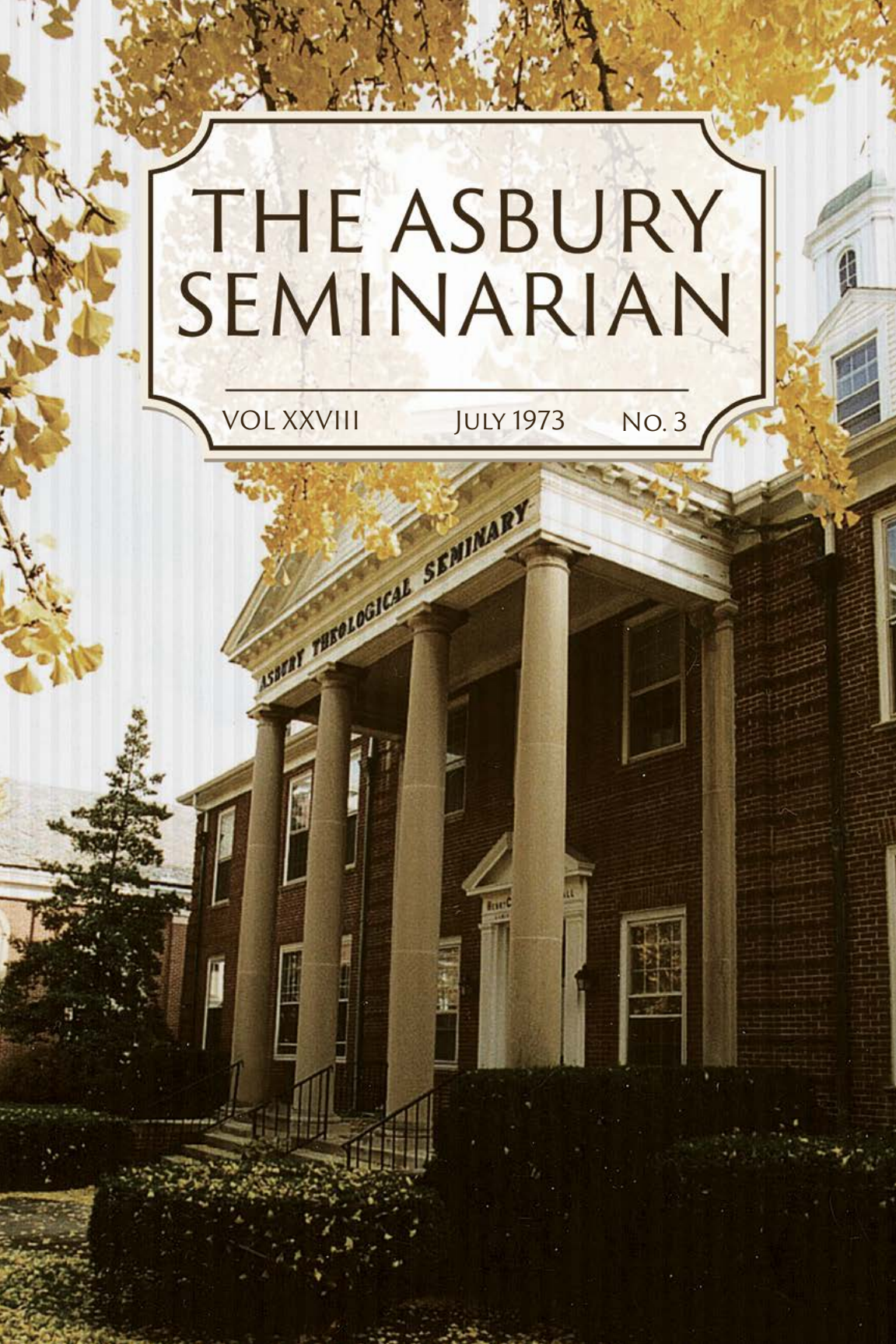


# THE ASBURY SEMINARIAN

VOL XXVIII

JULY 1973

NO. 3





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# *The Asbury Journal*

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# *The Asbury Seminarian*

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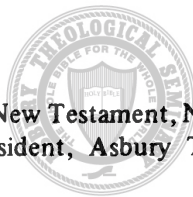
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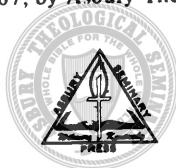
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## The Wesleyan Message In The Life And Thought Of Today

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# EDITORIAL

## COMFORTING MYTHS

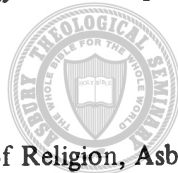
Harold Barnes Kuhn\*

“We reject the comforting myths by which our elders have lived and have rationalized their way of life.” So one of the university radicals expressed himself during the melancholy events on major campuses in the late 'sixties. Apart from the merits of the statement in its context, it does lift into prominence certain factors relating to the role of pre-suppositions in human life in general. These elements may prove also to have special significance for those concerned more especially with the life of the mind.

The late Arthur Darby Nock, and more recently Dean Samuel H. Miller, both of revered memory, have analyzed with great insights the element of “myth” and have assessed the supportive role of “mythical” factors, both in society and, as well, in personal living. It goes without saying that the term “myth” is, in its strict usage, a neutral term so far as the factual content of a proposition or a set of propositions is concerned. Granted, this is a technical usage, but the currency of the term cannot be understood apart from general agreement upon some such definition.

In everyday practice, the sentiments which gather about certain terms tend to enlist common loyalties and common sentiments. Concepts, for example, of nation, of flag, or of kinship elicit feelings which are powerful as cohesive forces in group living.

More specifically, however, there are academic myths which are powerful as controlling factors in the course of the intellectual enterprise. These are at least as determinative in theological areas and for theological discussion as in the more general fields of intellectual endeavor. Such “mythology” surfaces prominently in connection with



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the now-dominant historically oriented critical methodology, particularly in theology.

Let it be said at once that no literate scholar wishes to hold the critical faculty in suspense, nor to disregard the role of historical research in relation to religious investigation. But this is something vastly different from the conventional two-stage methodology known as the Critical-Historical Method.

The first mythology in this connection centers in the cluster of assumptions respecting the interpretation of first-century documents. It is hypothesized that one may not only discover, almost infallibly, what the writers of (say) the documents of the New Testament intended to say, but also to determine that such meaning must differ radically from the commonly understood meaning of the text. It is assumed that the plain man's understanding is radically other than, e.g., New Testament authors intended. Thus the critical use of the myth.

At a second stage, the Critical-Historical Method operates upon the myth, that the recaptured meaning of early Christian writers (as understood by their own contemporaries) can be reinterpreted, with a minimal margin of error, to the current age. Underlying this, in its theological application, is some generalization concerning "the Word" which seems to be regarded as a free-floating and transcendental entity, essentially incapable of being verbalized in more than the most transient sense. In other words, religious truth cannot be expected to lend itself to modes of expression which conform to the generally used norms of linguistic use.

There are, of course, other root presuppositions which the theological method under discussion accepts and utilizes. Other procedural elements do, of course, belong to it. What is important is that the method as understood, is underlain by isolatable myth-elements. As one has aptly said, the assumption of a purely objective scholarship is itself the major myth of our time.

The statement quoted at the opening of this Editorial speaks of "comforting myths" upon which some persons allegedly rely. The person who uttered it saw one thing clearly, that myths serve more than an ideological purpose. That is to say, they reinforce the ego as well as controlling the mind. They may, it is suggested further, serve to afford a false and foolish sense of security.

This may lead to smugness, to a sense of self-satisfaction which closes the door, not only to self-criticism but to criticism from outside. Certainly every understanding of human personality includes a



recognition of the need for the supportive role of ideational elements. What is open to question is the uncritical dependence upon myths which are either vulnerable to criticisms at the point of validity, or open to the charge of being merely analgesic.



# ARTICLES

## MUSIC AND THE WORSHIP OF GOD

Donald Hustad\*

It is a privilege and a pleasure to share this auspicious occasion\*\* with you. Perhaps nothing would be more appropriate than to make a few comments about "Music and the Worship of God." As a basis for our thinking, I read the scripture passage which is the starting point for most liturgical theologians.

In the year of King Uzziah's death I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the skirt of his robe filled the temple. About him were attendant seraphim, and each had six wings; one pair covered his face and one pair his feet, and one pair was spread in flight. They were calling ceaselessly to one another,

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts:  
the whole earth is full of his glory.

And as each one called, the threshold shook to its foundations, while the house was filled with smoke. Then I cried,

Woe is me! I am lost,  
for I am a man of unclean lips  
and I dwell among a people of unclean lips;  
yet with these eyes I have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts.

Then one of the seraphim flew to me carrying in his hand a glowing coal which he had taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. He touched my mouth with it and said,

See, this has touched your lips;  
your iniquity is removed,  
and your sin is wiped away.

Then I heard the Lord saying, Whom shall I send? Who will go for me? And I answered, Here am I; send me.

(Isaiah 6:1–9, NEB)

\*Dr. Donald Hustad is Professor of Church Music at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky

\*\*This is an address delivered at the inauguration of the William Earle Chair of Music at Asbury Theological Seminary on April 25, 1973.

It should be apparent that the central figure of worship is not the worshiper, but the God who is worshiped; God who is the perfection of holiness (as proclaimed by the angelic song we know as the **Tersanctus**—“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts”); God who is the perfection of power (for “the threshold shook to its foundations”); the God who remains finally somewhat inscrutable and incomprehensible to finite minds (as suggested by that image, “the house was filled with smoke.”)

They tell us that our modern word **worship** is derived from the Anglo-Saxon **woerth-scipe**, signifying the “ascription of worth.” Every man has his god; in every man’s heart there is an altar. The Christian worships the true and living God, as revealed in the scriptures and supremely in Jesus the Christ, because He alone is **worthy** to be worshiped. His holiness qualifies him to forgive us and to make us holy. His power enables him to regenerate and transform. And the mystery which must surround Him both inspires our awe and demands our faith. “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. This is the very word of the Lord.” (Isaiah 55:9, 8, NEB)

For our few moments together today, we will think of music and worship in three ways: as **dialogue**, as **incarnation**, and as **offering, or sacrifice**.

In the simplest and broadest terms, worship has been defined as “any proper response to God’s self-revelation.” In this holy conversation, it is God who makes the first move, who says the first word. Follow the dialogue then in Isaiah chapter six.

God says: “I am that I am—all holy, all powerful, yet mysterious.”

Man responds: “Woe is me! I am lost—a sinner!”

God quickly replies to our confession: “Be forgiven; be cleansed; be healed.”

While we are yet wondering at His grace, His voice continues:

“I need you.” Is it possible that the transcendent God **needs** the “man of unclean lips,” to do His work in the world? Yes, it is wonderfully true, and our only logical answer can be: “Here am I, Lord, Send me.”

This then is the dialogue which should take place in every worship service. But I fear that we frequently forget who is talking to whom. Sometimes it appears that the minister and the choir are engaged in antiphony, or perhaps the congregation and the preacher. When Kierkegaard speaks of worship as a drama, he insists that the congregation are the actors and that God is the audience. The minister and the

choir, he says, are “prompters”—those offstage individuals who remind us when we forget our lines!

When the minister preaches, he brings us word from God and at the same time reminds us what our response should be in the dialogue. When he prays, he does so vicariously on our behalf—speaking to God for us—and at the same time encouraging us to whisper our own prayer.

The choir’s anthem is not planned for your pleasure alone. The singers express praise of God for themselves and for you too. Hopefully, if the well of your heart only seems to have gone dry, they will prime the pump, and your personal adoration will flow Godward again.

Furthermore, the most significant music in worship is not that of the choir or even of our favorite gospel soloist, but that which we sing for ourselves. For when we join in the congregational hymns, we are, in Calvin’s words, the “church’s first choir.” It is then that the human-divine dialogue can be most direct and powerful.

. . . . .

When we suggest that “worship is incarnation” we are trying to say that worship is not alone something we do. A worshiper is something that we **become**, with our whole being. The British Baptist cleric Stephen Winward has said:

Both as revelation and response, worship should involve the whole personality of man, the body and senses as well as thoughts and words, movement and action as well as listening and understanding.<sup>1</sup>

As I look back on my early spiritual pilgrimage, I am afraid that I developed the idea that true worship is largely cerebral and propositional. Today’s young people have reminded us—after we got over the shock of “choreography” in church—that the body is not intrinsically evil, despite the fact that this Platonist heresy has crept into our evangelical thinking. Some of us should have remembered our heritage of the camp meeting, for there was great significance in kneeling at the wooden altar, in lifting the hands in prayer, and even in the occasional holy “dance before the Lord,” always ecstatic and, I believe, usually reverent.

I only wish that someone would remind my fellow Baptists that the admonition to “present our bodies as living sacrifices” certainly includes the use of the lungs, the tongue and the vocal chords in singing the hymns in church. Somehow about 40% of church-going Baptists seem to have picked up the idea that “singing in church is for singers.” The truth is that “singing is for believers.” The relevant question is not, “Do you have a voice?” but “Do you have a song?”

There is a close relationship between today's emphasis on man's **corpus**, his body, and his **psyché**, his emotional self. It is here that we musicians make our greatest contribution to worship. For music has been called the "language of the emotions." Its communication transcends that of words alone for it helps to reveal the numinous, the transcendent. It aids us in our attempts to express the inexpressible.

In my younger, more-strongly Calvinist days, I was sometimes irked by the well-wisher who wanted to thank me for the singing of the Moody Chorale, saying "the music was a blessing." Invariably I wanted to conduct a theological inquisition by asking "What did God say to you?" or "What did you say to God?" The great Marian Anderson was once asked to delineate in words the meaning of a song. Her reply was: "If I could have said it in words, I would not have sung it!" For too long we have downgraded the importance of emotion, even ecstasy, in worship. As the Apostle Paul said, "I will pray . . . I will sing . . . with the Spirit,"<sup>2</sup> and that is praying and singing that is, at least occasionally, more emotional than rational. As the old mountaineer once said, "Some things are better felt than telt!"

At the same time we must not belittle the second half of Paul's comment on his personal liturgical practice. "I will pray . . . sing with the Spirit, and with the understanding also." Hymns, anthems and solos have words, as well as melody, rhythm, and harmony, and it is proper for the individual worshiper to judge the theology of the "youth musical" as well as that of the sermon. God may be speaking to you through the words and ideas of the hymnal as well as those of the Sunday School quarterly.

Yes, worship should involve and transform the mind, as well as the body and the emotions. It may be that we church musicians often underestimate the potential of the tool within our control. For when words and music are happily married, idea is coupled with emotion. It is then that we may best expect the Holy Spirit to speak in power, and to effect an action of the human will.

This then is the ultimate in the process of incarnation in worship. This is worship that springs from our innermost being. This is "singing and making melody in **your heart** to the Lord."<sup>3</sup> Worship is finally **submission**. It is best expressed on the bended knee, with words "Here am I; send me."

I think we all agree that each minister of God should have his own personal heart searching and confession before entering the pulpit on

Sunday morning. My suggestion for myself and other ministers of music is that we read God's thundering words as spoken by Amos in chapter 5, verses 21 to 23 (NEB).

I hate, I spurn your pilgrim-feasts; I will not delight in your sacred ceremonies. When you present your sacrifices and offerings I will not accept them, nor look on the buffaloes of your shared offerings. Spare me the sound of your songs; I cannot endure the music of your lutes.

Some of us may guess that Amos is speaking as a music critic and that he was condemning the ancient prototype of the southern quartet "all-night sing" or the rock-gospel musical. The chances are this was the well-rehearsed traditional song of the levitical priests, every one a talented, trained and dedicated professional. Culturally, the music was probably related to the best cantata performance of the First Methodist Church. The problem was not musicological, but spiritual. The voices were singing—gloriously, perhaps—but the hearts of the singers were mute and cold. We need only to add the next sentence of Amos' challenge:

Spare me the sound of your songs; I cannot endure the music of your lutes. But let justice roll on like a river and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. (vv. 23,24)

. . . . .

For our last image of worship, we reach back to the oldest biblical concept, one which is missed by many modern churchgoers, even by so-called evangelicals. For too many people, worship is simply "getting a blessing." Fundamentally, worship is an offering—giving, more than getting.

The Old Testament is replete with references to music in worship as a "sacrifice." Psalm 27:6 reads, "Therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the Lord." Hebrews 13:15 (NEB) makes it clear that this sacrifice in worship is appropriate in our day of the new covenant: "Through Jesus, then, let us continually offer up to God the sacrifice of praise, that is the tribute of lips which acknowledge his name . . ."

It is only fair to remind ourselves that the question of acceptability goes back to the very first sacrifices of Cain and Abel. In Hebrew cultic practice, animals chosen for sacrifice were required to be the best of the lot, without blemish or disease. In Paul's call to Christian consecration, he says that the "offering of self should be 'a living sacrifice, dedicated and fit for his acceptance.' " 4

Obviously, the questions of quality and acceptance should be considered in connection with our "sacrifice of praise." Through his

creative life-time, Johann Sebastian Bach labored with great diligence to produce a stream of musical masterpieces, each of them inscribed with the words **In nomine Jesu**—"in the name of Jesus." The American Guild of Organists urges its members to strive for excellence under the motto **Soli Deo gloria**—"To God alone be praise." Today's church musicians give themselves to years of study of their art, that they may properly lead God's people in worship. Our choir members gather regularly for long and painstaking rehearsal in order that they may offer a worthy "sacrifice of joy" to God.

Of course, there is no room for either pride or scorn in our striving for excellence. To be sure, God's ears are not tickled by the tunes of his servant Bach. Nor is He displeased with the simple songs of the mountaineer strumming his dulcimer. But for each of us the demand is the same. Our sacrifice in worship must be **our best**, involving body, emotions, mind and will in a total response to God's self-revelation.

The word "sacrifice" of itself denotes something that is costly. I am often reminded of the story of King David's worship of God conducted on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite, told in 2 Samuel 24. I read from verse 20:

When Araunah looked down and saw the king and his servants coming over towards him he went out, prostrated himself low before the king and said, "Why has your majesty come to visit his servant?" David answered, "To buy the threshing-floor from you to build an altar to the Lord. . . ." Araunah answered David, "I beg your majesty to take it and sacrifice what you think fit. I have here the oxen for a whole-offering, and their harness and the threshing-sledges for the fuel."

Araunah gave it all to the king for his own sue and said to him, "May the Lord your God accept you." But the king said to Araunah, "No, I will buy it from you; I will not offer to the Lord my God offerings that have cost me nothing." (NEB)

I think it is fair to ask the people of God—the leaders in worship as well as the whole congregation—What has it cost you to offer to God your "sacrifice of praise?"

There are times in human experience when all the human and divine requirements are met, and music seems supernaturally to bring us into the very presence of God. Such a time was the dedication of Solomon's temple:

Now when the priests came out of the Holy Place, . . . all the levitical singers, Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun, their sons and their kinsmen, clothed in fine linen, stood with cymbals, lutes, and harps, to the east of the altar, together with a hundred and twenty priests who blew trumpets. Now the trumpeters and the singers joined in



unison to sound forth praise and thanksgiving to the Lord, and the song was raised with trumpets, cymbals, and musical instruments, in praise of the Lord, because he is good, for his love endures forever; and the house was filled with the cloud of the glory of the Lord. The priests could not continue to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled the house of God. (2 Chronicles 5:11–14, NEB)

It is sobering and humbling to realize that this can happen in conducting a ministry of music. Some of us have experienced it once or twice in our lifetime. And our prayer is, “Do it again, Lord. Do it again!”

---

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>S. F. Winward, *The Reformation of Our Worship* (Richmond, Virginia: John Knox Press, 1965. American Edition), p. 7. The outline of this paper has been borrowed from Mr. Winward’s book.

<sup>2</sup>I Corinthians 14:15.

<sup>3</sup>Ephesians 5:19.

<sup>4</sup>Romans 12:1, NEB.



## THE "PERFECT" CHRISTIAN

George A. Turner\*

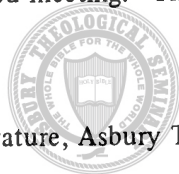
## Introduction

For this issue of *The Asbury Seminarian* the Editorial Committee requested an example of expository preaching. The thought of the Committee is that sermons should not be primarily autobiographical, nor primarily a series of anecdotes, nor yet primarily a series of metaphors, symbols and allegories; not always topical; not always even textual. It was felt rather that greater emphasis should normally be placed upon **contextual** sermons in which attention is given not only to a topic or a text but also the context out of which the text grows. In other words, the sermons normally should include an awareness of the Bible writer's **message to his readers** in their historical situation; then look for the essential spiritual principles, and finally for the relevance of these principles to contemporary life. What follows is a response to the Committee's request.

The Text: I Corinthians 14:20 "Brethren, be not children in understanding, but in malice be babes, but in understanding be perfect (mature)."

The Context: I Corinthians 12:31–13:13

St. Paul's brief poem on love is perhaps the choicest portion of the New Testament. It is certainly one of the best known and best loved chapters of the Bible, but this description of divine love is best understood not in isolation but in the context of the entire letter to the Corinthians. With the exception of Ephesus, it was in Corinth that Paul held the longest "protracted meeting." The Corinthian church was the



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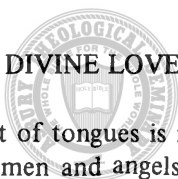
most vigorous of the churches of the New Testament. The Corinthian church was not only the most gifted but also the most troublesome of Paul's churches. Not all of its life and vigor was the most wholesome. The basic need of many of its members was that of Christian maturity. Paul calls them carnal (I Cor. 3:1) and yet they are recognized as "sanctified in Christ Jesus" (I Cor. 1:1).

They are called "sanctified" in the sense of being saved and set apart in Christ away from the world and yet "carnal" in the sense that there are many unchristlike elements in their lives and thought. These include such things as jealousy and bickering, the play of lesser loyalties, as over against the overarching loyalty to Christ. They are beset with spiritual pride and yet tolerant of immorality. They are inclined to set themselves up as models of rectitude while criticizing fellow believers whose consciences differed from theirs. Above all they are fascinated by spiritual gifts but lack appreciation for the spiritual graces. Like the recipients of the Hebrews Epistle they are described as immature babes (I Cor. 3:1–4; cf. Heb. 5:7–14).

After dealing with several problems concerning which they have written him, Paul turns his attention to spiritual gifts and desires to "clear up a wrong impression about spiritual gifts" (JB). His concern is to show that it is important to recognize the unity among the varied spiritual gifts. He lists these as the gift of faith, of healing, of miracles, of prophecy, of discernment, the gift of tongues, and the interpretation of tongues, but insists that it is more important to recognize the unity amid this diversity. He stresses the importance of cooperation rather than competition in the exercise of these gifts. He insists that one is not to regard another gift as inferior to his own and thus fall victim to the temptation to pride. He warns against the tendency to overemphasize the value of these gifts, especially those of prophecy and of tongues. Tongues seem especially to have been the problem and, after downgrading this gift in comparison with some others, Paul sets over against this gift and all other gifts something that is more important than any of them, namely, faith, hope and love. The point is that whatever gift one has he should major upon these graces of the Spirit, this fruit of the Spirit (cf. Gal 5:22–26).

## I. THE IMPORTANCE OF DIVINE LOVE (I Cor. 13:1–3)

He notes that the gift of tongues is not adequate even though it be with the eloquence of men and angels. He notes furthermore that



prophecy, valuable as it is, and the discernment of spiritual truth, however penetrating, are of no value apart from divine love. Even mountain-moving faith is futile if devoid of love. Even generosity and the unselfishness that prompts it, so highly commended among the rabbis, is without merit apart from Christian love. Finally, even sealing one's Christian witness with the loss of life, even martyrdom for the faith—the highest expression of Christian faith and courage—is valueless apart from divine love. Love is therefore indispensable, outweighing all other of these highly prized criteria of Christian character.

## II. THE NATURE OF LOVE (I Cor. 13:4–7)

In the world of Paul's day three Greek terms expressed different facets of the concept of love. The term most frequently used in pagan Greece and Rome was the term **eros** which was linked normally with romantic love. Because of its association with sex, the writers of the New Testament avoided the use of this term. Here Paul does not use the other synonym for love, the verb **phileo**, which means to be friendly, or affectionate, to have brotherly love (thus, Jesus loved Lazarus and his sisters Mary and Martha—Jn. 11:5). Paul and other New Testament writers selected the little used noun **agape** to express divine love, that which does not depend upon emotion, but is purposeful, calculating, and involves choice. It is similar in meaning to the Old Testament **chesed**, often translated, "lovingkindness" or "steadfast love." **Agape** therefore is distinctively Christian love. It is the love which God has for the world and which Christians must have for their enemies (Jn. 3:16; Matt. 5:44).

Paul then proceeds to tell what love is not. This divine love is never jealous or boastful; it is not conceited. The Corinthians, like other Greeks, laid great stress upon knowledge as the most prized of virtues or accomplishments. Five hundred years before, Sophists enjoyed great prestige in Athens, at least until their superficiality was exposed by the incisive questions of Socrates. Paul was eager that a believer's faith should not stand on human wisdom but upon God's power (I Cor. 2:5). It is not the wisdom of men but of God that matters, says Paul. To those who felt they already possessed adequate knowledge, Paul warned that while knowledge "puffs up," it is love which really "builds up" (8:1).

Several times Paul points out the danger of false knowledge or an exaggerated awareness of one's own knowledge or wisdom. The term **phusis** ("puffed up") appears in chapter 4, verses 6, 8, and 19. Those

who are inflated with a sense of their own importance are warned against self-delusion since the kingdom of God is not in the words of arrogant men but in God's power (4:21). This pride hinders repentance (5:2). In short, arrogance, self-esteem and pride have no part in divine love, in Christian maturity. Few sins of mankind come in for more frequent condemnation in both Old and New Testaments than the sin of pride. It can be said to be the seat of all sin.

Neither is discourtesy consistent with Christian maturity. Divine love is "never rude or selfish" (JB). The person who is characterized by divine love usually is more courteous and considerate of others than one skilled in the knowledge of etiquette. It is children who take the attitude of "me first." This mood, characteristically selfish people, including many of mature years, share in common with the animals. Pigs in a trough show little concern about the other pigs getting their fair share of the food. Love is considerate of others.

Another characteristic of spiritual immaturity is the tendency toward clannishness, schisms, jealousies, a gang spirit, a major problem at Corinth (1:10-17; 3:1-4). It is characteristic of children at a certain age. One boys' club or gang is normally exclusive in its membership and in competition, if not in quarrels, with other clubs or gangs. That this is not easily outgrown is seen in the popularity of exclusive clubs among adults. That it is not unknown among Christians is evident in churches that are exclusive, competitive, and arrogant. Also characteristic of childhood is stubbornness, a spirit which says, "If I can't have things my own way, I'll not play; I will take my dolls and go home." Even adults are known to resolve, "If this vote doesn't go the way I think it should I'll resign." By contrast, "Love does not insist on its own way" (13:5).

Another characteristic of children is peevishness and sensitivity. When a member of the Ladies Aid from a certain midwestern church was not re-elected president she stormed indignantly about the lack of appreciation on the part of the other women and proceeded to start another church aid society among her neighbors of which she was then, appropriately enough, made the president! Both groups of women supported the church but were intolerant of each other. But divine love "is not irritable or resentful" (13:5b).

Paul stresses the positive characteristics of this love. It has the capacity of being able to suffer yet be patient and uncomplaining through it all. It "suffers long and is kind" rather than becoming embittered, cynical, and resentful. It does not harbor self-pity nor seek consolation in bitterness and arrogance. Suffering can result in a certain

arrogance, a certain self-pity, an attitude of haughtiness toward those who have not experienced suffering. This kind of love rejoices in the truth and in good news concerning others and is not the kind that gains satisfaction from seeing another's humiliation. It does not relish gossip but does engage in loving service and witness. It can even rejoice in a rival's promotion, even though convinced that the rival's promotion is less deserved than one's own. This does not mean that one is not hurt and led to inquire as to why he is not more usable and useful, why his dedication and competence is not recognized. But nevertheless, by God's grace, he can rejoice in another's recognition, promotion and effectiveness. Such love is characterized by resiliency, and flexibility rather than brittleness. It can bend without breaking and spring back for more. Cast iron may be massive and look sturdy but breaks more easily than malleable iron. So love may appear weak because flexible, but it does not shatter. The wind breaks sturdy oaks more easily than flexible willows.

### III. THE PERMANENCE OF LOVE (I Cor. 13:8–13)

In stressing the importance of survival Paul points out at least by implication that the traits which characterize so much of the Corinthian church are not really marks of maturity but of immaturity. The "assets" they prized most highly—knowledge, and other spiritual gifts—are seen to be "toys" which fascinate the immature but may imperil the quest for the greater good. They are things that are not permanent but at best transitory. By referring to his own childhood Paul says that knowledge is limited and prophesying is limited. The gift of tongues is but temporary. None of them has survival value. These gifts are characteristics of childhood or immaturity; such things as pride, peevishness, quarrelsomeness should be recognized for what they are, traits of the immature or the childish.

As the text indicates, we should be as innocent as babes with reference to malice, but at the same time, be perfect, be men, be mature with reference to love. So the Corinthians should grow up, they should move from spiritual gifts to the graces of the Spirit such as faith, hope and love. Otherwise they will be spiritual morons or dwarfs. The peril of Christians remaining stationary, or retrogressing even, after entrance into Christian life is apparent. The indispensable character of the love which lasts on is self-evident. A little girl fell out of bed during her sleep. The next morning she diagnosed the problem: "I think I went to sleep too near the place I got in." Are not some Christians like that? No

wonder they do not grow to maturity (perfection) but remain spiritual dwarfs or morons, victims of retarded growth. The remedy is to seek first the “**Giver** of every good and perfect gift,” to trust and obey. Only love has survival value!





## ISSUES IN OLD TESTAMENT INTERPRETATION

John Oswalt \*

The following is, first of all, an attempt to identify the issues which an Old Testament interpreter must face and resolve, either consciously or unconsciously before he begins his interpretive work. Secondly, because it is the writer's conviction that the manner in which the interpreter resolves these questions will have everything to do with his interpretation of Scripture, his own approach to these issues is given. These statements are, because of the necessities of time and space, painfully brief, being more in the nature of conclusions than arguments. This is especially true of the earlier, more philosophical issues. If, however, they cause the reader to reflect upon his own ways of dealing with these questions and how his own answers affect his interpretation, the paper will have achieved its purpose.

There are four major questions with which the prospective interpreter must deal: First, he must ask the nature of reality. He must ascertain the Biblical position on this question and determine whether that position can be accepted at face value, or must be seen as some sort of an accommodation to the weaknesses of the transmitters involved. More than any other, this question and its answers will have a determinative impact upon one's interpretation. The nature of truth, of revelation, of history, all hang in the balance.

Second, he must ask the nature of Scripture. What is the Book he aims to interpret? Largely, the answer here will depend upon the way in which the previous question was answered. Whether one sees the Bible as a Word from God or a witness to such a Word; whether as a divinely-guided compilation of tradition or an inspired self-disclosure of God in



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history, the answers are, in some degree, contingent upon one's view of reality.

Third, he must ask the relation between the Testaments. Before one can speak with any degree of confidence on the meaning of the Old Testament, he must settle in his own mind the significance of the conjoining of Old and New Testaments. Does the New supersede the Old, so that the Old Testament's value is primarily as background? To what extent is it valid to superimpose New Testament insights upon Old Testament narratives? Is the primary purpose of the Old Testament to prophesy Christ? Should the Old Testament be interpreted "alongside" the New, but without letting the New influence one's interpretation of the Old? That there is a relationship is plain. Determining what it is is more difficult.

Fourth, he must ask whether the Old Testament is centered upon some one principle, the relation to which will provide the interpretive key for any given passage. Obviously, it is the relative unity or diversity of the Old Testament which is in question here. If the Old Testament has a central theme, then to miss it is to misinterpret the book. By the same token, if the unity of Scripture is not expressed in one easily definable theme, forcing all passages into some straitjacket is equally damaging.

The following is a presentation of these questions and their auxiliaries in outline form.

- I. The Nature of Reality
- II. The Nature of the Scripture
  - A. Its relation to the revelatory activity of God
  - B. The significance of canon
  - C. The practical effect of a doctrine of inspiration
  - D. The relation of history to the revelatory process
    1. Ramifications of historical-critical methodology
    2. Progressive revelation
- III. The Relation of the Testaments
  - A. Continuity or discontinuity
  - B. The validity of the promise/fulfillment formula
  - C. The value of analogical (typological) interpretation
- IV. The Question of an Interpretive Principle
- I. The Nature of Reality

As indicated above, this question is fundamental. One cannot interpret the Old Testament until he has evaluated its own view of reality. Is reality solely material, solely spiritual, or some combination

of both? If both, what is the relation between the two? Is reality personal or impersonal? Is nature capable of suspension by something or someone outside of nature (supernature)? These questions cannot be left aside in interpretation any less than in living. They are forced options. The very business of living and interpreting demands that we operate as if certain answers were appropriate. In the final analysis, these decisions, while intellectually supportable, must be primarily volitional (Jn 7:17).

The following is a summarization of the Old Testament conception of reality as the writer understands it. As such, it receives his wholehearted acceptance. Reality is understood as residing in a Person who transcends His creation, but yet permeates it. He is self-existent and self-consistent. He is capable of revealing Himself and His will to man and has, in fact, done so. He is thus in Himself truth and what He constitutes all things true. To know Him is to know the truth. Within the creation, the understanding and application of truth will always be more or less relative, because of human frailty, but this is not to say that God's nature and will are relative.

These statements concerning God's absolute reality should not be conceived to mean that the created world is somehow a shadow of His reality. He has bestowed on it His own reality. It is a part of reality, but a contingent part. He is the unconditioned part.

The very uniqueness of this view of reality in the Ancient Near East argues that we are not dealing with simply another variety of speculation. Moreover, the manner in which it carefully balances such imponderables as determinism and responsibility, dignity and creatureliness, spirit and matter, ideal and actual, suggests that despite its transmission through a pre-scientific mentality, it is more in touch with reality than those philosophies which arrogantly restrict their field of vision to sense perception.

## II. The Nature of Scripture

What is the Bible? Is it the approved statement of a people's religious development? Is it a collection of traditions? Is it a document dictated by God to human amanuenses? What is revelation? Event? Word? Both? Is the Biblical consciousness of history accidental or is it related to the very nature of revelation and the Bible? Is its treatment of historical detail trustworthy for the writing of a History of Israel? Or is such treatment most useful for discovering the theological *tendenz* of the various editors of the text? To what extent is the use of historico-critical methodology congruent with the nature of Scripture?

### **The Relation of Scripture (Canon) to the Revelatory Activity of God**

The Bible is not a **result** of God's revelatory activity, it is a **part** of it. As historical event was the vehicle through which God revealed Himself to Israel, so out of the authenticity of those events and that revelation, God reveals Himself to me. The canon records the totality of the events and interpretations through which God has disclosed Himself. As such, each of the separate books partakes of the very nature of revelation. (They **are** revelation [Word of God] apart from any response, in the same way that the Sinai events **were** revelation even if Moses and the Israelites had dismissed the whole thing as a superb volcanic sideshow.) On this point, see the remarks of Van Ruler, *The Christian Church And The Old Testament*, p. 18ff. This being so, it is possible to speak of those books which deal with less crucial issues without, in so doing, denying them revelatory status. This also means that it is incumbent upon me to probe any book which does not seem to speak to me, in an attempt to see what is its revelatory content.

### **The Practical Effect of a Doctrine to Inspiration**

It is inappropriate to use "tradition" and "inspiration" interchangeably with reference to Scripture. When one, with II Tim. 3:16, affirms that all scripture is *θεοπνευματος*, he is saying at the least that Scripture exists because of God's initiative in its production. This need not necessarily imply that God is the "author" of Scripture (in a "dictation" sense) although such passages as Acts 4:24,25 and 13:34,35 where the Holy Spirit is made the speaker in two quotations from the Psalms, must be kept in mind. More importantly, such a statement implies that Scripture says what God wants it to say concerning His own nature and the nature of His redemptive program. "Tradition," however, normally connotes an absence of a single guiding mind and presupposes a developing community, which somewhat unconsciously shapes and reshapes its literature in the light of its changing consciousness. A tradition is less valuable for the validity of the concepts conveyed than for its insights into the community and its development. For this reason, "tradition" and inspiration seem to be mutually exclusive terms.

### **The Relation of History to the Revelatory Process**

It is self-evident that the Biblical writers understood their God to be revealing Himself in history and the historical process. The very uniqueness of such a view argues for the actuality of the process as the only sufficient cause for the idea. Furthermore, the majority of historians agree that the Biblical view of history is not a product of the West, but

that one of the major factors in the shaping of the Western consciousness has been the Biblical view of history. These being so, any philosophy which denies the possibility of God's acting in history (history being defined as the unfolding story of mankind in the natural, physical universe) cannot be called Biblical. Furthermore, it means that a radically nihilistic attitude toward the historical value of the Biblical accounts is unwarranted. Again, it means that no interpretation has a claim to validity unless it deals with the specific historical milieu into which the revelation first came and makes a serious attempt to see how our altered historical situation affects the meaning of the revelation. (To adopt a methodology which is both soundly historical and soundly critical [analytical] is not to capitulate to the excesses of source—, redaction—, form—, etc., criticism, despite the claims of those who would so indicate.)

This understanding of the Bible as a product of God's acting in, with and upon human history has two further ramifications. It means that the Word of God written is similar in nature to the Word of God incarnate: fully divine and fully human. This means that methodologies developed for the analysis and interpretation of any human literatures are appropriately applied to Scripture (provided that uncontrollable hypotheses concerning sources, etc. are not the primary basis of such methodologies).

Furthermore, since the Biblical conception of history is one of movement (linear, spiral or whatever) toward a goal, the concept of progressive self-disclosure of God in this movement becomes viable. To those like D. Lys (*The Meaning of the Old Testament*) who are troubled by the idea of a revelation which is incomplete prior to Christ, it may be said that even Christ is not the complete (in the sense of total) revelation of God. He is simply the most complete that man in his present state can know. He is totally adequate for God's present purposes with man, however. So each successive revelation in the Old Testament was complete for its purposes, but each supplied a different part of the mosaic until Christ came to supply the central motif.

### III. The Revelation of the Testaments

This question is a very ancient one, for it is obvious that the Old and New Testaments differ widely. Yet Christ and the Apostles and the early church all seem convinced that their identities and the identity of their God were to be found in the Old Testament. Still, granting this, many problems remained. So much so that Marcion advocated playing

the man and jettisoning the Old Testament. The Fathers, while championing the Old Testament, did it no less of a disservice by trying to spiritualize it, which in reality was to de-historicize it. The excesses of their typologies are well known.

Thus, any approach to the relation of the Testaments must bear in mind that the Testaments are not alien to one another. At the same time the distinct contributions of each must not be lost in some process of ameliorizing one to another. The Old Testament's pointing to Christ must not be thought of as its only contribution to the total revelation of God, but at the same time, it is clear that the Church cannot live with any idea that the Old Testament does not lead directly into the New. With these parameters in mind, let us explore these issues more closely.

### **Continuity or Discontinuity**

The Testaments are continuous in the sense that both testify to the continuing creative and redemptive work of God, a process begun in Genesis 1 and prospectively seen as completed in The Revelation 21. The issue is the same throughout Scripture: bringing man to the discovery and experiencing of that for which he was created: life under the Lordship of his Creator. They are continuous in their unified proclamation of God's will for the character of human life. They are continuous in the sense that the new covenant is the logical outcome of the people's failure to keep the Old. (Failure to keep the Old Covenant results in death; in the New Covenant God takes upon Himself the people's consequence and by his own death supplies the blood for the New Covenant ratification [Exodus 24–Mark 14].) They are also continuous in that the New Testament assumes the content of its primary expressions of theology from the Old Testament without question.

The testaments are discontinuous in their historical contexts. Whereas the Old Testament is preparatory and is in primary conflict with Ancient Near Eastern paganism, the New Testament is a successor and is in conflict with the arid legalism which Judaism had become. Thus the Old Testament stresses external conformity and uses coercion to produce this. Elaborate object lessons are made a necessary part of national life. That the object lessons and the external conformity are not conceived of as ends in themselves is clear as early as Deuteronomy (6:4–9; 10:12–22). For the New Testament the issue is an internal obedience for which the Old Testament has created a hunger (Mk. 1, "He will baptize with the Spirit.") and a condemnation of the idolatrous use of the law. The New Testament is not discontinuous in that it contradicts the Old Testament, but in that it goes beyond it and deals with

issues which the Old Testament raises, but cannot answer. To shear the New Testament from the Old Testament is to cut loose the New from its moorings in history and to set it adrift on the sea of subjectivism (*à la* Bultmann). It is to leave the Old Testament as a contradiction to Isaiah: a stump from which no new shoot has burst forth.

### **The Validity of the Promise-Fulfillment Formula**

One scheme under which the Old-New relationship has often been seen is that of promise-fulfillment. While it is obvious that the Biblical writers use this scheme, its validity has been questioned, especially from the Old Testament point of view. This questioning is prompted in part by contextual studies which often suggest that some event much more near at hand than Christ's coming was in the writer's mind.

The question, then is twofold: to what degree are the New Testament writers' understandings imposed on Scripture and to what degree are we justified in following their lead?

If one grants that God can intervene in history and, in fact, has, there is every reason to suppose that He has shaped Scripture according to His purposes, as it claims. To ask how Isaiah understood his fifty-third chapter is thus not the only relevant question. How did God intend it? This is not to say that Isaiah necessarily pictured Jesus of Nazareth when he wrote the chapter nor to say that it does not have reference to God's expectations for the Jewish people. It is to say that what the chapter is talking about finds its finest flower in Jesus Christ, who is indeed all that the people of Israel might have been, but never became. This is not to say that the function of the Old Testament is to provide riddles for New Testament answers. It is to say that the New Testament understanding of the Incarnation as **the** (as opposed to **an**) appropriate keeping of God's promises is correct and we now, knowing how God chose to keep His promises, are justified in searching the Old Testament to see in what ways this new development illuminates His earlier activities.

### **The Value of Analogical Interpretation**

The above statement applies generally to analogical (typological) interpretation. Obviously, permitting this kind of method opens the door for imaginative inferences which do harm to the meaning of the text. On the other hand, to deny that there is a possible analogy between God's revelations to the people of the Old Testament and to those of the New while maintaining that such an analogy does exist between the Biblical text and the present seems arbitrary and inconsistent. Furthermore, granting the possibility of progressive revelation, one may very



well miss the full implication of a certain text by failing to compare other aspects of the revelation. He who will perform each of the three interpretive tasks honestly and rigorously (What does it say? What did it say to its first hearers? What does it say today?) need not easily fall into distorted and perverted interpretations. He who slights analogical interpretation may well find himself preaching a "history of religions" gospel, wherein the only value of past religions is a historical one.

#### IV. The Validity of a Single Interpretive Principle

Is there one principle by which the interpreter can infallibly discover what is the central content of any passage in the Old Testament?

This intriguing question has occupied much scholarly attention over the years. Especially when the unity of the Old Testament under a single divine "author" was stressed, such a principle was to be expected as a matter of course. However, the diversity of the books found in the Old Testament has not been capable of being put down. It is hard to see much in common between Ecclesiastes and Ruth for example, unless one descends to some "least common denominator" like "Fear God." So the search has gone on, fed by the conviction of fundamental unity, troubled by the data of, at least external, diversities.

Several principles have been proposed during the Christian era. Perhaps the oldest is the "Spiritual Sense" arrived at by means of allegorical methodology. Luther's was the Christological arrived at by means of the historical/critical and/or typological methodology. Eichrodt proposed covenant. Van Ruler has proposed kingdom. Students of W.F. Albright have proposed a method which is a principle: Biblical Theology. Brevard Childs, while scoring the weaknesses of this approach, is nonetheless still to be found within it.

The total disregard of spiritualizing exegesis for the historical context into which the revelation came has long since disqualified this principle. Likewise, Wright and others have recently criticized Luther's "Christomonism" as reconstituted by Barth, pointing out that movement is in precisely the wrong direction. Whereas our concept of Christ needs to be informed by the overarching concept of Yahweh, in fact, the concept of Yahweh is forced into the mold of Christ.

Van Ruler's idea of kingdom is attractive, particularly since it moves so well into the New Testament, thus correcting the misdirection noted above. So also Eichrodt's idea of Covenant. These single principles have the advantage of providing an organizing motif around which to group the diversities of the Old Testament. They have the disadvantage of tending to suppress these diversities (which is precisely the accusation

leveled by Barr<sup>1</sup> against Wright, et. al.) On the other hand, the very fact that these diverse writings are together in the canon suggests an underlying unity. Thus an attempt to understand whether they do speak a unified word is justifiable. It is at this point that a Biblical Theology seems to be the appropriate principle/method of interpretation.

It is understood that a passage must be interpreted first within its own literary context and historical milieu. However, those who accept this principle refuse to believe that the books of the Old Testament are together by chance. Rather they see the whole process of canonization as a recognition that there is a fundamental unity among these writings. This being so, one is justified in interpreting the passage in successively wider contexts, gauging its meaning in terms of that concept of God and His work which informs the whole. Finally, then one can only say what a passage means in the context of the whole Scripture.

Obviously, in the course of the centuries there have been many systems of interpretation proposed. This variety ought to provoke in the modern day interpreter a certain humility concerning the eternality of any systems to which he might come. However, he ought never to mistake diffidence for humility. Diffidence will be manifested in an unwillingness to take a stand, to commit oneself to any point of view. Humility will contend most ardently for its case, but will be free to admit that other points of view are conceivable and that their proponents are not, as a matter of course, morally reprehensible.

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<sup>1</sup>James Barr, "Revelation Through History in the Old Testament and in Modern Theology," *New Theology*, no. 1, ed. M Marty and D. Peerman (New York: the Macmillan Co., 1964), pp. 60–74 (and elsewhere).



## THE LORD OF LIFE AND DEATH

William J. Abraham\*

Text: Luke 7:11-17

Can God really do anything for this bigoted, blood-thirsty, blood-minded world of ours? From time to time that question haunts me like a nasty nagging nightmare. It haunts me when I think of what is taking place on the international scene. Nations sooner spend money on military hardware than on programs for the poor and underprivileged. I think of three out of every five people in the world going to bed hungry tonight; and sixty percent of the world's population trying to stay alive on the protein equivalent of one thin slice of ham a day. It haunts me, nationally, when I day-dream about going back to Ireland this summer. I think of innocent civilians who one moment are just out shopping and five minutes later are being picked up in little pieces and deposited in plastic bags to be buried, unidentified. It haunts me when I look realistically at so much of our church life. In the midst of all the chirpy optimism that I hear about revival and renewal I cannot help but wonder why we can still spend more on dog food and cosmetics than we do for missions. And with all the showy, trumpeting preaching about new life for the asking, I think of the words of Arthur J. Gossip as being aptly descriptive of the church when he says: "Our earthly conventions and ways, our grabbiness and pushfulness and self-indulgence are as local and parochial as a country accent." And it haunts me when I look honestly at my own life. I think of returning from a prayer-meeting and being nasty to my wife. Or I think of standing by the casket of a man I



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buried some months ago. He took a tumble down the stairs and bashed his brains in. So I stand by his casket and I grope prayerfully for a word from God for this hour; but deep down I want to cry out that life is mystery and misery and blood and sweat and tears!

The great danger of course is that the sheer mass of this misery will drive us to despair. We are tempted to believe that nobody—no not even Almighty God Himself—can really do anything for us! Or maybe it will make of us theological cynics. Take, for instance, a little poem by a student at the University of Kentucky, called “An Open Poem to God.” It runs:

Thank you, God, for everything;  
For wars and poverty,  
For racial riots and discrimination,  
For political propaganda,  
For corrupt governments and leaders,  
For starvation and over-population—  
Thank you, God, for Heaven—  
For we’ve served our time in Hell.

The marvel of the Bible is that it will never allow you to be deluded by that kind of despair or cynicism. In it you will find all the realism one can request: you will find bigots and big-shots, the prejudiced and the prostitute, murderers and malefactors, the theologically perplexed and the theologically perverted. But you will also find a note of triumph and victory that shatters our despair and turns our sunsets into sunrises. There’s a story about a widow in Luke’s gospel, chapter seven, that highlights this note of triumph with fitting eloquence. Both the context and the content of this short episode in the life of our Lord are worthy of our attention.

Turning to the context, the story of the widow of Nain is embedded in a mosaic of events that Luke has obviously brought together in order to insist emphatically that Jesus Christ is triumphant Lord no matter what the situation.

We see this to begin with in a situation where the slave of a respectable and devout Roman centurian is “sick and at the point of death.” Humanly speaking, this sick slave is exceptionally fortunate. He has a master who has money, who is deeply religious, who displays a humility not even seen in Israel, as Jesus Himself attests, and of course a master who cares enough to send for help when others of his trade would cheerfully send him away to die. But they are at the end of their tether where

this sickness is concerned. All they can do is send for Jesus. The need is met so quickly that all that Luke records is: "And when those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the slave well" (v. 10).

We find this note of triumph once again in the episode devoted to John the Baptist, beginning in verse 18. In John, of course, we meet a theological giant of the first degree. Jesus Himself refers to him as a prophet and even "more than a prophet" (v. 26). Indeed John had earlier come to see Jesus as the beloved Son of God who had come from the Father to purify and renew, to heal and to save, as is made clear in chapter two. But things had changed from those earlier days of confident preaching and ministry when people had flocked to be baptized. John is in prison now; the congregation he once had has dwindled to one and that one does not exactly show much prospect of conversion for he is a proud, superstitious, and seductive king named Herod. So the seeds of doubt have sprouted and John sends two disciples to Jesus with the question: "Are you he who is to come, or shall we look for another?" That Jesus is triumphant Lord of this situation is succinctly stated in two verses that are crammed with life:

In that hour he cured many diseases and plagues and evil spirits and on many that were blind he bestowed sight. And he answered them, "Go, and tell John what you have seen and heard; the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have the good news preached to them" (vv. 21–22).

The last part of Luke 7 is devoted to a very different situation where Jesus again reveals his masterly control of life. On the one side is a bigoted Pharisee named Simon. Sternly devoted to a religion of good taste and duty, petty rules and regulations, he invites Jesus to his home for a counseling session. One wonders if Simon hopes that he will be able to straighten out this bright but worldly young rabbi before He goes on corrupting the masses who are not keen on His new teaching. On the other side you have a prostitute. She slips into Simon's house almost unnoticed armed, not just with her kisses and tears of love, but with a whole flask of alabaster ointment. In between is Jesus. Simon is getting more and more embarrassed: "What if it gets out that a real live prostitute has been showering kisses on this radical young rabbi right under my roof!" He thinks, "Just think of it, he has the audacity to call himself a prophet; why we all know prophets don't hang around with prostitutes." While Simon is getting more embarrassed the prostitute is getting more and more emotional. The kisses, tears and ointment overflow in gratitude and love for this man who has given her back her self-respect,

and made her feel good to be a woman again. In between Jesus is unruffled, "Simon," he says quietly, "did you hear the story about the creditor who had two debtors . . ." and in ten seconds Simon is left speechless. And then he runs to the prostitute, "Thank you so much for coming to see me. Understand, now, your sins really are forgiven. Away, off you go in peace." And away she goes, in peace.

So the context of the story of the widow of Nain shows then very clearly that for Luke Jesus Christ is Lord of life with all its harmony, misery and perplexity, its immorality and bigotry.

But it is the content of the story which really focuses this point most eloquently. Indeed it is interesting that it is in the middle of this very story that Luke first refers to Jesus of Nazareth as the Lord (v.13).

The setting of the event is a funeral procession literally whining its way out of the town of Nain. Up front is the band of professional mourners with their flutes and cymbals, uttering in a kind of frenzy their shrill cries of grief. Behind them is the widow, the central figure in the procession. She had had little sleep the night before as she contemplated the events of the tomorrow, which was now today. It is true that she had faced this before when her husband died. But at least then she had hope: she had her son! But this was no more. She had nothing—no husband, no son, no legal rights, no inheritance to call her own. All she could look forward to were sobs and tears and restless nights when sleep would elude her and the loneliness of a barren home, bereft of all the warmth and love it once enjoyed. Behind her is the bier—a long wicker-work basket—and on it is the corpse for all to view. Round about walk the crowd that have reverently joined the procession as it heads out of the city to the graveyard which still stands today. Then they meet the Jesus, Lord of life. Immediately he takes control as his sensitive mind feels the pressure of the heart that is breaking in the center of that procession.

And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her and said to her, "Do not weep." And he came and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still and he said, "Young man, I say to you, arise." And the dead man sat up, and began to speak. And he gave him to his mother, (vs. 13-15).

We don't know the details of what happened. What we do know, however, is that a funeral dirge had become a song of victory, a funeral procession had become a march of life, a public highway had become a highway of glory, and the Lord of life had become Lord of death! "Fear seized them all; and they glorified God, saying, 'A great prophet has arisen among us!' and 'God has visited his people!'" (v.16).

So we return to the twentieth century with all its bigotry, blood-thirstiness and bloody-mindedness. We know that we will face sickness and death, and cruelty to little children and rat-infested housing facilities. We will see lean faces haunted by poverty, and manly young bodies broken by war. We will preach at funerals where the mystery and darkness of suffering will overwhelm, if not break us, and we will preside at board meetings where one Christian will give hell to another Christian because they cannot agree on a color for a new carpet.

But we return with a new light in our faces and a fresh spring in our feet. For we have discovered that in Jesus Christ, God has had the last word. In His life, death, and resurrection, God's sovereign rule has been inaugurated right here in the midst of sickness, perplexity, bigotry, and death. As George MacLeod, founder of the Iona Community has put it:

. . . Jesus Christ was not crucified in a cathedral between two candles, but on a cross between two thieves; on the town garbage heap; at the corssroad so cosmopolitan that they had to write His title in Hebrew and in Latin and in Greek . . . at the kind of place where cynics talk smut, and thieves curse, and soldiers gamble.





# BOOK REVIEWS

*Every Day With the Psalms*, by Mendell Taylor. Kansas City, Missouri: Beacon Hill Press, 1972. 307 pages. \$3.95.

This volume by a professor at Nazarene Theological Seminary is a day-by-day devotional study of the book of Psalms, a sequel to his *Every Day With Jesus*. The Psalms are divided into groups of fifty-two, each group with a caption and an area of concentration. One week is given to freedom from want based on Psalm 23. Six messages follow based upon a devotional exposition of a Psalm. Another week is given to "the way to and the way of holiness," based on Psalms 24-29. For another week Psalms 30-36 deal with "a right concept of time." Each meditation includes the text, the exposition on the text, and a concluding prayer. The messages are practical and relevant to existing needs; they give awareness of contemporary theological issues and the necessity for practical application of the biblical message. The reader will find the volume both interesting and edifying.

George A. Turner

*Dictionary of Satanism*, by Wade Baskin. New York: Philosophical Library, Inc., 1972. 351 pages. \$12.50.

After looking through this extensive dictionary, one may conclude that the author's own words in the Preface best express the purpose of the book and the significance of its contents:

The tremendous current interest in occult phenomena is widespread and embraces all levels of society and sophistication. Popular novels, films, music, magazines, and newspapers, particularly those of the underground type, produce a constant stream of Satanic encounters, first-hand accounts of presumably inexplicable situations involving spirits, witchcraft, and other Satanic phenomena is their widest applications. Dark beliefs that have haunted men for millennia have sprung into new life. Everywhere there is a passionate eagerness to discover and test, to probe the outer

fringes of knowledge, to draw new assurances from superstitions, esoteric cults, and Cabalistic teachings that lack scientific verification. From the gruesome murder of Sharon Tate to the pay-as-you-join Church of Satan administered by Anton Lavey, the omnipresence of the cult of Evil is undeniable.

The present work is intended to serve as a concise but comprehensive reference for the serious reader. It embraces concepts, issues, people, places, and events associated through the ages with Satan in his multifaceted but continuous manifestations. (pp. v,vi)

The perspective of this book is informational—to acquaint the reader with peoples, places, and events, and ideas that relate to what the author calls “Satanism.” This reviewer did not sense that the book was hortatory or aimed at propaganda in any way.

Frank Bateman Stanger

*The Flood Reconsidered*, by Frederick A. Filby. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1970. 148 pages. \$1.95.

This publication is a delightfully refreshing evangelical approach to the biblical Flood. A strong recommendation for it is that while factual information abounds, the author has avoided telling all the facts he knows whether relevant or not. Secondly, he has not sought to explain every known geological, literary and archaeological feature by one event.

The author discourages two audiences immediately. Those who wish to compress all of geological history into the year of the flood need not read beyond the first few pages to find an opposing perspective. The author loses the skeptical scientific community in the preface by supporting the authority of the biblical account on the basis of its sobriety and Christ’s reference to it, perfectly Christian supports, but not the letting of the facts of later chapters speak for themselves in supporting the accuracy and authority of the biblical account.

The strongest section of the book, and fully one-third its volume, is the initial chapter on “Scientific Aspects of the Flood.” The author seems on familiar ground and presents his materials in a mature and scholarly fashion. He represents an alternative viewpoint to those of John Skinner, on one hand, and Morris and Whitcomb, on the other, in

a professional and non-personal manner. The chapter begins with a consideration of evidence for catastrophic events, showing the increase near the end of Pleistocene into the Recent period. Attention is then directed to the three primary causes of floods, and the extent and date of the flood. Filby seems undecided about the extent of the flood, arriving apparently at a flood of the "entire then-known" world, but not a universal flood. Extended attention is devoted to the difficulty of different types of dating methods. He concludes that 4000 B.C. is the earliest possible date, 2400 B.C. is the most recent date, and somewhere between 3000-2500 B.C. as the most probable. The concluding portion of the chapter is devoted to a discussion of the hiatus between the Paleolithic and Neolithic cultures, enumerating such phenomena as the extinction of Paleolithic animals, and art, the deposit of sterile layers of soil, and fissures filled with bones obviously accumulated while the area was under water.

The handling of literary evidence for the flood in chapters two and three is adequate, but the interpretive efforts with biblical and historical materials in subsequent chapters, are less sophisticated and polished. An example is the rather strained effort to line up the deliverance at the Red Sea under Moses and Christ's resurrection on anniversaries of the exit from the Ark, a supposed providential arrangement of "new eras." Even should this speculation prove true it has little value to redemption history or Christian polemics, and certainly depreciates the value of an otherwise scholarly effort. Outside this one lapse, this book consists of a positive contribution to the Christian defense of the authenticity of the biblical account of the flood.

Ivan L. Zabilka

*Answers to Questions*, by F.F. Bruce. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973. 264 pages. \$6.95.

An evangelical scholar offers his answer to questions, basing his discussions on a life-time of biblical exposition and research. In twenty years his column in *The Harvester* magazine has proved to be one of the most popular features in that journal. This volume, containing a wide selection of the questions treated therein, will prove helpful to laymen and ministers generally. Dr. Bruce deals with sensitive moral questions

as well as difficult doctrinal issues. Part I considers questions relating to biblical texts; Part II is concerned with answers on various subjects. Topics discussed include science and faith, immortality, healing, demon possession, baptism, marriage and divorce, the ministry of women, and eschatology. The questions, submitted by others, reflect majority interests. The answers reflect consideration of differing points of view and are not unduly dogmatic. The author is Rylands Professor of Biblical History and Exegesis at the University of Manchester.

James D. Robertson

*God's Way of Reconciliation, Studies in Ephesians 2*, by D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1972. 380 pages. \$7.95.

Originally presented as sermons at Westminster Chapel, London, these expositions deal with man's basic problem—estrangement from God. After showing the chapter in point in the context of the Epistle, the apostle states the purpose of the chapter: to set forth God's way of reconciliation. "I know of no chapter in the Bible which states so clearly and so perfectly the essential evangelistic message for the unbeliever and the status and the privileges of the believer" (p. vii).

The volume expounds in grimly realistic fashion man's sinfulness and lostness and it unfolds with penetrating insight something of the glory of God's grace. Regarding the latter, Lloyd-Jones observes that our view of ourselves as Christians, our whole conception of salvation tends to be defective and inadequate. The Christian's dim awareness of the significance of his regeneration, of the completeness of his justification, of his standing and status in the presence of God—reflects the fact that he lives too much unto himself, that he lives too much in the realm of feeling the subjective. The antidote is to see ourselves objectively as we really are **in the purpose of God**. The chief end of our salvation is the glory of God, "that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Jesus Christ" (2:7). A thought the Christian needs to entertain as much as possible at the seat of consciousness! All this exposition of the character and the being and the greatness of God comes to pass through the church, the body of believers. Here is the cure for undue subjectivity in Christian experience. We are to see ourselves as part of the eternal plan of God. Thereby we are

lifted out of our little subjective states and modes and feeling.

These sermons (33 in all) on Ephesians 2 will provide inspiration and insight for all preachers of the Word.

James D. Robertson

*e Cross and the Flag*, by Clouse, Linder, Pierard. Carol Stream, Ill: Creation House, 1972. 261 pages. \$2.95 (paperback).

This is a book that calls for Christian involvement in human affairs. Why do conservative Christians shy away from political and social involvement? It is pointed out that Jesus, in His ministry, never distinguished between the "religious" and the "social." He fed the hungry, healed the sick, and raised the dead. He asked that His disciples not be taken from the world but kept from its evil (Jn. 17:15); signifying that believers are not to live in monastic isolation but rather that they are to be engaged in bringing God's value-judgements to bear upon the world's structures and practices. A purely social gospel is little more than "humanism overlaid with a thin veneer of Christianity," while a gospel devoted exclusively to saving souls may be "so heavenly minded that it is no earthly good" (p.17). Men like Billy Graham and Carl Henry are cited as strong supporters of this call for Christian involvement manifested at the U.S. Congress on Evangelism in 1969 also testifies to attitudinal changes taking place in evangelistic circles.

Each of eleven professors contributes a chapter to the volume. (Seven of them are teaching at universities, the others at church-related colleges.) All are evangelicals. Chapter headings include "The Christian and Political Involvement in Today's World," "Evangelical Christianity and the Radical Left," "Evangelism and Social Concern," and "The Christian, War, and Militarism."

In his preface to the book, Senator Mark Hatfield says, "Peter instructs us to give honor to everyone: love to the brotherhood, reverence to God, honor to the sovereign (I Pet. 2:17). In our time, it is essential that evangelicals discern the difference between the reverence that is due only to God, and the honor that is due to the sovereign. Only then will we know how to render unto God all that is His" (p. 11).

James D. Robertson

*Ethics, Real or Relative*, by William H. Bartlette. New York: Vantage Press, 1971. 135 pages. \$4.50.

The ethical enterprise of our time has been complicated by several trends in our culture. Among them are: mechanistic philosophies of human nature, the rise of a strong anti-intellectualism, the treatment of human beings as laboratory animals, the de-supernaturalizing of religion in general and of Christianity in particular, and the articulation of the so-called situation ethic.

Professor Bartlette has sought to come to grips with these issues, particularly that of situationism in which moral decisions are allegedly to be made by the individual's deciding "what is right in view of all the circumstances of the existential moment." Against such a view, our author makes a case for a principal ethic, with guidelines and with built-in calls for discipline and restraint.

In the early part of the volume, Professor Bartlette analyzes the contemporary ethical mood and sorts out the ingredients which comprise the behavioral "mix" with which our age confronts us. He sees clearly the interlocking relationship between theological (dogmatic) liberalism and the "new morality" of today. Both seek, each at its own level, to erode the standards and ideals of earlier generations.

Chapter four entitled "The Ethics of Jesus Christ" comprises the heart of the volume. Here our author portrays Jesus Christ as embodying as well as teaching ethical conduct, and as appraising with perpetual validity the relation of man's sinfulness to the entire ethical issue. He emphasizes, but without the sentimentality which often marks such an emphasis, the place of the individual in our Lord's thought, and balances this element against the New Testament stress upon man's social responsibility.

Nor is his understanding of the ethic of Jesus that of a mere "ethic of duty" unmixed and unmodified by the transcendent ethic of love. This can be, as he rightly observes, a mere support to the ego. Rather, the Christian ethic is shown to be underlaid by a love given to man by a God who redeems and transforms. In other words, it is "The Spirit of the Lord" who makes possible obedience to biblical mandates.

At times, the author seems to make too much of the essentially ethical quality of our Lord's teaching, as opposed, for example, to his emphasis upon correct belief. He recovers himself in Chapter five, where he pronounces believing to be "basic to every ethical standard." (p.99) He observes, correctly we think, that the Christian ethic answers to

deep requirements in human nature, and to the structures of the world in general.

The discussion of freedom leads the author into his final consideration, the relation of avant garde youth of today to the ethical order. He sees clearly the ambiguities connected with freedom, especially the conflict between liberty and law. He sees the resolution in terms of self-control and self-discipline. Despite the negative visibilities in many of the expressions of modern youth, Professor Bartlette sees hopeful signs of the horizon—signs of creative rather than destructive activity, as for example among serious ecological groups, and of interest in a Christ-oriented way of life. He hopes fervently that the adult generation may react in understanding and appreciation.

While the volume appeals to this reviewer as rambling in spots, its overall thrust is wholesome. It is geared to the lay-person, and has something creative to say.

Harold B. Kuhn

*Principalities and Powers*, by John Warwick Montgomery. Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship Press, 1973. 224 pages. \$4.95.

Today's Preoccupation with the occult, the esoteric, the mysterious contrasts sharply with contemporary technological understanding. Nor is this concern limited to the unchurched and the ungodly. The purveyors of occultism do not neglect the Christian elements in our society, nor are they summarily rejected by them.

Dr. Montgomery, certainly the last person whom those who know him would regard to be naive or credulous, has in this volume sought to put himself inside the mentality of those who do accept occultism as a genuine phenomenon. He traces psychological-cultural patterns which have been congenial to belief in the occult, beginning with the ancient world, traversing the Medieval and Renaissance periods, and coming down to our own era. Evangelicals do not come through unscathed, for our author sees qualities prevailing in the extremist wing which afford a climate (called "kookiness") which is congenial to acceptance of quasi-occult beliefs and techniques.

The volume contains valuable insights, and even-more-valuable warnings. At times, one could wish that Dr. Montgomery had been a bit



more discriminating in his listing of the forms of elements of "spiritual experience" in a lump form. But this does not negate the positive value of his work for the discerning reader. He sees clearly that those who dabble in the occult are expressing unsatisfied spiritual longings, are manifesting a search for truth.

The volume embodies a wide range of research, and in the Appendices and the Notes include data of much interest to the researcher in the area. More important still, Dr. Montgomery raises significant warnings against the peril of demanding the spectacular in Christian experience. He recognizes that in all occult areas there are blended subtle trickery with what Arthur Darby Nock called "the margin of the unexplained." The volume bears also a hidden warning against today's cult of irrationalism, with its own form of "seeking after a sign."

Harold B. Kuhn

*Hidden Art*, by Edith Schaeffer and illustrated by Deidre Ducker. Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House, 1971. 214 pages. \$3.95.

At first one will be tempted to think this delightful book on creativity is only for wives, but if both men and women would take its contents seriously, health, vigor, and life would all find great enrichment.

Edith Schaeffer, wife of the famed apologist, Francis, works on a simple and profoundly true thesis: we are made in the image of God; part of that image is creativity; when we create we fulfill God's purposes and ourselves. She cites the hypothetical case of the busy executive who, instead of going to the garden at day's end for refreshment, sits down in front of the TV, only to have his problems accentuated instead of relieved. The wise counselor will learn from Mrs. Schaeffer's "natural" therapy, and find it in the long run far more effective than an over-analytical program of counseling.

Ways and means of bringing out the "hidden art" in all of us are legion. Music can be a family affair; painting, sketching, sculpturing can be done by more people than we think; interior decoration can add just that touch of color and zest that makes living fun; gardens and gardening can put one in contact with creation; flower arranging has all kinds of potential for brightening an otherwise dull corner; food can be



prepared to make interesting meals; writing—whether prose or poetry—possesses capacities for fulfillment even if never published; drama's possibilities are as high as the sky; recreation can be both creative and re-creative; variety, color and design in clothing can add liveliness to life. Her last two chapters on integration and environment open doors to racial and ethnic unity, and make vivid significant ecological, social, and religious responsibilities. The beauty of this volume is underscored by an abundance of pencil sketches.

Not the least of the benefits of this volume is the plethora of suggestions for making a deeply meaningful family life style. In a day and age when families are frequently neglected, the beautiful innovations itemized are welcome indeed. Pastors counseling with problem families, or just plain "dull" families, would do well to place this volume in the hands of mothers.

Altogether, this book is warmly welcomed for a great many reasons, only a few which can be listed in this limited space.

Donald E. Demaray

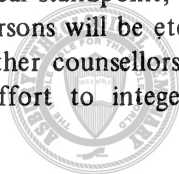
*The Christian Psychology of Paul Tournier* by Gary R. Collins. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1973. 222 pages. \$4.95.

This book goes far in achieving its broad purpose of providing a useful summary and a critical evaluation of the writings of Paul Tournier, professional psychologists, student of psychology, and others interested in human nature and counseling may learn from it.

The author used a threefold method of study in preparing to write this volume. He made a careful study of the writings themselves; second, he interviewed persons who knew Tournier; and, thirdly, he spent considerable time with Tournier personally.

Collins seems to maintain a basically unbiased attitude toward Tournier's thought. He found many ideas to approve but, on the other hand, he criticizes Tournier for being too simplistic, especially in his earlier books. He finds some of his book poorly organized and poorly written. From an evangelical standpoint, he criticizes Tournier's tendency to suggest that all persons will be eternally saved.

Many pastors and other counsellors will appreciate the author's summary of Tournier's effort to integrate psychology and biblical Christianity.



## BOOK BRIEFS

*Handbook of Preaching Resources from Literature*, by James D. Robertson. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1972. 268 pages. \$2.95 (paperback).

This is a reprint in paperback edition of a book originally published by Macmillan (1972). Here are moral and spiritual excerpts from literary classics too numerous and voluminous to have always at hand. Says John Oman, of Cambridge, "Inspiration comes largely from keeping company with the inspired . . . (Among) all kinds of defects in our present system of theological education, the chief defect I take to be ignorance of literature." There are two comprehensive indexes: the first lists each reference alphabetically by subject and subheading; the second, by author and source.

*The Invading Gospel*, by Jack Celmo. Old Tappen (N.J.): Revell, n.d. 128 pages. \$3.50.

This book, first published in England (1958), describes a distinguished British poet's journey "from isolated self-involvement to the joy of Christian fellowship." The writer felt an unresolvable conflict between Christianity and his own poetic temperament. After long struggle, he found the solution: man must surrender his unregenerate soul and accept the divine invasion. Only the Gospel of invading grace, with all its "transfiguring paradoxes," is adequate. The book is not for the casual reader. For it is a study in depth of a brilliant intellectual's pilgrimage from darkness to light.

*A Time to Seek, Life and Faith Decisions of Youth*, by Lee Fisher. Nashville and New York: Abingdon, 1972. 127 pages. \$1.95 (paperback).

This inspirational book treats issues of life and faith which confront young people today. Topics discussed include identity, friendship, love, right and wrong, honesty, sin, suffering, conversion, and the hereafter. The author gives some clear directions to help youth understand themselves and the way of Christ. He served Billy Graham for twenty years as research assistant.

*The Person of Christ*, Volume II, by H. Brash Bonsall: London: Christian Literature Crusade, 1972. 256 pages. (paperback).

This book, by the principal of Brimingham Bible Institute, is the fruit of many years of teaching. The first volume presented the Christ of the Creeds. The present volume, concerned chiefly with the Jesus of History, is a scholarly answer to those who insist that the Gospel accounts are but "legends, myths, and fables about a hero, comparable to the divinities of other religions" (Preface); the chapters are prefaced by questions to help the reader get the most from his study. The book will meet the needs of a wide readership.

*Pastoral Work*, A Source Book for Ministers, by Andrew Watterson Blackwood. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1971. 252 pages. \$2.95 (paperback).

Here is a precise yet wide-scoped book on the problems, small and great, which confront the pastor. Though thoroughly educated, Pastor Blackwood provides an home-spun weaving of insight and illustration that succeeds in catching the spirit of our time.

*Many Witnesses, One Lord*, by William Barclay, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1973. 128 pages. \$1.50 (paperback).

Diversity amidst unity characterizes the message of the New Testament. There is no one standardized religious experience; there is no one stereotyped interpretation of the Christian witness. The author seeks to discover what Christ and Christianity meant to the individuals who wrote the books of the New Testament—a challenging, difficult task indeed! Pursued by an eminent biblical scholar and preacher, the findings, as here related, proved rewarding reading. As in all his writings, the author's freshness of insight and concreteness of style bespeak for this little book a wide reading.

*Plain Talk on Ephesians*, by Manford George Gutzke. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973. 191 pages. \$1.95 (paperback).

Other books by the author in the "Plain Talk" series deal with Matthew, John, Luke, and Acts. The present volume comprises a section-by-section interpretation of Ephesians. Mainly devotional, rich in con-

temporary allusion, and written in lay-language, these Bible-based expositions will be valuable for both sermon preparation and lay reading.

*A Survey of Bible Prophecy*, by R. Ludwigson. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973. 187 pages. \$2.95 (paperback).

Previously published as *Bible Prophecy Notes*, this book has been revised and up-dated, and added to Zondervan's *Contemporary Evangelical Perspectives* Series. It sets forth the different views on major prophetic themes such as the millennium, the tribulation, the restoration of Israel, and the second advent of our Lord. Bibliographies and maps are helpful.

*Angels, Angels, Angels*, by Landrum P. Leavell. Nashville: Broadman, 1973. 96 pages. \$1.95.

What does the Bible teach about angels? Their place in Bible Times? How are they organized? Are there angels today? The pastor of First Baptist Church of Wichita Falls answers questions such as these. A little book on a little-known subject!

*Fractured Personalities*, by Gary R. Collins. Carol Stream, Illinois: Creation House, 1972. 217 pages. \$2.95 (paperback).

This is the third volume in the *Psychology for Church Leaders* Series. The first was *Man in Transition*; the second, *Effective Counseling*. The present volume treats the nature and causes of mental illness. It seeks to acquaint the church worker concerning abnormal behavior. Written by a competent psychologist from an evangelical perspective, the book is free of complicated jargon.

*The Parables of Jesus*, by George A. Buttrick. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1973. 274 pages. \$2.95 (paperback).

This paperback edition of the author's earlier publication will make the more accessible a work that is becoming something of a classic in parabolic study. Interpretation of the parables follows the findings of

competent critics of Scripture. The parables treated here become relevant to life in the twentieth century.

*Issues of Theological Warfare: Evangelicals and Liberals*, by Richard J. Coleman. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972. 206 pages. \$3.45 (paperback).

Although the past decade has seen unmistakable evidence in the direction of theological ecumenicity, Protestant Christianity remains sharply divided. The author sees the battle lines drawn between liberals and evangelicals. Here he presents both sides of the big issues, making no effort to suggest compromises. His position is that both have something to teach; and both have something to learn. This is a book for those who welcome dialogue.

*Evangelistic Sermons of Clovis G. Chappell*, by Clovis G. Chappell. Nashville and New York: Abingdon, 1973. 144 pages. \$2.95.

Selections from the writings of one of America's outstanding preachers, these messages show the author's remarkable gift not only for getting to the heart of the gospel but for reaching the heart of "everyman." They center around the perennial question: Who is this Jesus and what response does He demand?

*What Do You Think of Jesus*, by David P. Scaer. St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia, 1973. 114 pages. \$2.50 (paperback).

The author attempts to answer questions such as: Were the Gospel writers prejudiced? Did Jesus really live up to His name; Was He dead serious about Satan? What kind of Mosaic footsteps did Jesus follow? Theological and philosophical, the book is nevertheless eminently readable. It should enrich Christian commitment.

*Modern Myths*, by Cecil E. Sherman. Nashville: Broadman, 1973. 122 pages. \$1.50 (paperback).

The writer would have us look squarely at some of today's myths—basic assumptions by which we live, but which do not stand the test of truth. He calls us to reexamine our lives in our relationships with others and to see how the gospel can change our habits of thinking and our way of life.

*Life in the Heights*, by J.H. Jowett. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1973. 266 pages. \$2.95 (paperback).

These brief expositions from the Epistles are sampling of Jowett's spiritual insight and remarkable beauty of style, a combination rarely found in sermon literature. The winsome charm of this outstanding preacher of the grace of God reaches you movingly even through the printed page.

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OF ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Frank Bateman Stanger

*Dynamics of the Faith*, ed. by Gene Miller, Max Gaulke and Donald Smith. Houston: Gulf Coast Bible College, 1972. 304 pages. \$4.95.

In an age of confusion and doubt, it is heartening to hear a positive affirmation of unchanging gospel verities—the more so when the voice comes from an institution of academic instruction.

Such is the hallmark of this anthology published by Gulf Coast Bible College. In compact chapters, it sets forth basic doctrines of the church and shows their application in evangelism. The editors, all of whom are leaders in the Church of God (Anderson), write from a perspective of evangelical realism. A devotion to the Holy Scripture shines through every page.

This fine Christian training school is to be commended for the study. It reflects a reverence in the presence of truth which distinguishes genuine higher learning. I believe that its publication will be received with gladness by all within the Church of God, regardless of their name.

Robert E. Coleman





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## About First Fruits Press

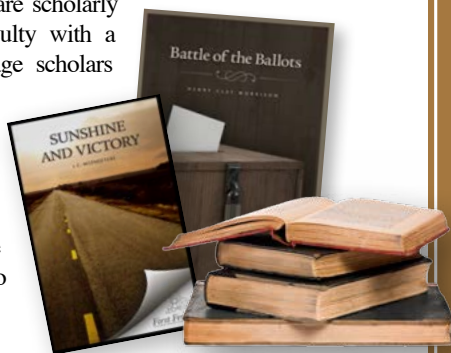
Under the auspices of B. L. Fisher Library, First Fruits Press is an online publishing arm of Asbury Theological Seminary. The goal is to make academic material freely available to scholars worldwide, and to share rare and valuable resources that would not otherwise be available for research. First Fruits publishes in five distinct areas: heritage materials, academic books, papers, books, and journals.

In the Journals section, back issues of The Asbury Journal will be digitized and so made available to a global audience. At the same time, we are excited to be working with several faculty members on developing professional, peer-reviewed, online journals that would be made freely available.

Much of this endeavor is made possible by the recent gift of the Kabis III scanner, one of the best available. The scanner can produce more than 2,900 pages an hour and features a special book cradle that is specifically designed to protect rare and fragile materials. The materials it produces will be available in ebook format, easy to download and search.

First Fruits Press will enable the library to share scholarly resources throughout the world, provide faculty with a platform to share their own work and engage scholars without the difficulties often encountered by print publishing. All the material will be freely available for online users, while those who wish to purchase a print copy for their libraries will be able to do so. First Fruits Press is just one way the B. L. Fisher Library is fulfilling the global vision of Asbury Theological Seminary to spread scriptural holiness throughout the world.

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