THE ASBURY SEMINARIAN

VOL XXV   JAN 1971   No. 1
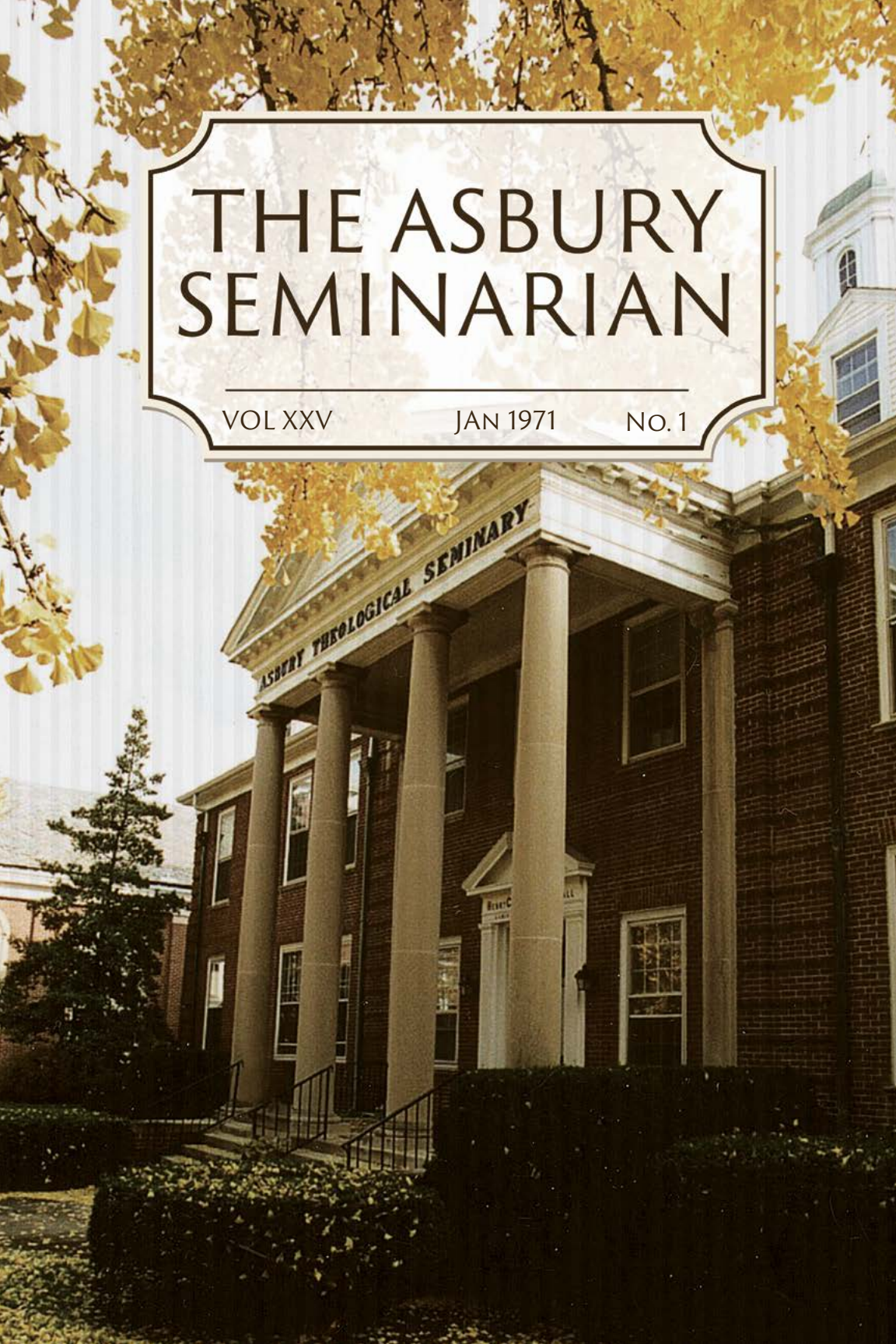
The Asbury Seminarian

EDITORIAL BOARD

The ASBURY

SEMINARIAN

The Wesleyan Message In The Life And Thought Of Today

The ASBURY SEMINARIAN

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ARTICLES

The Evangelical and COCU

Kenneth Kinghorn*

Not all Christians in the "Evangelical Wing" of Christendom are agreed concerning the ecumenical movement. Some evangelical Christians regard the movement generally as a cage of unclean birds, and they feel that any attempt at "dialogue" with more liberal Christians is a basic compromise. They regard denominationalism as the will of God and are not greatly bothered by the divided state of the Church.

However, there are other Evangelical Christians who seek to relate positively to the ecumenical movement. They understand the Bible to teach that the Church is not a human organization, but a divine organism. Therefore, one cannot choose his Christian brother. All persons "in Christ" are united into a single body. These Evangelicals feel that the divided state of the Church does not reflect its true nature, and the failure of Christians to demonstrate visible unity is inimical to mission and witness. They take seriously what they feel to be their ecumenical responsibility, and they do not pretend to have easy answers to all the issues.

Evangelical Christians who are seeking to be constructive in their relationship to the ecumenical movement face the particularly knotty problem of COCU. Indeed, the Consultation of Church Union (COCU) is perhaps the most perplexing ecumenical problem facing the conciliar movement generally, and evangelical ecumenists particularly.

There are two reasons why COCU is an especially perplexing problem for ecumenically-minded Evangelicals. (1) They are basically committed to the "ecumenical ideal," and they want to approach other Christians in an irenic manner. However, they have mixed emotions because their understanding of the ecumenical ideal and the form being taken by COCU cannot be equated in their minds. (2) The hasty preparations which COCU has made for itself cause most Evangelicals to wish for a more lengthy and well-built runway before liftoff is attempted.

*Associate Professor of Church History, Asbury Theological Seminary.

Many evangelical Christians, therefore, feel frustrated as they seek to relate to COCU. This is of course especially true of those who find themselves within denominations which are actively engaged in COCU talks. They see many excellent ecumenical insights woven into the structures of COCU, and they rejoice that serious discussions in COCU have been fruitful in several areas.

This is as it should be. More than a half century of ecumenical experience has been available for COCU to draw upon. And valuable lessons learned in this history have informed some concerning the developments in COCU. Especially encouraging to Evangelicals are the COCU "intentions" for the continuing life of the united church. Some of the important ones follow.

First, it is gratifying to evangelicals to note that COCU seeks to respect and enhance the deeply personal character of the Christian faith. COCU insists that only by costly individual choice can persons yield full loyalty to Christ. Personal commitment is emphasized at least in the documents.

Second, an attempt is being made by COCU to restore and renew the full scriptural sense of the terms "membership" and "member." The pledge of commitment to Christ is not seen as an easy or minimal step. Church membership involves total self-surrender and unconditional commitment to the vocation of the church in the world. Conceptions of membership which derive from secular organizations are resisted in the interest of discipleship and renewal. Again, this is "theory," but it is very good theory. Evangelicals concur in this emphasis.

Third, COCU recognizes that the church is a steward and trustee of the truth of the gospel. Each member of the United Church is to be taught the meaning of Christian faith and helped to put that faith to work. These and a number of other commendable features of COCU planning are welcomed with appreciation by Evangelicals.

Yet there are some fundamental issues which Evangelicals feel need to be raised and resolved before they would want to give an endorsement to the total package. They want to be able to raise these issues from the posture of "loyal opposition." They would hope that their concerns would be taken seriously, and not written off as "reactionary" by COCU zealots.

At the time of this writing most Evangelicals, if faced with a "yes" or "no" decision with respect to COCU consummation, probably would vote "no." There are several reasons for this position. I can be most authentic if I list these reasons from my own perspective of one who happens to find his home in the United Methodist tradition. There are others, whose communions are involved in COCU discussion, whose perspective is from the Reformed–Congregational tradition. But from my own vantage point I see the principal objections to COCU to be the following.

THE MINISTRY

There is no satisfactory reconciliation of the problem of the ordained ministry. Essentially COCU (in deference to the Protestant Episcopal Church) embraces the "historic episcopacy" and its concomitant, "apostolic succession." In the proposed service of union there would be a corporate act of laying on of hands in which and through which all would ask God "to complete and perfect what is amiss or incomplete in our ministries and to give us whatever of his authority and grace we need. . . ." In ordination of new ministers this "orderly transfer of ministerial authority and function helps guard the continuity of the Church's faith expressed in word and sacrament." This is essentially the doctrine of apostolic succession, which has no foundation in the New Testament. It is mechanical, and it regards other ministries as either incomplete or invalid. In a day of the growing awareness of the laity as having a "ministry" this is a movement backwards toward an unfortunate development in the medieval church. I am not arguing that there should be no ordained ministry—I think there is definite warrant for this! But, like all other gifts, the ministry is sola gratia, and grace may not be restricted to institutions.

Moreover, the place of the bishop seems unclear. An episcopacy should be functional if it is to be practical. This does not seem to be the case in the present COCU plan. COCU would leave us with some 1,800 bishops and make that office about equal to what United Methodists call a District Superintendent. This would be expensive and serve only to confuse the nature of the episcopal office. This proliferation of bishops is not consistent with COCU's rejection of a "sent" ministry in favor of a "called" ministry. This is almost a complete movement to congregationalism. One can fairly ask whether this would not discourage "prophetic preaching." Moreover, in this scheme the collective wisdom of the total church structure is easily short-circuited by any wealthy congregation.

SOURCES OF AUTHORITY

COCU documents reflect a weakness, or at least an ambiguity, at the point of the relationship of the Bible and tradition. The recognization that various communions have their fair share of insights to contribute to the Church catholic is a good point. Failure to apprehend this basic insight is at the root of much of institutional sectarianism, theological smugness, lack of charity, and actual doctrinal mutations which border on heresy. Many Evangelicals welcome the presense of an openness to truth from other traditions.

However, COCU at times seems to blur the distinction between men's traditions and the gospel tradition. There is a tendency in COCU to fail to see that frequently the Bible is at odds with tradition. Indeed, often the Bible pronounces judgment upon the traditions of men. Evangelicals

are not sure what interpretation is put on such statements as, "Certainly it is the case that in the Church, Scripture and Tradition are bound together."

Evangelicals are committed to the "Protestant principle" of ecclesia semper reformanda (the Church always reforming). And the basis for continual reformation within the Church must be the Bible. From time to time all traditions of men need testing by the Scripture. This is a crucial emphasis for Evangelicals. They wish for clarification at this point. The fundamental source of authority must be Christ alone as revealed in the Canonical Scriptures. Sola Scripture, Solus Christus!

GRASS ROOTS AGREEMENT

The collective witness of all the constituent parts of the participating denominations does not seem to be adequately considered. Time has been too short and the delegations have been too small for a satisfying blending of traditions. If COCU were to be consummated at this time, my fear is that it might create more disunity, schism, and division than it would heal. There is a moving of the wind to be sure. But there is no common agreement at this time as to just what direction the wind is taking. Certainly we cannot direct how the Spirit may move—He moves where He wills. More grass roots participation and agreement is needed before we are ready for a united church. A living and vital blend is not yet an achievement of COCU.

COCU is top heavy, savoring of bureaucracy. It seems to have come down from the top rather than grown up organically from the churches and the people. United Methodists, for example, are still working out many adjustments regarding the recent merger of The Methodist Church and The Evangelical United Brethren Church. They have not yet had time adequately to think about further mergers.

Christians today are more open to trans-denominational cooperation than ever before in history. It would be a tragedy to frustrate this movement of the Spirit. If a flower is opening to the sunlight, one ought not to rush in with a tool to aid the process of nature. It is not yet clear to many Evangelicals just where the Holy Spirit is leading in matters ecumenical. In times like these we need midwives, not engineers.

Many Evangelicals feel frustrated that their ecumenical integrity is rated on the basis of lack of hesitation to move ahead as fast as possible. History may yet prove that the cautious ecumenist is the best ecumenist. One simply cannot become preoccupied with structural union in the face of a gigantic need for renewal. Renewal is more likely to bring union than is union likely to bring renewal. Renewal of the Church must ta¹ priority.

At this stage some participating churches would likely b₋ victimized. As a United Methodist, I feel that my tradition of theology, church polity, and ethical ethos has not been satisfactorily represented. Certainly no one

truly committed to ecumenicity at its best wants a lowest common denominator. One leader in COCU has admitted: "Some theologian-participants have expressed private fears that COCU might become an umbrella organization for an interlocking directorate of various power figures within the denominational—conciliar establishment."

These observations are not intended to reflect upon any one's motives or sincerity. But they do indicate the opinions of one who is committed to the healing of the divisions in Christ's body, but who wants the healing to take place in a manner which would most perfectly reflect the will of the head of the body, Jesus Christ.

Conscience and the Issue of War

George Allen Turner*

In a major historic decision, the United States Supreme Court has recently decided that a conscientious objector without belief in The Supreme Being can be excused from bearing arms on the same basis as one who believes in The Supreme Being. This affirms the integrity and authenticity of the conscience of the individual whether or not he avows an allegiance to God. Exemption on the basis of belief in a Supreme Being was posited on the recognition by the State that there is an Authority superior to even that of the State and that the State dare not make demands on a citizen incompatible with his allegiance to this Supreme Being. This recent decision means that the State defers not only to God but to the conscience of the individual as well. In support of this position it is argued that to make belief in God a condition of exemption is to inject into the issue a theistic belief not shared by all the citizens, and hence these citizens are deprived of their civil rights. It is pointed out with considerable plausibility that the non-theist has as much an obligation to obey the dictates of his conscience as the theist and that all should be given equal treatment. Not only humanists (atheists) but Christians such as William Sloan Coffin, Jr., (University Chaplain at Yale), defend this position. Parallel to this development is the contention that the conscientious objector has the right to discriminate between wars that are just and those which he considers unjust.[1] Consequently, he should have the privilege of refusing to serve in a particular war even though he is not opposed to the use of force in other wars.

These issues give great strength to the individual and his rights and put his government more on the defensive when conscripting his services. It also places on the local draft board unprecedented difficulty in discriminating among those who are sincere and those who use these legal devices to escape the responsibilities which other citizens must share.

---

*Professor of Biblical Literature, Asbury Theological Seminary.

1.   cf. "United States v. Macintosh, 1931" in L. Schlissel, ed., *Conscience in America* (Dutton, 1968), pp. 193ff.

The conclusion to which this study has led is that neither of these positions is correct. The earnest Christian is presented with the necessity of reexamining and reassessing his own attitude toward the use of force in areas of human conflict. The questions include: 1) Has the conscience of the non-theist as good a claim to consideration as that of the theist? 2) Are some wars "just? 3) Is it ever right for a Christian to take human life? 4) Should one kill in self-defense? and 5) Is it right to withhold help from a victim of violence?

What is "Conscience?

The word comes from two Latin terms: con (with) and scire (to know). It is equivalent to English "with science or with knowledge. Currently the term means "a sense of moral obligation to do what is believed to be . . right and to avoid the contrary'.' Kant defined conscience as "the consciousness of an internal tribunal in man (before which 'his thoughts accuse or excuse one another') . . . an inward judge which threatens and keeps him in awe."[2] Conscience is a creature of education as well as "the voice of God."

In the ancient world Socrates referred to an inner moral monitor as his "daemon" which alerted him to ethical issues. Plato attributed one's sense of moral standards to recollections of pre-existent states. Aristotle believed that man's moral sense is that which distinguishes him from the beast.

In the New Testament the writings of Paul provide the clearest teaching on conscience (suneidesis), a term which is found 31 times in the New Testament. For Paul conscience is the vehicle of divine revelation for both Gentiles and Jews. "Gentiles," says Paul, "not having the law, are a law unto themselves, . . . their conscience bearing witness . . . accusing or else excusing . . . . " (Rom. 2:14). Conscience serves to render moral judgement on acts practiced or contemplated. The idea is anticipated in the Old Testament as when David's "heart smote him" for having numbered the people (2 Sam. 24:10). Likewise the Gentiles are found guilty for having rejected "natural revelation" (Rom. 1:19-31). The Jews stand condemned not only for violating their consciences but especially for not living up to their "special revelation" in the Torah (Rom. 2:1-20). Conscience serves both to convict the guilty but also to console the guiltless. Paul had the assurance of a good conscience before God and man (Acts 23:1; Rom. 9:1; I Cor. 4:4; 2 Cor. 1:12). In the latter, conscience serves a similar function

---

2.   Immanuel Kant, "On Conscience," *Great Books of the Western World,* XLII, 379.

to that of the Witness of the Spirit (Rom. 8:16; I John 2:27).

Conscience is seen in the Bible as a part of the imagio Dei, which survived the Fall of man, "shattered but not destroyed."[3] Immanuel Kant could have been thinking of Psalm 8 or Romans 1 when he marvelled at the "starry heaven above and the moral law within."

Conscience, however, is a creature of education as well as "the voice of God." It can be educated either for better or worse. It can also be calloused, seared and rendered almost inoperative. Thus the individual conscience can never be considered as safe guide to the truth. Realizing this Charles Wesley prayed, "Quick as the apple of an eye, O God, my conscience make. Awake my soul when sin is night, and keep it still awake." However, we should be prepared to give another the benefit of the doubt, rather than jeopardize his relationship to his God (Romans 14), even to preferring his conscience to our own.

The crucial question remains—to what extent is one's conscience "the voice of God? To what extent does it have grounding in objective moral norms? Or, is it autonomous? If the latter is so, can it claim a moral basis equivalent to one who believes his conscience is based on the will of God? Conscience has always based its claim on an authority outside the self, sitting in judgment on the self.

The non-theist who appeals to his conscience, as opposed to the laws of the state, simply places his conscience against the collective conscience of society. The theist, however, bases his appeal upon what he affirms is God's will for him as opposed to the will of the state. The state must then decide whether to honor his conviction of a higher loyalty to God, even if convinced he is mistaken, or whether to assert a prerogative which is contrary to his conviction of the divine will. The non-theist, therefore, has no objective frame of reference to which his conscience seeks to conform, but rather has the arrogance to assert that his own subjective judgment has more moral authority for him than the collective judgment of society. Such a claim for the autonomy of the individual conscience could only receive attention at a time when existentialist philosophy discards adherence to an objective absolute standard of values. It is comparable to the situation in which there is no "king," (external authority) and "everyone does what is right in his own eyes" (cf. Judges 21:25). Unless one holds that all wars are unjust, there seems no valid grounds for permitting him to decide which particular war he will avoid. No individual has sufficient information to determine whether one war is unjust. To admit this would

---

3.   C. F. H. Henry, *Christian Personal Ethics.* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1957), p. 519.

make his judgment equal to the wisdom of administration and Congress, to whom more information is available.

The Biblical Data on War

Those in the Judean-Christian heritage naturally look to the Bible for guidance in the matter of conscience. The Bible says categorically, "Thou shalf not kill" (Ex. 20:13; Deut. 5:17). There are several Hebrew words which can be translated "kill." The word used here means specifically "international killing" or "murder." That its meaning is limited to what we term murder is indicated by the fact that the taking of life is sometimes done with divine sanction and with the sanction of the community. David slew Goliath with obvious divine approval, not because Goliath was a political adversary, but because he had defied Israel's God. Blasphemers were condemned to receive the death penalty (Lev. 24: 10-23). Achan's sin was punished by death (Josh. 7). Samuel slew Agag the Amalekite with divine approval (I Sam. 15:33). Because the Amalekites attacked the Israelites in the desert, Jahweh decreed the genocide of that tribe, a task which King Saul was required to accomplish (I Sam. 15:18). The city-state of Jericho was devoted to destruction by the express command of Israel's God (Josh. 6:17, 21). The extermination of all the inhabitants of the land of Canaan was likewise authorized by the Lord in order to safeguard the holy nation form contamination by their new environment (Deut. 1:1-6). Later, non-Israelites were "sanctified" (set apart) by the Lord for the purpose of conducting a "holy war" against the chosen people in order to discipline them (Isaiah 10:5-15; 13:3-5).

Jesus, disavowing the precedent of Elijah (II Kings 1:10, 12), said he had not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them (Luke 9:52-56). Jesus not only supported the command not to kill, but forbade hatred of one's neighbor (Matt. 5:21-16). Jesus also said that those who live by the sword shall perish thereby (Matt. 26:52). What about the Acts and the Epistles? The Christians were urged by their leaders not to rebel against the government or slave-owners (Rom. 13:1-7; Col. 4:1-3; I Pet. 2:18-25). Relief from economic exploitation was to be sought not in violence but by patient waiting for the returning Lord to redress their grievances (James 5:7-9). The conviction by which they lived was that the entire structure of human society is subject to the government of God, who is alert to injustice and will eventually assure the vindication of the just and the triumph of their cause. The battle against their enemies and oppressors is to be carried on by the Lord; the prerogative of judgment is his alone. The Christian's obligation is not self-defense, but rather to overcome evil with good and hatred with love (Rom. 12:18-21).

The ethical demands of love for one's neighbor is a prominent theme of the New Testament. Jesus said it stood along side the first as the greatest of all the commandments (Mt. 22:35-40). Paul and James agreed that

love of one's neighbor is the fulfillment of the law (Rom. 13:8; Gal. 5:4; James 2:8).

Is Force Ever Justified in Christian Ethics?

Historically Christians have taken three basic attitudes toward the morality of war. One is the pacifist position that the use of force is seldom, if ever, justified. This attitude prevailed during the first three centuries of the church and among the Anabaptists for the last three centuries. The early Christians were a minority group in the Roman empire. From the reign of Augustus until the barbarian invasions, the Roman soldiers were primarily guardians of the peace rather than engaged in aggressive wars; theirs was police duty for the most part. Jesus' personal example of nonresistence and his refusal to sanctify contemporary revolutionary movements were remembered and taken as precedents. The church was an "underground movement" and a minority sect felt no responsibility for maintaining the status quo. Christians were exhorted by their leaders to keep the law scrupulously, to pray for their governors and, unless the government threatened their loyalty to Christ, to obey the secular authorities.[4]

The book of Revelation, however, like the Old Testament, has imagery like that of Jewish apocalypses in which the judgments of God envision the destruction of rebels to the divine rule. Even Jesus is pictured as a warrior conquering his enemies by force. It was recalled that Jesus used force rather than persuasion or boycott in expelling merchants from the temple in Jerusalem (John 2:15). It is significant also that the hallelujah chorus by the redeemed saints is occasioned by the destruction of Babylon. The saints did not participate in the destruction of Babylon however; that was accomplished by the Lord and they were only spectators (Rev. 17:16; 18:6; 19:1-6, 11-16). This passage in the Book of Revelation cannot easily be used to justify warfare because the saints are not the belligerents and because the language is highly figurative. In short there is much in the Old Testament to justify warfare, but many see no justification in the New Testament.

It should be pointed out, however, that the New Testament ethic is for individuals and does not relate primarily to nations as such, nor does it involve police action to protect the rights of civilians. Roman soldiers

---

4.   A non-Christian pacifism, an outgrowth of Oriental philosophy, "dissolves the contrast between the good and the bad by merging both into an undifferented whole." E. L. Long, Jr., *War and Conscience in America* (Westminister, 1968), p. 71.

were urged by John to "do violence to no man," but that was probably a reference to "police brutality," rather than law enforcement. What does the Christian ethic say about the use of force to defend the victim of attack? The Good Samaritan gave help to the victim of robbery but apparently did nothing about pursuing the robbers. But parables usually have one focus, and this one served to define "neighbor." Love of neighbor in a similar situation would seem to call for the use of force if nothing less would protect the defendent from injury or death. The Christian ethic with reference to war, therefore, depends upon implications rather than upon explicit commands or prohibitions.

Here, as in other aspects of social ethics, both Old and New Testament need to be consulted. In many respects the nation of Israel during the kingdom period offers a closer approximation to our nation than does the Christian church of the first century. This is true because the prophets of Israel had some opportunity for influencing national policy, while the Christian church of the first century had no influence on the rulers of the Roman world. We can therefore learn about Christian ethics from the prophets of Israel as well as from the apostles of the church. Sometimes the prophets foretold divine protection apart from human participation. At other times and to a limited extent, military action had prophetic sanction, especially during the time of Elisha; King Saul's defense of Jabesh-Gilead had the sanction of Samuel, and the refusal of some tribes to join in battle against a common foe drew the rebuke of the prophetess Deborah.

The Pacifists

The Anabaptists are like the early Christians with reference to nonviolence. They think of society as alien and of themselves as "dead to the word." They are content to be protected by police action and yet accept no responsibility for an orderly society. They are concerned solely with loyalty to Christ even if in so doing they become irrelevant to their contemporary world and hence irresponsible in social issues. The other churches are regarded as having compromised with the world unless they practice nonviolence in settling disputes. They do not admit that one must sometimes choose the less of two evils. A. J. Muste, for example, urges unilateral disarmament, in the confidence that such an example by a strong nation will lessen the bellicose aims and methods of rival powers.

He brushes aside the argument that the Allies' disarmament following World War I did not deter Germany, Italy and Japan from aggressive acts, saying that our disarmament was not complete enough and affirming his conviction that initial suffering would be followed by peace.[5]

---

5.   A. J. Muste, *Not By Might* (New York: Harper, 1947), pp. 127 *et passim.*

He urges a complete dissassociation with the state which makes war an instrument of national policy; nothing less is true Christian discipleship.[6] His thinking was in the context of the nuclear arms race between the "superpowers" and does not take into account the obligation of the strong to help the weak if help is needed and requested. He too readily applies personal ethics to nations and thinks only of self-defense, not of assistance to the needy.

The Crusaders

War as a holy war or a crusade against "evil" has often been employed both in self-defense and in wars of offense. Of the three monotheistic faiths, Moslems are most prone to the j'had (holy war). The Hebrews were less war-like historically and the Christians least. During the Middle Ages, however, the Christian church was the most war-like of all communions, but it represented a departure from its own tradition. In addition to the Crusades themselves, the Thirty Years War between Catholics and Protestants had the characteristics of a crusade. In modern times Billy Sunday called for a crusade against "the Hun," in World War I, and today Carl McIntire calls for victory in Vietnam.[7] Not only they but many evangelical missionaries in Southeast Asia feel deeply that the only satisfactory way to resolve the conflict there is a military defeat of aggressive communism. They obviously view a war to help victims of aggression to survive the less of two evils.

"Agonized Participants"

The Christian citizen and the nation which respects Christian principles can never use force to impose its will upon a weaker neighbor when only "national interest" is concerned. Therefore the Opium War between Britain and China was immoral. Likewise the Mexican War of 1848 is a blot on the international record of the United States. Both World Wars were in common defense against aggression and were less blameworthy morally. The Korean War was primarily going to the assistance of a victim of external aggression—a "police action" which had the legal sanction of

---

6.   A. J. Muste, "The Individual Conscience," in Paul Mayer, ed., *The Pacifist Conscience* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1966), p. 351.

7.   Said Billy Sunday, "The man who. . . dies fighting in the trenches is better than you Godforsaken mutts who won't enlist." (R. H. Adams, *Preachers Present Arms*, p. 83).

the world Community and has some claim to having been a "just war" because it was resisting injustices.

Thoughtful people can learn from history. In the present torture of conscience, clarity is assisted by some lessons in the nineteen thirties. William L. Shirer in his *Rise and Fall of the Third Reich* indicates that failure of Western Europe to resist Hitler at the outset facilitated the Second World War. It is useful to recall the insights of Reinhold Niebuhr during this decade in calling upon the Christian democracies to resist Fascism and Communism. Niebuhr blames a naive optimistic liberalism for the slowness of America to react decisively to the danger. The question may be fairly asked whether the "doves," humanists and neo-isolationists of today are similar to the pacifists against whom Niebuhr protested. As Niebuhr points out:

> The defects of democratic government in the field of foreign policy are aggravated by the liberal culture, which has supported democracy in the past two hundred years. . . . It is full of illusions about the character of human nature, particularly collective behavior. It imagines that there is no conflict of interest which cannot be adjudicated. It does not understand what it means to meet a resolute foe which is intent upon either your anhihilation or enslavement.[8]

Niebuhr goes on to point out that false premises of liberals and intellectuals, their wishful thinking, their assumption that tyrants would prefer not to fight, played into the hand of Nazi Germany and Communist Russia by encouraging the assumption of the aggressors that complacent democracies lack the will to resist by force. Even Hitler did not destroy the false optimism about human nature. The victorious allies after World War II falsely assumed that Russia would honor its commitments in the peace treaties. The result is the "cold war" of the past quarter century.[9] He points out also that college faculties urged the Untied States to resist Hitler while their students continued to urge isolation. This he explains as due to the students' acceptance of their teachers' earlier support of pacifism.[10] He

---

8. Reinhold Niebuhr, *Christianity and Power Politics.* (New York: Archon Books, 1940, 1969) p. 68.

9. Space does not permit elaboration on this point, but Russia's refusal to permit a Polish government and the reunification of Germany are example of perfidy. Later invasions of Hungary and Czeckoslovakia confirms this.

10. But the writer remembers the cordial reception given to Niebuhr by the students at Harvard in 1943, and the coldness he received from their professors.

notes also that the idealist and moralist Christian spokesman failed truly to assess the situation. The common people, he noted, have an instinct for survival which proves a surer guide than the illusions of the intellectual.

Niebuhr points out Christian pietism or perfectionism contributes to the "illusion that politics can be sublimated into an exercise of pure moral suasion." This naivete is augmented when a nation has enjoyed several years of peace. Complacency makes "advanced" nations vulnerable to "barbarian" invaders. Do we have someone today who sees as clearly and articulates the issue as well?

Then Niebuhr's concern was for the preservation of western Judaeo-Christian civilization. He felt self-defense morally justified. Today the issue is not only self-defense but whether the strong should help the weak defend themselves, whether political decisions should be settled by brute force or by persuasion. Those leaders in religion and in politics who demand negotiation instead of hostilities fail to realize that it takes two to negotiate; and that those who seek to dominate their neighbors by force of arms are not interested in negotiations while there is prospect of achieving their purpose. The peace-loving politicians who plead for negotiations with a foe who does not want peace and has no desire to avoid bloodshed (of his enemy) are either incredibly naive or they equate "negotiations" with surrender. In pleading for less money for "defense" and more for the domestic amenities of life they fail to recognize that survival is even more basic that the "better life."

Can Any Modern War Be "Just"?

Among recent advocates of the just war theory is Ralph Potter, who argues that a Christian should be as concerned with preventing injustice as in avoiding violence.[11] He urges a United Nations' police force not subject to the veto of the Security Council, an impossibility unless the "big" powers surrender some of their sovereignty.

Paul Ramsey argues against a Christian withdrawing from hard decisions about the use of force by national leaders, and seeks a viable "just war" doctrine.[12]

Advocates of a just war usually begin by quoting Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, in his struggle to reconcile divine providence with the fall of Rome to invading barbarians. His position is reflected in the theory of a

---

11.   Ralph Potter, *War and Moral Discourse* (John Knox Press, 1908).

12.   Paul Ramsey, *War and the Christian Conscience* (1961), pp. 314ff.

just war maintained generally by the Roman Catholic church. This position is taken by Luther, Calvin and other Reformers who were also deeply indebted to Augustine. Said Augustine, "It is the wrong doing of the opposite party which compels the wise man to wage just wars."[13] Acquinas justified war when "waged by the command of the ruler or a righteous cause and with good intention." Implicitly here is the distinction between acts and intention, a good motive used to justify a bad act. Luther stressed the distinction between the personal ethic of the Sermon on the Mount and the citizens' responsibility for justice in society. The two domains require different standards of conduct. In Calvin's theory the Old Testament ethic must not be ignored by contrasting it with the New Testament. Thus he could cojoin the New Testament motive of love with the Old Testament practice of war. The Westminster Confession concurs: "Christians . . . may lawfully, now under the New Testament, wage war upon just and necessary occasions." The last clause is sufficiently ambiguous that almost anyone could employ it to justify acts of war. Woodrow Wilson after being re-elected "to keep us out of war" could feel justified in joining in an effort to stop "the Hun."

The advent of the nuclear age has made the concept of a "just" war even more untenable. How can justice be associated with atom bombs destroying civilians? If there is such a thing as a "just" war, it should include several characteristics. 1) Resorts to arms is justified only after all other alternatives fail; 2) It should be only for the defense of freedom and justice. 3) It should be in response to the moral obligation of the strong to help his weaker neighbor to survive. 4) It should have the endorsement of the moral conscience of mankind expressed in recognized and official channels, such as the United Nations. 5) It should be resorted to only as the less of two evils. 6) It should be prosecuted with a minimum of injury, especially to the innocent. 7) It must be in the nature of police action to restrain the aggressor and defend the civil rights of his victim, like the use of police to protect civil rights within a nation. It has been argued that police must at times use force to restrain evil doers; so international conflict should be limited to similar police action. In such a case forced restraint of an aggressor would be an evil less pernicious than to abandon world order to the "law of the jungle," permitting predator nations to devour their weaker neighbors. Such police force is not possible unless nations surrender some of their sovereignty to an international body, thus

---

13. Augustine, *The City of God*, XIX, 7; *Great Books of the Western World*, XVIII, 515.

giving that body power to ıestrain the violent. Until that time, the next best is for the "strong" to act in concert to withstand the aggressor and help protect the weak. This would seem preferable to abandoning the world to the "survival of the fittest." Meanwhile more patience and persistence need to be exercised in the interest of world government, while we prayerfully await the arrival of the "Prince of Peace."

The Computer Revolution
And Christian Faith

Jama Martin*

Advances in technology have had and will continue to have a profound impact on society. The historical aspect of this statement may be verified by even the most casual survey of the consequences of the technological advances which brought about the Industrial Revolution. The steam engine, the railroads, the power loom, etc. gave society a totally new environment — a changed outlook on life. An industrialized society develops, among other things, a sense of time, a sense of material progress, and the tendency toward urbanization.

More recent technological advances, of which perhaps foremost is the electronic computer, have the capacity to change society much more rapidly and profoundly than the machines of the Industrial Revolution. This is because "they deal with the stuff of which society is made — information and its communication."[1]

What is the electronic computer, the machine which has been described by the American Federation of Information Processing Societies as a tool "whose liberating potential for mankind is greater than that of any other invention in our history"?[2] Does it "think," or is it simply an overgrown calculator?

The computer is an information-processing system.

The computer accepts information from its environment

1. John Diebold, *Man and the Computer* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1969), p. 4.
2. American Federation of Information Societies, quoted in Gloria Kirshner (ed.), "The Computer Revolution," *The Teacher's Guide to the 21st Century,* (Sept. 24, 1967), p. 1.

through its input devices; it combines this information, according to the rules of the program stored in its memory, with information that is also stored in its memory, and it sends information back to its environment through its output devices.[3]

This is not unlike the functioning of the human brain, which also accepts inputs, processes input information with stored information, and can return the results to the environment.

Interestingly, the French Christian philosopher, mathematician, and physicist, Blaise Pascal, made the first entry in the history of the modern electronic computer when he invented a mechanical adder in the 17th century. While theoretical advances were made in the intervening years, it was not until World War II that the first digital computers were built. It has been twenty years since the beginning of commercial manufacturing of electronic computers, and in that short time the industry has risen to the position of third largest in the United States. "Industry prophets" agree that it is only a question of time until the computer industry attains first place.[4] Furthermore, after only twenty years computers are well into what is called their "third generation," and the fourth generation is actually beginning to appear.

In the 1940's computer speeds were measured in seconds. Today the nanosecond (one billionth of a second) is the common unit of reference. A nanosecond is to a second as a second is to thirty years!

The early computers were made with huge vacuum tubes. Today it is not possible to observe the details of circuity with the naked eye. Fifty thousand third-generation transistors can be placed in a thimble.[5] This trend toward miniaturization is not only for the convenience of compactness for the computer user, but also to reduce the distances electrons must travel in the circuits. After all, electrons travel at the rate of 186,000 miles per second, but that is not quite a foot per nanosecond!

Every four years the cost of computing power has been reduced by a

---

3.   Dennis Flanagan (ed.), *Information* (San Francisco: W. H. Freeman, 1966), p. 1.

4.   Paul Armer, *The Individual: His Privacy, Self-Image, and Obsolescence*, presented to the Committee on Science and Astronautics, U. S. House of Representatives, (Jan. 28, 1970), p. 10.

5.   *IBM System/360 System Summary* (New York: IBM Corporation, 1968), p. 5.

factor of ten, and this trend is continuing.[6] This has made the use of computers feasible for a large number of applications and makes more believable the predictions of a computer in every home, at least from the standpoint of cost. By the end of 1972 there will be 100,000 computer installations in the United States; there were less than 1,000 in 1956.[7]

The computer, with rare exception, does what it is told (programmed) to do. (The difficulties one may encounter with, for example, a computerized billing system are a consequence of the difficulties human beings have in determining exactly what the computer should be instructed to do.) The term "computer" is commonly meant to designate a machine which can accomplish any number of tasks, depending on the program which is selected and stored within it.

A computer can be instructed to do such things as "read" input data which has been previously recorded (e.g., a punched card, the pencil markings on a special test answer form, special characters on a bank check, a set of magnetic "marks" on a reel of tape) or which is currently being generated (e.g., radar signals, electrocardiograms); it can be told to store input information internally or externally for future reference, to perform arithmetic calculations, to perform character manipulations such as an alphabetic ordering or scanning a sentence for a particular word, and to compare items of information and use the results of the comparison to determine which set of subsequent instructions to select for further processing; it can "write" information through a variety of output devices (e.g., a printer, a card punch, a magnetic tape drive, a typewriter terminal hundreds of miles away, a cathode ray tube similar to a television screen). A particularly interesting use of computers is known as "computer graphics," which refers to the ability of the computer to accept line drawings or graphs as input as well as create the "graphics" and produce them as output.

One of the most important developments in computer technology is known as "time-sharing." Many remote terminals may be connected to a single large central computer by means of communication lines. Users at these terminals may instruct the computer, enter data, and receive responses from the computer. Because of the relatively high speed of the computer when compared with the speed of the termianl, each user feels that he

6.   Armer, *op. cit.*, p. 2.
7.   Diebold, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

has the complete attention of the central computer. Messages may also be sent from one terminal to another. In fact, the main function of the central computer may be to interchange these messages. Computers, therefore, are very closely related to communications; in fact, modern sophisticated communications systems are actually computers.[8]

The human being cannot compete with the computer in accuracy, speed, or capacity for the purposes of computing, correlating, and retrieving information. Consequently, tasks which could never have been accomplished in a reasonable length of time by a reasonable number of .mans are being accomplished through the use of the computer. Ideally, ...1e human being is freed from routine and time-consuming tasks which may better be performed by information-processing machines to concentrate his efforts at more creative tasks and those which require intuition and judgement. "The uniqueness and promise of information processing is that it is a tool for increasing his understanding and control of the physical and psychological factors that have the greatest effect upon his existence."[9]

Current applications of computers include the checking of income tax returns, chemical analysis of smog, the space program (which could hardly exist without computers), control of city traffic lights, and airline and hotel reservation systems. A computer may be used for writing concordances, text editing, and text analysis. The Dead Sea Scrolls were catalogued in proper sequence with the aid of a computer. Computers have analyzed, composed, and produced music. In the field of medicine, computers are monitoring patient data in intensive care facilities and aiding doctors with diagnoses. The computer can be used to simulate a proposed new system for industry or business, or it can simulate a biological or chemical process.

There is much improvement to be made in educational uses of computers, particularly in the elementary and secondary schools. They have already proved themselves very useful and even superior to human teachers where drill and repetition are required. What is lacking is sufficient understanding of the teaching-learning process and adequate sophistication in the programming of computers so that creativity on the part of

---

8.   Armer, *op. cit.,* p. 1.
9.   Isaac Auerbach, "The Impact of Information Processing on Society," Automation Series, *The Voice of America Forum Lectures.*

the student may be cultivated. Current programs seldom permit the student to be other than passive. Patrick Suppes predicts that "in a few more years millions of school children will have access to what Philip of Macedon's son Alexander enjoyed as a royal prerogative: the personal services of a tutor as well-informed and responsive as Aristotle."[10]

John McCarthy, in considering future uses of computers, describes the following:

> No stretching of the demonstrated technology is required to envision computer consoles installed in every home and connected to public-utility computers through the telephone system. The console might consist of a typewriter keyboard and a television screen that can display text and pictures. Each subscriber will have his private file space in the computer that he can consult and alter at any time. Given the availability of such equipment, it is impossible to recite more than a small fraction of the uses to which enterprising consumers will put it . . . .
>
> Everyone will have better access to the Library of Congress than the librarian himself now has. Any page will be immediately accessible . . . .
>
> The system will serve as each person's external memory, with his messages in and out kept nicely filed and reminders displayed at designated times.
>
> Full reports on current events, whether baseball scores, the smog index in Los Angeles, . . . will be available for the asking.
>
> Income tax returns will be automatically prepared on the basis of continuous, cumulative annual records of income, deductions, contributions, and expenses.
>
> With the requisite sensors and effectors installed in the household the public-utility information system will shut the windows when it rains . . . . [11]

When one considers the powerful capabilities of the computer, he must surely be concerned that the power be used for the good of mankind. It is not difficult to recall the anti-Utopian descriptions of Orwell's

10. Flanagan, *op. cit.*, p. 157.
11. Flanagan, *op. cit.*, pp. 11-12.

1984 or Huxley's *Brave New World.* While the computer's potential for good exceeds one's imagination, misuse of the computer does indeed threaten the safety and integrity of the individual.

An immediately obvious problem is the threat of unemployment posed by automation. While job-opportunity patterns have changed and will continue to do so, there is room for argument about the total effect on unemployment caused by automation. The threat to the employment picture remains, however, and the hope is that intelligent and realistic planning and control can direct the course of the computer revolution so that an unemployment crisis can be avoided. This planning must include education and retraining with the objective of helping the individual to find a meaningful role in the world of automation.[12]

There are other problems related to unemployment. The use of leisure time is one which has been widely discussed. Alienation of workers from their work in computer-dominated plants could present increasing psychological problems, perhaps resulting in alcoholism and dope addiction.[13]

The creation of a national information file or "data bank" is a topic which may come more frequently to the public's attention. Computers make it possible to collect in one file all the medical, employment, educational, security, tax, and credit information about every citizen. Existing large files such as credit files have been abused; it requires little imagination to foresee misuses of a national information file. The privacy of the individual is obviously threatened by such misuse. However, the enforcement of appropriate legislation resulting from questions of the centralized file could be used to eliminate current misuses of existing files.

Some of the most significant and interesting questions are being asked in the area of cybernetics, which involves

> the comparative study of communication and control in the brain and nervous system of organisms and in mechanical-electrical systems. Study of the brain and nervous system has yielded insights that are valuable in the development of mechanical-electrical control systems, and, conversely, the study of such systems has yielded insights into the physiology

12. Robert MacBride, *The Automated State* (Philadelphia: Chilton Book Co., 1967), pp. 19-34.
13. Kirshner, *op. cit.,* p. 4.

and neurology of organisms. Man was nudged from the center of the universe by Copernicus; Darwin drew man's physical nature within the natural evolutionary process; man's unique claim to rationality was greatly reduced by Freud; and now, it seems, man is nothing but a highly complex communication-control system. Indeed, man is already excelled by the machine in some of the simpler, more routine tasks. What does the future hold?[14]

Cyberneticians, it would seem, tread on sacred ground.

Norbert Wiener, the late mathematician and cybernetician, warned us of certain points in cybernetics which impinge on religion, particularly in his book, *God and Golem, Inc.*[15] The cybernetic points he cites are machines which learn, machines which reproduce themselves, and the coordination of machines and man. Wiener acknowledged the superiority of man at this stage in the art of cybernetics.

Let us here examine only the first of these three issues. The development of learning machines comes in the study of artificial intelligence. The classic example of a learning machine is that of a computer which is programmed so that it learns, or appears to learn, to play the game of checkers. The program provides a correct understanding of the rules of checkers, a method for analyzing potential moves, and a memory for recording the results of previous efforts. At first the machine is easy to beat, but after several hours of practice its game improves so that it is able to win consistently. To this example Marvin Minsky adds others, including a program for taking the section of a college-entrance examination which has to do with the recognition of analogies between geometric figures. Admitting the weaknesses in current results in the development of artificial intelligence, he concludes:

> It is reasonable, I suppose, to be unconvinced by our examples and to be skeptical about whether machines will ever be intelligent. It is unreasonable, however, to think machines could become *nearly* as intelligent as we are and then stop, or to suppose we will always be able to compete with them in

---

14. Harold E. Hatt, *Cybernetics and the Image of Man* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1968), p. 9.
15. Norbert Wiener, *God and Golem, Inc.* (Cambridge, Mass.: The M.I.T. Press, 1964).

wit or wisdom. Whether or not we could retain some sort of control of the machines, assuming that we would want to, the nature of our activities and aspirations would be changed utterly by the presence on earth of intellectually superior beings.[16]

Moral, ethical, social, political, theological questions are posed by current and potential uses of technological advances. The direction our society follows will be determined by those who ask and answer the questions. In addition to questions of a theological nature, such as those regarding the image of man, it must be the intelligent concern of Christianity that the appropriate questions be asked in time, and that the answers which follow be those which would result in the betterment of the human individual and his society.

Thomas J. Watson, Jr., Chairman of the Board of the IBM Corporation, made these observations at a recent conference on computers and society at Oberlin College:

> . . . the computer and other technological devices in our time, I believe, are hurrying us all towards . . . a moment of truth, which will force us to look at ourselves square in the face as never before . . . we cannot get the answers from technology or systems analysis or gimmicks or data processing . . . the computer is an instrument — not an instrument of good or evil, of uplift or destruction, of promise or doom; just an instrument, period. It has no purpose. It has no soul . . . it has always been and always must remain the motivation of the human being which determines progress or regression, not the tools he uses . . .
>
> Everything hangs on the answer we give to one key question: what will this advance of technology produce, not in the world of gadgets and offices and satellites without, but in the world of heart and mind and conscience and soul within?[17]

The Christian faith holds *the* answer to Mr. Watson's question. Will this answer be effectively communicated to a society undergoing the computer revolution?

---

16.   Flanagan, *op. cit.,* p. 211.
17.   "Computer and Society," *The IBM Magazine,* (Feb. 27, 1970), II, VIII. 8.

Art, Christianity and Culture

Gordon R. Kelly*

When considering the relationship of art to Christianity and culture, care should be taken to avoid structuring a false dichotomy. Christianity, after all, can be a part of the total cultural milieu, or to put it the other way around, Christianity can itself be highly acculturated. A more fruitful approach for our purposes would seem to me to be best achieved by premising our investigation upon a real dichotomy, one that actually exists by virtue of an action of God as set forth in Deuteronomy 30: 15-20, where God said, "I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse; therefore choose life, that you and your descendants might live." And even though God is biased in favor of life, we are nevertheless free to choose death if we are that foolish. The dynamics operative on either side of this dichotomy invariably work themselves out to their fruits, and so we pay the price of our choice. God himself assigns the content to these categories, and that content may vary from covenant to covenant, but the choice for life or death still persists to this very day and best accounts for reality as we find it. The surest way to understand life is to ponder the Christ event and then having pondered it, to put it on. To understand death and to avoid it, we must realize that it is controlled by the "father of lies," the god of this passing age, who makes warfare with his seductive arsenal of idolatry, perversion and deceitful distortion.

Since the artist has the power through his so-called creativity to give the appearance of life to vain imagination through his graven images and other forms of fantasy, he becomes a prize catch for the "roaring lion." This is why he is so often found drinking the "cup of the devils." According to Isaiah, he is also sought after by those who are empty toward God and have no oblation, and hence need him to carve the tree that will not

* Artist-in-residence at Malone College, Canton, Ohio.

rot; to form a graven image that will not move. (Isaiah 40:20) However, when the artist is fully conformed to Christ, he can reflect the glory of God as revealed in the face of Jesus Christ, by using his talents as a way of worshipping and serving the Creator rather than the creature. As long as his works are as songs of praise and thanksgiving or as powerful plastic prayers, they can point away from himself and up to God, and by so doing help people to set their affections on things that are above. Therefore, to make a categorical judgment as to which cup he is drinking is difficult, for sometimes a vile and demeaning content may be covered by rhythmic patterns that are aesthetically pleasing. On the other hand, perfectly valid content may be so poorly executed as to offend aesthetic sensibility. For example, the picture of Christ that appears in most churches, can, despite its popularity, have an unpleasant effect upon some people who disdainfully refer to it as the protestant icon. To complicate the problem further, Christ may choose to bless the work of a relatively weak artist in order to confound the proud, or it is even possible for Him to come to us in what may at first appear to be an inordinate work, in a manner equivalent to His coming upon us as a thief in the night. The real danger, however, comes from the side of death, when the devil comes disguised as a child of the light in works of dazzling splendor that carry subtly corrupting hidden agendas. Like pink pork, these art forms may carry deadly aesthetic trichinosis. Little wonder, then, that the artist is found to be alternately praised or profaned, prized or prohibited, in his off-again, on-again relationship with the church. If the problem is difficult for the church, pity the poor Christian artist who is caught up in this dilemma, for he always runs the risk of causing, through his work, one of Christ's little ones to fall, which by Christ's own warning is to be dreaded beyond measure.

Because the risks involved are so great, many churches have turned their backs on the artist and his plight. This is comparable to turning one's back on sex simply because it might end in perversion rather than parenthood. Actually, the church has no need to fear art any more than any other part of creation as long as it exercises its prerogatives in Christ. Christ, after all, has overcome the world. To put it bluntly, when the unclean art went out of the church, the church became aesthetically a dry place as it wandered aimlessly through time, and seven devils of worldly art came in on its members, and the last state of the church was worse than the first. Without a redemptive art of its own, the church has only the works of unfaith to feed on, and as a consequence is bombarded by bizarre images that corrupt its spirit and dissipate its taste. Such counterfeit reality with rituals and sacraments of sickness beguile and bewitch and lead the unsuspecting soul into bondage or unto death.

Even when the church tries to confront the problem, it is confounded, for lacking an expertise of its own, it does not know where to turn and so delivers itself to the expertise of the high priests of wordly aesthetics who foster the theories of art for art's sake or cults of self-expression with their accompanying vanities. But how can their aesthetic norms apply to Christians, who are to seek not their own (self-expression) and who are to separate themselves from idols (art for art's sake, which is an idol by its own definition)? Christians are to center in Christ rather than self and are to worship the Creator rather than the creature. This applies to Christian artists as well, for the artist, too, must pass from death to life along with the rest of mankind.

As we said earlier, one cannot be involved in life or death without paying the respective price. Let us observe, for example, the agenda of death in one prominent artist's work as he marches from meaninglessness to mania under the cheers of the aesthetes. The movement is from distortion, to beguiling abstraction, to the mimicking of death mask imagery of African origin, to the celebration of pornographic eroticism. Or it can be observed again in the distortion of perception through psychodelic and drug cult addiction which produces discontinuity between time and energy and causes disdain for Judeo-Christian moral concepts, leaving existence a drag; and existence that is a drag is not life at all, but death. Death's deadly "mal"-o-drama produces those bewitching thrill syndromes that exhaust the nerve cell as "the beat moves on," — first the blues, then depression, then chronic depression, then hallucination, and finally suicidal despair. Thrill is to death what joy is to life, but joy moves from glory to glory as it feeds on the "Bread of Life;" a feeding that leads to the mansions of the house of the Father where fulfillment is forever.

Unfortunately, in acculturated Christianity, most of us are offered schizophrenic high balls concocted partly from the "cup of the Lord" and partly from the "cup of the devils;" so we cleave and despise and are as often as not found praying in the name of Christ while really desiring the devil's delight for Christmas. To separate these cups is a formidable task and one that we seem disinclined to undertake, for it is more difficult for us to separate ourselves from a consumer culture propagandizing for hedonistic pleasures and opulent new Egypts than it is to separate a savage from his terror gods.

Really, there is no simple solution to the problem. However, I do think it is possible to establish some guide lines. One approach that I find helpful is to act on the premise set forth by Paul when he said that for Christians all things are lawful, but not all things are convenient. The convenient thing for the Christian to do is to avoid exposing his perception to

demeaning works even though it may be lawful for him to do so, for the unconscious mind soaks in everything it sees, and even though value judgements are being made against the garbage, it may still rot in the lower levels of our mind and in our weaker moments come back on us as filthy fumes, thus defiling the temple of the Holy Spirit. The Christian, by discernment, will guard against such exposure and permit into his perception only those things that help him grow up into a perfect man conformed to Christ. Art that would aid this growth should have about it that power of "awe"-ful stillness that bears an affinity to God's rest. "Be still, and know that I am God." (Psalm 46:10) Art that produces quiet order, unity, and beauty bears an affinity to God's rest and becomes a pattern of the true tent actually pitched in heaven. For instance, in a small head of Christ in the Metropolitan Museum in New York City, one is almost made to feel Christ's aching spirit within. God, by His holy condescension, permits such works to act in the sense realm as a kind of foretaste of Christ's "all-in-all." Hence, the temporal body is given a foretaste of what the risen body will taste fully.

An artist whose work does not celebrate the Christ event directly can still celebrate and rejoice in God's creation as long as God is worshipped and served rather than the creature. He can also play a prophetic role by using his work to cry out against injustice and the ravages of sin. Yet, his victory in Christ should stimulate him to the higher task of reflecting God's goodness, which is above contradiction, by setting that goodness upon the hill of his work for all the world to see. To merely grovel in brokenness or chaos is to demean Christ's triumph on the cross by implying that evil still has the upper hand. After all, disfigurement, brokenness, and chaos belong to the realm of death. Form-transfigured data with its order and implications of wholeness belongs to life and points to the "all-in-all" where at last the final enemy, death, will be put down. The Holy Spirit, who brings life, is a forming agent even though He is free to blow where He will. There is a seductive counterfeit, however, called "free form," but even the term "free form" is a contradiction since form implies limit, and form that does not limit is not a form. As a helpful generalization it might be noted that God gathers while the enemy scatters.

The Christian, while naturally rejecting vulgarity and bad taste in art, is yet confronted with further dilemmas. For instance, if we take the Biblical position that all that is not of faith is sin, what about those works of art produced outside of faith? Will sin be present in these works even though their effect upon us is one of beauty? Some Christians, in order to rationalize the pleasure they get from such works, try to solve the problem by an appeal to natural grace, but I think natural grace refers to the quality

of God's love rather than to the quality of the works of the unjust upon whom the rain also falls. A tare, after all, is not just wheat that lacked a little love. Its difference is in kind, and only an in-grafting can change it or an act of cleansing by God. "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common." (Acts 10:15) Perhaps in this area, then, we had better trust the Spirit, who prays in us and let our impulses of conscience be our guide. Here, as in other areas, the spirit of the law rather than the letter of the law had best obtain, for there is no safe way to make a judgment outside of right relationship to God.

Two further observations are offered at this point with reference to Christian discernment. One has to do with the qualitative use of time and the other with time vs. eternity. The qualitative use of time is illustrated in the story of the wise and foolish virgins where what is conceived innocently as good by the foolish virgins becomes the enemy of the great. The good times that the foolish virgins were having robbed faith of its redemptive opportunity. The foolish virgins were not said to have been up to any overt hanky panky. They were merely doing what would be comparable to trimming their suburban hedges while the wise virgins were trimming their spiritual wicks. They were wasting the oil that the wise virgins were storing up for the coming of the bridegroom. Can't you just picture the foolish virgins standing at the seashore while the boat called *Redemption* moves on to its port in paradise! Likewise, for Christians, the mere presence of cultural opportunities makes it possible to be innocently fiddling with cultural agendas while the inner city is burning. The possibility of being caught, on the Judgment Day, on the side of Nero rather than on the side of the natives should give us cause to pause and reassess our values. In other words, we, as Christians, may be stringing second rate pearls of cultural pastimes to hang around our upper middle class necks where the more stunning pearl of self-giving would be found more pleasing to the God, who sees in secret and searches the thoughts and intents of the heart. The danger lies in passing by the widow and the prisoner in their need when on the way to the latest cultural event. Therefore, art that becomes a substitute for redemptive activity is misused regardless of all other considerations, good or evil.

The last consideration has to do with what is permanent as over against what is merely passing. Art that puts us in touch with Christ's words by setting forth the Christian miracle or by celebrating God through creation or by making the neighbor aware of God's goodness has served its highest function, for Christ said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." (Matthew 24:35) To be preoccupied with surface pleasure no matter how dazzling or beguiling causes us to run

the risk of being trivial rather than triumphant. This is also true of the church when it is preoccupied with the *things* of God rather than the life of God. After all, the god of this passing age can give things; what he cannot give is life. Unless the flame of the Spirit burns with more brightness than the flame of lust, it gives the sign to the lost that grace is not really grace-full. Likewise, if the Christian artist cannot incite others to Christ by out-performing the children of darkness, he, too, forfeits the game. Religious pictures that are weakly pious are like whited sepulchres filled with dead men's bones and thus do not appeal to a generation whose veins are surging with passionate blood. The church, when it eats the "Bread of Life" without engaging in redemptive activity, has its arteries clogged with the sludge of spiritual cholesterol, thus weakening its heart and leaving it open to the attack of irrelevancy. Here the Christian artist can help prod the church toward redemptive activity, for the failure to set forth lives transfigured by holy zeal reduces the image of the church and the image of the Christian to that level where God can no longer make His appeal through them. God is left, then, with no recourse but the exercise of His wrath as a way of making a knowledge of His holiness known to a faithless generation.

I would hope that as artists who bear the name of Christ, we would use our work in a self-effacing way so as to permit Christ to stand before men sacramentally. By unashamedly confessing Christ before men, we will in turn be confessed before the Father according to Christ's own promise. (Matthew 10:32-33) (Mark 8:38) In the final analysis, to stand in the presence of the Father is a higher satisfaction than can be realized from any art form, no matter how ingenious.

On Reviving the Study of
Biblical Ethics

Wayne McCown*

"The simple task of honest and clear exegesis," Thomas C. Oden has recently perceived, "may be the undiscovered beginning point for contemporary Protestant ethics."[1]

The "exegetical" work currently presupposed by and presented in the ethicists[2] (and in the pulpit!) is sadly inadequate. Too often, the Bible is appealed to in an arbitrarily selective way. Texts or paradigms are adduced in evidence as convenient, while others equally but inconveniently germane, are ignored, played down, or even repudiated. Further,

*Professor-elect, in the field of Biblical Literature, at Seattle Pacific College. He received his Th. D. from Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Virginia.

1.   Thomas C. Oden, *Radical Obedience: The Ethics of Rudolf Bultmann* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1964), pp. 18, 21.

2.   In recent years, theologians in Christian ethics have produced quite a number of stimulating volumes. These scholars, of course, focus primarily on the present situation; they dedicate most of their attention to elucidating it and the ethical processes pertinent to it. But, appeal to the Bible is, for none of them, an unnatural act. Rather, it is integral to both the methodology and message of Christian ethics.
The ethical works studied of late, with attention espeically to the exegetical question posed here, include the following: John A. T. Robinson, *Honest to God* (London: SCM Press Ltd, 1963), and *Christian Morals Today* (London: Student Christian Movement, 1964); Paul L. Lehmann, *Ethics in a Christian Context* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1963); Joseph Sittler, *The Structure of Christian Ethics* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1958); James Sellers, *Theological Ethics* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1966); Paul Ramsey, *Basic Christian Ethics* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1950), and *Deeds and Rules in Christian Ethics* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1965); James M. Gustafson, *Christ and the Moral Life* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1968); Helmut Thielicke, *Theological Ethics, Volume I: Foundations,* ed. William H. Lazareth (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966).

sentences lifted out of their context become, in the hands of some, little more than mottos—as if authority attaches to them regardless of the use to which they are put. But *use* of the Bible (in a supportive role), rather than submission to its authority, is, from the exegetical side, an unreliable method and a misuse of the Bible's authority.[3]

If the Bible is to be at all normative, or genuinely illuminative, in matters of ethical decision and conduct, certainly it must be the Bible rightly interpreted. " . . . it is the biblical word in its true meaning, and that alone, that can claim to be normative in the church."[4] In a word, we have to do with the task of exegesis.[5]

Exegetical work in the "ethical" parts of the Bible has been woefully lacking.[6] But now, there are signs of renewed interest in this endeavor.[7] And, there are tentative signs of an attempt to bridge the long-standing gap between biblical studies and Christian ethics.[8] But how? That is the problematic point in the process, and its touchstone.

The present paper is intended, in part, to summon the evangelical church to participation and leadership in the revival of biblical ethics.

3.   For this reason, the attitude and approach to Scripture espoused by James Sellers is unacceptable: "For Christian ethics," he has asserted, "the basis of hermeneutics is a pragmatic affirmation of *what we are to expect to find* in the Bible" (*Theological Ethics,* p. 102; underscoring added).

4.   John Bright, *The Authority of the Old Testament* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1967), p. 42.

5.   Cf. James M. Gustafson, "Christian Ethics" in *Religion,* ed. Paul Ramsey (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1950), pp. 337-338, who lamenting the "paucity of material that relates the two areas [of biblical exegesis and Christian ethics] in a scholarly way," has called urgently for more work to be done at this point.

6.   Cf. Rudolf Schnackenburg, *New Testament Theology Today,* trans. David Askew (New York: Herder & Herder, 1963), pp. 123-124; Victor Paul Furnish, *Theology and Ethics in Paul* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1968), p. 7; C. Sleeper Freeman, "Ethics as a Context for Biblical Interpretation," *Interpretation,* (October, 1968), XXII, 443.

7.   See the works cited below, in note 24.

8.   See, e.g., Amos N. Wilder, "Kerygma, Eschatology and Social Ethics" in *The Background of the New Testament and Its Eschatology,* ed. W. D. Davies and D. Daube, in honour of Charles Harold Dodd (Cambridge, England: University Press, 1956), pp. 509-536; and, William Baird, *The Corinthian Church: A Biblical Approach to Urban Culture* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1964).

More specifically, it will propose, as an initial step, a method of interpretation appropriate to the study of the exhortatory (ethical) materials in the New Testament epistles.

Problems of an Exegetical Ethic

Evangelicals are among those prone to short-circuit the process of interpretation. The demands of Scripture are wont to be pressed into immediate application, through a "super-direct mode of casuistry."[9] But the inadequacies of a naively literal hermeneutic are perhaps nowhere more evident: the exhortatory commands in the Bible cannot be appealed to mechanically, non-contextually, non-historically—as if each had the flat authority of law in its text. Not all the directives in the Bible (even "moral obligations) are equally binding on the Christian today (consider Lev. 20:9, "every one who curses father or mother shall be put to death").[10] We are obliged, then, to ask a profoundly critical question: what *is* it in Scripture that commands us and *how* is its authority to be appealed to rightly?

The problem is a difficult one; it also is one we must face more courageously, if we expect to find a sound and satisfying solution (which, at present, we do not have). Carl F. H. Henry, in his lengthy apologetic treatise on Christian personal ethics, repeatedly emphasizes the eternal and absolute quality of the transcendently revealed Hebrew—Christian ethic. Yet, he must also concede: "In both Testaments there is the moral law that is binding upon all men in all circumstances and places; there are also commandments of temporary significance."[11] Dr. Henry, however, fails really to grapple with the problem thus posed. Precisely *how* he (or any of the rest of us) determines which injunctions are absolute and which temporary seems unascertainable, or at best, arbitrary. Such a methodological flaw, at such a crucial point, means the whole structure of evangelical ethics is posited on an uncertain foundation.

---

9. Harold B. Kuhn, "Ethics and the Holiness Movement" in *Insights into Holiness,* comp. Kenneth Geiger (Kansas City, Mo.: Beacon Hill Press, 1962; third printing, 1963), pp. 249-250.

10. In the New Testament consider, e.g., 1 Cor. 14:34ff., " . . . the women should keep silence in the churches. . . . for it is shameful for a woman to speak in church."

11. Carl F. H. Henry, *Christian Personal Ethics* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1957), p. 269.

A related problem also required a great deal more thought and attention. How are the demands of Scripture to be applied in the church today? Harold B. Kuhn has suggested: " . . . the task of the Christian moralist must be essentially this: to *abstract* from the temporary and local precept [of the New Testament] *the principle which underlies it and which it encases;* and then, *to reapply the principle in terms of the contemporary situation.*"[12] This description points us somewhat in the right direction (although exegetical rationale is lacking, this phrasing may be employed for expressing the task thus, in terms of 'encasement' and 'abstraction').[13] But Dr. Kuhn's statement is no more than a general description— one which invites contextual investigation of precise hermeneutical, analytical and critical procedures from both ends, the biblical and the modern. On this score, evangelicals too often seem unbelievably immature, in knowing how to apply the Scriptures.

Another problem: we cannot expect to find in the Bible a direct word for many of the most important moral choices confronting contemporary man (e.g., abortion—on—demand, genetic manipulation, environmental pollution). Can Scripture be brought to bear on these pressing questions—how? Dr. Henry submits, that the questions to which the Bible gives no explicit answers "may be considered under large principles and examples."[14] Other Christian ethicists accomplish the task similarly, by applying theological motifs and biblical images or moral beliefs based on the Bible. But, as Professor Gustafson has pointed out, "The way one moves from basic Christian beliefs to moral intentions has not been the subject of much close analysis." He further asserts:

> The "because" or the "therefore" that joins belief and action often covers a mass of confusion. The moves from theological statements to ethical principles, and to the existential moral question are often hidden in religious rhetoric.[15]

---

12.   Kuhn, p. 249 (italics in original).

13.   Henry's procedure in this regard is much less precise methodologically, and can hardly be deemed helpful at all: "This content of morality is not limited to the express precepts but embraces all they imply—building churches, establishing Christian schools and seminaries, endowing hospitals, printing and circulating the Bible, keeping the Lord's Day, holding family worship" (Henry, *Christian Personal Ethics,* p. 338).

14.   *Ibid.,* p. 339.

15.   Gustafson, *Christ and the Moral Life,* p. 260.

These represent some of the provocative problems raised by prior research in Christian ethics, at the point of its contact with the Bible. One fact is abundantly clear: in the recovery of a sound exegetical (evangelical) ethic, we are obliged to begin with a diligent study of exhortation in the Bible itself.

Dibelius on Exhortation in the New Testament

Modern New Testament scholarship, in its understanding and interpretation of the exhortatory (or "paraenetic") passages, has been strongly influenced bv Martin Dibelius.[16] He appropriated for their study a definition developed by Rudolf Vetschera relative to the Greek moralists. It reads as follows: "Paraenesis is *a literary form which,* in accord with its usage and purpose, *presents a collocation of precepts;* these it relates to the practical conduct of life, *as spurs to progress and guides to virtue.*"[17]

---

16.   Of Martin Dibelius' studies, see esp. *Der Brief des Jakobus,* Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament Begründet von H. A. W. Meyer, Bd. XVI (7. Auflage; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1921); and, *An die Thessalonicher I. II. An die Philipper,* Handbuch zum Neuen Testament hrsg. von H. Lietzmann, Bd. II (3. Auflage; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1937). Dibelius' influence is evidenced in all of the following monographs: Karl Weidinger, *Die Haustafeln. Ein Stück urchristlicher Paränese,* Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament, Bd. XIV (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs' sche Buchhandlung, 1928); Siegfried Wibbing, *Die Tugend–und Laster-katalogischen Paränese im Neuen Testament und ihre Traditionsgeschichte unter besonderer Berucksichtigung der Qumrantexte,* Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft, Bd. XXV (Berlin: Verlag Alfred Töpelmann, 1959); Erhard Kamlah, *Die Form der katalogischen Paränese im Neuen Testament,* Wissenschaftlichen Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament, Bd. VII (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1964). Cf. also David Bradley, "The Origins of the Hortatory Materials in the Letters of Paul" (Unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, Yale University, 1947).

Rudolf Vetschera, *Zur griechische Paränese* (Scmichow: Druck von Rohlícek und Sievers im Prag. Im Selbstverlage, 1912), p. 7 (the somewhat free translation is my own; underscoring added). On the character and function of paraenesis in the Greek (and Jewish) tradition(s), see also Victor Paul Furnish, *Paul's Exhortations in the Context of His Letters and Thought,* Microcard Theological Studies, SSVI (Washington, D. C.: Microcard Foundation for the American Theological Library Association, 1960), chap. I, "The Paraenetic Tradition: Its History and Character," pp. 6-72.

This "preceptorial" mode[18] is intended to provide a place of ready reference for all sorts of moral directives, as a comprehensive guide for a man's practical life.[19] The logic behind the form comes to fore most clearly in a syllogism preserved by Seneca (4 B.C.–65 A.D.): "The happy life consists in upright conduct; precepts guide one to upright conduct; therefore precepts are sufficient for attaining the happy life."[20]

What results when exhortation in the New Testament is interpreted by this standard? The traditional, eclectic characteristics of certain paraenetic materials is brought into focus. But, for Dibelius, this aspect obscured any possibility of theological *entente* or specifically Christian content. In his commentary on James, he declares:

> . . . the Epistle of James has no "theology." Although the world of ideas and values which the Epistle attests, despite its eclecticism, is relatively uniform—yet, paraenesis offers no room for the unfolding and development of religious ideas. At best, now and then they are touched on or alluded to, but, for the most part, they are only presupposed. . . . One may compare the paraenetic parts of the Pauline epistles: only with difficulty could anyone derive from them any kind of "theology"; and, in any case, it certainly would not be Paul's.[21]

The general, traditio-historical, pedagogical aspect of such hortatory passages essentially determine their hermeneutical import. Thus, for example, it can be affirmed, further:

> The hortatory sections of the Pauline letters are clearly differentiated in material from what Paul otherwise wrote. In particular they lack an immediate relation with the circumstances of the letter. The rules and directions are not formulated for

---

18.   Cf. Seneca's reference to "this department of philosophy which the Greeks call 'paraenetic,' and we Romans call the 'preceptorial' . ." *(Epistulae Morales,* XCV. 1).

19.   Furnish, *Paul's Exhortations,* p. 40; Vetschera, *Zur griechische Paränese,* p. 6.

20.   Seneca, *Epistulae Morales,* XCV. 4.

21.   Dibelius, *Jakobus,* p. 19 (The translation is my own).

special churches and concrete cases, but for the general re-
quirements of earliest Christendom.[22]

Similar results are obtained by application of this interpretation of parae-
nesis to the Epistle to the Hebrews. The treatise does not address itself to
the situation of one beleaguered community; rather, the seemingly con-
crete expressions (e.g., 10:32-34; 12:4) reflect phenomena "typical" of
the young Church. And, the hortatory passage 5:11—6:12 resolves into a
mere pedagogical preface for the expository treatment of Christ as high
priest in chapters· 7-10. Apostasy does *not* threaten as an imminent possi-
bility, but the motif has been utilized to "mobilize" the readers for the
message proffered.[23]

Requisites in Rethinking the Task

A critical comment may be submitted at this point. Although he
begins with Vetschera's limited formal definition of paraenesis, Dibelius,
by necessity, in his New Testament studies proceeds to use the terms
"paraenesis" and "paraenetic" in a more general sense, to describe any
type of exhortation or appeal. The functional characteristics of paraenesis
specified as a literary genre, however, have continued to be enforced also
in the extended sense of exhortation (as an earnest appeal).

Due to its exegetical and theological inadequacies, a reaction against
the Dibelian approach has set in, quite recently, in the field of Pauline
studies. Wolfgang Schrage and Victor Paul Furnish insist that traditio-
historical (and form-critical) description constitutes only a part of the
hermeneutical task requisite to these hortatory sections. The Apostle's
commands and appeals also must be considered seriously in terms of their

---

22. Martin Dibelius, *From Tradition to Gospel,* trans. from 2d rev. ed. by Bertram
Lee Woolf (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1935), p. 38; cf. Rudolf
Bultmann, *Der Stil der paulinischen Predigt und die kynisch-stoische Diatribe,*
Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testament, Bd.
XIII (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck &Ruprecht, 1910), pp. 99-100.

23. Martin Dibelius, "Der Himmlische Kultus nach dem Hebräerbrief" in
*Botschaft and Geschichte; gesammelte Aufsätze, Bd. II: Zum Urchristentum
und zur hellenistischen Religions—geschichte* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul
Siebeck], 1956), pp. 160-176.

epistolary and theological context(s).[24]

Robert W. Funk, too, has recognized the need for renewed thinking in regard to the paraenetic sections of the (Pauline) epistles:

> This particular aspect of the letters, as it appears to me, re-
> quires rethinking in two respects. (1) Are the ethical sections
> framed by and referred to theological sections? If so, how?
> (2) Are the paraeneses constructed with the particular situa-
> tion in mind? How can we determine what has specific refer-
> ence and what not? What is required in resolving these ques-
> tions is more than the customary exegesis can provide, for it is
> necessary to attend to the way in which the paraeneses are set
> in the letter as a whole, and the way in which traditional
> material is framed in its own immediate context, in addition
> to which one must be alert to Paul's disposition to conven-
> tional language. These factors may drastically affect the
> [Dibelian] understanding of the paraenesis which takes the
> items *seriatim* and refers them to tradition.[25]

A Proposed Method of Interpretation

What is needed in the study of New Testament exhortation entails, in the first place, an exegetically derived definition and delimitation of the

---

24.   Wolfgang Schrage, *Die konkreten Einzelgebote in der paulinischen Paränese*
       (Gütersloh: Gutersloher Verlagshaus [Gerd Mohn], 1961); Furnish, *Theology
       and Ethics in Paul.*
       See further, Lorenz Nieder, *Die Motive der religiös-sittlichen Paränese in den
       paulinischen Gemeindebriefen. Ein Beitrag zur paulinischen Ethik,* Münchener
       theologische Studien, I. Historische Abteilung, Bd. XII (Munich: Darl Zink
       Verlag, 1956); A. Grabner-Haider, *Paraklese und Eschatologie bei Paulus.
       Mensch und Welt im Anspruch der Zukunft Gottes,* Neutestamentliche
       Abhandlungen, N. F., Bd. IV (Münster: Aschendorff, 1968). Substantial
       work also has been done in this regard by Rudolf Schnackenburg, *Die sittliche
       Botschaft des Neuen Testaments* (2. Auflage; Munich: Max Hueber Verlag,
       1962), who essays to survey the place of ethics within the theological per-
       spective of Jesus as well as the major New Testament writers. Celsaus Spicq,
       another Roman Catholic scholar, has contributed too in his extensive treat-
       ment, *Théologie Morale du Nouveau Testament* (2 vols.; Paris: Librairie
       Lecoffre, 1965).

25.   Robert W. Funk, *Language, Hermeneutic, and Word of God: the Problem of
       Language in the New Testament and Contemporary Theology* (New York:
       Harper & Row, Publishers, 1966), p. 254.

"hortatory sections." The understanding of exhortation in the New Testament epistles, evidently, must be sufficiently broad to allow consideration, ultimately, of their paraenetic purport or applicability in its totality. Hebrews embraces lengthy expository passages (e.g., 7:1-10:18); yet the author himself designates the whole of his writing as "my word of exhortation." Even Romans (often cited as typical of the apostolic practice of handling exhortatory and ethical matters[26]) has, almost from the beginning (see c.2), a hortatory aspect –"of which chapters 12-15 are only, so to speak, the denouement."[27] Yet, a recognition of the features distinctive to the explicitly hortatory passages in an epistle, too, is salutary. Their specific uniqueness, of course, inheres in their intimate embrace of, or immediate attachment to, an exhortatory appeal.[28]

These specifically hortatory demands, however, are not immediately to be sifted out of their contexts for contemplation (and application). Rather, the hortatory sections thus defined must be analyzed as exegetical units. They are first to be studied according to the principles of grammatico- and form-historical criticism by which other kinds of (biblical) texts are approached.[29] At some points, though, it is helpful in studying hortatory appeal to move "beyond form criticism" to the kind of "rhetorical criticism" lately suggested by James Muilenberg.[30] Or, to put it another way and therby introduce a further stage, the study needs to

---

26. See, e.g., William D. Davies, "Ethics in the New Testament," *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, II, 175: "Most of the letters reveal a twofold structure: a first part, dealing with 'doctrine,' is followed by a second, dealing with ethics. Romans is typical." This usual division of the letters now seems highly questionable and somewhat misleading, on closer examination of the evidence; cf. Furnish, *Theology and Ethics in Paul*, pp. 98ff.

27. Furnish, *Theology and Ethics in Paul*, p. 107.

28. Note that, in addition to such obvious grammatical forms as imperatives, hortatory subjunctives and verbs of entreaty, many subtler and less direct ways are used with the force of exhortatory appeal: e.g., rhetorical questions; entreaties in prayers, thanksgivings and benedictions; even indicative affirmations (expressions of "need," "fear," etc.)

29. A helpful introduction to the methodology of form criticism and its role in biblical exegesis, now available in English, is Klaus Koch, *The Growth of the Biblical Tradition: the Form-Critical Method*, 2. Auflage, rev., trans. S. M. Cupitt (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1969).

30. James Muilenberg, "Form Criticism and Beyond," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, (March, 1969), LXXXVIII, 1-18.

attend to analysis for form, style and sequence, as Professor Funk would encourage.[31] Thus, we recommend adaptation and application of methodologies, not only form-critical (and traditio-historical), but also rhetorical and literary, as appropriate to the subject matter at hand.

The procedural order may be outlined as follows:[32]

(1) Having *demarcated* the sections specifically concerned with hortatory appeal, first consider each separately, analytically, EXEGETICALLY, in terms of form (i.e., *structural format*) and *content*.

(2) Working with the descriptive data thus collocated, it is possible to move the study forward by attending more carefully to the various FORMAL CHARACTERISTICS of the materials involved: (a) the *"hortatory techniques"* exhibited in the several sections; (b) the *backgrounds and appropriation of materials* used therein; and, (c) the *stylistic and logical aspects* of the explicitly exhortatory statements.

(3) Finally, the move must be made from form-critical, traditio-historical and rhetorical analyses, to synoptic consideration of the hortatory sections IN CONTEXT: (a) their relations to the other (i.e., expository or doctrinal) parts apropos *literary structure;* and, (b) their relations to the *theological themes and concerns* of the epistle.

The method of interpretation suggested here should open up for us several specific lines of inquiry which must be pursued if we are to explore biblical ethics in its comprehensive perspective.[33] (a) To what extent are the data for ethical reflection in the New Testament epistles provided by the experiences of the early Christians, by the tradition of ethical insight shared by their community, and by events in the secular world? (b) What hortatory techniques and materials common to the ethical teaching of the

---

31. Funk, *Language, Hermeneutic, and Word of God,* esp. p. 254.

32. See Wayne Gordon McCown, "The Nature and Function of the Hortatory Sections in the Epistle to the Hebrews" (unpublished Th. D. dissertation, Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, 1970).

33. Cf. Freeman, "Ethics as a Context," pp. 449-450.

period were taken up by early Christianity, and how were they appropriated? (c) How did the authors of the New Testament employ and interpret the (Old Testament) Scriptures relative to their ethical concerns? (d) What actual concerns, theological and sociological, prompted the exhortations of the individual authors; with what purpose in view did they extend their commands and appeals? (e) What kinds of ethical norms operated for the biblical writers, and by what logical and rhetorical means did they give substance and life to their appeals? (f) What, precisely, are the relations between "theological" proclamation and "moral" exhortation?

Serious investigation along these lines should provide us with better criteria for relating the biblical message to our own ethical concerns. The Scriptures proffer to us—scholar and preacher and layman alike—a source of great illumination in the methodological aspects of ethical reflection, as well as preserving, in content, our ethical heritage.

The biblical writers exhibit an extensive concern with ethical issues. We simply cannot understand the New Testament apart from this concern; exhortatory application is integral to the very theological message. The signs of a renewed interest in biblical ethics is, therefore, in a real sense simply the recovery of a neglected aspect within the biblical sources themselves.[34] Reviving the study of biblical ethics, thus, should be a vital concern in the evangelical church.

---

34. *Ibid.,* p. 449.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Layman's Parallel New Testament, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1970. 943 pages. $7.95.

Four popular translations and paraphrases of the New Testament are published in parallel columns for easy reference and comparison: The King James Version, The Amplified New Testament, The Living New Testament, and The Revised Standard Version. Together, they constitute a rather broad summary of interpretation of the New Testament, almost amounting to a concise built-in commentary.

The familiar beauty of the oldest version leads with its concise and stately style. Sharing the same page of the double spread is the expanded and explanatory interpretation that has furnished so many of the fruits of scholarship to laymen in recent times. Beginning the second page of the spread is the new interpretive paraphrase by Kenneth Taylor. This is a thought-by-thought restatement of the content of the New Testament, based on the American Standard Version of 1901. In the last column is the version that was made in the hope of replacing the King James and that has come nearer to achieving that goal than any other attempt.

In a day when few have the patience or can spare the time for detailed study of the Scriptures, this modest investment provides quick insights into the Word of God. While paraphrases and expansions also furnish shocks and disappointments to those who are familiar with the passages in a more traditional and beautiful form, there is a genuine value in any device that induces people to read and understand the New Testament. The explanatory paraphrases also furnish a bridge from the archaic expressions of the older English to a proper insight into the meaning of the most widely used modern revision. On the whole, this volume is a convenient and useful tool for reading and study.

Wilber T. Dayton

The Prophecy of Ezekiel: The Glory of the Lord, by Charles Lee Feinberg. Chicago: Moody Press, 1969. 270 pages. $4.95.

The essential contents of this book first appeared serially in *The*

Chosen People, a missionary magazine. Feinberg interprets Ezekiel literalistically. This prophecy is no mere literary reflection on historical events; rather, it is a record of the authoritative and predictive acts and utterances of a man of God moved by the Spirit of God. What Ezekiel predicts comes to pass—after the fact of prediction. But Ezekiel's message is more than a simple seer's oracles concerning coming events; it is a declaration of the Shekinah glory of the Lord. Prediction—fulfillment is only substantiation of the essential message. Prediction is never prediction *per se;* it always exists as part of this larger message.

The Prophecy of Ezekiel is a chapter by chapter exposition; each chapter by Feinberg deals with a chapter by Ezekiel. The author divides Eaekiel into four large units: "Prophecies of Jerusalem's Destruction" (chapters 1–24), "Prophecies Against the Nations" (chapters 25–32), "Prophecies of Israel's Blessing" (chapters 33–39), and "The Millennial Temple and Sacrifices" (chapters 40–48). He analyzes and interprets the contents of the respective chapters. In so doing, he marshals background materials of many sorts, both Biblical and extra-Biblical: historical, archaeological, geographic, linguistic. He demonstrates a wide knowledge of the scholarly problems involved. Having trained as a Rabbi before his conversion, Feinberg is able to share the insights of Rabbinic writings. The last paragraph in each chapter is usually a distillation of some spiritual note which can be applied to our own lives, whether a specific message in the words of the prophet or an object lesson drawn from the chapter. These paragraphs are always terse, more suggestive than explicit. But they show insight and they contain the germ of more than one sermon, poem, or religious novel. In the exposition of his last two major division, Feinberg deals with prophetic predictions concerning events he feels to be yet future. Here again he insists on taking the prophecies literally, always alert to indications of future consummation.

Understandably and interestingly written, a rich treatment of a difficult theme, Feinberg's *The Prophecy of Ezekiel* will prove rewarding reading to students of the Word. It will be especially welcome to those of us without the linguistic equipment for using more sophisticated tools.

Anthony Casurella, Jr.

Old Testament Times, by R. J. Harrison, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970. 357 pages. $6.95.

As the book jacket indicates, this volume, by the professor of Old Testament at Wycliffe College, University of Toronto, "deals in an untechnical manner with a broad social and cultural context in which the

events recorded in Scripture took place." Less detailed and technical than Harrison's *Introduction to the Old Testament,* this volume, designed more for the general reader, successfully correlates the history of the Old Testament with that of its environment. There are several helpful indices, plus a bibliography, designed to lead the inquirer into further background material. Over one hundred well chosen illustrations really add to the interest and usefulness of the volume.

After a survey of the records of the ancient past, the author gives considerable attention to Mesopotamia, outlining in a readable and concise manner the prehistoric Stone Age and the rise of kingdoms of this valley up to the Patriarchial Age of the Bible. Ancient Egypt is covered in a cursory manner and the reader's attention is then directed to the Hebrew people, their migration from Egypt and conquest of Canaan. The history of the chosen people is traced through the Exile and the Intertestament Period up to New Testament times closing with a consideration of the Herodian Period.

The author appears most competent and knowledgeable in the ancient period, his treatment of the later centuries being dealt with in less detail. Throughout, primary sources are seldom referred to, the author being dependent for the most part on secondary sources. In other words it is a helpful working manual which assembles in a readable fashion a vast amount of material bringing it into a manageable compass. Occasionally it would have been helpful to have indicated the sources in greater detail.

While the perspective of Harrison on the whole is conservative, he seeks honestly to consider all the relevant evidence and draw the conclusion to which the evidence points so that both his methodology and his objectivity are quite satisfying to this reviewer. Occasionally one encounters some rather surprising data such as the comment that the second largest pyramid, that of Khafre, had its surface pillaged and height reduced similar to that which the Great Pyramid experienced, failing to note that Khafre's pyramid has its tip intact. Another error noted concerns the identification of a panoramic view of Jerusalem on page 353, which looks toward the southern ridge of the Mount of Olives surmounted by its Russian tower. But the caption describes it as the site of the new Hebrew University, where a collection of the Dead Sea Scrolls is now housed. As every visitor to Jerusalem knows, to the north of this photo, on Mount Scopus, is the *old* Hebrew University campus and that the *new* campus, where the Dead Sea Scrolls are deposited, is in west Jerusalem. The book deserves a wide reading because it lends itself admirably to the nonspecialist in Old Testament studies who needs a ready manual for background. It should prove at least as successful as its companion volume, Tenney's *New Testament Times.*

George A. Turner

BOOK BRIEFS

God's Super Salesman, by Bob Harrington. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1970. 175 pages. $.95.

This is a book of views on religion, sin, and "unorthodox" evangelism, written by the noted "Chaplain of Burbon Street." It contains numerous pictures of the author. His fervent style of ministry is reflected in the text.

All the Trades and Occupations of the Bible, by Herbert Lockyer. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1969. 327 pages. $4.95.

This reference book is really a record of how people of ancient times lived and labored. The author not only gives carefully documented facts and supplies word origins but he takes an in-depth look at every occupation mentioned in Scripture. It is a worthwhile book for preachers and teachers.

The Urban Crisis, by David McKenna (editor). Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1969. 146 pages. $3.95.

The editor, President of Seattle Pacific College (Washington) and a graduate of Asbury Theological Seminary, presents a symposium on pressing issues resulting from the present urban crisis.

The book is written from two viewpoints. First, national leaders in the fields of sociology, politics, and education identify the issues. They analyze the live options that represent differing viewpoints of the issue. Secondly, evangelical Christian scholars who have special interest in urban problems relate the issues and options to a Christian perspective as a base for responsible social action.

New Ways of Teaching the Old Story, by R. E. Bingham. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1970. 125 pages. $3.50.

In view of the rapid changes in communication and the impact of mass media, the church is searching for new techniques in teaching the Old Story. This book by a leader in Christian education explores some of

these: team teaching, television, programmed learning, learning centers, and data processing.

Spiritual Manpower, by J. Oswald Sanders. Chicago: Moody Press, 1970. 219 pages. 95¢.

A paperback edition of seventeen Biblical biographies, from Abraham to Paul, this little book will furnish inspiration and resources for one of the most rewarding types of preaching.

The Whole Armour of God, by J. H. Jowett. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1969. 265 pages. $2.95.

This paperback reprint of fifteen sermons by a pulpit master of other years now appears in Baker's *Preaching Helps Series.* The messages, on the classic passage from Ephesians 6, are typical of Jowett at his best. He speaks in the persuasive language of a man deeply rooted in the Biblical faith, and he charms us with "the witchery of speech."

James, A Primer for Christian Living, by Earl Kelly. Nutley, N. J.: The Craig Press. 1969. 282 pages. $3.95.

In these thirty-three sermons on James, the author in his exegesis and exposition has drawn on a wealth of supporting materials. He succeeds in making this epistle "uncannily relevant" to the contemporary situation.

The Book of Joel, by M. Di Gangi. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1970. 75 pages. $1.95.

This is another in the *Shield Bible Study Series,* paper bound manuals which serve as guides to the study of the Bible. Previsou publications include manuals on Amos, Micah, Jeremiah and Colossians. It is profitable for group study in the local church.

The Light on the Lord's Face, by J. Winston Pearce. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1970. 128 pages.

This book is rich in inspiration. If we would know what God is like we shall discover it "in the light of the Lord's face"—in the life, teachings, death, and resurrection of Christ.

First Fruits
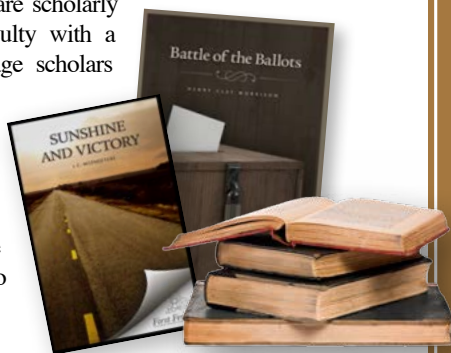## THE ACADEMIC OPEN PRESS OF ASBURY SEMINARY

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.

asbury.to/firstfruits