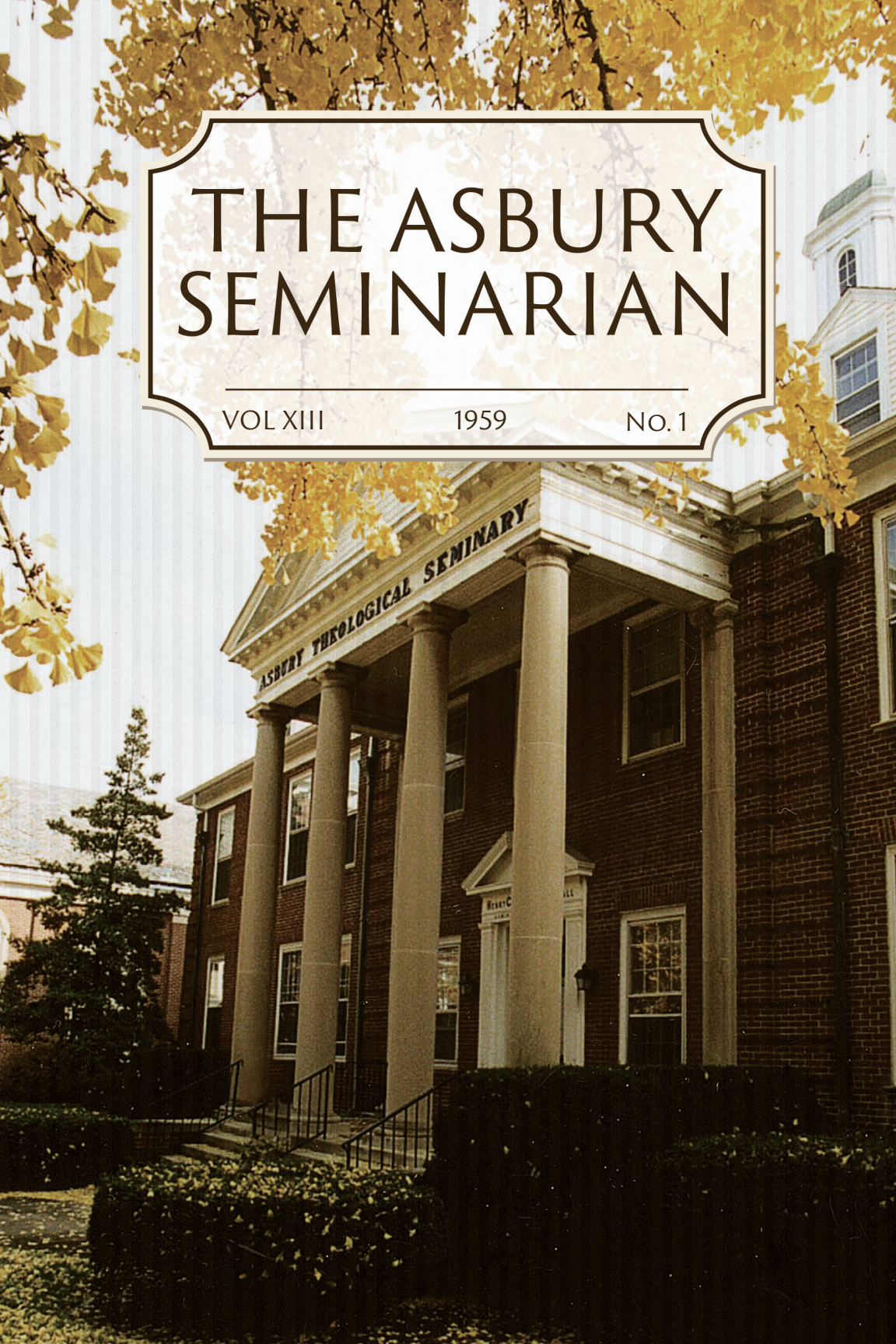


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Editorial . . .

The Inevitable Word

Harold B. Kuhn

To a degree which could not have been anticipated twenty years ago, the Bible has again been recognized as being crucial for the thought of the Western world. This manifests itself in theological circles today by the question raised: Is it biblical? More generally, it appears in the concern which sensitive persons feel for the Bible as a book containing the answers to life's supreme concerns.

Derived from this is the growing tendency to view Communism analytically, and then to reject it, not upon purely emotional grounds, but because its rejection of supernaturalistic considerations seems superficial. It is, of course, possible to overestimate the significance of our Western return to interest in spiritual realities; however, the acknowledgment of God in our time has not been without its reflex in the raising of the question, whether God may not after all have spoken in the Bible, and if so, whether what He has said does not deserve careful attention.

This does not mean that a return to interest in the Scriptures has always been in terms of an adequate understanding of their significance. Indeed, many who come to regard the Bible with new concern still retain much in their thinking which seems to undercut the proper meaning of the Word for them. There is need for placing a "floor" beneath our understanding of the Christian Scriptures as the Word of God. This will be done in a later article in this issue. For the present, it will be helpful to note some alternative ways of regarding the Word.

Some, faced anew with the question of taking the Bible seriously, seek to consider it chiefly in terms of a book of mystical devotion. These see its excellence to inhere mainly in its power to mirror the moods of the soul, and to enhance those moods. Now certainly the Scriptures are amazing in their grasped insight into man's inner life. It is safe to say that there is not an aspect of the life of devotion that has not been experienced by the inspired writers and set down in im-

pressive form. One of the marvels of the Psalter is its ability to give perfect expression to every phase of the devotional life.

And yet, subjectivism as a category for the understanding of the Word has been tried and found wanting. Its chief weakness is that any empirical discipline by which the Christian faith is analyzed purely in terms of its inner manifestations leaves untouched a major question. This question is that of the objective reality of the relationships which the subjective approach seeks to study. The Church's supposed witness to its own experience cannot stand alone. If one takes the Bible seriously at all, he finds this experience to rest upon facts of real objective significance; and this leads again to the question of the propositional accuracy of the written Revelation.

The typical 'liberal' view of the Bible seems to be crumbling at so many points that fewer and fewer people appear to be charmed by it. This view is, in reality, many views with a common denominator. They agree upon the following points: (1) that the Bible is not to be equated with the Word of God, but that some parts of it (especially selected sayings of Jesus) are divine revelation; (2) that any 'inspiration' claimed for the Bible is not something qualitatively unique, but only quantitatively different from that which impelled other writers to pen their statements; (3) that the canon of Scripture is purely human in its inclusion, and thus it is theoretically open; and (4) that the Bible contains much in its record that is naive and erroneous.

This type of approach to Scripture has fallen upon evil times. Carl F. H. Henry says:

The liberal view of the Bible was in the main a reflex, as we have seen, of an undergirding philosophy of religion, as well as of nature and history, which has now fallen on days of judgment. Hardly a year passes but that the last defenses of this position are weakened by the exodus of former advocates to opposition territory.¹

This does not mean that the alternatives have been adequate alternatives. The most tempting of them has been that of the neo-supernatural or so-called 'neo-orthodox' approach to Revelation. This approach has been discussed at such length that most readers are familiar with it. It centers in the view that the Bible is a fallible witness to a special divine revelation. This does not mean that the Bible itself is to be

¹ John W. Walvoord (ed.), *Inspiration and Interpretation*, p. 265.

identified with that revelation. It is rather a record of a 'revealing deed,' which may become revelation, as it induces a revelation-encounter in the case of the one who reads it.

There are indications of fundamental instability in this view. The easier answer may not, after all, be the correct one; and while the dialectical theologian's solution to the question promises to enable its holder to retain both the evangelical concept of Revelation and the 'scientific findings of liberal biblical scholarship' one wonders whether this alloy of iron and clay can prove itself stable. Actually, it has not done so.

The fashion at this moment is to seek a solution which goes 'beyond liberalism' and which presumably avoids some of the extremes of neo-supernaturalism. After all, the extreme view of the transcendence of God is somewhat arid and sterile. No doubt it is this which has impelled the post-liberals to move beyond it. Of this we shall say more shortly; but in the meantime, attention should be drawn to the role of archaeology in bringing the Bible again to the center of the stage of human attention.

William F. Albright has recently written an article under title, "Return to Biblical Theology," published in the *Christian Century*, November 19, 1958. He emphasizes that the branch of biblical study in which he has distinguished himself, namely that of archaeology, has served the following purposes: it has set the Bible at the center of history; it has reduced the probable span of man's history; it has forced a return to a general appreciation of the accuracy of the religious history of Israel as given in the Old Testament; it has given new support to belief in Mosaic monotheism; and it has consolidated the historical unity of the two Testaments.

In summary, he suggests that "we can now again treat the Bible from beginning to end as an authentic document of religious history."² This is an amazing acknowledgment, coming from a man of the stature of Professor Albright. The basic thrust of his statements is, to be sure, weakened somewhat by his disavowal of what he calls an "uncritical belief in 'verbal' inspiration"; but the affirmative weight of his article is tremendous.

To suggest, for example, that the Bible stands at the center of history is to assert its perennial relevance to human life and human needs. In other words, Dr. Albright sees that in the Scriptures, historical events and religio-moral matters

² *Christian Century*; Nov. 19, 1958, p. 1330.

are inseparable. The Bible is an accurate voice in the record of man's total past.

His conclusion that estimates of the antiquity of "tool-making man" is shrinking, and that "differences between known types of fossil man have been greatly exaggerated,"³ may have far-reaching implications for our view of the origin of man as well as for his history. Dr. Albright finds no forms of fossil man without tools, without language, and without art. Time will tell what the full significance of such conclusions will be for our understanding of man.

His assertion of the general accuracy of the religious history of Israel as given in the Old Testament seems to cut the ground from beneath much of so-called scientific study in the Old Testament and of the religion of Israel. Particularly significant is the suggestion that monotheism was a quality of the religious world-view of Moses and the other early leaders of Israel. It does not greatly weaken the force of this statement when Professor Albright adds that this monotheism was 'practical' rather than philosophical. After all, the type of systematic philosophical thought for which fifth and fourth century (B. C.) Greece was famous was no necessary part of the religion of Israel.

What is extremely important is, that he feels that recent research has found nothing to discount belief in an early monotheism, nor yet in the role of the Covenant in early religious history. This latter, along with the motif of insight into the future "which shaped the attitudes of the prophets themselves,"⁴ is indispensable to our correct understanding of the prophets of Israel. The word of a scholar of the stature of Dr. Albright at these points is significant to our total understanding of the manner in which the Bible is again making a place for itself at the center of human thought.

The Dead Sea Scrolls have vastly increased our understanding of both the linguistic situation in the inter-testamental period, and the thought-world which underlay the period of early New Testament history. Here, again, Professor Albright's word is amazingly forthright; he says: "The internal evidence supposed to prove the late date of many New Testament books has vanished. There is no longer any concrete evidence for dating a single New Testament book after the seventies or eighties of the first century A. D. --though this does not mean

³ *Ibid.* , Nov. 19, 1958, p. 1329.

⁴ *Ibid.* , Nov. 19, 1958, p. 1330.

that such an early date is already proved."⁵

Perhaps the most significant fact emerging from the study of the Dead Sea Scrolls is, that the unity of the Old and New Testaments has been, as Dr. Albright says, 'consolidated.' The allegedly Greek elements in the New Testament entered it, not from the outside as innovation, but by route of Judaism which had for several centuries been influenced by it. The authors of the New Testament, identified as being all "probably or certainly Jews," wrote with the conviction that the Hebrew Bible was Holy Scripture, and that they were writing with a definite purpose of continuing its basic message.

Supplementing this work of archaeology in bringing the Bible again into a place of centrality, and perhaps drawing upon it, is the work of men calling themselves 'post-liberal' in the sense that they go beyond both the classic liberalism and the dialectical theology. It needs to be said that there is not, at present, any group of men who formally consider themselves as post-liberals. But two or three names can be mentioned in this connection, notably that of Paul Tillich and that of Nels F. S. Ferré.

The latter of these, Dr. Ferré, has in a special sense been drawn to a renewed seriousness with respect to the Scriptures. The account of his spiritual pilgrimage has been traced by Soper in his *Major Voices in American Theology*. In his youth he found it difficult to accept certain views of the inspiration of Scripture which he considered to be extreme. Later, he seems to have found the attitude of classic liberalism toward the Word to be too sterile.

His more recent thinking has led him to a 'middle way'--a way which maintains contact with some of his earlier views, but which asserts with new emphasis the inevitability of the Word for the Christian man and woman. Coming from a man who is highly regarded as a Christian spirit and a Christian gentleman, this expression is exceedingly heartening. We are pleased to share this article with the readers of *The Asbury Seminary*. (It follows this Editorial in this issue.)

Just which direction the post-liberal type of theology will take is not at this moment clear. Some of its favorite themes may well prove to be transitory. The first of these is the interpretation of the Fall of man as "The symbol for the sin which we actually find in experience, rather than a doctrine

⁵ *Loc. cit.*

which determines in advance what we shall find."⁶ It is often summed up in the words, "Every man is his own Adam." It helps little for the advocates of this view of the Fall to say that the historic Christian view represents a false estimate of man's nature in advance, or that it is essentially a 'quantitative' doctrine. Actually, if this writer sees the situation correctly, the doctrine of the Fall of man is basically qualitative in its judgment upon human nature.

The second feature of post-liberal theology which is in vogue nowadays is stated in about the following words, "Christianity has no doctrine of immortality, but only the doctrine of the Resurrection." On the surface this appears innocent; but viewed a bit more closely, it may easily be pressed into the service of universalism; for if there is nothing permanent in the individual which survives death, in some "intermediate" state, and if personality awaits the calling-forth from nothingness through a resurrection, then why should not those who are unredeemed simply either remain in nothingness, or else be reconstituted as saved?

But, we repeat, these features may not outlast the men who propose them. What will survive is, without doubt, the power of the Word of God to impress itself upon the minds and consciences of men. Slowly but surely it has done so in the face of such a weight of negatives (from the side of classic liberalism) as might have seemed totally discouraging two decades ago.

Events are again underscoring the basic message of Hebrews 4:12: "The Word of God is alive, and powerful, and sharp...." The Evangelical can derive from this promise great confidence--a confidence which he finds to be buttressed by today's events.

⁶ John C. Bennett, *Christians and the State*, p. 54.

The Bible As Authority

Nels F. S. Ferré

We must return to the Bible. There is no hope for man outside the biblical faith. The Bible, rightly interpreted, that is from its own highest peak, God's actual presence as Holy Love in Jesus Christ, is man's final revelation. I know or can imagine no other God, or better, than he who has disclosed his will and way in Jesus Christ.

The Bible should not be a problem but a power. It should be the light of the world and the light for life. It should be our proud and precious possession. We should live by it, grow by it, and become glad and strong by it.

Nevertheless, it is a problem to numerous people, both inside and outside the faith. It is a difficulty in people's lives because it has been abused. It has been used wrongly. It has been sinned against by both enemies and friends. The church is confused, divided and enfeebled because the Bible has not been allowed to be the Bible, the living Word of God.

Two dangers beset the Bible, one from the left and the other from the right.

From the left we have a group of scholars who want to demythologize the Bible. With this they mean to remove from the Bible the primitive myths which modern man, trained in science, can no longer believe. These forces are led by the most prominent theologian in Europe, R. Bultmann, and in many's opinion the most weighty theologian in America, Paul Tillich. Both leaders are able, profound and dedicated, but they believe that science has forever destroyed legitimate faith in the supernatural world, a personal God who created and controls the world, and life after death. These men are followed by a number of competent and determined spirits.

I believe this movement constitutes a threat of life or death to everything that the Bible affirms at its very center. This movement will be defeated because the Bible is true and we can do everything ultimately for, and not against, the truth. God's truth will prevail.

The threat from the right has made the threat from the left

possible and indeed necessary. This is the threat unintelligently and immorally to flatten out the Bible, putting all of its material on the same level, rather than putting God in Christ as the center and the heart-beat of the Bible. Bishop Gerald Kennedy calls this "the crime of the levelers." This devastating attack on the Bible which drives the intelligently alert and morally sensitive people away from it, falsely, is due, all too often, to a zeal not according to knowledge. The Bible must be rescued from its unintelligent friends and be allowed to speak its sovereign message to a needy and waiting world.

Let me illustrate what I mean. A high executive of one of the greatest of the denominations in the South came to Principal Nathaniel Micklem with his problem: his high school daughter had come to him asking him whether to believe her preacher or her teachers as to the age of the earth. "I myself," he said, "can get along by believing, when I am in church, that the world is only 6,000 years old while believing that the world is much older when I am with educated people, but I don't want my daughter to have to grow up a split personality."

There is no need for a split personality on account of the Bible! I want to point out to you the full biblical faith, in its own light, for the world, with no sacrifice either of honesty or competence. We shall consider first "The Bible and Christ"; secondly, "The Bible and the Holy Spirit"; and thirdly, "The Bible and Experience."

The Bible and Christ

The Bible is indispensable as the original record of the constituting events of the Christian faith. The Church without the Bible is like a person with amnesia, i. e., without memory. Such a person lives, he sees, he can choose, but he does not know who he is nor how he got to be what he is. The depth and riches of his experience have dropped out. Everything for him is flat and thin. He has no secure sense of self-being. The Church without the Bible is unthinkable. It is its original self-attestation. It is, its founding deed.

Even such a state of complete forgetfulness would not be disastrous if the Christian faith were a matter of correct ideas or a matter of prescription for right living. But it is not primarily either of these. The Christian faith is a historical religion that is more like a personal life than any system of

ideas. It is rather a matter of a living relation between God and men which he has brought about by his mighty deeds. The Christian faith is a matter of God's showing his will and way, first in "a people prepared unto the Lord" and then in a Person. God reveals himself through mighty events. To be sure these people, these events, this Person must be known through ideas and communicated by means of ideas. Life is impossible on any developed level apart from ideas. That is the reason that I am so appreciative of the position of my conservative friends that the Bible gives what they call "propositional truth," i. e., definite ideas that you can nail down, fix as definite meaning. But all these ideas tell of God's mighty deed, they tell of a chosen people, of a Person who came in the fullness of time, and of a new kind of community that God has created through him.

The Bible then is, first of all, the record of God's mighty deeds to show us his salvation, showing us ourselves and how to reach heaven and home. As such, the Christian faith is through and through historical and dependent upon the historical record. To be sure these saving deeds, this Person, must be capable of being told. Where are we then? If our interpretation of the Bible will not take us to the place where God's self-disclosure through his saving deeds and his own coming to us is primary, on the one hand, then we are wrong and in need of correction; if, on the other hand, we arrive at God's deed and personal presence without being able to tell the old, old story of Jesus and his love in terms of such ideas as convict us of sin and failure and show us to true salvation, then we shall also have made a mistake. We shall, however, arrive precisely at such a combination.

Christ and the Bible are inseparable. Luther said that he did not believe in Christ because of the Bible but in the Bible because of Christ. He said that Christ was the Lord of the Bible. When we come to the Bible we are confronted with the act of Christ at its very center, and Christ is not the whole Christ apart from the whole biblical faith, of God the Creator, the God of history as seen in the Chosen People, and the God of the Church. But Luther was right in his order of stress: the Bible tells of Christ. It is Christ that gives the full meaning to the Bible.

Christ, the holy love of God come to earth, is the Word. John of Damascus said that God is never without his Word. God is never Wordless. But that Word has become flesh in the

fullness of time, full of grace and truth, through whom we have seen the Father of glory and our own true selves. Christ is the Word of God and therefore we sing: "O Word of God incarnate, O Wisdom from on high," referring to Christ. Professor Henry Joel Cadbury has said that wherever the New Testament speaks of the Word of God it refers not to a Book but to a Person--it refers to the eternal Christ who became incarnate in Jesus Christ.

This is of utmost importance. The Apostle Paul had trouble with legalists and literalists who did not know the truth that only the Spirit gives life, even to the letter, and the Spirit is the Spirit of Christ, the living Love of God in human history. And the very earliest of all Church Fathers, the blessed St. Ignatius, had the same problem in the first century of the Christian faith: "When I heard some people saying, 'If I don't find it in the original documents, I didn't believe it in the gospel, 'I answered them, 'But it is written.' They resorted, 'That's just the question.' To my mind it is Jesus Christ who is the original document. The inviolable archives are his cross and resurrection and that faith which came by him. It is by these things and through your prayers that I want to be justified."

Luther also said that the Bible is the cradle in which the child was laid. We are saved by the child, not the cradle. The cradle is necessary, but we must distinguish between the straws of the cradle and the holy child. Our problems are not new, but neither is the power of God to save! The Bible consists of many words, so to speak, of which Christ is the Word.

I want, however, an even closer relationship between Christ and the Bible. I want even the straws to be of intrinsic importance to the Christ. I want the whole Bible to be purposive. How can all the truths of the Bible fit into the Truth of the Word of God in the fullness of time? If we can be both honest and competent at this point, we shall have succeeded in meeting the needs of every age on this question.

I believe that Christ is the Word made flesh, while the Bible is the written word for the preparation and for the exposition and development of what Christ means for us and for the world. The written Word contains the whole range of human experience; it consists of the whole gamut of human life. It is composed of the total spectrum of human colors from black to white. It is all there--from the murder of Cain to the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ and his glorious resurrection. In

between are all the shades of human deceit and human devotion. The movie magnate justifies before Senator Kefauver his depicting of sex abuses by saying that they are in the Bible! And all this is needed, for here is drawn for our benefit the whole history of the human race, the entire record of man's experience in sample form, and this history is an experience organically related to God's mighty deeds of revelation, and in the end to the figure of the Christ.

The Bible is a realistic book. Therefore it is wonderful. It is genuine and open, but withal it is not a discouraging book, for with all the sins and failure of men there portrayed, comes the even truer picture, because it is eternal, of God's saving mercy and faithfulness. To put everything on one level, stories of rape and sermon on the mount, songs of hate and the Cross of Christ, is to be guilty of what Bishop Gerald Kennedy calls, I repeat, "The crime of the levelers."

No, we need a criterion, and the only criterion for the Bible is Christ. Christ is the incarnation of God, the personal Spirit who is Holy Love. He is not a glorified X, the representative of the unknown God still a mystery, but God revealed in personal form in the fullness of time. Christ is God come to earth to save man by enlightening him, judging him, forgiving him, correcting him, and fulfilling him. Christ is "the true Light which enlightens every man who comes into the world." He is the Love of God who is "full of grace and truth." Christ is the universal Love that God is, who alone can fulfil every person and all people. He is not a theoretical or abstract universal, but a concrete embodiment of God who is the Reality and the full potential for all fully personal and universal relations. Christ is, at the same time, Person and actuality, standard and potentiality for Community. He is the Head of the Church.

This is the perfect Truth who is also sovereign grace. He is the changeless Absolute who yet relates himself in Love to every changing person and condition. He is the living Soul of the Bible who inspired the preparation of the fullness of time and is thus the beating, waiting heart of the Old Testament. He is the Reality of the New Testament, person, and church, and the criterion and dynamic of all the truth into which the Holy Spirit is to guide all who accept the Gospel and expect his coming again in glory. His coming in glory to put all things right, when even the Son will be subjected to him who put all things under his feet alone gives the Bible its full con-

vincing power, for it proclaims that the Sovereign Lord is Saving Love.

Everything in the Bible contrary to this criterion is judged by it--from black to white with all the grades of gray in between. The very purpose of such grades is to show us vicariously and livingly in human experience and history what is right and wrong. Everything consistent with the criterion makes rich in human experience and history the meaning of truth and serves as example and encouragement for us.

The Bible and the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit, too, is defined as the Spirit of Truth, and the witness to him who is grace and truth, in such a way that everything that is true in the Bible is true because of him and everything that is false is false in relation to him. The Spirit of truth works through many channels and in many ways. When the scientist or the historian or the psychologist discovers a truth, he does so only because truth is and because truth is made possible for man in a spiritual universe. The final truth is God a Spirit, the God who came as Saviour in Christ, and the Holy Spirit who takes of Christ, whether as Creator, Sustainer, or Redeemer of man and his world, and communicates to those willing to accept him.

The Word of God then is primarily the Word Incarnate, Jesus as the Christ, the enactor in full humanity of the holy Love who God is. But it is also the written Word, the whole gamut of human experience and history in the Light and Lifting of that Word. But the Bible is a Trinitarian Book, not arbitrarily, not in terms of three Gods, but of the nature of God in his relation to the world. For the Word of God is also the continual offering to each receiver and reader of the Gospel. The Word is also the present imparting of the Holy Spirit to give light, warmth and power to the Incarnate Word in relation to the written Word. Without the presence of the Holy Spirit the Word is never fully proclaimed, read, understood, or accepted. We must always listen to what the Spirit saith to the churches, whether by man or book.

We need the letter; the Word must become flesh in a Person, be enmanned; the Word needs also to become nature in the Bible to creatures of and in nature; but the Spirit must yet breathe life into nature and into flesh. The letter without this Spirit is death; but the Spirit needs the letter of communi-

cation. No letter can, however, communicate in any fullness nor can the letter give life. To substitute the letter for the Spirit is therefore death, but the spirit without letter is that neutral white where all the colors are or that silence which is the source of sound; most of the time we mortal creatures must live by color and sound. Such is the function of the letter.

To use another figure: the written Word is the riches of all stained glass windows, for it is the full story of human life in one painting: this painting revolves around its central theme: the Christ, his life, ministry, teaching, crucifixion, resurrection, and the consequent spreading of the Gospel and the waiting for the consummation in glory. The meaning of the multitudinous and varied subscenes find their explanation only in terms of the central theme. Nevertheless, the whole painting is in shadow and undecipherable until the light is turned on it. Then it speaks its momentous and all-important message. That Light to be turned on is the Holy Spirit.

Or to use still another figure: a diamond well cut has innumerable facets, but it never glows with fascinating sparkle until the light strikes. Then what a total radiance is seen enhanced by man, minor dancing lights! Even so the Bible is the condition for Christian radiance, but will not give it till we turn on the light of the Holy Spirit.

This light of the Spirit will come when we are willing to be led into all truth. Central to such truth is God's own universal love, this inclusive and yet full intensive concern for each and all. The Bible is read in the Spirit only when it is read from God for the world. This Spirit is One who so loved that he gave his own Son, his very life for the world. Unless we so read the Bible as a self-offering unto God for the world, the Bible will remain a closed book to us. Only when the Bible is read in the Spirit of Agape, or Christ-love, can the Bible open up to us its unsearchable treasures and offer through us and to us its riches in glory. John Woolman said that where there is great Treasure there is also great Trust. Treasure and trust go together! Only he who will live the Bible can rightly read it and fitly teach it.

Such reading in the Spirit will also mean that we are open to all further truth. As Robinson of the Mayflower said: "God has yet more light to break forth from his Word." That Word is inexhaustible. The truth of the Bible is God's own self-disclosure as holy Love and not through all eternity shall we

be able to comprehend fully what that means, for we shall remain men and not God. Over and over again we must study and obey, obey and study, thank God, and receive, knowing full well that we know not yet as we ought. What a treasure of grace is our precious Bible!

The Bible is also God's living speech to men, and we must be open to any and all truth from whatever quarter it comes, treating it with reverence and holy respect. All truth is of God and we do insult the Spirit, as Calvin stressed, when we refuse to accept the self-disclosure of that Spirit in whatever form and in whatever subject. Humble open-mindedness along with a critical care to test the spirits whether they be of God is the only attitude to maintain towards such truth as is not developed in the Bible. We can trust the Spirit to be our helper as we have need and to guide us into all truth as he will. The Spirit is never defensive, but always open and creative. In him we believe all things that are true and of a good report, in that he is himself the Love who abides in faith and hope. Biblical truth comes then, even as Jesus, not to destroy but to fulfil. The Bible judges what is untrue and evil while enriching and giving new context to whatever is true and good.

In the third place, the Holy Spirit makes the biblical faith a reality in our lives. He provides the immediacy for us. He gives us the click of conviction. He wipes the dust and the tears from our eyes and makes them eyes of faith. Assurance never comes from self-assurance. Assurance of self is brittle and easily shaken. The assurance which is mainly subjective is fugitive and fleeting. The assurance that the Holy Spirit gives is deep and continuing. As long as we remain in him our faith is strong even within our own weakness. The biblical faith is assurance through the Holy Spirit who provides all joy and peace in believing, making us "to abound in hope." There is no strong approach to the Bible as the Word of God that does not make indispensable the Holy Spirit as interpreter and as giver of assurance. Christ as the given light precedes, as does dedicated study and self-offering, but as Christ, the study and self-offering are carried on, within the larger orbit of the Spirit's reign and agency, finally there must come an intimate understanding and assurance of the Word of God that can come only through the power of the immediate work of the Holy Spirit.

The Bible and Experience

We have now discussed the Bible and Christ, and the Bible and the Holy Spirit. It remains to mention the Bible and Experience. This third part should not be of equal length and importance with the first two, for they are foundational. At the same time the subject of experience has come under a cloud lately and needs to be cleared. We must stress biblical experience, for Christ and the Holy Spirit have come that we might enter into a living experience of God. All of God's work in creation, history, and redemption, is for the sake of experience. Experience is our side of the picture, and, even though it is not primary or original, it is part and parcel of God's plan and work.

Christian experience is biblical experience. Christian experience is fellowship with God on the basis of his own grace and full acceptance. It presupposes the biblical world-view. With such a view we do not mean a world six thousand years old, having corners, and with the sun circling around it! The biblical world-view is the understanding that in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Eternity we cannot understand and must leave in the hands of God. What we can understand, to a significant part, is the reality of God as the supernatural Creator of the universes. He is also the controller of the endless distances and of the submicroscopic spaces. Even man's history which is partly free, is yet as a whole under his sovereign planning and constant supervision. God is no absentee landlord; he cares for his land.

According to the biblical world-view, God is also the finisher and fulfiller of his work. This world is his; our lives are his; all is therefore to be accepted with thanksgiving and prayer and used within a free and responsible stewardship to God's glory, our own growth, and for human helpfulness. Our lives here are only part of their endless existence before the face of God. What such a promise means we cannot fathom, but we can trust him who has himself come into human life and history to show us his will, to make a way for us to himself, to our own true selves, and to right relations with him and with each other. All meaning, significance and decision are to be seen in the love of God in Christ Jesus, who is our Lord precisely because he enmanned the universal Love which God is. He is our only Lord in that no other Love can ever be absolute

or hold claim over us. The Son, Life and Love thus go together inseparably in the biblical world-view. Such is at least a minimum but central statement of the biblical world-view which is presupposed by all Christian experience.

Such experience is through and through supernatural. Words get in the way, and we had better explain that word. The Christian experience is altogether natural in the sense that it belongs to man by his deepest nature. God made him for it. God gave himself in human life and death for it. God works to make it real and permanent in man. Christian experience is man's proper nature and in this sense is natural to him. By supernatural we mean that what is potentially natural to man can never be had by man apart from God's presence and gift of himself. It is not something a man can work out for himself. It is a relation to God which can come only by the work of God. Supernatural is therefore not over against or contrary to nature, but rather is indicated by nature and longed for, but impossible apart from what is more than nature as we know it.

Christian experience is a new relation into which we must be born by God. He accepts us freely because of his own work, by his own love, and as we are ready to understand and accept what he can mean to and for our lives. Jesus was a complete realist when he insisted that we must be born again, from above. Natural man has a spirit centered in himself and in his own ideals and interests. Such self-centeredness is necessary to an individual who is to become real in freedom and responsibility. But since what is natural to us as we are is not natural to us as we are to become, our ideals and interests fail to satisfy our deepest longings. We shall never find fulfilment and satisfaction on the deepest level of our lives until we find the reality for which we are born, namely, to be born again into the fuller presence of God with new ideals and interests, even of his own inclusive and intensive Love. Christian experience is finding the love of Christ and living in a constant acceptance of God, oneself, and others. It is therefore also a being born again into a new kind of community, the holy fellowship of the Church.

The Bible describes the Christian experience and how we can get it. The Bible shows us God and all his work on our behalf. The Bible shows us the conditions that must be met if we are to receive and live such an experience, but the Bible also feeds such an experience. We are born and therefore

live. All lives require nourishment. The Bible is the proper food for Christian growth. Biblical experience is growth in grace, growth in the love of God which surpasses knowledge, growth in the community which builds itself up in love. The Bible contains milk for babes and meat for men, and also all the grades of feeding required in between. Those who feed on the Bible wisely and regularly show the growth of Christian experience. When reading, praying and living go together, within the framework and the living power of the Bible, what results is a biblical experience which is the yearning of the heart of God and the deepest craving in man. Christ, the Bible, the Holy Spirit, and Christian experience, ought always to be held together within our thinking and seeking.

In a way what I have said here is part of my own life from childhood. When as a boy of thirteen, I left home for America without any money or the language of the country, the last words of my mother as the train pulled out were: "Nels, remember Jesus; Nels, remember Jesus." However sophisticated my training and experience, deep down those simple words have been rock-bottom wisdom. Here we see and meet God.

When I arrived at Ellis Island no one was there to become my guardian, through neglect or misunderstanding, and for eleven long days I had to be in prison in no man's land, with no person who could understand me and under indescribable conditions. My one comfort was the Bible. I read it and read it, and found God near in it.

May I make the personal confession that without the Bible I am quite lost. It is so much a part of my daily routine, that all of life would be radically altered if the Bible were not being read. How can we ever thank God enough for such a blessing?

Let therefore the Bible be no problem but a power. Let it unite by its Love, lead by its Light, and save by its Spirit. Let us all take a loyalty pledge to honor the Bible by using it at its highest, God's Love in Christ, its truest light of God and leading for man.

The Emancipating Word of God

George A. Turner

A commonly held view is that the orthodox, conservative or traditional view of the Bible as the inerrant Word of God is static, authoritarian, binding. Against this Luther, Calvin, modern criticism, liberalism and neo-orthodoxy, have successfully protested, leading to a liberation of the mind and of the real power of the "Word of God" within the Bible. To identify the Bible as the Word of God is to shackle the revelation. This viewpoint, with varying perspectives, is advocated in such representative works as A. Sabatier, *Religions of Authority and the Religion of the Spirit* (1904), and Edwin Lewis, *The Biblical Faith and Christian Freedom* (1952), pp. 30 ff. There is some truth in this widely accepted viewpoint.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, it is widely held, a combination of factors made "the old biblicism" completely untenable. These factors included the application of the doctrine of evolution to Old Testament history, the application of Hegel's dialectic by Strauss and Bauer to New Testament studies, the influence of "higher criticism," the rise of "the social gospel," and the increased knowledge of comparative religions. The total effect of this "new learning" left no phase of biblical research unaffected.

The antithesis to "modernism" or "liberalism" was "fundamentalism" which challenged the "new learning" in the interest of the trustworthiness of the Bible and the basic truths of the Christian faith. In so doing fundamentalism overstated its case at points and came to espouse views of biblical literalism and homogeneity more rigid than otherwise would have been articulated and defended.

In times of theological controversy, when important truths are felt to be in jeopardy, extreme positions tend to be taken, defended and enshrined. A fixed canon of the New Testament was thus the result of Marcion's abbreviated canon and several heretical "gospels." The Pelagian-Augustinian anthropological controversy of the fifth century defended the doctrines of

human responsibility and divine grace respectively, with the result that both factions defended positions more extreme than would otherwise have been the case. Throughout history this has been a contributing factor to what Hegel called the movement of thesis, antithesis and synthesis. Arminianism was an attempt to effect a synthesis between Pelagianism and Augustinianism and to conserve the best insights of both.

The issues of the fundamentalist-modernist controversy have recently been softened by a new synthesis currently best known as "neo-orthodoxy." After a second look many liberals, concerned with conserving the basic truths of the Christian faith, have sought to correct the admittedly negative results of higher criticism. Typical of these is John Knox, *Criticism and Faith* (Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1952).

The purpose of this essay is to suggest a defensible view of the authority and inspiration of the Bible which does justice to the Bible and to contemporary scholarship. As a label for the view herein set forth the overworked term "evangelical" seems most appropriate. While this view is essentially conservative the term "conservative" is not precise because this view welcomes research and new light and is not reluctant to leave the old simply because it is old. While this view is in rapport with most "fundamentalists" it eschews the connotations of verbalism, literalism, and pugnacity often associated with this term. The term "evangelical" seems most appropriate for this view since, in common with primitive Lutheranism, Pietism, early Methodism and their successors, it stresses the factor of Christian experience in sound biblical interpretation.

Methodology is important in the quest of truth. It is deemed best to place alternative or opposing views in their best rather than worst light and to undertake to prove no more than necessary to substantiate one's position.

It should be generally accepted that no one should make claims for the Bible greater than those made by the Bible itself. This has actually been done in the heat of controversy. Conversely, it ill becomes one to divest the Bible of qualities it claims, unless, of course, the truth demands it. It should be recognized that the Bible is the work of many hands over many years--is actually a library. The surprising thing is not its diversity but rather the degree of unity which it possesses in view of its diverse origins. The solid results of critical biblical scholarship are something for which all may be grate-

ful. Among them are the findings of archaeologists which in the past generation have revolutionized biblical research. The import of these has been to authenticate the Scriptures in many areas, especially in the Old Testament field. The Graf-Wellhausen hypothesis, once the corner-stone of Old Testament criticism, and held as almost axiomatic (Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 812), has been all but abandoned as one result of archaeological research.¹ No informed person would consider defending a "pre-critical" viewpoint, although some current apologetics do just that. But, since the "assured results" of higher criticism are less sure now than a decade ago, a conservative attitude would seem timely and appropriate.

Fundamentalism, commendably seeking to safeguard the essentials of "the faith once delivered to the saints," has often overstated its case. In too many instances a priori considerations have pre-judged the case and prevented an impartial weighing of evidence. Sometimes a fear of conclusions has short-circuited investigation and the follow-through of evidence. But it is to their credit that fundamentalists have insisted on taking the Bible as it is. Most of them are really more objective in their methodology than their liberal and neo-liberal critics.

The positions of the "neo-orthodox" are more difficult to define since they have been in a formative stage and only now are crystallizing. Their great contribution is the re-discovery of the basic insight of the great Reformers that man is a sinner and can only be saved by the grace of God. It has brought in or rather recovered a third dimension in biblical interpretation--the factor of man confronted by God and in so doing discovering his true nature. The movement has done service in calling attention to the Person of whom the Book speaks rather than the Book as such. But while the theology of crisis has accepted one of the two cardinal principles of the Reformation--justification by faith--it has not fully accepted the other--that of the sole authority of the Scriptures. Since this school accepts most of the results of higher criticism it is left with a Bible which contains much of "the Word of God"

¹ Only one Old Testament scholar in Israel today adheres to this theory, according to statements made by members of the faculty of Hebrew University, Jerusalem, in 1958. In 1941 Pfeiffer knew of no scholar who had rejected the hypothesis (*loc. cit.*).

and much that is only the fallible words of men. The interpreter is compelled to select the inspired and authoritative utterances in the Bible from those which are uninspired, unauthoritative and erroneous. Unfortunately the student is left with no norm or touchstone by which to make this selection. The typical neo-orthodox student is of necessity subjective in his value-judgments. This means that the final authority is not in the Bible itself but in the "existential moment" in the Bible reader, that moment when he is confronted with the presence of God speaking through his written Word. This means that the Bible does not possess within itself a self-authenticating quality; its authentication is dependent upon the reader's response, a subjective validation. It is analogous to the old argument as to what constitutes sound. Does a tree falling in a distant forest make a sound if no ear hears the reverberation? Is the Bible the Word of God if there is no response to its message? Is it authoritative for one who rejects its authority? The neo-orthodox view would say that there is no sound unless someone hears it; no Word of God in the Bible unless the reader-auditor responds to its stimulus. Does it not follow that I am not responsible to God unless I find within me a response to his written Word? It points back to Barth and Augustine who while commendably laying stress on the grace and sovereignty of God fail to leave enough room for responsibility and hence morality.

To make the Word of God conditioned upon man's response relieves man of responsibility for obeying. Such a view must be basically antinomian and amoral. It would be analogous to saying that a traffic law is not law to the man who understands it but in whom it evokes no favorable response. It makes man's ratification a necessary ingredient in divine revelation. Is it not truer to say that the Bible remains the Word of God regardless of one's personal response, but those who do respond discover that it leads to the Incarnate Word by whose grace is given "the engrafted word which is able to save your souls" (Jas. 1:21)?

The "new biblicism," while professing acceptance of the view that all Scripture should be interpreted in the light of Jesus Christ the Word of God, does not share Jesus' reported view of much of the Old Testament; instead it accepts most of the results of higher criticism. Illustrative of this is the view that Genesis reflects the ideas of the Kingdom period rather than being a revelation of God's will "in the beginning" as

Jesus viewed it, according to the Gospel writers.² It is like arguing in a circle to say that the New Testament does not present one with the actual works and words of Jesus, but that one knows Christ through "the eyes of faith" alone. Whence comes faith? Does the Word of God come as the result of faith as the "new biblicism" says, or does faith come as a result of the word of Christ as Paul affirmed (cf. Rom. 10:17).

Against the necessity for the subjective validation of the Word of God (the Bible) the evangelical would have to protest. He believes instead that the Bible has a certain self-authenticating quality. He has learned, moreover, that external evidence has often confirmed the Scripture testimony concerning itself. From this self-styled "evangelical" viewpoint the whole Bible in its present form is inspired and authoritative; but, contrary to the viewpoint of some ultra fundamentalists, not all of the Bible is equal in degree of revelation. In other words, some parts of the inspired record more clearly reveal God's mind and will than do others. There is progressive revelation. There are even instances in which the sequence is reversed, where an earlier revelation has been temporarily superceded as a concession to expediency. As an instance of the latter, when the Pharisees questioned Jesus concerning divorce they cited the Mosaic law (Deut. 24:1, 3) which granted divorce on relatively easy grounds (although in its historical setting was a limitation on contemporary practices). Against this Jesus set the ideal "in the beginning" as recorded in Genesis 1:27; 2:4; 5:2, according to which the marriage bond is indissoluble. By appealing to one Scripture against another Jesus was indicating that one more truly revealed the will of God than the other, although equally inspired and authoritative. The command in Deuteronomy was a reluctant concession to man's "hardness of heart"; it was within the permissive will of God, but did not represent his highest thought and purpose (Mark 10:2, 12). Likewise, in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus clearly indicated that the ethics of the New Covenant are higher and more demanding than those sanctioned under Mosaic law. The prohibition of adultery is more demanding (Mt. 5:27, 28) than in the Decalogue. The same is true of the command to love one's neighbor (Lev. 19:18, cf. Mt. 5:43-48). An attitude towards one's enemies that was commendable in Elijah is sub-

² Mark 10:6, cf. G. E. Wright, "From the Bible to the Modern Mind," *Biblical Authority For Today*, p. 231.

Christian in the New dispensation (II Kings 1:10,12; cf. Lk. 9:54). The imprecatory Psalms (e.g., Ps. 137:9) are below the level of Christian ethics and attitudes as defined by Jesus. The Proverbs do not profess to be revelations direct from God, like the works of the prophets, but are "the voice of experience," the accumulated wisdom of the sages (Pro. 4:1-5). So, obviously, not all of the Bible presents to an equal degree God's highest will.

But in this viewpoint there is still not sufficient evidence to justify the conclusion that the divine revelation is mixed with error because of its human mediators. It is no better to assume that because fallible humans produced the Bible it must perforce contain error than to conclude that because God inspired it it must therefore be inerrant. The evidence should determine the conclusion, not vice versa. While the revelation is conditioned or refracted by the human media it is not thereby necessarily rendered erroneous. To say that the revelation is accurate only in matters of faith is a subjective judgment for which the Scriptures themselves afford no warrant. "If part is fallible, then all must be" in logical consistency.³ To conclude, however, that because the Bible is inspired it must be infallible is the a priori method which must be renounced. Rather "it is something whose nature is strictly dependent upon an inductive study of what the contents of the Bible actually are."⁴

What is that view of scriptural authority which may be derived from a study of the Bible itself, following the inductive approach? The Word of God is not to be equated with a book. It is rather the expressed thought of God which was revealed in act and thought to the Old Testament prophets and culminated in the "Word made flesh" at the Incarnation. It is more correct to say that the Bible is the record of God's revelation than simply that it is God's revelation. This revelation was a living witness, transmitted not in writing but in saving acts, in the living voice and in inspired interpretation of events, culminating in Jesus' words and acts, including the resurrection, and the descent of the Spirit at Pentecost. Seen in broad perspective the Old Testament finds its unity in a series of redemptive acts and the prophetic interpretation thereof: 1) the Covenant with its three phases--

³ John Murray, *The Infallible Word*, p. 5.

⁴ H. Cunliffe-Jones, *The Authority of the Biblical Revelation*, p. 115.

to Abraham, to Moses, and to David; 2) the Exodus; 3) the Captivity; 4) the Restoration; 5) the Scriptures (involving the Law, the prophets, sayings of the wise and the institution of the synagogue); 6) the Incarnation; 7) the passion and resurrection (analogous to the Exodus); and 8) the Parousia.

The prophet under the Old Covenant and the evangelist in the New are more than reporters of an audible message; they are primarily witnesses of their experience of God.⁵ It is God's saving presence which is the most important factor in the revelation; the words used to report the experience are secondary. It follows that it is more correct to say that the prophet's thoughts are inspired than that words were placed in his mouth. The latter is more in keeping with the Koran or with Greek oracles than with biblical inspiration. This accounts for the factors of the writer's personal experiences (e.g., Isaiah), contemporary events, and style which influence the formal expression of the revelation of God. This accounts also for the variety in the Bible and justifies research into the environmental factors which conditioned the expression of the revelation. Moreover, the authority of the Bible is further evidenced in the essential unity with which the writers speak, in the harmony of basic doctrines rather than in verbal similarities of expression. Paul speaks of being a "new creature" (II Cor. 5:17), John of the "new birth" (John 3:3), II Peter of "partakers of the divine nature" (II Pet. 1:4). In the usual connotations of the term it follows that "plenary" rather than "verbal" inspiration is the better way of describing the process of inspiration.⁶ It seems probable, however, that both proponents and opponents of "verbal" inspiration have overstated their respective positions. How else can thought be transmitted except through words? Any use of language is "verbal."

The Bible writers often used incomplete or incorrect documents in the compilation of Scripture. Divine inspiration did not necessarily supply lacunae in their written sources or correct misspelled words and erroneous dates. These are errors of transmission which are limited to unimportant details. It has not been proved conclusively that, as originally given, the writers recorded what professed to be in-

⁵ Cf. Amos 3:8; Hab. 3:1; Acts 4:20, and J. K. S. Reid, *The Authority of the Scriptures* (Harpers, 1955), p. 271.

⁶ James Orr, *Revelation and Inspiration* (Scribners', 1910), p. 211.

spired thought from God which later proved to be contrary to fact.⁷ The freedom from such errors of knowledge and judgment, which one might naturally expect from a series of ancient documents, is too remarkable and have so often been confirmed that the conclusion that the original documents were free from statements contrary to fact seems well grounded. Said Orr,

...it remains a fact that the Bible...is free from demonstrable error in its statements, and harmonious in its teachings to a degree that of itself creates an irresistible impression of a supernatural factor in its origin.⁸

In support of this judgment is the testimony of the ancient Jews and the primitive Christian church, and the frequency with which charges of error have proven false.

What is the relation between the Word of God and the Bible? To say that the Bible contains the Word of God is inadequate because it implies a container with contents of varying merit. To say that the Bible becomes the Word of God is only a half-truth. To say that the Bible is the Word of God is more adequate if it be clear that the book and the revelation are not identical. The revelation of God is as true as God is true. It is believed to have been given historically and preserved in a written record by human instrumentalities under sufficient divine providence to assure a uniquely authentic and trustworthy end-product.

It has been stated that the orthodox or classical view of the Bible as "plenary inspired" and inerrant is authoritarian, static, and shackling to freedom of thought and experience.⁹ That is the same as saying that the view of the Bible shared by the apostles, church fathers, and evangelicals of the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries was sterile and static. In spite of this alleged handicap much was accomplished by these men. Those who were instrumental in making the nineteenth "the greatest century" (Latourette) in Christian history were men with this "static" view of the Bible which "shackled the revelation." Christianity's finest chapters were written before the

⁷ The evidence for such alleged errors cited in C. H. Dodd, *The Authority of the Bible* (Nisbet & Co., 1948), p. 15, are not entirely convincing.

⁸ James Orr, *op. cit.*, p. 216.

⁹ Edwin Lewis, "The Emancipation of the Word of God," *Religion in Life*, XVIII, 542.

rise of negative "higher criticism" or the contemporary "new biblicism."

It remains to be seen whether those who consider themselves emancipated from the shackles of the "old biblicism" will write brighter chapters in Christian history. One is reminded of Homrighausen's question, "Where are the Neo-orthodox evangelists" who are reaching the masses with the life-transforming "Word of God"? What is now needed is not so much the "emancipation of the Word of God" from a "static biblicism" as the emancipating Word of God in its pristine power.

The antithesis is not between authority and freedom. Freedom comes by way of discipline as is too infrequently recognized.¹⁰ Actually, "the authority of God is the source of man's freedom."¹¹ There needs to be a rediscovery of the paradox between freedom and discipline. It was voiced by the Psalmist: "So shall I observe thy law continually for ever and ever, and I shall walk at liberty; for I have sought thy precepts." It is expressed with even deeper insight in the words attributed to Jesus: "If ye continue in my word then are ye my disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:30,31). The connection between emancipation and the Word of God which binds and liberates, kills and makes alive, is obvious. No one saw this more clearly than Luther as he wrote *The Liberty of the Christian Man* unless it be Luther's teacher--the author of the letters to the Romans and to the Galatians.

¹⁰It is so recognized in *ibid.* , p. 555.

¹¹Cunliffe-Jones, *op. cit.* , p. 11.

Form Criticism

O. D. Lovell

The term "Form Criticism" comes from a German word *Formgeschichte* meaning "Form-History." Form Criticism came into existence in Germany following the war of 1914-1918. Essentially it is a growth from that form of the critical study of the sources of the gospels known as literary or source criticism. Literary criticism failed to deal adequately with difficulties connected with the pre-literary stage of the gospels. A knowledge of the situation in which the study of the gospels was left prior to 1914 shows the need of additional study. The important and outstanding scholars preceding 1914 in Germany were Bernard Weiss, Holtzmann, Wrede, Johannes Weiss, Wellhausen, Gunkel, and Wendling. Each of these men, by one method or another, helped lay the foundation for the appearance of Form Criticism. These scholars raised many questions which they did not solve, but they are not to be criticised for this.¹

Time and space forbid the formulation of a statement of the aims and procedure of Form Criticism which would be inclusive of all contributing scholars. The writer of a brief paper must be content with the following of main thoroughfares. Form Criticism deals primarily with the oral period; this is a general characteristic of all main representatives of *Formgeschichte*. It is quite true that form critics take their departure from the synoptic gospels.

The basal assumption is that during this period the tradition circulated mainly in separate oral units which can be classified according to their form. It is believed, further, that much may be inferred regarding the origin of these units, the causes which gave rise to them, and the changes they underwent until in course of time they were given a written form.²

¹ E. Basil Redlich, *Form Criticism* (London: Duckworth, 1939), pp. 16-19.

² Vincent Taylor, *The Formation of the Gospel Tradition* (London: MacMillan Co., 1953), p. 10.

The form critics maintain that the evangelists were not authors, but collectors and editors. It was their task to collect choose, group, reorganize, and hand down the tradition. They had nothing to do with the original formation, because they took over the material at a time when it had a "form" and existed in independent units. These self-contained units obeyed certain laws, and to endeavor to trace and follow out these laws is to write the history of the form of the gospel. The origin of the form is primitive Christianity itself. It is here that we see the "life-situation" out of which the narratives and sayings originated.

Form Criticism is a 'literary-historical method.' The term points to its association with the methods of investigation known as Literary Criticism and Historical Criticism, it accepts its main results, such as the priority of Mark, the existence of Q, and would allow that special written sources were used by Matthew and Luke respectively. It is not therefore concerned with this literary problem of the sources of our written Gospels. But it is concerned to investigate the traditions as they really were before the Gospels or their sources were written, and to trace the influences which moulded these primitive traditions in the formative period, that is, before they received literary form. When Form Criticism first appeared its purpose was purely literary. But it now has a wider scope. It has developed its technique and widened its range. It is now not a method of literary criticism but a literary historical method.³

This connection with historical criticism has led Form Criticism to study the narratives and sayings of other literatures, such as those of the Rabbis, Greece, Persia, India and China. By the process of comparison, laws of tradition may be discovered and applied to the formation of the gospel tradition. Form critics maintain that the forms of the independent units of the gospel tradition are similar to those assumed in folk-lore tradition, having been moulded by constant repetition. The task of Form Criticism is characterized more by speculation than by the literary comparison of the synoptics, and the conclusions reached are more difficult to prove.

³ E. Basil Redlich, *op. cit.* . . p. 10.

In the endeavor to study the method and results of Form Criticism the following outline is given as a guide:

- I. Figures (men) and contributions
- II. Features and characteristics
- III. Facts and convictions
- IV. Faults and corrections
- V. Fruit and conclusions

I

There are certain men who are considered as important leaders and contributors by such analysts as Vincent Taylor, Floyd V. Filson, and E. Basil Redlich. Omissions or breaks were long ago evident in the history of gospel origins. Endeavors like the Ur-Markus theory and the concept of a lost Hebrew gospel were advanced, but these did not stand in the light of additional research. Work seemed to be at a standstill unless new methods could be advanced. Form Criticism is the endeavor to provide such a method.

It was inevitable that the problem of Gospel Origins, attacked thus from different sides, should become the object of a more complete assault, and it can be no matter for surprise that the 'Formgeschichtliche' school sprang suddenly into existence, without collaboration from its leaders, who simultaneously pitched their tents before what had seemed the forbidden city.⁴

The outstanding figure in this new endeavor is Martin Dibelius of Heidelberg. In 1919 he published a stimulating work entitled *Die Formgeschichte Des Evangeliums*. This book considered very important.

He does not work back analytically from the texts of the Gospels to the original traditions but investigates the life of the early community in order to determine the relation of the tradition to the conditions and activities of the early church. He is convinced, by the evidence of the prologue to Luke's Gospel, that the traditions received their form from the needs of missionary preaching. By preaching he means all forms of missionary propaganda, mission preaching, sermons in worship and catechetical

⁴ Vincent Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

teaching.⁵

The early preachers, said he, did not speak about the life of Jesus; they were interested in the salvation which he provided. Stories of Jesus were used to illustrate and prove the message of hope and salvation; they were a means to an end. The objective of the sermon gave birth to the form of the story. Dibelius calls each of these stories a paradigm. These paradigms were at first independent of one another, and the preacher could select them as he desired in his endeavor to prove his theme. It is apparent that Mark assembled them and edited some. The group of stories about Jesus which present him as a wonder-worker, Dibelius calls Novellen or Tales. Another group consisted of the Sayings; these served a group composed of Legends and a group of Myths. The only continuous narrative existing in the earliest period was the Passion-narrative. Christians in this early period read a gospel of the passion into the Old Testament.⁶

Dibelius thinks that at first anonymous people made small collections, not to write books but to pass on tradition. Even the earliest evangelists did nothing else. 'Thus the tradition of Jesus only gradually became literature, and this took place not on account of the literary ability of any author but by virtue of the significance of its content.'⁷

At the time Dibelius was writing his book there was already in existence, but not published, a manuscript which became of considerable worth to this new school of thought. "This was a critical examination of the synoptic framework published by K. L. Schmidt in 1919 under the title *Der Rahmen Der Geschichte Jesu*."⁸ This work has provided a firm basis for the basic assumption of Formgeschichte, that in the beginning the gospel tradition existed in fragments freely circulated. The author is very definite in his rejection of any outline or chronological sketch of Jesus' life. There is no biography, only single stories. Schmidt also looks upon the Passion-narrative as an exception.

R. Bultmann attacked the problems of form, and in 1921 he published his book *Die Geschichte Der Synoptischen Tradition*. This book differs from that of Dibelius, but it is of great im-

⁵E. Basil Redlich, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 26-30.

⁷E. Basil Redlich, *Ibid.*, p. 30.

⁸Vincent Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

portance in gospel criticism. It goes into greater detail and its objective is greater; it attempts to trace the origin and formation of the material from the oral period to the written gospels. Bultmann is skeptical; if he is correct, we have not only lost the synoptic framework but also a large part of the material. The sayings are products of primitive Christianity which puts back its own ideas and beliefs into the lips of Jesus. He is more kind to the possibilities than to the probabilities of things. Even the Passion-narrative is overgrown with legends. The final motive which produced the gospels is not historical interest in Jesus, but the needs of common worship.⁹

By a process of exclusion, he comes to the following conclusion. The investigation of the sayings of Jesus leads to a considerable uncertainty, but it does not end in complete scepticism. By no means are we at the mercy of those who doubt or deny that Jesus ever lived...The character of Jesus, the vivid picture of his personality and his life, cannot now be clearly made out; but what is more important, the context of his message is or will be ever more clearly recognizable.¹⁰

M. Albrecht wrote *Die Synoptischen Streitgespräche* published in 1921. He is referred to as one possessing insight and sound critical judgment.

Albrecht condemns what he calls the brazen scepticism of Bultmann and the literary interest with which, in his opinion, it is too closely associated. His own purpose, he explains, is to trace the final literary products in the Gospels to the actual verbal contests of Jesus and the oldest community with their opponents.¹¹

E. Fascher published *Die Formgeschichtliche Methode* (1924). In it he presents some searching criticisms of form study. He condemns the skepticism of Bultmann, but favors Bultmann's analytical skill. Fascher is surprised that Dibelius and Bultmann look for the *sitz im leben* in the community and not in Jesus himself, and goes so far as to say that the form alone permits no historical value-judgments. The primary considerations are historical, and to these

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 13-15.

¹⁰ E. Basil Redlich, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

¹¹ Vincent Taylor, *op. cit.*, pp. 15-16.

factors those relating to form must subordinate themselves.¹²

The views and contributions of these men give us insight into the background, growth, importance and development of Form Criticism. The minister or teacher of New Testament should acquaint himself with this school of thought.

II

We now turn to some of the features and characteristics of Form Criticism. An important feature of Form Criticism is that it focuses attention upon the earliest period of the transmission of the gospel material. The first twenty years of the church are vitally important. This is a difficult period to study, because we have no written records from it. It is the most vital era in the life of gospel tradition, because upon the treatment of the tradition in those years depends the worth of our gospels. Is it true that during this period these narratives and sayings were subject to the customary fate of oral tradition, such as adaptation, alteration and addition?

Form Criticism claims that the laws of oral tradition can be discovered and stated, and that, by applying them to the Gospels, the narratives as they actually happened and the sayings as they were actually uttered by our Lord can be determined.

This is one of the aims of Form Criticism.¹³

The stress placed upon the stage of oral tradition is an outstanding feature of Form Criticism. It takes note of our written gospels, and it also makes a place for written sources before our gospels. However, the chief concern is not with the written sources. The gospel accounts are studied with the hope of getting back of them and their written sources to the period when the tradition of these sayings and deeds was handed down by word of mouth.¹⁴ Torrey believes that all four of our canonical gospels were originally written in Aramaic. He believes there were written records from the very first years of the church, and probably during the very lifetime of Jesus. The form critic is not in accord with such a view; he maintains that oral transmission of the tradition was the procedure for two decades and perhaps longer. During

¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18.

¹³ E. Basil Redlich, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

¹⁴ Floyd V. Filson, *Origins of the Gospels* (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1938), p. 92.

this period the important elements of the tradition were firmly established. We should keep in mind that eyewitnesses were living at this time. While a period of oral tradition is confidently admitted, positions vary as to the length of such a period. The preface of Luke indicates the existence of previous written records.

Does such a view minimize the importance of separate writers of the gospel? It is evident that each gospel carries the stamp of the man who gave it its final form. The form critic believes that this writer or author is merely recording the result of a long process of oral transmission.

Not only is the function of the final editor of the material minimized, but the former tendency, still widely dominant, to bridge the decades between Jesus and the actual writing of the Gospels by some one eyewitness for each Gospel, is seriously discounted. Instead, for example, of seeing Peter as the sufficient guarantor of what Mark contains, there is a tendency to see in Mark the deposit of a collection of units of continually repeated oral tradition.¹⁵

Such a view as this strikes a serious blow at any concept of a closely knit narrative. The connecting links and transitional expressions do not reflect actual historical sequence but are only editorial devices. Form critics would warn us about too great dependence on the context.

Another feature or trait of Form Criticism is its search for the background of the tradition in the life of the primitive church. Form critics take the position that in order to comprehend the formation of the gospel tradition, it is necessary to seek its setting in life.

The social situation in which the material was preserved and used must be envisioned. The group life, not the individual carrier of the tradition, must be the center of attention.¹⁶

This important feature of Form Criticism suggests a solution to the question, why the material in our gospels was preserved and later put into written form. Many readers of the gospels have faced the fact that only a small percent of what Jesus said and did has been preserved. It was not a historical or biographical concern that controlled the choice of what sur-

¹⁵ *Ibid.* , p. 93.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* , p. 95.

vived. The choice, so the form critic tells us, was controlled by the conditions and needs of the church. Floyd V. Filson mentions four aspects of the early church's need.

The early church recalled and preserved sayings and incidents which gave Christians guidance in points of belief and conduct. It raised questions relative to Sabbath regulations, proper attitudes toward the law and matters pertaining to forgiveness. The answer to these and many other questions was found in the acts and sayings of Jesus. The form of the saying might be sharpened or a generalized utterance added so as to focus it upon the problem.

Inquirers and converts needed instruction as to the meaning of their faith and the character of their leader. Constant reference was made to the deeds and sayings of Jesus. Easton has stressed the teaching activity as vital in the passing on of tradition. Paul's statements (Rom. 12:7; I Cor. 12:29) give evidence for believing there was a group of teachers in the primitive church.

Another situation in which the first Christians undoubtedly used the material which later was included in the gospels was the service of worship in which believers shared. Even in the beginning days of the Palestinian church, prior to the inevitable break with Judaism, Christians had their own separate meetings for fellowship and worship (Acts 1:13-14; 2:1-46; 4:23). It was necessary to have material with which to express the particular Christian features of their belief and practice. Surely the teaching and life of Jesus must have played a great part here; eyewitnesses and others would relate these. Dibelius believes that preaching and teaching furnished the setting for the use of tradition.

Christians from the very beginning had to give a reason for the faith that was in them. Criticism and opposition often confronted them, and an answer needed to be given to these objections. Appeal and reference to what Jesus had said was the best evidence. This had a definite bearing on the creating and shaping of tradition.¹⁷

Thus the tradition which best served the needs of guidance, instruction, worship, and controversy was preserved. But it was not merely the content of the surviving tradition which was determined by Church use and interests. The form also was affected by the practical concern. Just as a modern

¹⁷ *Ibid.* , pp. 95-97.

minister tells a story in order to bring out most effectively the point he has in view, so those who repeated the tradition shaped it to serve the immediate end. If the purpose in telling an incident was to bring out a teaching point of Jesus which would apply to the Church's situation, the incident was shaped so as to lead up to this point as a climax, with perhaps the addition by the teller of a generalizing sentence which would make perfectly clear the application of this point to the Church problem... As the material was told and retold, it was altered at times to meet the changing needs of a developing Church, always, of course, with the honest intention of making a legitimate application of the original tradition. This eagerness to possess a tradition adequate and timely might even lead the Church or its leaders to 'construct' or to borrow fitting material and ascribe it to Jesus. Some Form Critics, for example, Bultmann, find in this latter process of supplementing the tradition the origin of a large proportion of the contents of our Gospels.¹⁸

Such is the nature of form criticism. If this method of study proves to contain considerable truth, a significant result will follow. The Gospels become an important source of information about the life, interests, problems, and development of the Apostolic Age. In fact, that is precisely what the Form Critic claims... If the Gospels thus reflect the life and thought of the primitive Church, the problem of the reliability of the material for the study of Jesus' life arises. This is frankly recognized by the Form Critic, and when an element of the tradition shows a developed Church interest, or a Hellenistic character, it is rejected from the fund of usable data for the life of Jesus. Since all the material preserved was used by the Church, this skepticism may go so far as practically to deny that we have any dependable data left with which to picture the historical Jesus.¹⁹

Form critics believe that by their method of investigation

¹⁸ *Ibid.* , pp. 97-99.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* , pp. 99-100.

it is possible to know Jesus as he really was before the gospels were written. Form critics on the whole are not ultimately skeptical relative to reliable information about Jesus.

III

We now desire to look at some of the facts and convictions of form critics. The study of Form Criticism is inconclusive to all who hold a high view of inspiration. The gospel is to be accepted and interpreted, but no final explanation for the character of Christianity can be found in the mere study of its origin. Form critics say such a position is impossible because it does not take account of the facts. While the divine element is not denied, it is claimed that the gospels came into existence in human ways. God did not deem it necessary to safeguard their records by protective measures, but he left them free to gain their place. If such a position is correct, it is all the more necessary to comprehend the process and method by which the tradition was formed and transmitted to us.²⁰

Before the nineteenth century the investigation of the formation of the Gospel tradition was almost impossible; ignorance and false views of Inspiration barred the way; and it is only in comparatively modern times that the attempt has been seriously made.²¹

An important fact to keep in mind in our study of Form Criticism is the various types of materials which scholars identify in the gospels. We now give attention to the attempts made to classify the gospel material according to the form used. It is evident that there is no unanimity among those working at this task. We see that other factors having to do with content rather than the form of the material have had a great bearing upon the classification.

Dibelius notes the following types:

1. Paradigms, short incidents which climax in a teaching utterance of Jesus.
2. Tales, stories told for their own sakes, usually miracle stories.
3. Legends, stories about saintly people who are objects of interest to the church.

²⁰ Vincent Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 2-3.

4. Exhortations.
5. Myths, stories of doings of Jesus regarded as divine.
6. The passion story, which is the outstanding exception to the isolated form of most primitive material, and which in nucleus at least was a connected story from the beginning.

Bultmann gives a different classification:

1. Apothegms, which essentially coincide with Dibelius' paradigms.
2. Sayings of the Lord, which are sub-divided into five groups: logia or wisdom utterances, prophetic and apocalyptic sayings, legal and ecclesiastical pronouncements, sayings using the first person "I" form, and parables.
3. Miracle stories.
4. Historical narratives and legends.

Taylor's classification:

1. Passion narratives, the first part of the tradition to take definite and ordered form.
2. Pronouncement stories, equivalent to Dibelius' paradigms.
3. Sayings and parables.
4. Miracle stories.
5. Stories about Jesus.²²

Filson regards Vincent Taylor's book as the best presentation of Form Criticism positions relative to the types of material. The writer now turns to Taylor's view of the Passion-narrative. His arguments and conclusions are forcible. He first notes that the story as it appears in the gospels has the nature of a connected historical account. This suggests that the evangelists had access to a relatively fixed complex of stories. He also notes that the gospels are in substantial agreement regarding the course of events. Such a similarity of structure is easily explained if the tradition was continuous from the beginning.²³

Schmidt calls our attention to the silence of Jesus in the passion story. He maintains that, for edification and religious purposes, a later time would have represented Jesus as engaging in debate with the opposition. Taylor believes this argument has value; we see such as this in the apocryphal New Testament. Taylor believes Schmidt is correct in his

²² Floyd V. Filson, *op. cit.*, pp. 100-102.

²³ Vincent Taylor, *op. cit.*, pp. 44-45.

view that the passion story in the gospels was preserved from such, because it had already and for a long time attained a fixed form.

The argument most characteristic of the form critics is the contention that the circumstances in the primitive community demanded a continuous passion story. From the very beginning the followers of Jesus were confronted with the difficulty of showing how a crucified Messiah could be the subject of a message of salvation. Early Christians soon discovered that such a message was "unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto Gentiles foolishness" (I Cor. 1:23). The arguments from Old Testament prophecies were insufficient to answer this difficulty. It was necessary to tell the connected story.

Thus Dibelius maintains that the interests of edification, of the most primitive theology, and of the simplest apology combined to make it needful to narrate the whole Passion Story. In like manner Schmidt argues that to tell single incidents satisfied the need neither of the narrator, the liturgist, nor the apologist.²⁴

Bultmann claims that when Paul says, "Christ died for our sins $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{o}\varsigma \acute{\alpha}\pi\acute{\epsilon}\theta\alpha\nu\epsilon\nu \acute{\upsilon}\pi\acute{\epsilon}\rho \tau\omega\nu \acute{\alpha}\mu\alpha\rho\tau\iota\omega\nu \eta\mu\acute{\omega}\nu$ that he was raised on the third day $\kappa\alpha\tau\grave{\alpha} \tau\acute{\alpha}\varsigma \gamma\rho\alpha\phi\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$ and (I Cor. 15:3); he implies the existence of a written passion and resurrection story. Bultmann does not believe that the above phrase refers to the Old Testament. He states that Paul nowhere else quotes the Old Testament when speaking of Christ's death as a death "for us," that his usual formula of citation is $\kappa\alpha\theta\acute{\omega}\varsigma \gamma\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\rho\alpha\pi\tau\alpha\iota$ or some equivalent phrase.²⁵

The question is asked, was the passion story current in several forms? The following considerations lead the form critic to believe that it was. One single story, as the basis of all the gospel narratives, would suggest from the beginning a highly organized church governed from one center. It seems more likely that separate communities usually possessed their own accounts.

The Synoptic data are leading us to think that parallel collections of the words of Jesus were drawn up at different centers, while in later times the existence of local texts, associated with the

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

Ibid., pp. 47-48.

great Churches of early Christianity, is becoming the assumption of modern Textual Criticism. The probabilities, then, favor the existence of Passion Stories; and this view is not ruled out by the fact that the Markan Story, by reason of its merits and its Petrine basis, outstripped others in its influence and the range of its dissemination.²⁶

Some form critics tell us to be careful about multiplying sources; they also ask us to consider whether the grouping of material was necessarily preserved in written form. In practical church use some of the sayings and incidents could have been connected and used together in worship. There is no reason to believe that this could not have been done without committing the material to writing. The author of our gospel could have taken over this connected material and have preserved it in his account.

A brief consideration of parables in relation to Form Criticism is necessary. An important question for form critics is, did parables circulate singly or in collections? The parables in Mark 4 are: the Sower, the Lamp under the Bushel, the Measure, the Seed growing secretly and the Mustard Seed. Notice is made of the fact that the last two begin with an expressed comparison. It would seem that these two formed a pair in oral tradition. In Luke 15 we find the three well-known parables, the Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin and the Prodigal Son. The Lost Sheep is placed in a different context in Matthew (18:12-14). It would seem that the pair in Luke, the Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin, circulated together because their treatment is alike. Form critics conclude that in the oral period a few parables circulated in pairs.

We turn to a brief word relative to the "Formless Stories." These stand outside the purview of Form Criticism. Form critics, however, have used terms in reference to them which throw doubt on their trustworthiness. Others maintain that these formless narratives are not devoid of historical value; even the so-called myths enshrine facts of mystical experience. A temptation or a spiritual experience is no less a fact because it has occurred in a person's inner consciousness.²⁷

The subject of miracles merits brief consideration in any

²⁶ *Ibid.* , pp. 50-51.

²⁷ E. Basil Redlich, *op. cit.* , p. 184.

study of Form Criticism. The study of parallels indicates the superiority of the gospel miracles and also the contribution they make to faith. Many of these stories stand near the records of eyewitnesses; this fact increases their historical value. It is acknowledged by Vincent Taylor that the study of form brings us only to the threshold of the historical problem. This problem does not admit of any solution which can be called scientific. The decision rests upon a personal element which can not be eliminated; it depends on our view of the world, our concept of the person of Christ, and our attitude toward and use of the principles of historical criticism.

It is no longer proper to dismiss this question by claiming that miracles are impossible. The view of science relative to natural law has changed. Nature is not a closed system, and miracles are not intrusions into the present order of events. In the light of the atom bomb and hydrogen bomb scientists speak of the universe as something other than a mechanistic affair. This change of view does not prove the miraculous, but it does show that miracles are not impossible.

If Jesus were only a prophet the question of miracles could be dismissed. Healing miracles could be considered as cases of healing by suggestion. Nature-miracles could be explained as legends. If Jesus is divine, however, the position is changed. The main problem hinges around the nature-miracles. The divinity of Christ does not necessarily prove the validity of the nature-miracles. Christian thinkers recognize that the incarnation imposed limitations upon Christ. How far do these limitations go? Did they allow Jesus to still a storm, to multiply loaves and fishes, and to walk upon the surface of the lake? Some claim that absolute honesty forces us to acknowledge that we do not know. Such acknowledgment indicates that the full recognition of the divinity of Christ does not answer the questions pertaining to nature-miracles.

The denial of such miracles, it is held, is not the denial of divinity. Neither the divinity nor the words of Christ offer any solution regarding the actuality of nature-miracles. We must turn to the synoptic narratives themselves. These are few in number and the critics have reduced the number. Taylor says the problem centers around three stories, the stilling of the storm, the feeding of the five thousand and the walking on the water. The view of the old liberal school was that these stories are the accounts of natural events which have been

given a miraculous interpretation. This position is rejected by the form critics who explain them as legends derived from folk-tales or shaped by popular conceptions.²⁸ Those believing in the deity of Christ have no problem believing his miracles.

In these matters we face unsolved problems, and each man must follow the light which he has. No more, then, than any other kind of Criticism does Form-Criticism enable us to solve the vexed problem of the Gospel miracles; none the less, it has a real contribution to make. It enables us to affirm that the Miracle-Story is a definite form of oral tradition closely related to the life and faith of the earliest Christianity. It permits us to distinguish between stories in free circulation and stories which stand nearer primitive accounts. By comparing like stories in Jewish and Hellenistic tradition it reveals the worth of the Gospel stories, and gives us no reason to think that they have been formed by a process of borrowing. It supplies no basis for the inference that doctrinal interests were responsible for their formation, or indeed that they arose out of any other motive than the desire to illustrate the power and comparison of Jesus. If at this point the investigator of forms is compelled to hand on the problem to the historical Critic, to make such a decision as he can, he is at least able to claim that he has placed the Critic in the best position possible from which to approach the Gospel narratives. The rest depends on our use of Historical Criticism, our world-view, and our estimate of Jesus.²⁹

IV

We now direct our thinking to some of the faults and needed corrections of Form Criticism. One of the fundamental assumptions of Form Criticism is the position that the earliest tradition consisted of small isolated units. It is this writer's opinion that the existence and importance of eyewitnesses are overlooked. The Gospel of Mark is evidence of the fact that

²⁸Vincent Taylor, *op. cit.*, pp. 134-140.

²⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 140-141.

the earliest tradition was in a degree fragmentary. One outstanding exception is the passion story. There are other evidences of historical unity (Mark 1:21-29; 4:35-5:43). Some form critics would lead us to believe that the disciples must have been translated to heaven immediately after the resurrection. We are not to believe that the primitive community was cut off from its founders. It was not necessary for these early folk to invent situations for the words of Jesus, and place on his lips sayings which personal memory cannot check. What are the reasons for the unwillingness to consider the existence of eyewitnesses? The form critic deals with oral forms shaped by nameless individuals, and the recognition of eyewitnesses capable of enriching the tradition by their actual recollections is a disturbing element to such a theory. The form critic also knows how greatly the position and influence of eyewitnesses have been exaggerated.

Scholars of the literature of Form Criticism often feel that it has gone to extreme in its rejection of connecting links between units of tradition. The early church needed a consistent picture of the words and acts of Jesus. The above references to Mark give evidence of such connections. The writer acknowledges that some conservatives go to extremes in reference to chronology and context.

Form Criticism gives a mistaken picture when depicting the transmission of the tradition as being exclusively the task of ignorant or unlearned men. The primitive Christians were not all Solomons, but there were men of education and discernment in the church at all times. What Form Criticism says about the perpetuation of folklore among simple people is not an exact parallel to the situation in the primitive church. We have no justifiable grounds for believing that Jesus always stated the same maxim in the exact form. There is no reason to believe that he did not vary his messages.

Form critics have failed to deal fairly with the historical sense of the early Christians. Their tradition cannot be classed with the ordinary type of folk-tales and legends. It is unfair for form critics to assume that the contexts, settings and chronological details are of no historical value.

All endeavors to make the apostolic age responsible for the creation of a major portion of the gospel material cannot stand in the light of the parables. The parable is the characteristic teaching form in the synoptic gospels. Parables do not occur in the remaining portion of the New Testament and in other

early Christian literature. If the apostolic age had created these parables, other writings of that time would naturally reflect the same method. In my opinion form critics assign the community too much creative power.

Where forms do not exist form critics are guilty of classifying materials according to contents; this is not Form Criticism. Form Criticism has neglected to take advantage of the results of literary criticism of the gospels. The evidence from second-century and later writers is also largely overlooked.

Form Criticism does not take account of all the varied interests of the early church. The primitive church was willing to suffer and die for its faith in Jesus and the power of his name. Jesus was their Christ. Form Criticism by too great an emphasis on the expected Parousia has sacrificed all interest in an understanding of the normal life which men lived.

It is impossible for anyone to be entirely objective, but Form Criticism leaves the door open for too much subjective treatment and its supporters are partial to this.³⁰

V

Attention is now directed to some of the fruit and conclusions of Form Criticism. One of the important finds of this study is the light cast by Form Criticism around the Apostle Paul. In the last century many scholars found in Mark an infiltration of Paulinism into the gospel tradition. Such ideas as are expressed in Mark 10:45 are said to be of Paul and not Jesus. Recent investigation is testing this claim. It is now recognized that Paul was preceded by Christian thinkers who gave some measure of intellectual form to their faith before his time. The attitude and position of Form Criticism makes it impossible to maintain that Paul was the man who spoiled a non-theological and non-Christological paradise by advocating the teachings found in his letters. It is now believed by many that Paul was anticipated in many of his viewpoints by those preceding him.

The needs of daily life, of apologetics, and of worship had already led the Church to begin the formulation of theological conceptions as to the place and work of Jesus in God's plan. Moreover, form

³⁰Floyd V. Filson, *op. cit.*, pp. 105-110; E. Basil Redlich, *op. cit.*, pp. 77-80.

criticism stresses the fact that such beliefs and ideas were not the queer work of a few individuals merely, but were the common possession of a confessing and worshipping Church.³¹

Separation from a Judaism which failed to recognize Jesus was inevitable. The writer acknowledges that Christians have inherited much from Judaism. However, once we recognize that from the beginning Christians gave such a unique place to worship, we see that the germ of the church was present from the beginning and was not an accidental development. If Judaism would not accept Jesus, separation was inevitable.³²

From the beginning Christian life was explicitly centered around Jesus. Jesus was the unique, divinely sent, and divinely attested head of the Christian group.

Form Criticism suggests that we must get away from any idea of the early church as merely an ethical society or a religious group of nondistinctively Christian features, and it directs us to the worshipping Church which gave Jesus the place of God's unique and final representative. Studies in the gradual growth of Christian doctrine have led some to think that primitive Christianity was free from any definite Christology, and that we therefore ought to go back to that earliest non-theological attitude. Form Criticism leads us to see that such a time of freedom from Christology never existed.³³

Form Criticism admits that collections of Jesus' sayings were made early; this indicates clearly that Jesus' words treasured as oracles to lead and govern the destinies of individuals and of the Church. Form critics have stimulated the study of gospel origins. This will no doubt lead to additional study in the future. Form Criticism shows that the early church was interested in the holy men and women who followed our Lord in the days of his flesh.

Limitations of space have made it impossible to include many factors in this study. The writer believes that Form Criticism is a voice to which the Christian must listen. Like all movements this one has "radicals" in it, but sane and sound men have made a contribution to New Testament study.

³¹Floyd V. Filson, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

³²*Ibid.*, pp. 112-113.

³³*Ibid.*, p. 112.

Christian Education

A Theological Discipline

Harold C. Mason

There have recently appeared two books by Professor Randolph Crump Miller of Yale University Divinity School, dealing with the relationship between systematic theology and religious education. In the first of these books he maintains that theology can be taught "in terms of relationships at any age." In this first volume, *The Clue to Christian Education*, the author endeavors to show how Christian theology can be taught to the various age groups. The later book, appearing in 1956, is entitled *Biblical Theology and Christian Education*. The September-October issue of *Religious Education*, of which Dr. Miller is the recently appointed editor, devotes thirty-four of its seventy-seven pages to a symposium on the subject, "Theology and Religious Education."

In this emphasis upon theology and Christian education he sets forth the organic relationship between content and method, doctrine and the learning process, and theology and Christian living.

The organic relationship between content and aim and method has long been recognized as a basic principle in education. Far more than this principle connotes, however, is mystically operative in Christian education. The Bible, Christian education and theology, are of one and the same pattern and fabric. This is shown in the Shema, the Sermon on the Mount, Christ's conversations, the Paschal discourses, Paul's admonition to Timothy, and countless other passages throughout the Bible.

Bower and Hayward in *Protestantism Faces Its Educational Task Together* mention the fact that it is often assumed that organization and administration in education have nothing to do with the educational process itself, thus ignoring the basic dictum that aim controls all of the educational endeavor. In such an assumption organization is thought of as "merely providing the mechanical frame work within which the educational process can go forward." It is now recognized that organization is as much a part of education as is curriculum or teaching. All of the aspects of the educational endeavor must

be devoted to but one end, the improvement of teaching for the realization of objectives. All phases of Christian education constitute it a theological discipline.

It is Christian theology which distinguishes Christian education from that which is merely religious. Religious education has always been theological in that it has forwarded positions for, against, or about, God. Atheism is a religious and theological position, but it is assuredly not Christian. Secular education as a discipline must by its very nature identify itself with the aim, purpose, content, and methodology of the subject to be taught; hence in educational nomenclature are such expressions as "the teaching of science" and "the teaching of religion." But in religious education, Christian education is an expression of revealed theology. Education may exist apart from English, or mathematics, or science, as disciplines, but Christian education cannot exist apart from that with which it is identified.

Those who have never thoroughly considered education as a field of study have tended to down-grade it as a system of mechanically acquired techniques, a carnival of fads and fancies, a more or less fascinating array of gadgets, or a passing vogue in goble-de-hook. Such persons fail to see that in an enlightened culture, communication and nurture are basic. The history of education is directed to the discovery and evaluation of the best possible methods for communicating and developing knowledge and skills. The philosophy of education is devoted to reflection upon the most desirable ends in the over-all educational endeavor. Educational psychology is concerned with the success of the pupil in learning. Christian education as a discipline is said to be concerned with the propagation and communication of the Christian Gospel, efficiency in Christian service, and promotion of the Christian ethic. It is the identification of process with purpose which makes education such a meaningful and challenging discipline. Carpentering cannot be disassociated from construction, banking from finance, surgery from anatomy, medicine from physiology, or Christian education from the Bible and theology. The term "Christian" forces Christian education into a common mold with biblical and theological thought. There may be education about Christianity which properly falls into the category of religious education, but Christian education involves mystical elements which are a part of itself. It partakes of the reality which it teaches. Certain facets of Christian

teaching may be emphasized in religious education, but such emphases do not constitute Christian education. Just as in the passing generations mental health, psychiatry and counselling, group guidance, a secularistic pragmatism with emphasis upon biology and the sciences, or aesthetics, may be emphasized as representative of Christian culture; so elements of the Christian ethic, the good life in the temporal sense, and religion as a refining influence, may be projected. But Christian education involves much more than fragmentary emphases, as does Christian counselling and guidance.

For all age divisions and groups, Christian education begins with the nature and character of God as theistic, triune, and immanent in the personal, not pantheistic, sense. Before the child is born, godly parents are concerned with his future relationship to God. As soon as he begins to grasp the meaning of spoken symbols the Lord Jesus is presented to him as living, loving, and endearing Himself to childhood. Our primary knowledge of Him comes from a Book which is not the product of men's minds. Men did not make Christ. God is not a mere philosophical concept to be conjured with in terms of pantheism, atheism, deism, on any level. He is only apprehended as He is completely accepted and believed upon as the supernatural God of the Bible.

Man is a special creation in the image of God with moral capacities and responsibilities. The curse of the Fall is upon him and he cannot live to the age of moral responsibility without knowing himself to be a sinner. This sad truth is associated with the eschatological and temporal fact that men are judged and condemned according to the deeds done in the body. While an infant is heir to man's fallen condition, until he reaches the age of accountability he is not a theological nor legal subject of judgment and condemnation. Hence the infant is not in a state of condemnation upon whom the judgment of God rests for deeds done in the body. He is, however, in possession of a fallen nature which must be changed, without volitional involvement on his part if he dies in infancy. There are no unregenerated natures in Heaven. Theology is not merely related to the Nursery School or the Beginners, it is the very stuff of infant teaching in the church. It is the Christian education of infants.

When the child becomes literate his attitude toward the Book of Books is a basic matter. It is not bibliolatry to accept the Christian doctrine of inspiration and special revelation. One

does not worship a dictionary because he believes in it and guides his thinking and communication by its inexorable demands. There is no Christian education which is not the teaching of the Bible as the Word of God.

The "bird's nest" philosophy which once characterized religious education has long since been abandoned in the teaching of children. World War I taught us some things about the fact of evil. Messengers brought to the parents of little children news of the death of an older brother on the field of battle. Tiny children witnessed the tears of grief as they had the anxiety etched upon the faces of their parents. Little birds do sometimes fall out of the nest, and are eaten by cats. Nature is both benevolent and ruthless. God is not a part of nature, but over and above it. He is the over-ruling God of love, knowledge of whom must be translated into the language of childhood. There is sin and evil in the world, and the only remedy for it is in the Person whom the Bible and Christian experience present to a suffering world. The Christian doctrines of salvation and redemption are completely identified with Christian instruction, and the essential identification of Christian education with salvation and nurture does not change with the opinions of men, nor their carnal desires.

In his beginning years the child is presented his version of the Scriptures. The doctrines of the revelation, inspiration, and authority of the Scriptures are projected in the story telling method. Since the child cannot read, he is utterly dependent upon what he is told and what he sensuously experiences. Thus is bound upon the devout and theologically intelligent story teller the obligation of great faithfulness in transmitting the Scripture to the child. Sceptics take liberties with the Scriptures and pervert, distort, or emasculate them, and Christian teachers of little children may do the same thing by injecting unwarranted imaginative elements into the lesson story or film script, and some day the child may say as he reads the Scripture for himself, "This is not the way I heard it!"

The curriculum maker in the children's division must heed St. Paul's instruction to Timothy, who had been so carefully educated in the Scriptures by his mother and grandmother, to "rightly divide the Word of Truth." In this day the Bible must be rightly divided in terms of grade adaptation as to difficulty of comprehension and content, and the spiritual and moral needs of the individual.

No one can teach Christian education as a discipline without raising such questions as, "When does a child attain the age of moral responsibility? Does the infant need to be born again? How do the Scriptures apply to the primary child and his needs?"

The Christian life and ethic cannot be taught without due emphasis upon eschatology. Man being a creature of two worlds, his immortality forces consideration of eschatological questions. St. Paul knew this and said that if in this life only we have hope in Christ we are of all men most miserable.

The doctrine of the Holy Spirit and the nature and mission of the Church are completely identified with Christian education. Christian education is mystical and more than human. What is the Church? It is Christ carrying on His teaching ministry in human embodiment through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church. In Christian education the Holy Spirit is the teacher, employing the bodies and spirits of believers as instruments. Therefore, in Christian education the teacher must have the mind and spirit of Christ, not merely information about Christ or the good life or proposed schemes for the correction of social ills. And what is the mind of Christ? It is what He believed and taught about Himself, about God the Father, about the Scriptures, about human responsibility and need, about evil and its relation to eternal destiny, about grace and eternal life, about the person and work of the Holy Spirit, about the Church, about the life of the Christian, about the heavenly home and His eventual return in visible presence to the earth. In the Church it is His indwelling Spirit.

There can be and is no Christian education which can be thought of apart from Christian doctrine, for Christian education is the teaching aspect of Christian theology. It is the work of the Holy Spirit.

Christianity, and therefore Christian theology, is for the whole of life. Essentially, Christian theology is not human speculation or philosophizing about the character of God, the destiny of man, the nature of the universe, human freedom, and the problem of evil. It is necessarily biblical. It is grounded in "Thus saith the Lord."

Christian education as a theological discipline pertains to the whole of life. It views life in terms of dimensions, such as its length or longevity. It is concerned with age groups and their varying needs at levels of experience and responsibility.

Nursery school, kindergarten, primary, intermediate and senior children, are to be confronted with the Christian revelation in accordance with Paul's instruction to Timothy. Older youth, young people, young adults, the middle aged and senior adults, are to be ministered to in terms of their needs through the Word and the Christian witness. This the Church, the body of Christ, the tabernacle of the Holy Ghost, does, in its teaching ministry. It communicates Christian theology in word and life. It also views life in terms of depth. It has to do with man's deepest needs. The problem of sin and of rising from its depths confronted David the king. It deals with rescue from defeat and humiliation in the realm of character, with life after death, with love and fellowship among men as reflected in King David's exultant cry, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? Why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God." A clear conscience, a sense of direction, are matters of depth. Evangelism and worship in Christian education fathom the depths of man's nature. Where his affections take root, where loneliness and desolation thrive, where the heart cries out for the living God, the Christian teacher ministers with the great truths of the Gospel. He challenges to the discovery of self-forgetfulness and the peace of God which passeth knowledge and the joy of unselfish service. He presents the great doctrines of the New Birth and the life of the Spirit to man in his deepest need and longing. Depth is a present dimension. Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation. Repentance and saving faith come to focus in the depth of man's need, his fallen estate. For him love and faith are a sure and steadfast anchor, attainable in the depths of repentance, faith, and the assurance of the Word validated in Christian experience. There is breadth as well as length and depth to life. The call of Christ is universal, it is to a whole wide world. Christianity is a missionary endeavor, the Church, the mystical body of Christ, extending beyond denominational boundaries and confines around the world. There is the broad way which leadeth to destruction. These are theological considerations. The mistaken broad-mindedness of toleration of evil and the break-down of faith are also matters of breadth, theologically. Christian education is concerned with altitude. Heaven is above us. Christ was lifted up, rose from the dead, and ascended into Heaven. Christian education is concerned with a theological climate in which aspirations, hopes, ambitions and desires, can only be met in

the exalted Christ. The church in its Christian education program, its teaching ministry, challenges to the complete dedication of talent to its highest uses and inspires to such heights of service and devotion as the world cannot envision. Thus theology is bound up with life in all its dimensions.

Man is a creature of two worlds, and God the Father meets him on these levels. There can be no Christian intelligence apart from Him. Christian education as a discipline is devoted to the science and art of communicating spiritual truth and the nurture of Christian personality in the Holy Spirit. It is concerned with a moral universe. It is a theological discipline because it is devoted to making known and effective in human life the biblically derived doctrines of the Church. It is not merely an addendum to a biblical and theological seminary curriculum. It stands with theology at the heart of it. There is no teaching in the practical fields which is not theological. This is tacitly acknowledged when we refer to such teaching as "practical theology."

The general principles of education apply to Christian education, but the essential thing about Christian education is that the Holy Spirit is author of the text-book, director of the curriculum, and the Great Teacher. The Church, the body of Christ, continuing His teaching ministry, is the living embodiment of Christian theology--practical, systematic and biblical.

Book Reviews

James D. Robertson, Ph.D., Book Review Editor

Christians and the State, by John C. Bennett. New York: Scribner's, 1958. 302 pp. \$4.50.

In times like ours when so much of human existence is riddled by ambiguities, the sensitive Christian feels with special keenness the perplexity which betimes grips all men. After all, he is a part of a spiritual society existing within a general society whose aims are diverse from spiritual ideals. The problem is vastly greater in our pluralistic society, in which Protestant and Roman Catholic aims are often as diverse from one another as they both differ from those of secular society. Add to this the recent tragic experience of the rise of National Socialism, and of the phenomenal expansion of Communism.

These problems set the pattern for a volume by Dr. John C. Bennett, Professor of Applied Christianity in Union Theological Seminary (New York), which brings together within one cover a vast amount of meticulous study into the complexities of the Christian's situation in contemporary society. Dr. Bennett deals with his subject under three general divisions: Christian Faith in a Pluralistic Society, the Christian Understanding of the State, and the Relations between Church and State.

The author's approach to his topics is uniformly positive. He is critical of historic Christianity's doctrines of the Fall and of Sin because of what seems to him their negative value judgment, not only upon men as individuals, but upon human institutions. His attitude toward the several elements in our pluralistic society is one of studied fairness. He has the ability to set forth the major known elements in a given discussion, and then to bring in others equally relevant, keeping the reader asking, Why did I not think of that in this connection?

Dr. Bennett writes as one who once expected more of Communism than the cynicism, moral relationsim, and

brutality that it has manifested in the U.S.S.R. and China. His analyses are the more pungent as a result of disillusionment with the course of this movement, especially in the last two decades.

He is uncompromisingly in favor of separation of Church and State, and keenly alert to the tendency implicit in Roman Catholicism to evade the consequences of such separation. His final appeal is for a coherent but indirect influence of Church upon the State, that is, in the influence which follows the impact of the enlightened Christian witness and conscience upon public opinion, and upon the value-systems of the community.

This is a valuable volume, reflecting the mature experience of an author who has passed through the idealistic stage (e.g., of Christian socialism) to the belief in the genuine possibility of achieving social justice within the framework of our present socio-economic system. The work combines in splendid fashion the tasks of informing and of challenging further thought.

Harold B. Kuhn

A Tool In His Hand, by Ann M. Harrison. New York: Friendship Press, 1958. 170 pp. \$2.75.

"In the name of Allah, the Merciful, to the honorable, the esteemed Dr. Harrison," began the letter.

"It has come--an invitation to go into the Nejd!"

Thus, after some years of faithful service on the Arabian coast, Dr. Paul Harrison's medical skill, the "tool in his hand," had opened up the way for the first Christian witness in central Arabia by invitation of King Ibn Saud himself.

Here is a biography which will challenge prospective missionaries to prepare themselves to meet human needs as a means of securing opportunities to present the message of Christ. The story is especially pertinent in view of the prominence of Arabia and the rest of the Middle East in the news of the present day. The experiences of Dr. Harrison's forty years as a medical missionary in this most difficult of fields, the Moslem world, point up the fact that one may not determine whether he is in God's will by counting the number of converts. Our faith is challenged as we see his faith for the gospel in the future of this area.

Even so today, when many missionary doors are closed, the

Christian message can still enter through the missionary who has "a tool in his hand."

Ruth Olney Greenlee

Christianity and World Issues, by T. B. Maston. New York: Macmillan, 1957. 374 pp. \$5.00.

The major social issues of our time receive much attention nowadays. The question of the individual versus the state, or the factors of race relations, the family, economic life, social change, war and peace, and the communist threat, all are discussed, often in varying contexts. Dr. T. B. Maston, who is Professor of Christian Ethics in Southwestern Baptist Seminary, has brought to these issues the essentially evangelical outlook, and in this volume discusses them within a frankly Christian context. Assuming that there is an identifiable Christian social ethic, he brings it to bear upon the 'live' issues of the time.

Certain ideas pervade the book and lend coherence to it. The primary one of these (apart of course from the doctrinal positions characteristic of the Christian faith) is that of the inevitability of tension in human relations, particularly in modern life. In his approach to each of the questions with which he deals, he notes the sources of polarity, the degree to which tensions are inevitable, and the degree to which they may be resolved by the vigorous application of the message of the Evangel to our common life.

The author is a discerning analyst of the problems of our time, and has done a prodigious amount of research in preparation for his work. He adds an extensive and valuable bibliography to a very stimulating book.

Harold B. Kuhn

The Private Letters of Luke, by Roger Lloyd. New York: Channel Press, 1958. 192 pp. \$3.00.

The New Testament sketch of St. Luke is tantalizingly brief, and it is understandable that Christians should seek to round out the picture of his career. Roger Lloyd, Canon of Winchester (England) Cathedral, has endeavored to do just

that, utilizing such data as the New Testament gives concerning Luke, Paul, and Theophilus, together with hints given with reference to lesser-known characters. This volume is a collection of thirty-four letters, such as might have been written by Luke, Silvanus (Silas), James the Elder, Mark, and Theophilus.

The author seeks to throw light upon the career of Luke, beginning with his situation as a physician in Antioch, continuing through his conversion and his contacts with Paul, including his researches preparatory to the writing of his Gospel, and up until the actual penning of the works in the New Testament which bear his name.

Antioch is chosen as the point of departure, partly no doubt because it was here that major issues between Jewish and Gentile Christians arose and had to be ironed out. Of the characters involved as either writers or recipients of letters, only one is not mentioned in the New Testament--Issachar, who is a staunch champion of the Law as binding upon Christians.

The book is written in a fascinating style, and evidently seeks to incorporate nothing which is not harmonious at least with New Testament narratives. It is incisive in its treatment of the mentality of Gentiles when confronted with the emptiness of Roman paganism and with the "strange new message" of the Gospel. Luke and Theophilus are portrayed convincingly; one only wishes that he might possess the actual facts connected with each as he was related to the Christian Church. Lacking these, Canon Lloyd has sketched them as they may well have been. His volume is an absorbing one, highly worth the reading.

Anne W. Kuhn

The Origin and Transmission of the New Testament, by L. D. Twilley. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans. Pp. ix plus 65. \$1.50.

In this small volume of the Pathway Book series a British Baptist pastor has given a brief and lucid description of the development of the Christian Church during the period when the books of the New Testament were being written. The author speaks of the writing of each book of the New Testament as a part of the story, according to his own views of their date; but he also includes special notes indicating the differing

views of other scholars.

The second half of the book is devoted to the story of how the New Testament was handed down through the centuries to the present, and includes a concise and helpful survey of the principles of textual criticism.

This book will be helpful to the minister who has never studied textual criticism; it will also provide for the layman a very readable presentation of the origin and transmission of the New Testament.

J. Harold Greenlee

The Reality of the Church, by Claude Welch. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1957. 254 pp. \$3.95.

Today's theology is in quest of a definition of the Church, and for a more concrete understanding of the relationship existing between the Church as defined in the New Testament and the empirical Church. This volume addresses itself to these two concerns. The writer, in his ontology of the Church, begins with the definition of the Christian community as existing in reponse to God's redemptive call. As such, the Church is one of the multiple institutions of man, and at the same time "described as the people of God, the colony of heaven, the royal priesthood, God's planting, the body of Christ" (p. 21).

Our author traces this polarity in a two-fold direction: first in terms of the paradox of the life of the individual Christian, who both lives in this world, and exists "in Christ"; and second, in terms of the incarnate Christ, who at one and the same time "had no beauty that we should desire him" and walked among men as Emmanuel, the Lord of Glory. He traces a number of current solutions which are proposed to resolve the paradox with which the empirical Church confronts us, with all of her shortcomings, her rigidities, and her power structures.

Significant in this connection is the statement of the writer's point of view. While he recognizes that we must see the Church alongside the other institutions of society, yet he insists that no one will see her with appreciation who does not do so in terms of the "perspective of faith." She is formed around the historical figure of her Lord, is determined in her development by "the peculiar relation of this people to God in Jesus Christ," and conditioned in the ongoing of her life by

her response to the prior initiative of God toward men in the incarnation of Christ.

In short, says Professor Welch, it requires the same "eye of faith" to perceive "the people of God" in the visible institution which we call the Church as it took (and takes) to see the Son of the Living God in the humble man of Nazareth. He preserves our sense of the essential unity of the Church in terms of a very able assertion of the true unity of the Person of the God-Man, in whom God assumed humanity in the self-movement toward our race which we call the Incarnation.

Crucial to our author's discussion is his treatment of "The Church in Sin." No discussion of the question of the relation of the Ideal Church as Christ's Body to the Church involved in the difficulties of our sinful world can be wholly satisfactory. Professor Welch rejects several classical solutions, centering in the assertion frequently made that the Church herself transcends any involvement of her members. His own solution to the problem is in terms of his words, "The life of the Church cannot be understood simply as analogous to the life of Christ; it reflects also the life of Peter, and even of Judas" (p. 126). Again he says (same page), "The dialectic of the holiness and sinfulness of the church derives directly from the dialectic of the life of the Christian man as saint and sinner."

Continuing his analogy of the Church as reflecting both the divine and the human in Christ, he suggests that "The historicity and sociality of the church reflect the humanity of Christ" (p. 135). Now, so long as this is kept in the realm of pure analogy it may be acceptable; but one can foresee those who deny the sinlessness of our Lord as deriving comfort from any literal pressing of this proposition. The author does emphasize over and over that he is speaking only analogically; and his major point is clear, that the Church's existence is basically a teleological existence--that it is an existence which is moving toward a goal toward which the world outside the Church is unknowingly also proceeding, namely, toward the day when "every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that Christ is Lord."

Chapter VI, entitled "Christ, World, and Church," raises many questions to which no final answer can be given, such as: "Is there salvation outside the Church?" "What is the divinely-intended relation between Church and World?" and "what is the relation between Church and Kingdom?" Professor Welch's answer is always in terms of the perspective of faith,

by which we seek to see that which is not yet. His solutions are usually proposed from the point of view of the empirical Church's involvement in sin, and of her expectation of the day of fulfilment.

The final chapter, under title of "Christ, The Spirit, and The Church," brings to summary that which our author has been seeking to say. He assumes as granted the organic unity of the divine life within the triune God, and the continuing and life-giving ministry of the Holy Spirit. It is through Him that Jesus Christ continues to manifest Himself in the Church. If this be done imperfectly, it is due to the fact that the Church reflects His humanity, and the humanness of the apostolic circle. The sacraments of the Church are "concretely visible, historical means through which Christ gives himself to be present to his Church, as determinate patterns of common life which through the power of the Spirit are lifted up to be instruments for the realization and sustenance of new life in Christ" (pp. 233f). These, together with the continuing ministry of the Word, help the Church to realize the reality of His incarnate life.

Enough has perhaps been said to indicate that this volume is an unusually stimulating attempt at the definition of a reality difficult to pin down. It leaves us with some questions unanswered; it leaves us at times uncertain with respect to precisely who can be really termed a Christian. It leaves us in no doubt concerning the high purposes which our Lord intends to fulfil in the Church, His Body.

Harold B. Kuhn

Handbook of Church Management, by William H. Leach.
Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1958.
504 pp. \$8.00.

Here is the most complete book in print that deals with the organization and administration of Protestant local churches. The publishers, with some exaggeration, claim that this volume is "almost encyclopedic in content" and that "literally nothing is left out."

The broad scope of the contents includes discussion of the nature of executive leadership and the basic problems of church organization and administration including finance,

publicity, working with lay officers, and other important aspects of the supervision of a local congregation. In addition to the primary interests in church management, the author also discusses ministerial etiquette and ethics, worship, "the ministry of marriage," and the pastoral care of the bereaved. The volume includes some material that is not ordinarily included in the general field of church management.

The author's discussion of all these problems is clear and effective. He demonstrates acquaintance with the contemporary principles and practices in administration. In some cases, however, he is too specific. He tells his readers the "right" way to do things when a broader discussion of several methods would be more helpful. The book is strengthened by numerous charts, rating scales, check lists, and illustrations. Many of the chapters furnish excellent bibliographies. The volume has much to offer pastors, for whom it is primarily intended. Lay church leaders will also find it valuable. It will doubtless stand for many years as a basic and definitive work in its field.

W. C. Mavis

Day Is Dawning, (author not named). Philadelphia: Christian Education Press, 1956. 222 pp. \$3.50.

The subtitle of this volume indicates its contents, "The Story of Bishop Otto Dibelius." It is not, in the conventional sense, a biography, but the account of the development, by significant stages, of a Christian statesman. The author is not named; he is a man close enough to the evangelical Bishop of Berlin and Brandenburg to have access to the major events in his life and to many of the documents and proclamations which have issued from his ministry and his church administration.

Great men sometimes show their greatness by almost imperceptible stages; so it has been with Otto Dibelius, who is today the best known and (outside the Red world) the best loved churchman standing in opposition to the communist regime. In this work, biographical sequences give place to crucial events: and in the 78 years of the Bishop's life, many such events have appeared. He has met three great occasions of decision: the first came when he took his place in the line of

Adolf Stoecker, and declined to be a clergyman of the conventional sort, blandly beating the drums for the "squirearchy" which surrounded the Emperor in the closing years of the Second Reich. Otto Dibelius chose rather a nonconforming role--one which took him from the fashionable circles of the Kaisers' Berlin to a parish in Cressen/Oder, and then to Danzig.

The end of World War I found him with his family back in Berlin, where he served as pastor of the Church of the Holy Fount, and ministered to the disillusioned generation. During this period, he marked out the prophetic course (the course of a minority) as a man determined to pursue the spiritual values which would survive the crumbling order. By this time he had attended the Edinburgh Conference of 1910 (thus revisiting the Scotland which he had known as a student some years earlier); he was now confronted with rising marxism among the embittered in his defeated nation. He sought in those days two objectives: first, to confront the neo-pagans of Berlin with the realities of the Christian Evangel; and to build a bridge between his defeated nation and the Western powers. During this time began a series of visits to America, which should come to be so significant for the Christian Church.

With the gathering of the clouds for the Nazi storm, the life of Otto Dibelius entered its second major phase. Shortly after the inauguration of the Third Reich, he was forced from his pastorate and compelled to move his family into a garage apartment in the Steglitz area of Berlin. As a disrobed pastor, he defied the Nazi Minister of Religion by a vigorous program centering in the distribution of mimeographed outlines and directives, these prepared by members of his family in their garage-home. Three times the Nazis imprisoned him during their ill-fated regime; and the end of World War II found him again seeking to find a way by which the Church in a defeated land might serve as a "light in a dark place."

The dismemberment of Germany soon brought him to the third phase of his life: his episcopal responsibility was for churches in the area under Russian occupation and control. It became his lot to shepherd congregations which became increasingly isolated, and increasingly subjected to totalitarian control. Meanwhile, the Bishop was active in establishing contacts with Christians in the West. He was instrumental in the ecumenical movement within Germany, and in its establishment in formal terms of the World Council of Churches.

It has been the privilege of this reviewer to meet Bishop Dibelius upon several occasions in his native Berlin. During these interviews, the struggles through which he has been compelled to go have been recounted in more detail than Day is Dawning can give them. Here is a man who has been trained in the crucible of suffering and by immersion in patterns of difficulties almost inconceivable to us. He is a man of rare insight and of boundless ingenuity. This volume gives us documentary insight into his mind and spirit.

One is impressed by his use of Scripture, his pungent analyses of men and movements, and his rare courage. The title Day is Dawning seems at first glance somewhat remote from the content of the work. Upon second thought, however, one sees its relevance to the whole thrust of the life of Otto Dibelius. He has labored and suffered to bring a day in which a Church, freed from secular control, should declare herself prophetically and with a ministry of healing and reconciliation. The evangelical Bishop is not primarily concerned with the permanence of human institutions; no one can foresee the future for East Germany. He is concerned that the Church shall be the Church, and that she shall be able to light candles in the darkness of a pagan society. To do this in the face of the secularization of the Church under Red domination is not easy. Here is a man who counts nothing dear to himself that he may shepherd the Church through its present dark night.

A volume so heavily documented with the carefully-pondered public utterances of a descendent of the Teutonic Knights is not always easy reading. This should not, however, deter the thoughtful person who desires to learn how one man, often standing alone, has found the resources of the Word of God sufficient to enable him to weather in succession three storms, and to make him, now in his seventy-ninth year, a key figure in the resistance of the Church to communist pressure. The man Otto Dibelius is in himself a source of profound inspiration. The book Day is Dawning is in the best sense a "tract for the times."

Harold B. Kuhn

The Story of the American Negro, by Ina Corinne Brown. New York: Friendship Press, 1957. xi plus 212 pp. Cloth, \$2.75; paper, \$1.25.

This book, first published some years ago and now brought up to date to include recent developments, can be recommended to anyone who sincerely wants to understand the American Negro and his present circumstances. The author surveys a three-hundred-year period, from the beginning of the African slave trade down to current measures seeking to implement or to circumvent the Supreme Court's ruling outlawing racial segregation. The book is written in a commendably dispassionate style, yet the pathos of the very facts thus related often strike to one's heart.

The book's wealth of background and reference information should be welcomed by anyone who comes to grips with the race problem which presses so urgently upon Americans today: the fact that the theory of racial inferiority of Negroes was only a late development (p. 10); how an acceptance of slavery was written into our federal Constitution (pp. 41-42); the changes of attitudes toward slavery as slavery became more profitable; how northern states took away from free Negroes the right to vote (p. 62); and a summary of the Negro's circumstances during the ninety years since his emancipation (pp. 155-156).

Typical of the author's clear perspective is her incisive paragraph giving "the real tragedy of slavery" (p. 56). Likewise valuable are her summary of the hopeful signs at present in the race situation in the United States.

J. Harold Greenlee

Perfectionism, by Benjamin B. Warfield. Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1958. 464 pp.

The present volume is an attractive reprint of the thousand-page study of the subject of perfectionism undertaken by Dr. Warfield about thirty-five years ago. Professor Warfield held the chair of Didactic and Polemic Theology at Princeton from 1887 to 1921 and was known as the leading theological exponent of Calvinism. The publishers are to be commended for making available again some of the more enduring contributions of Dr. Warfield. The editor, Samuel G. Craig, has selected the more relevant sections of a larger study and condensed them in this volume.

In this abridged volume Warfield traces the history of perfectionism in this country to Oberlin, where he finds that Charles G. Finney and his associate, Professor Asa Mahan, played a decisive role in the history of American perfectionism. He attributes the perfectionism of these men not to what they learned from the Scriptures, but rather to Pelagianism in general, and to the "New Divinity" of Hopkins at Yale in particular. While Professor Warfield attributes the modern perfectionism movement to Wesley and his successors, it is remarkable that he pays scant attention to perfectionism in Methodist circles. His attention is confined almost entirely to the perfectionism in the Reformed tradition, both on the Continent and in the United States. Thus he traces it from Oberlin to the Higher Life Movement pioneered by W. E. Boardman in his book entitled *A Higher Christian Life* (published in 1859). From there Warfield follows the perfectionist movement to Germany, where it was known as the Fellowship Movement; it flourished during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Here it built on the foundation of Pietism, which is essentially a reformation of the Reformation, stressing, along with the objective grounds of Atonement, the subject it effects in a renewed life of holy living. The important figure in this phase was H. Pearsall Smith, who had a remarkable influence around 1875 coincident with the influence of the Moody and Sankey revivals. It culminated in the Keswick Movement, which still manifests considerable power. In this latter movement Henry Clay Trumbull and the *Sunday School Times* played a leading role.

Warfield's criticism of perfectionism is that it is unfaithful to the cardinal doctrines of the Reformation; especially is it inadequate in its conception of sin. He defends the traditional Reformed position that perfection is available but not in this life; that the life described in the seventh chapter of Romans is the normal Christian life; that perfectionism draws too much from Pelagianism and is to a large extent a self-salvation. He is restive under the accusation by the perfectionists that the Reformed doctrine is a "miserable sinner" type of Christianity.

Warfield in his criticism of Finney and the revivals of the early nineteenth century, does not exhibit sympathy with the evangelical point of view. He is skeptical of the worth of Finney's work as an evangelist, both as to the methods and the results. The idea of an evangelical conversion, of a true re-

vival among believers, finds scant enthusiasm in Warfield. Much of his criticism of the Perfectionist Movement he describes is justified. His attention is confined entirely to the Reformed tradition where he effectively points out the inconsistency of claiming a perfection in Christ which is never actualized in the life of the believer. He notes that by stressing dependence on Christ, Jellinghaus and others (page 442) in effect denied the possibility of effectual "perfection" in this life. Much of the criticism leveled by Warfield against the Keswick Movement would be shared by the Holiness Movement in the Wesleyan tradition. With the latter, however, Warfield does not concern himself except by way of an occasional background reference.

Those whom Warfield criticizes apparently did not recognize that in a lower sense all Christians are sanctified. In other words, they made little distinction between the initial sanctification experienced by all believers and entire sanctification which some believers profess to have found. The study as a whole reflects a deep interest on the part of Warfield in this general subject. It also reflects deep prejudices against revivalism in general and perfectionism in particular--two things which Warfield feels endanger Reformed theology. As a polemic theologian rather than an exegete, it perhaps is not surprising that Warfield does not more frequently test the theology he is considering in the light of the Scripture. However, when Warfield abandons the role of the polemist and adopts that of the exegete, his views on entire sanctification have much in common with the Wesleyan point of view. This is seen in the appendix to this volume, an exposition of I Thessalonians 5:23, which he entitled "Entire Sanctification." It is also seen in a study of verbs for renewal in a volume by Warfield entitled *Biblical Doctrines* (Oxford University Press, 1929). It might be better if more frequently we became exegets rather than theological combatants. In any case, the appropriate rule for growing Christians is that of quest.

George A. Turner

The Holy Spirit in Your Life, by Andrew W. Blackwood, Jr.
Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1957. 169 pp. \$2.50.

The author of this practical volume on the Holy Spirit is

pastor of the Presbyterian Church in West Palm Beach, Florida, and the son of the well-known preacher-teacher-author, Andrew W. Blackwood. He writes from a background of experience in pastorates and in the Naval Reserve chaplaincy. As one might expect from a pastor's approach to the subject, materials are presented in relation to the needs of ordinary church members.

It is the author's conviction that "the Church's outstanding need in our time is to rediscover the Holy Spirit" (p. 15). The earnestness and warmth of his personal concern as a pastor is indicated by a significant paragraph:

Rediscovering the Holy Spirit means far more than dusting off some theological formulae about the third Person of the Holy Trinity. These formulae came into being to give expression, as precise as possible, to soul-shaking experience our fathers had. Sometimes the language that meant much to one generation means little to another. So I am not especially interested in recapturing the religious vocabulary of yesterday. But I am praying instead that the church in our time may have anew the flaming consciousness that God is present, the intense concern for our neighbors, the confidence of God's guidance, the whole-hearted commitment to God's will, and the peace of heart that are implied in the phrase, 'I believe in the Holy Ghost' (p. 23).

There are eleven chapters in all, four of which are devoted to various aspects of the theme, "The Spirit in Salvation." Two chapters give attention to "The Difference Faith Makes" in times of disaster and tension. Materials are presented from the standpoint of a high regard for the Bible as having been written by men who were inspired by the Holy Spirit. The author unhesitatingly affirms the divine personality of the Holy Spirit, who "is God, in all His mystery, power, and love" (p. 16).

This volume will appeal especially to pastors who are interested in presenting this vital truth to their congregations. While its content is not particularly original, the approach is fresh and lively. The book should be valuable not only in helping the preacher grasp the theme more comprehensively, but in furnishing guidance as to the manner in which the various topics may be developed in a pulpit ministry.

There is one novel idea presented by the author, whose

inclusion some will question. In describing the Holy Spirit, it is Blackwood's opinion that "Jesus' word 'she' is far more adequate than our word 'he'" (p. 148). He bases this opinion on two observations: first, that the word for spirit is feminine in the language which Jesus spoke--Aramic, a Hebrew dialect; secondly, on the work of the Spirit, which, says the author, is "creative, intuitive, giving moral strength in times of weakness, bringing order out of confusion, producing beauty, warmth, and love" (p. p48). He regards this as the "feminine component" of reality, to use a phrase of the philosopher F. S. C. Northrop, just as "in human society it is woman who brings life into being, who creates beauty and order, who possesses the warmth of intuitive understanding" (p. 149). Fortunately, this novel idea is limited to the chapter (Chapter 10, "Receiving the Spirit") in which it is presented. Admittedly, human language is limited when we come to speak of God. But to speak of the First and Second Persons of the Trinity with the masculine gender, and the Third Person with the feminine, would not clarify but confuse. As for the author's arguments for the use of the feminine pronoun, it appears to this reviewer that the gender for spirit in Aramaic is no more determinative than is the gender for spirit in Greek (which happens to be neuter). Further, the characteristics and functions which the author regards as feminine are not necessarily so, and be predicated of the "man Christ Jesus." There is no need to make a concession, even unwittingly, to Roman Catholicism with its misplaced and erroneous emphasis on the Virgin Mary, to which the author makes reference in the chapter. It is precisely because of the neglect of a proper stress on the ministry of the Holy Spirit and the mediation of Jesus Christ that Roman Catholicism has sought to fill the vacuum by assigning functions to Mary which in the New Testament and in classical theology are associated with the Holy Spirit.

The present volume, nevertheless, helps to atone for the neglect of an important theme; its use in a practical, down-to-earth ministry should serve to make the Third Person in the Trinity a greater reality to the Christian Church.

William M. Arnett

The Amplified New Testament. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1958. 989 pp. \$3.95.

The editorial committee responsible for the preparation of this volume "assiduously examined" in whole or in part twenty-seven translations and versions of the New Testament. Much of the credit for the book is given Frances E. Siewart, who according to the Preface, "spent the major portion of a long life in humble, thorough preparation--translating, collating, and correlating in an amazing display of ability and accomplishment." Publication was made possible by the Lockman Foundation, a California non-profit corporation.

This amplified version of the New Testament seeks to hold to a four-fold purpose: fidelity to the original Greek, grammatical correctness, layman intelligibility, and Christ honoring. Here is both a translation and a commentary--a unique combination for student and layman alike. Several shades of meaning are often supplied for a given word or phrase, with contextual insights added for further clarification. Truth becomes more palpable as difficult passages are rendered in the modern idiom. Some will feel, however, that at times the beautiful, sonorous cadences of the older translations have been wantonly sacrificed, particularly the King James version. One wonders, too, what is gained in clarity and fidelity in the "Lord's Prayer" in addressing deity with "Your" and "Yours" instead of "Thy" and "Thine." A generation blinded by secularism needs every reminder of Him who is altogether "Other."

The various scholars whose translations are used receive careful documentation throughout. Nearly all of the men quoted are of established reputation. The reader will be curious, however, to learn the names of the members of the editorial committee responsible for the project. Likewise, the three scholars who acted as consultants to the committee remain "incommunicado." The volume has the unqualified endorsement of a number of outstanding evangelical leaders.

James D. Robertson

Spirit, Son and Father, by Henry P. Van Dusen. New York: Scribner's, 1958. 180 pp. \$3.50.

The belief that the major tenets of the Christian faith are so closely interwoven with one another that one may approach the study of any one of them by route of another, is the point of departure for a study of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit which will bring up to date the studies of such men as H. Wheeler Robinson, B. L. Streeter, and H. B. Swete. Professor Van Dusen seeks frankly to give an exposition of the Christian faith which will not only begin with the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, but which also will find its other tenets clarified by reference to that doctrine.

Several controlling ideas underlie the volume. One is, that the New Testament doctrine of the Holy Spirit is a lineal descendant of a primitive and non-moral (or even sub-moral) interpretation of "extraordinary phenomena of all kinds, both in physical Nature and in animate Nature..." (p. 36). Another is, that in the gospels, there are no evidences that Jesus Himself made frequent reference to the Holy Spirit. A third is that Christian theology might have taken a much more wholesome turn had the Holy Spirit rather than the Son been identified with the Logos or Word.

Professor Van Dusen attributes the prominent place which the Holy Spirit occupies in the gospels to a reading-back of the central conviction of the early church. Those passages in the synoptics in which our Lord is quoted as mentioning the Spirit are discounted in the following fashion: those which do have parallels elsewhere (e.g., the words "give good gifts" in Matt. 7:11 parallels the mention of the Holy Spirit in Luke 11:13); the parallel passages which do not mention the Spirit are regarded as being "more accurate." The record in the Gospel of John at this point is discounted as historical, and interpreted as being "the interpretation of the Early Church...read back into earlier happenings including His teaching" (p. 61).

Dr. Van Dusen's tracing of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit in Church History centers in the following stated principles: it was central in the message of the early church, and in Paul's thought; it was "captured and imprisoned" by Roman ecclesiasticism; it periodically was released, when it renewed spiritual life; the classic Reformation marked but a temporary release of Him, followed by a re-imprisonment of Him in "Protestant scholasticism"; and He burst forth in new power in the "Radical Reformation" of the sects.

The Conclusion of the volume elaborates the author's

definition of the Holy Spirit--as centering in intimacy and potency--in terms of the priority of the "Trinity of Experience" over the "Trinity of Speculation," with the "Trinity of Revelation" as something of a third term. The outcome of the discussion is that the "Persons" of the trinity represent three aspects of the one God: The term "God the Father" stresses the ultimacy of the divine; "Jesus Christ" reveals the character of God; and "Holy Spirit" indicates the "never-failing availability of God" (pp. 175ff).

What is not altogether clear is, in what respect Professor Van Dusen's conclusions differ from the classical Modalists. It seems to this reviewer that the approach is a bit too subjectivistic. Perhaps this cannot easily be avoided in discussing such an intimate subject as the Holy Spirit. But the volume still leaves unanswered the question, Are we correct in thinking of the trinity as an ontological reality? Or is the doctrine of the tri-unity of God a groping attempt to define human experience of God?

Harold B. Kuhn

The Gospel of Matthew, by David Thomas. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1956. 560 pp. \$3.95.

The aim of the first-mentioned volume of expository sermons is to bring out of Matthew's gospel the "widest truths and highest suggestions for ethical and homiletical purposes." The strong good sense of the author, his insight into the Word, and his homiletical inventiveness, combine to make the book a storehouse of things new and old. He stays close to the Scriptures, and he stays close to human needs. The work is in large part the substance of sermons first spoken from the pulpit and later published in the *Homilist* over a period of almost fourteen years. To him who would learn the art of biblical preaching these discourses will serve as a fine introduction. Their reappearance comes at a time when the pulpit is rediscovering the worth of the Bible.

James D. Robertson

Outline Studies in Acts, by W. H. Griffith Thomas. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co. 1956. 555 pp. \$4.50.

Another collection of carefully-outlined Bible-inspired messages comes from a former principal of Wycliffe Hall, Oxford, a widely-known conservative teacher and preacher. The continuing worth of Thomas' books is suggested by recent American editions of his Devotional Commentaries on Genesis and Romans, and others of his writings. The present volume was prepared for publication by the author's wife, Mrs. Griffith Thomas (d.1953) and their daughter, Mrs. E. H. Gillespie.

The studies are topical, following the divisions of the Acts in the form of biographical data and early church history. The materials, rich and full of practical application, will provide inspiration and guidance for the pastor who would acquaint his people with the message and the persons of this highly significant New Testament record. The style is lucid yet terse, the outlines natural and distinct, the ideas relevant and suggestive.

James D. Robertson

Beyond Conformity, by W. Curry Mavis. Winona Lake: Light and Life Press, 1958. 160 pp. \$2.75.

A distinguished member of the faculty of Asbury Theological Seminary has given to the Christian reading public an incisive interpretation of the current scene, often heralded as a scene in which vital spirituality is being rediscovered. Dr. W. Curry Mavis, Professor of Pastoral Work, uses as a springboard for his analysis the question of the legitimate versus the non-legitimate relationship between Church and World.

In this book the author seeks to answer two questions: (1) What is "conformity"? and (2) What is "beyond conformity"? The answer to the first is given in terms of what the author calls "culture-Christianity"; while to the second it is in terms of "evangelical-Christianity." Most of the book concerns itself with the nature, objectives, principles, and techniques of evangelical Christianity, which in the author's point of view can furnish the only adequate answer to an era of increased religion, a religion of conformity. Following chapters dis-

cussing "Culture-Christianity" and "Evangelical Christianity" respectively, the remaining four chapters present what may be considered to be an extension of the "genius of Evangelical Christianity." This extension is described in terms of Evangelical Christian Life, Evangelical Evangelism, Evangelical Christian Nurture, and Evangelical Cooperation and Union.

The author uses the term "culture-Christianity" not only in alluding to medieval religion, but as indicative of what contemporary religion in America is fast becoming; for in our time "the so-called revival of religion...is not rooted in a deep repentance of sin or a sincere desire to return to God." In fact much of the renewed interest in religion seems to be inspired by "religious sentimentality" or "personal self-aggrandisement" (18). "The church accepts the larger part of this half-Christian and half-pagan culture. What it cannot accept it tolerates...Prevailing culture, in appreciation of the church's latitudinarian spirit, accepts religion...Society accepts the church as it accepts other institutions."

In contrast to this "exterior-institutional" religion, our author sees evangelical Christianity as offering an "interior-personal" religion, the genius of which is personal conversion (a gift from God through Christ, contingent on man's repentance and faith. Evangelical Christianity also emphasizes the importance of man's being filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8), who is the inner spiritual dynamic motivating the life of victory in service.

Evangelical Christian life goes beyond conformity in several respects: (1) by doing something about social problems, (2) by exercising discipline in meeting requirements for both becoming and remaining a church member, and (3) by retaining the inward spiritual dynamic of the Christian life. Professor Mavis points out that the loss of this dynamic is evidenced by losses in devotional life and Christian witness. Church activities become less and less Christ-centered. There is a gradual weakening in doctrinal beliefs and ethical standards. "Conformity" is past establishing itself.

In this "era of cheap grace" evangelical evangelism must demand that the gospel be preached dangerously, that it be lived daily, and that it be spread abroad through "first-hand witnessing." Evangelism that will transform must denounce sin "which, in turn occasions a sense of guilt," and must also with equal vigor offer "a solution to the sin problem."

Instead of the ecumenicity of culture Christianity which is

here viewed as "under-emphasizing" the evangelical genius and "over-emphasizing" institutionalism, Mavis describes evangelical ecumenicity as accenting spiritual unity before any corporate union.

Readable, challenging, well documented--this book expresses clearly the "Why," "What," and "How" of a better way. Even the reader who does not agree with all the author's views on evangelical Christianity will find much in this discussion which will set him to thinking on "conformity" and "beyond conformity" in Christian experience. The convinced Evangelical will find the volume highly valuable as a guide to understanding the contemporary religious scene. Dr. Mavis has made a significant contribution to the Christian's knowledge of his actual and potential place in today's world.

C. V. Hunter

THE ASBURY SEMINARIAN announces the publication of a new book by Dr. W. Curry Mavis, Professor of Pastoral Work at Asbury Theological Seminary. The volume is entitled *Beyond Conformity*.

* * *

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The Asbury Seminary Bookstore
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Book Notices

Personalities Around Paul, by Holmes Rolston. Richmond, Va.: John Knox Press, 1954. 206 pp. \$2.50.

An informative and inspiring treatise that will encourage the preacher to prepare a sermon series.

The Gift is Rich, by E. Russell Carter. New York: Friendship Press, 1955. 117 pp. \$2.00.

A study about the American Indian and his contribution to the mainstream of American life.

How to Tell Your Children About Sex, by Clyde M. Narramore, Ed.D. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1958. 97 pp. \$2.00.

A helpful guide for parents and counsellors.

Speaking for the Master, by B. Barrett Baxter. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1956. 134 pp. \$2.50.

Deals with practical aspects of the subject such as leading in public prayer, reading the Bible aloud, and making talks.

In One Spirit, by D. Campbell Wyckoff. New York: Friendship Press, 1958. 167 pp. \$2.95.

An interesting book on the missionary venture as it relates to senior highs.

The Shadows They Cast, by Janette T. Harrington. New York: Friendship Press, 1958. 161 pp. \$2.95.

Dramatically-told stories of North American Christians who helped shape the societies in which they live.

Bible Encyclopedia, edited by Patrick Fairbairn, D.D. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1957. 6 volumes. \$29.75.

A reprint of a classic in its field, scholarly, comprehensive, and conservative.

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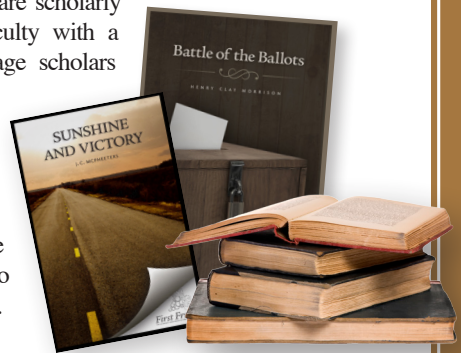
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