be unreasonable, he adds, to cling to human opinion and abandon belief in God's speaking by his Spirit.

He then cites Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah and "the rest of the prophets" (clearly inferring a literary collection) whom the Spirit used "just as a flute player blows on a flute," (9). There follow Scripture citations from the prophets as to God's singularity and transcendence, leading to the divinity of the Son, the Logos, and the triune nature of God (10). Athenagoras' statement about the Trinity is remarkable for its completeness. That Christ the Son of God is the mind and word of the Father, coheres with what the highest levels of Greek intellect said, but this has come by the divine self-disclosure, in the Scriptures rather than by conjecture, he argues.

It is noteworthy that by his citation of *Galatians 4:9*, Athenagoras rejects worship of any material elements; rather, we should worship God who is the cause of all matter and motion. His allusion to "the wretched and weak elements" is direct reference to Democritean atomism, which was part of Stoic metaphysics. Such citation from Paul suggests existence of a developing apostolic collection. In an aside he confirms this, "you will note that we say nothing without authority and speak only of what the prophets have told," (24). While Athenagoras develops a parallel between the highest concepts achieved by the Greek theorists, he argues that God who speaks his own word of truth uniquely and verbally should be heard and obeyed. Revelation and Scripture transcend speculation and conjecture.

Whether metaphysical or moral issues are in view, Christians accept, rely upon and obey what "says Scripture;" not human laws, but teaching that has come from God, (32). While Athenagoras' citations of Scripture are not as frequent as those by Clement, they nevertheless point to a collection of writings that are prophetic, dominical and apostolic in origin.

IRENAEUS

Irenaeus was like a woodpecker – he dug out the parasites. But he was not merely an apologist and polemicist; he was a wonderfully nourishing woodpecker who nurtured the fledgling church in Gaul into the mega-church it became as a result of his evangelistic fervor and teaching of the apostolic heritage. Whether as polemicist, missioner or teacher of Christian truth, the Scriptures are pivotal in Irenaeus' writings.

For Irenaeus heresies are like a meandering river: at times the waters lie dormant in shallow puddles populated by reeds, then they find clear channels and their currents sweep all before them. In particular he attacked Gnostic theories, notably those of Valentinus, as a series of metaphysical constructs that have no basis in reality other than misguided pet self-definition.

Gnosticism is a broad category which embraces many different viewpoints spread over several centuries. Irenaeus' analysis of Valentinianism is comprehensive, though it must be noted that even though highly regarded it is analysis by an enemy not a friend, and in recent years new discoveries have added to the data we have.

Redeeming knowledge (*gnosis*) for Gnostics is insight into our true spiritual selves. Essentially dualistic, the thesis is that we must be released from the materially bound self by a spiritual savior. Redemption comes about by illumination, which is the role of the Christ who entered the world in the form of the earthly Jesus to accomplish the mission of illumination.

Transcendental reality comprises an ineffable fullness called the *Pleroma*, which is made up of cascading series of thirty non-material, intellectual constructs. These gradually diminish in purity downward from the ineffable to the material. Irenaeus' description is found in AH.Book 1. chapters 1-8.

The top tier of eight, the Ogdoad, are crowned by two pairs, Bythos/Sige (or Propator/Ennoea) and Nous (or Monogenes)/Aletheia. These four are the Tetrad, the root of all things, roughly translated as Profundity/Silence (or Progenitor/Own Reflection), Mind/Truth from which derive Logos/Zoe and Anthropos/Ecclesia, roughly translated as Word/Life, Man/Community. Christ and the Holy Spirit issue from the conjunction of Nous/Aletheia, by-passing the downward movement of the Aeons through the Decad.

The middle tier of ten, the Decad, are formed of five pairs, Bythius/Mixus, Ageratos/Henosis, Autophyes/Hedone, Acinetos/Syncrasis, Monogenes/Macaria, roughly translated as Deep/Mixing, Undecaying/Union, Self-existent/Pleasure, Immoveable/Blending, Only Begotten/Happiness.

The third descending tier of twelve, the Dodecad, are formed of six pairs, Paracletus/Pistis, Patricos/Elpis, Metricos/Agape, Ainos/Synesis, Ecclesiasticus/Macariotes, Theletos/Sophia, roughly translated as Advocate/Faith,

Ancestral/Hope, Metrical/Love, Praise/Understanding, Ecclesiastical/Felicity, Desiderated/Wisdom.

Descending from the Pleroma, the Christ endows Jesus the earthly creature in an effort to redeem humanity from the passions generated from the lowest aeon of the Pleroma, Sophia. The world is in a state of imbalance. An inner sense of immortality seeks release from the chains of matter and draws us higher and higher, through ascending stages until through illumination the initiate reaches the final state of harmony, completeness, beauty, rest, bliss. Those who do not are doomed to re-incarnation in yet another body.

The pairs are conjugal productions (*syzygy*), not unlike the thesis, antithesis and synthesis of modern Hegelian metaphysics, though in the Gnostic formulations the pairs have masculine/feminine characteristics for reproduction. Hidden within the self of each person lurks *the odor of immortality* – which prompts escape from mortal entanglements by means of illumination.

A later generation Gnostic put the matter succinctly in the *Gospel of Philip*: while in the beginning God created humanity, the wheel has turned full circle. Now, humanity creates God and it is more appropriate for the gods to worship humans than that humans worship gods of their own creation.

Like the ancient Gnostics, moderns today create gods of their own self-definition, which is at the core of Gnostic thought. Carl Jung spoke of archetypes as images of the instincts. They give form to religious instinct as personality-like structures whether alter-egos or, like the ancients, gods and goddesses and other mythologies which stereotype values and emotions. The transcendental alter-egos have their reflection below in the world of matter. Such were the moderns with whom Irenaeus contended in his day.

Analysis of Irenaeus' rejection of Gnostic philosophy sets the stage for understanding the comprehensive role Scripture plays not only in his polemics, but also in his concept of the Rule of Faith. Critical to his exposition are facticity and information as attested to by witnesses. Christians confess faith on the basis of information that is public, not secret initiation. That is what apostolicity means.

In the *Preface* to Book 5 of *Against Heresies* Irenaeus sums up his method of argument. Having pointed to errors and inconsistencies in the teachings of the heretics, he moves to the truth he affirms. The truth which the Church preaches was proclaimed by the prophets, brought to perfection in the historical Christ, and was then handed down by the Apostles. One of his main tasks is to defend the legitimacy of the Hebrew Bible against the attacks of Gnosticism and the Marcionites who denied the validity and usefulness of the Old Testament. There are present here the parameters of a canon: the Old Testament along with what was said and done by Christ as transmitted by the Apostles.

Christian teaching is not based on the *knowledge so-called* (secret Gnostic illumination); rather, it is the Gospel proclaimed in public and later openly *handed down to us in the Scriptures* (AH.3.1). For Irenaeus, *the Scriptures* and *the tradition of the Apostles* are synonymous terms.
"Handed down in written form" is the key-feature of Irenaeus' argument.

The barbarians, he says, receive the Gospel by the spoken word of the authentic apostolic tradition which is conserved in the written word: *having salvation written in their hearts by the Spirit, without paper or ink, and, carefully preserving the ancient tradition … Those who, in the absence of written documents, have believed this faith … That ancient tradition of the apostles,* (AH.3.4.2). Thus, Gospel, Apostolic Tradition, Scripture, Rule of Faith, and Rule of Truth are terms which identify a faith that is historically based. While the concept of a canon is not explicit, it is implicit, in the sense of public documentation and publically circulated tradition which has a direct line of transmission from the Apostles (AH.3.3.1,). The "apostolic deposit" reflects the reality of a New Testament corpus (note McDonald/Porter, pp. 425, 614-615).

Insistence on Apostolicity and Scripture is repeated frequently in his writings. In AH.1.10.1-2, where he furnishes a comprehensive creedal statement, he begins with *the Church, though dispersed throughout the whole world, even to the ends of the earth, has received from the apostles and their disciples this faith.…* In AH.1.22.1 he repeats the same thought, *the rule of truth which we hold, is that there is one God Almighty, who made all these things by His Word … thus saith the Scripture.* Later he cites the testimonies of Mark, Luke, John, Matthew, and Paul as representative of the apostolic witness (AH.3.15.3 – 3.16.3). Finally, he concludes that the one, true and living God is the author of both testaments, the Old Covenant and the New Covenant (AH. 4.9.3; 4.10.1; 4.32.1-2; 4.34.4) by which the errors of heretics are to be judged (AH.4.33.1-3).

REFLECTIONS

Fundamentally, the Christian Canon is *that which has been received* by the churches in post-apostolic times. What was received was two-fold: the books of the Hebrew Bible, and Christian writings that originate from the Apostles – either written by an apostle or attributed to associates of the apostles. Thus the Old Testament and Apostolic Writings comprise the Canon of the Holy Scriptures. It is significant that no Council of churches, or bishop, decreed the extent of the canon, and where canonical lists were made later they come long after the fact of actual recognition and use of Scripture among the churches. The details of the historical process are not fully apparent to us.

These writings are the air the early Christians breathed. This point precedes any discussion of what books any individual or local church may have had, and it parallels Irenaeus' insistence on *the Rule of Faith* and *the Rule of our Tradition.* It is therefore mischievous to say that "the church put the Bible together." The

churches acknowledged what they had received. Those who deemed themselves lords of Scripture, such as the Gnostics or Marcionites, were quickly identified as heretics. For the early Christians *warranted assertion*, that is, authentic Christian teaching, must be based upon authentic interpretation of scripture. Christianity was and continues to be a scriptural religion.

Data and theories as to how we got to the canon abound.

As to the Old Testament, the traditional Protestant view is that the first Christian scriptures were the twenty-two books of the Hebrew Bible in the Septuagint Version, and that these comprised the canon of the Jews and were so recognized by Jesus and the apostles – they are the books that *render the hands unclean* – they are too sacred to be handled casually. And, as well, that the collection was completed by about the time of Ezra. Recent evangelical studies such as those of F. F. Bruce and Lee McDonald suggest that the Old Testament biblical canon was not completed until at least the end of the last decade of the first century of the Christian era, perhaps in connection with the proceedings of the Council of Jamnia. However, I accept the conclusions of the Jewish scholar Sid Z. Leiman "that Talmudic and midrashic evidence is entirely consistent with a second century B.C. dating for the closing of the biblical canon," (1974, p. 212).

Recent theories helpfully attempt to correlate canonical formation with strategic events in Israel's history as an unbroken narrative, such as that proposed by D. N. Friedman. In a lecture that I heard him give he suggests cycles of two great building-blocks of canonical formation: (a) Survival - the canon becomes a theological memoir. Following the Babylonian conquest books of the canon become the Bible of the exiles. (b) Restoration - the canon becomes a message of hope. Proclaimed by the prophets the developing canon includes the theme of hope which galvanized reconstruction of the city of Jerusalem, the Temple and re-establishment of Torah teaching. On this thesis, the traditional Protestant view is correct as to the pre-Christian era date for the closing of the OT canon. There is added the dynamic of apocalypse and hope and the impact of different needs and interests at various stages of Israel's history. It is a creative attempt to throw light on the dark ages during which canonical formation took place, about which we know very little.

The formation of the New Testament canon was a gradual process having to do more with the work of local church leaders and congregations than that of church Councils. It was instinctual in relation to a received apostolic tradition. I admire the Bampton Lectures of H. E. W. Turner (1954) on this question. He argues that along with the Gospel Canon there gradually emerged acceptance of Paul's writings and the other epistles as a separate group alongside the Law and the Prophets, and that citation of them (as in *I Clement*) bears this out. Later, questions as to the inclusion of certain books, such as Hebrews and the Apocalypse, were dealt with separately. Turner elucidates certain key principles that guided New Testament canonical formation: authorship by an apostle or apostolic man; knowledge of the book by the ancients; general utility and

orthodoxy; interaction among the leading ecclesiastical sees as to their holdings and scripture reading lists.

Turner's summary is as follows: "These criteria of Canonicity were not mechanically applied. Rather, they reinforced and dovetailed into each other so closely that different combinations were used to decide the fate of particular works. The primary criterion was certainly apostolic authorship, real or alleged, but in the case of disputed works doubts on this score might be outweighed by a combination of other criteria such as general utility, knowledge by the ancients, and widespread and long-standing public use … There is no dead hand in the production of the Canon; there is rather the living action of the Holy Spirit using as He is wont the full range of the continuing life of the Church to achieve His purposes in due season," (p. 252, 258). To be sure, the Bible had an important theological use, but its primary use was devotional, especially its public use in worship, and this use reflects the primacy of the received apostolic tradition to Christians. That is what Scripture *qua* Scripture meant to them and that is what determined canonical criteria.

This is fundamentally the conclusion Lee McDonald has reached (McDonald/Sanders, 2002): Prime are criteria as to what is understood to be Scripture, and its correlative apostolicity (in the case of the New Testament books); followed by orthodoxy, antiquity, and use among the churches (pp. 420, 424-432; note also McDonald/Porter, pp. 617-618). "Recognition" by Christians as to authenticity and apostolicity and use in worship are critical factors in the formation of what became the Christian canon of Scripture.

The Bible is a record of communication which is claimed to be from God, a witness to the truth of that claim, a recounting of experiences of God, and an account of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ and apostolic interpretation of the significance of his life. God is experienced as being personal from the start and the personal self-disclosure of God in Christ coheres with that conviction and teaching. The transcendent God was present and speaking in finite situations. Jesus Christ is God incarnate, present personally as Savior in our finite situation. The Bible's appeal is rooted in the fundamental premise that ultimate reality is of the nature of persons and personal life and that revelation takes place on God's initiative in history, in such manner as that at times his speaking is personally direct and at other times his speaking embraces human discovery and insight.

The functions of language in the Bible cohere with the biblical view of human nature. Human beings are spiritual creatures. Speech is not simply a reflex mechanism. It is more than subliminal stimulus which triggers satisfaction of need. Speech is the indispensable bridge between persons. Personal encounter is impossible unless a word is spoken. The mind, spirit or character of the person sitting next to me in an airplane are opaque to me; whereas, if I pick up the phone in the airplane seat and dial my office, speech enables me to get into another's mind and he into mine. This is the function of the Word of God and of Christ the

incarnate Word. Through observation of nature we may be able at times correctly to infer truths about the power and intelligence of a creator, but not about his character. In interpersonal relations the words are not merely analogical. They convey reality because only they make non-sensory data accessible and, as well, they can make them accessible as matters of public fact. How this word from God came, or may still come, is fundamentally not known to us, except for the "still small voice" of the prophet Elijah's encounter with God.

In what sense are the various modalities of biblical revelation to be taken seriously? Are they merely the ramblings of ancient mythologies?

The biblical canon is the winnowing and controlling element in the formation of authentic Christian understanding. Since the time of Christ and the apostles there has been a depletion of revelatory situations. All the major Christian confessions state or assume this to be true. Claims to new revelation have been steadfastly resisted by practically all churches in Christendom. This does not indicate rejection by Christians of divine sovereignty to speak again "in many and various ways," (Hebrews 1:1); rather, depletion is taken to confirm that God has spoken once and for all through the prophets, in and by Jesus Christ and through the apostolic testimony. Depletion is due to fulfillment of disclosure.

There is no biblical mandate nor formula given for Christians to institutionalize or to ritualize revelatory situations as many non-Christian religions do. This is why the skepticism with which all branches of Christendom view claims to non-biblical special revelation, recurring claims to visions, claims to miracle working, or claims to one's being a channel for yet new words from God is so pervasive. Such skepticism is not a denial of the possibility of a new divine initiative under any number of different modes. It is rooted in the conviction that if God has spoken "in these last times" in Christ then he has said what he wanted to say and that the next move will be his to inaugurate the Kingdom of Christ (note Wolterstorff 1995). Meanwhile, the task of Christians is to preach the Gospel, to nurture people in the Christian way, to succor the needy, to live righteously, but not to look for yet new revelation and new signs. In this, the role of the Bible, the Canonical Scriptures, is indispensable.

TEXT

The Letter of the Church of Rome to the Church of Corinth, Commonly Called Clement's First Letter (Cyril C. Richardson, translator and editor, *Early Christian Fathers.* Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1953). Richardson attempts to correlate citations from and allusions to biblical texts in *I Clement*. I made the following count: Genesis, 12; Exodus, 6; Numbers, 8; Deuteronomy, 15; 1 Samuel, 3; 1 Kings, 2; 2 Kings, 2; 2 Chronicles, 2; Job, 10; Psalms, 39; Proverbs, 8; Isaiah, 12; Jeremiah, 5; Ezekiel, 6; Daniel, 1; Joel, 1; Amos, 1; Malachi, 1; Matthew, 5; Mark, 2; Luke, 4; Acts, 5; Romans 5; 1 Corinthians, 5; 2 Corinthians, 1;

Galatians, 2; Ephesians, 1; Philippians, 3; 1 Timothy, 2; Titus, 3; Hebrews, 11; James, 1; 1 Peter, 3; Revelation, 1. There are citations from and allusions to *Wisdom, Sirach, Judith,* and *Tobit*; and many instances of pagan and secular common sense and folk wisdom.

Irenaeus, *Against Heresies.* The text I cite is the translation, *circa* 1867, of the *Against Heresies* by Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson in Volume I of the *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, revised by A. Cleveland Coxe; re-published by the Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, (n.d.).

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Nicolas Wolterstorff, *Divine Discourse: Philosophical Reflection on the Claim that God Speaks.*
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995. He concludes with the following: "Let us gather the strands together. Suppose the apostles were commissioned by God through Jesus Christ to be witnesses and representatives (deputies) of Jesus. Suppose that what emerged from their carrying out was a body of apostolic teaching which incorporated what Jesus taught them and what they remembered of the goings-on surrounding Jesus, shaped under the guidance of the Spirit. And suppose that the New Testament books are all either apostolic writings, or formulations of apostolic teaching composed by the associates of one or another apostle. Then it would be correct to construe each book as a medium of divine discourse. And an eminently plausible construal of the process whereby these books found their way into a single canonical text, would be that by way of that process of canonization, God was authorizing these books as together constituting a single volume of divine discourse," p. 295.

UNIVERSITY, SEMINARY, AND CONGREGATION: CONTEXTS FOR THEOLOGY

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Theology in the Service of the Church: Essays Presented to Fisher H. Humphreys
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During the early 1960s at the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary a young student named Fisher Humphreys came into the first term of my systematic theology class for his introduction to theology. In that first hour he caught the vision that systematic theology should be the subject matter of his life. Later I recommended him to friends at Oxford University for graduate studies. Subsequently he completed his doctorate at New Orleans, and when my wife Jessie and I returned to Canada for ministry Fisher succeeded me as theology professor at the New Orleans Seminary. He has had a distinguished career as professor, counselor to students and ministers, and theological leader among Southern Baptists. It is an honor to contribute to this dedicatory volume.

In this essay I address the loss of Christianity as a hermeneutic in America and propose some elements of a remedy within the academy, especially among Christian colleges, universities, and seminaries. From Augustine until the mid-twentieth century the Christian worldview was dominant culturally — not only in Britain, Europe, North America and the former European colonies overseas, but also within the academy as the prime metaphysical paradigm.

For example, with what can only be called religious fervor Richard Rorty promotes an anti-Christian-religion agendum in the American academic community advocating a completely naturalistic perspective of life in the universe. This is strikingly ironic in view of his familial origins as the heir of his maternal grandfather Walter Rauschenbusch, the New York German Baptist pastor who created the Social Gospel of Liberal Christianity seventy years ago.

For Rorty, pragmatism displaces religion, though perhaps I should say embraces all religions *provided that they are secularized.* In *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity* he argues that no single cohering vision of the nature of reality and of human life in the universe is possible.[1] Instead, he opts for a practical, romantic polytheism within a liberal democracy. See his book titled *Achieving Our Country* (1999).[2] This is a new religion created in America. Secular, social democracy displaces the fellowship of the saints of his local Baptist church ancestors, though the latter remains, I think, a haunting ideal for him.

Let us consider the metaphysical base of Rorty's developing social construct. How can the prevailing secular need-satisfaction behavioral model transcend its fundamental ego-centrism in the romantic polytheism he envisions? What can be built on a non-binding moral footing (in his language, a non-creedal footing)? How is one to judge between diverse, often rival, polytheistic claims?

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[1] Rorty, Richard, *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press) 1989.
[2] Rorty, Richard, *Achieving Our Country*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press) 1998.

Along the lines of what ethical principles will the social solidarity for which he pleads be fashioned? It appears that for Rorty, traditional Christian values of love as self-giving and other-regarding, not the self-interest of behavioral need-satisfaction responses, are key feature elements of his utopia, but absent their author and sustainer, God. That such utopias have failed miserably in the past, as in the case of the genocidal Marxist social experiment of the past century in the Soviet Union, escapes his analysis and criticism.[3]

Evangelistic secularism now extends to American politics in the popularly circulated allegation that religion, particularly committed Christian faith, is a menace to the formation of equitable public policy in America. To buttress this allegation, President George W. Bush's conversion and personal commitment to Christian faith and ideals are cited disparagingly.[4]

Can we return to a more balanced view of confessional Christianity's contribution to the formation of the American political system and social ideals, and to what Christians, including evangelicals, can continue to contribute to American life?

Christianity came into a world richly furnished with ideas. How did it come about that, as a result of the life and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth and the activities of a group of undistinguished and largely ethnically and culturally insulated followers in Galilee and Jerusalem, ancient political and social institutions, the cults, and the schools were displaced by Christianity?

The Christian doctrine of creation and grace is supremely anti-reductionist and is person-preserving. The choices before us are: do we choose theoretical models which increase freedom or those which limit freedom? The higher the spirituality of personal life, the less causally predictable are its choices because, as the spirituality of life increases, its choices refer less to the antecedents of action and more to moral goals in light of which the action is taken.

At first the early Christians had little time to contemplate philosophical and public policy implications of their heritage and faith because of their intense missionary work on the one hand and the persecution they had to endure on the other. But gradually they discerned the differences between their own firmly held views and the prevailing ethos created chiefly by the idealist and materialist schools of the ancient world alongside the popular polytheistic cults.

The philosophical idealism of ancient Greece and Rome was essentially mystical. In it the visible world is unreal, as Plato suggested in his Myth of the Cave.[5] Absolute being transcends this transient physical order and is adumbrated in beauty, goodness, and truth. The idealist heritage is traceable through Gnosticism, Manicheanism, and Neo-Platonism to modern forms of Idealism.

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[3] Note the trenchant critique in Richard Grossman, ed., *The God that Failed* (New York: Harper and Row, 1949), first published in 1944 in the midst of the World War II devastations. In this book former Marxists such as Arthur Koestler, Louis Fisher, and Stephen Spender mourn their previous obsession (Augustine's "fantasies of the mind") with Marxist materialist dogma.

[4] An example is the strident article by Garry Wills titled "A Country Ruled by Faith" in the *New York Review of Books,* November 16, 2006.

[5] Plato. *The Republic: Book 7*. Paul Shorey, trans. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1935) Paragraphs 514-516.

Systems of Idealism have tended to denigrate the empirical world, and their views have been inimical to discrete full-blown personhood.

On the other hand, ancient materialism has remained remarkably consistent to modern times, with the addition of biological and psychological characteristics. Leucippas, Democritus, and Epicurus said that all of reality is comprised of atoms in the void, denying the independent reality of the mind and the existence of the soul. Modern atomism is indistinguishable except for the dynamic rather than "hard bits of stuff" concept of the atom; modern hedonism, its ethical derivative, is indistinguishable from its ancient Epicurean counterpart. Mind is simply the physical functioning of the brain cells; there is no inner spirit, mind, or person. Freedom, as B. F. Skinner and Pavlov argued, is an illusion.

For their part, Christians declared that the world was created by God and that persons as spiritual beings were created to enjoy loving relationships with one another and fellowship with God. Human life is the art of the Creator, and discrete personhood is not only the goal of redemption but is, as well, the highest level of reality. Christianity became an attractive alternative. In an age of brutality and high inflation, Christians cared about people. The Christian conventicles had a powerful sense of community and were radically egalitarian — each was a drastic social experiment, a cave of Adullum. Their ethical standards were high, their religious devotion to the one true God was intense, and their discipleship life-encompassing. The power and vigor of such dedication must be seen in relation to their view of God, the world, morality, and man. The existential appeal of the faith was joined inextricably to the defense of essential humanity within the terms of the creationist-personhood perspective.

Thus the Christian perspective may be more important to the future of humanity than has been assumed by many moderns. Ancient and modern forms of Idealism have been substantially displaced by varieties of contemporary Transcendentalism, and ancient Atomism has developed into Naturalism and Behaviorism. The pursuit of personal identity in our time reflects deep concern about the future of humanity. In a unique way the Bible trumpets the call to arms for the defense of humanity. As fashioned in the image of God, each human soul is of infinite value. What we are and how we treat one another fall under a moral standard that is not purely behavioral.

One of my favorite writers is Camille Paglia — atheist, classicist, social critic and author, and Professor of Humanities and Media Studies at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia. She was interviewed in *Salon* as one of its founding columnists.[6] She observed that though she is an atheist and secular Democrat politically, she believes that "without religion we'd have anarchy." She went on to comment that religion is a metaphysical system that honors the largeness of the universe which is absent from the cynical ideologies currently promoted by the elite universities. She added that the more (ideologically) liberal parents are, the less contact children have with religious ideas.

Fear of the political aspirations of certain Christian triumphalist fundamentalists has led to a misleading version of the doctrine of the separation of church and state, the point of which is, in fact, that the US "simply has no

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[6]Paglia, Camilla, "Salon Interview: Camille Paglia," *Salon,* online (October 27, 2006) 7. http://www.salon.com/opinion/feature/2006/10/27/paglia/print.html. Cited 7/9/2007.

official state religion," she says.[7] Nevertheless, the formative influence in our intellectual heritage came from Puritan descendants in New England. Many universities, like Harvard and Yale, were founded on religious principles. Secular liberalism, she said, has become bourgeois and materialistic offering no passionate engagement in life to appeal to young people. It has become "snide, elitist and politically marginalized." [8]

How can Christians in America recapture a place in the dialogue which leavens the formation of ideas, ideals, and the cultural ethos? I attribute the loss of evangelical intellectual influence in America to modern American evangelical rootlessness and the impression many in America have that the evangelical representation of Christianity is sectarian.

During the past century a significant and regrettable change has occurred in evangelical seminary education, the effects of which have been heightened by the extensive development of university and college departments of religion, some of which offer doctoral research programs. The aspect of this change which most concerns me is the eclipse of patristics (and medieval) studies and the wholesale transfer of serious patristics studies to universities and colleges.

More than forty years ago I introduced courses in the Ante-Nicene, Nicene, and Post-Nicene Fathers at the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary which, following a "taste-and-see" attitude of a few students who were prepared to test the novelty, rapidly became popular courses. Nevertheless, in most seminaries such courses are "introductions" – surveys of a period, the writers and their texts. Rarely is time allowed and effort made to critically understand and evaluate the texts themselves.

A supporting anecdote: For the past forty years, almost without fail, I have attended the four-yearly International Patristics Conference at Oxford University (my *alma mater*). As well, for a great deal of that time I have been a member of the North American Patristics Society. Although I have rarely been able to attend the annual meetings of the latter, I regard their *Journal of Early Christian Studies* a "must" read.[9] Bear in mind that I am not a patristics scholar, though I have diligently read the writings of many of the early church fathers.

Patristics studies have burgeoned in universities and colleges during the past half-century, partly synchronized with the development of religious studies programs and programs of research in comparative religion and the intellectual roots of the major world religions.

In seminary curricula this shift is due in large measure to the alleged greater relevance of "practical courses" – leave the theological, philosophical, historical and comparative courses to the Departments of Religion. A quick overview of the ancient periods will suffice. I have heard this said in not a few faculty committee meetings. In many evangelical schools intensive courses are offered in Reformation and post-Reformation theology. As welcome as these are, the trend has created the impression that evangelical Christianity and its key

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[7] "Salon Interview." Ibid., 8.
[8] "Salon Interview." Ibid., 8.
[9] *Journal of Early Christian Studies,* published quarterly for the North American Patristics Society by the John Hopkins University Press, Journals Division, 2715 N. Charles Street, Baltimore, MD 28218-4363.

confessional statements begin with the Reformation, with the concurrent impression formed within the Christian community and in society generally that evangelicals are an historical novelty somewhat disconnected from the roots of the Christian heritage, except for their Bible-thumping. The Roman Catholic, Anglican, and Eastern Orthodox traditions have the field clear to themselves to claim continuity with the apostolic heritage.

The American media have picked up on this. Most current commentators on religious and theological questions on radio and television talk-shows are of the Roman Catholic or other Episcopal traditions. Evangelical commentary on religious topics is now rarely sought by the major media except to illustrate what is regarded as quaint or extreme. Most serious Christian commentary is sought from Roman Catholics who now dominate the voicing of opinion in the public square. The following well-known media figures are all Roman Catholic: Peggy Noonan, Bill O'Reilly, Sean Hannity, Larry Kudlow. Exceptions are few: John Kasich and Cal Thomas.

In the best interests of the churches I suggest renewed emphasis on foundational patristics studies in seminary curricula and the curricula of Christian college Departments of Religion. I suggest, first, Clement of Rome, Athenagoras, and Irenaeus; second, the Nicene Era; and third, Augustine.

Clement of Rome

As the earliest of the post-canonical Christian writings, written from the church at Rome to the church at Corinth, 1 *Clement* is a fraternal, not Episcopal, letter which speaks of the consent of the church in its election of leaders and deals with the quality of life within a congregation.

Clement, probably an elder of the church at Rome who was responsible for communicating with sister congregations elsewhere, stresses the importance of tradition of a very particular kind: the norms of Scripture buttressed by common sense. His array of Scripture references from both the Old and the New Testaments is striking, but his fundamental appeal is to the Scripture-informed conscience of the Corinthian Christians which he calls "the hidden depths of the heart" (21:2). This informing is shaped by the "rule of our tradition" (7:2), commonly called "The Rule of Faith," which is the truth of the Gospel anticipated in the Old Testament, fulfilled in Christ, and transmitted by Christ through the apostles to us. "We should give up empty and futile concerns, and turn to the glorious and holy rule of our tradition," (7:2)[10] Clement urges. This is not an appeal to the dead hand of tradition; rather it contends that the living word of truth conserved in the Scriptures has been transmitted to them, and is continually being transmitted from one generation to another (note also 2:1; 13:1-2; 22:1; 42:1). Additionally he cites many items of folk wisdom to show that the force of truth to any rational mind is inescapable, from whatever source. If one is looking for that which is practical from the church fathers, here it is!

Athenagoras

Athenagoras was a converted philosopher who lived in Athens and addressed his *Plea* to the Emperor Marcus Aurelius and his son on behalf of

[10] Clement of Rome, *The Letter of the Church of Rome to the Church of Corinth,* Commonly called Clement's First Letter. in Cyril C. Richardson, trans. and ed., *Early Christian Fathers* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press 1953).

persecuted Christians on the occasion of the Emperor's visit to Athens in the latter part of the second century A.D. Methodologically it differs markedly from 1 *Clement*. Clement writes an "in house" letter to Christians and cites Scripture copiously, while Athenagoras writes to a non-Christian from the standpoint of the logic of the Christian faith and the place of Christians as good citizens in society.[11] It is an excellent example of ancient apologetics which exhibits core concepts of Christianity without using the Scriptures as a club.

Athenagoras (knowing that Marcus Aurelius was a Stoic philosopher of note) pleads for toleration for Christians on grounds of the Stoic concept of Natural Justice. Further, he argues that it is more rational to believe in one God than in many gods. Monotheism is superior to polytheism, which many pagan poets and philosophers had already abandoned, and the Christian doctrine of divine providence is superior to (Stoic) determinism. He points out that Marcus Aurelius' own Stoicism predicates the non-material, singular reality of the divine causal Spirit which pervades the universe. He emphasizes the rationality of biblical teaching. He ends by satirizing endless philosophical babble about behavior by ethicists of the day while they fail to restrain their own impulses and commit egregious acts, such as the sexual abuse of children. [12]

Irenaeus

Irenaeus illustrates how one can be a defender of core elements of the Christian faith – he was indeed a vigorous polemicist against the Gnostics of his time -- while at the same time not be side-tracked from the primary task of preaching and extending the gospel. The conversion of many in Gaul, which is an example of a very significant church growth movement, was due to Irenaeus' intense missionary work.

Ancient Gnostics believed that redeeming knowledge is insight into our true spiritual self, that redemption comes about by illumination, and that to bring this illumination was the task of the earthly Jesus. The later *Gospel of Philip* and the more recent release of the *Gospel of Judas* reflect parallel sentiments: we create gods of our own self-definition, not unlike Carl Jung's archetypes as images of the instincts. These take personality-like form, whether as alter-egos or, like the ancients, as gods and goddesses which stereotype values and emotions.

Not only are Irenaeus' writings important as polemics against both ancient modern efforts to create God in human likeness, but also as a striking instance of the role of "The Rule of Faith," the content and truth of the Scriptures, which is based upon factual data and information attested to by witnesses, not illumination conveyed by secret initiation.

The Nicene Era

Second, I believe that intensive study of the Nicene era, including the formation in A. D. 325 of the Creed of Nicaea, the Constantinopolitan Creed of A. D. 381 (commonly known as the Nicene Creed), and the Creed of Chalcedon (A.

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[11] Cyril C. Richardson, trans. and ed., *Early Christian Fathers*, Ibid. Athenagoras: A Plea Regarding Christians by Athenagoras, the Athenian, a Philosopher and a Christian, 1, 37.

[12] Cyril C. Richardson, *Early Christian Fathers*, Ibid. Athenagoras: A Plea Regarding Christians by Athenagoras, the Athenian, a Philosopher and a Christian, 34.

D. 451) should be mandatory in the theological education of ministers for the churches.

These readings will lead students into the formation of early Christology, including Christ's deity, the two natures of Christ as divine and human, the doctrine of the Trinity, and the formation and mission of the early Christians in the ancient world.

Third, in the transition from the patristic period to medieval times, including the rapid decline of the Roman Empire as an international force, the writings of Augustine should be a standard academic requirement.

Augustine on Reason and Faith

Augustine's theology was created in light of his conversion which entailed repentance and faith in Christ but also a dramatic metaphysical paradigmatic shift. The need of a paradigmatic shift in modern Western thinking applies particularly to today's church and its place in society as a hermeneutical witness.

How do we move beyond Augustine's personal conversion cry ("Thou hast made us for thyself and our hearts are restless till they may have found their rest in thee" [*Confessions* 1.1]) to the metaphysic of a world view – Camille Paglia's "largeness of the universe" which modern cynicism dismisses?

Augustine's theory of knowledge is that reason connects the data of the senses into a coherent continuum. It distinguishes and connects things that are learned (*De Ordine* 2.3). "By reason all those other things and also reason itself become known and are held together in knowledge" (*De Libero Arbitrio* 2.4).[13] The prime function of reason is to serve as the vehicle of faith, not faith as credulity, but faith issuing in understanding.

Nevertheless, in our condition we humans don't know enough (due to our finitude) and we distort what we do know (due to our sinning). The consequences are two-fold: first, we become enamored of "phantasies" (*Confessions* 3.6), by which Augustine means erroneous paradigms (in his case his absorption with Manichaeanism, Platonism, Skepticism) which, second, become engrained as habits of thought in the way we see things. We end up neither willing the good perfectly, nor nilling the bad entirely (*Confessions* 8.9-10). This is what Augustine calls "imperfect piety" – our failure to commit unreservedly to truth and the pursuit of truth perfectly. The failure becomes a self-fulfilling sequence: "because of a perverse will was lust made; and lust indulged in became custom; and custom not resisted became necessity" (*Confessions* 8.5).

This is a splendid backdrop to modern attitudes regarding nature, science and the meaning of human existence. The dominant secular paradigm (for Augustine, the dominant phantasy!) of our generation is American Naturalism, which is ancient Democritean and Epicurean Materialism dressed up in modern hedonist garb as the, often cynical, pursuit of the good life.

One of my favorite philosophy professors was an ardent advocate of Naturalism in its classical Epicurean and contemporary American hedonist form. He argued that the behavior of all organisms is conditioned solely by the biological and psychological urge to gratify the senses – the need-satisfaction

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[13] Augustine, *Confessions*. Whitney J. Oates, ed., *The Basic Writings of Saint Augustine,* 2 volumes (New York: Random House, 1948).

cycle. This modern version of the ancient pleasure principle claims that what organisms in fact do is the true meaning of what they ought to do if those actions meet need or gratify the senses.

My professor insisted that altruism is intellectually and emotionally suicidal. The pursuit of any object of any interest defines the good. On this premise only self-gratification is the true motive for action. It remained a puzzle for me: if psychological hedonism is the root of action, why should intelligence lead any one of us to care about anyone else except to conserve that person or that something for the sake of one's own gratification? Add to this ancient Epicurean and modern atomism and one arrives full circle at the concept that all of reality has come about by the chance concatenation of atoms and that to attribute mind or purpose or freedom of action to such a structure or within such a structure is sheer nonsense.

This was the question put to me: should I make pleasure the intrinsic motive of actions? Projecting such a thesis as the foundation of life was troubling. There was the unresolved ambivalence between egoism and altruism. Hedonists tended to minimize reason as the foundation of their premise but then went on to minimize motor-affective responses with regard to future actions when they advocated "highly refined," "permanent as against transient pleasures," and sought to distinguish between "negative" and "positive" motor-affective responses. As well, claims by behaviorists to being scientific mystified me. So much was said about behavioral responses when, as Richard Feynman the physicist argued, many of the most important things of life are not empirically discernible or manageable – not the least of which is an adequate accounting of freedom and the will.[14]

Is my willing (determining) to do something simply the last act in a behaviorally conditioned series? If so, when applied to human experience how can one account for the socially detaching power of religion in the lives of many martyrs? One may assign new uses to terms such as freedom, the good, or that which is right as against that which is wrong, but this does not and cannot pre-empt the realities the words stand for. Reality entails something more intrinsic than mere behavior.

Paul deals with the popular hedonism of his day which is virtually identical with our modern "pursuit of the good life" ethos. For Paul, the divinely motivating purpose principle trumped the naturalistic behavior principle.

Few students of Paul's writings grasp the distinctions he makes between a purposeful universe and one driven by the chance movements of atoms, or the intensity with which he draws that contrast. In a satirical thrust he speaks of two ways in which "things that are not" (the *ta mē onta* of ancient Greek metaphysics) are conceived: the atomism of Democritus and Epicurus as allegedly the only real things with the things that are not, i.e., despised spiritual realities. Paul says that atomism becomes a form of self-deception if it is thought capable of explaining all of reality. People, Paul says, become "slaves to the elements of the universe,"

[14] Feynman, Richard P. *The Meaning of It All* (London: Allan Lane, The Penguin Press 1998).

where *elements* does not mean letters of the alphabet as some think, but the atoms of a mechanistically conceived universe.[15]

Paul agreed with the "pursuit of the good life" advocates of his day that our present life is an interim but not, as they said, between a past black eternity and a future black eternity. There is more to the universe than matter and motion. While they construct theories about atoms which they cannot see and which theories they claim are not myths, the truth of the way things are beckons: the universe is not purposeless and its essential reality is spiritual in nature. The key to living is not avoidance of envy, ambition, and competition on the one side, and the pursuit of pleasure on the other (all based on the principle of expedience); not a universe empty of over-arching morality, or commitment, with only the scanning of advantage and disadvantage of any action or in any relationship.

What were the golden texts of the good life for those who pursued it so ardently, and should these become the tablets posted on the entrance foyer of my soul? Paul's scalpel (Phil 3:19) is sharp and discerning: First, fascination with food – "their God is their belly." Metrodorus had urged that "the pleasure of the stomach is the beginning and root of all good." Second, obsession with sex – "they glory in their shame."[16] Lanctantius said that all the dogs of philosophy were barking around Epicurus. Paul's warning "beware of the dogs" meant that humans should not flaunt sexuality publicly as dogs do. Third, "their mind is on earthly things," which means more than worldliness. Rather, it means "a this-life-only" attitude, a totally materialistic, purposeless view of reality. Hence Paul repeatedly contrasts flesh and spirit, by which he does not denigrate earthly existence nor the human body, but a mindset that views existence purely as a set of motor-affective responses.

What drives us must not be merely an external drive but an impelling inner suasion. This is, as A. N. Whitehead said, "the eternal urge of desire" for realization of the potentialities that inhere in life and which life's opportunities offer to us as spiritual beings.[17] This is never a matter of "whatever turns you on," or "makes you feel good." Rather, it is the decisiveness of an ideal which by the power of its attraction draws toward God-given, life-fulfilling purpose, not for self-gratification, but to grasp the truth of the way things are in order to more adequately contribute to what humanity may become.

The insights of Karl Popper, philosopher of science, reinforce the preceding discussion as to how our knowledge of the world is formed, whether by common sense knowledge or scientific knowledge, and try to correlate these insights with the limited knowledge Augustine and the Apostle Paul speak about. Popper argues that the modern problem of knowledge is not the problem of our perceptions – i.e., epistemological – but the notion materialists entertain that

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[15] 1 Cor 1:29 (RSV). In classical Greek materialist metaphysics *on* identified what is real, while *mē on* identified the not-real, as in Democritus. *Stocheion*, translated "element" identified the atom, that which is real in materialist metaphysics [N. D. Dewitt, *Epicurus and His Philosophy* (Westwood, CT: Greenwood Press, 1954) 159]. This is Paul's sense of the meaning of elements in Gal 4:3, 9 (RSV) not "spirits." Note also 2 Pet 3:10–12 (RSV).

[16] N. W. DeWitt, *St. Paul and Epicurus*. (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1954) 23 – 25.

[17] A. N. Whitehead, *Process and Reality*. (New York: Social Science Book Store, 1929) 522. Note also: *Religion in the Making*. (New York: MacMillan Co., 1930) 59 – 60, 157 – 159.

knowledge is built up inductively from observations; that we observe and then inductively generalize as to what the world is and how it functions.[18]

Popper explores the mindset we bring to interpretation of data. He argues that an unquestioned perspective develops that pervades a particular field of enquiry and deforms its results. The results become normal science or current orthodoxy over long periods of time, until support for their vested interests fades. The resulting paradigm -- what Augustine called a fantasy of the mind -- becomes politically or scientifically correct thought.

For Popper, truth is not merely a perspective immanent to a field of inquiry. Truth is objective. It is not contingent in relation to time and place and paradigm. Popper strives to know the truth, i.e., *that which is actually the case* about the object of study, even though the ultimate truth may permanently elude us.

The scandal to modern practitioners of empiricism is that Popper denied the validity of induction and that scientific knowledge is certain. Claims for the inductive method of science, he adds, "had to be replaced by the method of (dogmatic) trial and (critical) error elimination."[19]

While we do test our understanding of the laws and processes we attribute to the natural order, such understanding is never certain or complete. It is and must continually be revised, but prior understanding of the way we think things work, before observation, comes first. Observations come later. Only at critical points of divergence (the falsification of previously held theory) does new insight occur. It is likely that in the present state of our scientific knowledge the true nature of reality — that which is actually the case — is probably not even imaginable.

Reversal, or a critical juncture of clarification, if not falsification, is what I take to be the meaning of Paul's use of the word knowledge as *epignosis*; that is, transforming insight which overturns previous understanding. Progress occurs spiritually, as well as scientifically, only by the destruction of prior certitudes as these distorted our understanding of the nature of spiritual or material reality. This is, I think, what Paul meant when he said that "now we know in part."

There remains a key metaphysical problem: how to account for the actualizing of life and form in nature. Is a completely naturalistic or completely idealistic answer credible in view of the displacement of former categories and the likelihood that some of today's categories will also be left behind? To believe that impersonal matter, which may have a limiting potency, and randomness by means of organic naturalism, have produced a rational universe has become unpalatable to not a few scientists. The alternative to materialistic Naturalism is some form of idealistic Panpsychism or Panentheism. Christians hold that creation of the world by a transcendent and personal Creator reaches to the heart of the matter.

Augustine on a Philosophy of History

[18] Schilpp, P. A., ed., *The Philosophy of Karl Popper* (La Salle IL: Open Court, 2 vols., 1974).
[19] Popper, Karl, *Unended Quest*: *An Intellectual Biography* (La Salle IL: Open Court, revised ed., 1976) 52.

Augustine is the first Christian father to formulate a philosophy of history: how Christians should view earthly kingdoms, and the crucial role of hope in human experience.

Can human beings live without hope? There is a growing consensus in this post-modern cynical age that they cannot. It is striking that during its 1968 centennial year the University of California should have organized a conference on "The Future of Hope" featuring presentations by Ernst Bloch and Emil Fackenheim, among others.

Proponents of naturalistic, deterministic metaphysical systems argue that the universe is not and cannot be open-ended. But the failed modern attempt to blend economic and social utopianism with metaphysical determinism has forced revision to a possibility-oriented view of history, as in the case of the German marxist Ernst Bloch.[20] He turns his back upon a significant element of German cultural theory, namely, despair (*Weltangst*) about the human condition. In an earlier paper which he read at the 1968 University of California centennial year conference titled "Man as Possibility," Bloch prefigured the outlines of his later, major work. He begins with dreams. There is nothing in history, he says, which has not been sketched out in advance, i.e., planned in vision or dream. The only indestructible thing (a word-play against fixed determinism) is the "unconditionally indeterminate," namely freedom and hope: "I contend that the world is open, that objectively real possibility exists in it, and not simply determined necessity or mechanical determinism".[21]

At the same conference, Emil Fackenheim, in his paper titled "The Commandment to Hope: A Response to Contemporary Jewish Experience," says that the Hebrew prophets convey the message of hope as divine command. Israel is commanded not to despair but to live in hope. He adds that the tensions between particularity and universality in the Hebrew Bible, along with alienation and return, extend the paradigm of God's dealings to humanity in general beyond Israel. The key to the prophets is *God will do it*. Modern utopians have wrongly said *we will do it*. In the Hebrew Bible, says Fackenheim, the Jew is forbidden to despair of God; to exist as a Jew after Auschwiz is to be committed to hope.[22]

Philosophically, the Greeks saw history in mythological terms, as nature (*physis*) unfolding itself. The endless succession of events entails a dialectic of time - the cycle of rise and fall, of conflict, of polarization of opposites, as proposed by Empedocles. Epicurean theory was based on deterministic atomism and was thus behavioral and hedonist, without a sense of history. Stoic theory was more cosmology than historiography, as Cleanthes' *Hymn to Zeus* shows. The Stoic philosophers adopted the *Logos* concept as the inherent cosmic principle of intelligibility in the sense of inexorable destiny or fate, which they called justice (*dike*). The prudent man knows his place or role in the universe. The empire is a

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[20] Ernst Bloch, *The Principle of Hope* (Boston: MIT Press, 1995).

[21] Ernst Bloch, "Man as Possibility," in *The Future of Hope,* Walter H. Capps, ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1970) 51, 58, 62.

[22] Emil Fackenheim, "The Commandment to Hope: A Response to Contemporary Jewish Experience," in *The Future of Hope,* edited by Walter H. Capps, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, Fontana Edition, 1970) 90.

divinely inspired political and social manifestation which the Emperor epitomizes, as Marcus Aurelius, the last of the great Stoic philosophers, declared.

Roman thought concentrated upon the theory and functions of society, the *polis*, whether of an individual city or the empire as the expression of a divinely given and sanctioned order, an order that is reflected in the life-cycle of nature annually. History shows how men succeed but also how within success lurks the inevitability of failure. A form of Platonic Idealism legitimized the state. The state was regarded as a concrete manifestation of an ideal form. The ideal of justice, regarded as common to humanity, is embodied and implemented in the commitment to justice in the state.

What about early Christian understanding of history, the relation of Christians to the state, and divine providence in the affairs of humanity? Early Christian historians were chroniclers desiring to exhibit the historical authenticity of their faith. But, during the fourth century, with the conversion of the Emperor Constantine and the growth of the Church they began heralding the arrival of the Kingdom of God on earth. These included Eusebius of Caesarea (c. 260 – c. 340), Sulpicius Severus (c. 363 – c. 420/5), Socrates (c. 380 – 450), Sozomen (early fifth century) and Theodoret (c. 395 – c. 458). However, late in the fourth century Christian imperialist sentiment came under intense pressure when in A.D. 410 Alaric sacked Rome. The fall of Rome and worsening instability powerfully rejuvenated pagan sentiment and undermined the Christian view of God's providential favor toward the empire following Constantine's conversion. Dissolution of Roman power lent credence to the pagan charge that abandoning the gods for Christianity had brought disaster. The concept of the Christian divine *politea* — of the Kingdom of God as arriving — was in jeopardy.

This is the issue that Augustine addresses in *The City of God*. His conclusion was fundamentally at variance with popular Christian opinion of the fourth century. Augustine turned chronicling into a Christian philosophy of history.

It is within the context of the late fourth century crisis that enveloped the Roman Empire that Augustine developed his concept of time. This concept has dominated all theories of time in Western thought ever since. Time, he said, is a function of creation. For Augustine, eternity is timelessness (*Confessions* 11.13) or immediacy: "in the eternal nothing is flitting, but all is at once present, *whereas* no time is all at once present (11.11); thy today is eternity (11.13); … but to be, now, for that is eternal: for to have been, and to be about to be, is not eternal" (9:10).[23] Augustine declares that God is infinite and is absolute being, but he rejects the idea that absolute being excludes personhood and action.

Time came into being with the world. The first moment of creation is the first moment of time. God *creates* time. Time is the measure of motion: "we measure therefore, even whilst it passeth" (11.21). Three distinctions illuminate the nature of time (11.14): (a) *If nothing were passing there would be no past time.* (b) *If nothing were coming there would be no time to come.* (c) *If nothing were there would be no present time.*

[23] Augustine, *Confessions.* Whitney J. Oates, ed. 1948, Ibid.

This conception of time is foundational to Augustine's view of history, God's providential working in history, and his concept of the kingdom. Creation and time are the contexts for ordered linear historical process which has divinely-given significance and ends. History reflects purpose. This is rationally and spiritually discernible in light of the biblical revelation. We discern the trends and their significance in history; we must not impose our notions upon history. Augustine complains that apocalypticism tends to magnify one's own problems, but viewed historically the current troubles were not as bad as they could be, he said. God's mercy is still evident. The Christian lives in hope because a divinely-ordered end is in view. The present kingdom is not the final kingdom, nor is any earthly peace and prosperity the Christian final Sabbath rest. There is more to the divine ordering of history than the *Pax Romana* - the peace and stability that had been the hallmark of the empire.

Earthly kingdoms serve self-interest because human nature is flawed by pride and error. Rome itself was built on greed and conquest, he said, upon the myths of the gods and upon the political myth of the divine Caesar. Ultimately it is impossible to sanctify paganism. Like all human societies, the empire was founded upon an illusion and continues to be an illusion. No earthly kingdom can be the City of God.[24]

History discloses neither the anthropomorphic caprice of the gods, nor fortune and fate, nor the inexorable movement of an inherent impersonal Logos principle. Fortune and fate are intellectually ridiculous and morally abhorrent (*City of God* 4.33; 5.1; 7.3; 12.13).[25] History discloses the purposes of the personal Logos, the providential acts of God, not chance or blind force. The irrationalities of history are paradoxical, but they do not leave us in unreason and despair.

The inner power of the two cities is love, but of two different kinds. That of the earthly city is not really love but self-interest and egoism. That of the heavenly city is the love of God, who is the source and inspiration of all that is good. Redemption is not a trans-empirical connection between the soul and the Absolute (Plato), nor is it to be achieved by habituation (Aristotle), nor can it be founded upon a myth (the Imperium). Redemption is through regeneration, and regeneration is attended by and finally is based upon categories as to the nature of reality which are unique to the creationist view of the world. Redeemed men and women are part of societies that are mixtures of good and bad. The Christian must live pragmatically, with insight, and in hope of the final Sabbath of the soul.

Conclusion

It remains to sum up.

While various forms of transcendentalism, whether modern revivals of Gnosticism or the panentheism of Paul Tillich, absorb the interest of some

[24] Augustine, *The City of God*. Oates, ed., 1948. Ibid. 5.18 – 19, 21, 24.
[25] Augustine, *The City of God.* Oates, ed., 1948. Ibid.

Americans, the dominant ethos of our times is American naturalism, the modern descendent of ancient materialism. [26]

This dominance is apparent in two crucial respects: First, the widely accepted metaphysical proposition that reality consists only of the material order – there is no spiritual world or soul. Thus, idealism and materialism in both their ancient and modern garb regard individual persons as epiphenomena, soon to be absorbed at death or erased by death. Second, that values are simply behavioral responses of the human organism and therefore cannot be judged morally. Ultimately values are any object of any interest. No individual will survive the death of the body, and there can be no judgment about the private behavior of any individual.

In contrast to the foregoing, Christianity is essentially a hermeneutic of creation and redemption which ensures the recovery of humanity. In the Christian view, selfhood is a non-reducible reality which we know ourselves and other selves to be by immediate intuition. A person is not simply a unity of conscious experiences but the subject of that unity. Not only is this essential to our understanding of human beings as created in the image of God, but this truth cuts across the whole range of modern research, theory, behavioral techniques, and planning for humanity's future. The Christian outlook is predicated upon the understanding that each person is a spiritual agent and that as spiritual agents we are called upon to spiritualize bodily life; to live in accordance with conscious, beneficent purposes in responsible fellowship with God our Creator and with one another.

[26] Idealism identifies various forms of ancient and modern transcendentalism, a much larger paradigm than the tendency of some moderns for whom Idealism identifies reality as the content of our minds – associated with the view of George Berkeley, Baruch Spinoza, G. W. Leibniz, Emmanual Kant, and G. W. F. Hegel. Theological versions tend to embrace the concept of the absolute and transcendental values, as in the work of S. T. Coleridge, F. D. Maurice, John Caird, the Process Philosophy of A. N. Whitehead, and Paul Tillich. In its larger sense Idealism sees true reality to be other than the physical order; that the latter is merely appearance and that transcending the appearances of the senses is the realm of the Absolute, for example, the Forms of Plato. Such views tend to depreciate the ultimate value of individual personhood.