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THE ASBURY THEOLOGICAL JOURNAL provides a scholarly forum for thorough discussion of issues relevant to Christian thought and faith, and to the nature and mission of the Church. The Journal addresses those concerns and ideas across the curriculum which interface with Christian thought, life, and ministry.

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RENEWAL:
PHILIPP JAKOB SPENER'S
PARALLEL WORD FOR SANCTIFICATION

K. JAMES STEIN

This address should really deal with John Wesley's doctrine of holiness, but for me to lecture on that topic at Asbury Theological Seminary would be quite unnecessary (like carrying coals to Newcastle), to say nothing of quite foolhardy (like representing a subject to a group of people, most of whom know more about it than you do). Wanting this address to be neither unnecessary nor foolhardy, I have chosen instead to speak about Philipp Jakob Spener, the patriarch of seventeenth-century Lutheran Pietism. I believe that by doing so I will honor my good friend, Dr. Steven O'Malley, who is being installed today into the John T. Seamands chair of Methodist Holiness History.

As I do so, let me express my congratulations to him and to Asbury Seminary on this wise selection of such an able and faithful professor, and also to affirm the profound satisfaction and honor I feel in being invited to share in this significant occasion.

Spener lived between 1635 and 1705. Although he was separated from John Wesley by a century (he was virtually seventeenth-century and Wesley eighteenth-century), a channel (he was a German and Wesley an Englishman), a confession (he was Lutheran and Wesley Anglican), and a family commitment (he was married and the father of eleven children, while Wesley's short marriage produced no offspring)—yet, they had much in common. Both were ordained clergymen who wanted their people to have a vital personal realization of God's salvation in Christ and both were much concerned with helping to bring renewal to the European state churches of which each was a part.

Spener was in his ninth year as dean of the Lutheran clergy in Frankfort/Main in 1675 when he published his Pia Desideria, his pious wishes for reform that brought him to national attention. This, his most famous work, lamented the cor-
ruption of his Lutheran church, which was demonstrated by the formalized understanding of the Christian faith accompanied in many cases by debauched living that manifested itself most in drunkenness and lawsuits on the part of the nobility and the laity. Contributing immeasurably to this was the professionalism, scholasticism, and lack of deep faith and personal piety on the part of the large number of clergy.

Spener was optimistic about the future, however. He predicted "better times for the church on earth" and made six concrete proposals that would help to bring them to pass: (1) There should be more extensive use of the word of God among the people (here he promoted small groups for Bible study and prayer); (2) the establishment of the spiritual priesthood in which laity would assume more responsibility for their spiritual lives and those of others; (3) an emphasis on Christianity as a way of life, not just orthodox belief; (4) a minimization of polemical theological debates; (5) a reform of theological education that would send university graduates to their parishes as believing Christians, and (6) a reform of preaching so that "faith and its fruits may be achieved in the hearers to the greatest possible degree." Spener's balanced approach and positive suggestions for renewal of the church won a very supportive reception for his book.

In a 1976 article entitled "Wiedergeburt und Erneuerung, bei Philipp Jakob Spener" (New Birth and Renewal According to Philipp Jakob Spener), Johannes Wallmann, a leading Spener biographer and interpreter in Germany, made the penetrating observation that in the Pia Desideria, Spener did not follow Theophil Grossgebauer's earlier promotion of church renewal through a greater stress on church discipline nor did he fully adopt Christian Hoburg's sweeping emphasis on the New Birth. Instead, said Wallmann, Spener promoted the practice of piety, the process of growth in faith, and the striving after Christian perfection—all of which were rooted in the New Birth, but which really belonged to the doctrine of Erneuerung (renewal). Renewal was Spener's major concern.

To be sure, Wallmann was distancing himself from Prof. Martin Schmidt's thesis that the New Birth was Spener's primary thrust, and thus may have been influenced a bit by his own contrary opinion. Still, he amassed some significant arguments. He found it interesting that in the Pia Desideria, his ninety-one-page program for renewing the church, Spener mentioned the New Birth only three times and then somewhat in passing. Moreover, when in 1696 Spener published his well-known sixty-six sermons on the New Birth, only five of these, said Wallmann, dealt with the nature of the New Birth and the vast majority of them dealt with the nature of the new person who should result from the New Birth. Wallmann concluded that while the New Birth was the presumption upon which Spener's 1675 reform program was built, he was really out to improve the life of the church through the renewal or sanctification of individuals.

The point is that Spener seemed to use the words 'renewal' and 'sanctification' interchangeably. Of course, there are more references to Heiligung (sanctification) than there are to Erneuerung (renewal) in the index of his Theologische Bedencken, his major theological work. In his 1691 farewell sermon to his Dresden congregation, Spener stated that the blessings of our salvation are justification, sanctification, and glorification. In the Pia Desideria it is plain that one of Spener's main reasons for holding an
optimistic view of the church's future was his contention that the same Holy Spirit who once affected all things among the early Christians "is neither less able nor less active today to accomplish the work of sanctification in us." Unquestionably, the Pietist leader was comfortable with the word 'sanctification' and used it extensively.

Still, a number of times Spener identified sanctification with renewal or even equated the two words. In his writings one finds expressions suggesting that we are not able to exclude the least beginning of sanctification and renewal from the life of this salvation. He could state that renewal is "the greatest part of sanctification; indeed, that is entire sanctification." He mourned that it is "even lamented by God that such words as 'renewal' and 'sanctification' are strange to some teachers of the people." Spener insisted that these were good biblical words. One of his definitions of renewal sounded somewhat like sanctification, when he wrote:

It is actually renewal when a believing Christian, who always stands in God's grace and daily more and more lays evil aside from himself and strives to crucify the old nature in daily repentance and in the contrary, puts on the new nature....

It is most likely that Spener made the identification of sanctification with renewal because he was a Lutheran. The confessional statements of that church, which emerged in the sixteenth century, seem to have made that easy connection. The Formula of Concord stated that the word 'regeneration' means "sanctification or renewal which follows the righteousness of faith, as Dr. Luther used the term in his book On the Councils and the Church, and elsewhere." In addition to several other references to "renewal and sanctification" together in the Formula of Concord, one encounters a summary statement like this: "After the person is justified, the Holy Spirit next renews and sanctifies him, and from this renewal and sanctification the fruits of good works will follow." Thus, it would have been quite natural that Spener, educated theologically in the Lutheran Reform Orthodoxy at Strassburg University near his Alsatian home, would have had little difficulty linking renewal with sanctification or even substituting renewal for sanctification. Indeed, Immanuel Hirsch, a German theologian of our century, found that for Spener faith is received from the Holy Spirit in the New Birth, "which is the foundation for union with God and sanctification or renewal."

So, for the moment conceding that the word 'renewal' was important for Spener and that he used it not only with but sometimes as a substitute for the word 'sanctification', let us consider briefly some of the claims he made for it.

First, Spener saw renewal or sanctification as the continuation of the New Birth or regeneration. For him, three things happen when a person experiences New Birth: faith is ignited in the heart; newborn persons have their sins forgiven, are justified, and are adopted as God's children; and an entirely other and new nature is created in them. Spener's comparison of the New Birth and renewal helps describe what he thought of each. He averred that the New Birth for us is essentially like our physical conception. Just as a child does absolutely nothing about its conception, so the New Birth happens to us. It is "pure unmixed grace," for which we can make not preparation. In the New Birth, the person takes no initiatory steps, although one could pre-
vent its happening. Spener was very clear on this point, asserting, “Although we have it in our hands to be able to reject our New Birth, we do not have the ability to come to it of our own free choice.”

In Spener’s catechism, which was really to be used as a commentary on Luther’s *Small Catechism* and which became the Pietist leader’s most widespread work, one finds this succinct summary:

Q. 1028 What follows after the New Birth?

Renewal, so that once a person has received a spiritual life, this always continues in renewal and the still remaining evil is laid aside more and more, together with all bad habits.

Q. 1029 How are the New Birth and Renewal distinguished from one another?

The former is the beginning of the spiritual life, but the latter is its continuation. New Birth is perfect for we are born entirely as God’s children. Renewal is imperfect. The New Birth happens all at once, but for renewal one has to work daily. Through the New Birth we attain faith; through renewal we demonstrate it. The New Birth simply happens only through God and his grace; at the same time renewal occurs through the new powers given to people (2 Thess. 1:3).

Spener gladly pointed to Titus 3:5 where we read that “God saved us, not because of deeds done by us in righteousness, but in virtue of his own mercy, by the working of regeneration and renewal in the Holy Spirit.” Thus as soon as persons are reborn, the Holy Spirit takes residence within them, instantly effecting the renewing process. The New Birth is the initiation of one’s spiritual life; renewal is its continuation. Richard Lovelace in his book *Dynamics of Spiritual Life: An Evangelical Theology of Renewal* agrees in essence by stating: “The Holy Spirit begins to apply this completed work in the believer’s life at regeneration and continues it in a progressively enlarging sphere of renewal in the personality.”

Secondly, renewal or sanctification is the work of the Holy Spirit but in cooperation with the believer. Whereas believers are, at best, permissive when it comes to receiving the New Birth, they must definitely cooperate in their renewal. Of course, we are not able to renew ourselves through our own powers. It is really God’s work in us through the Holy Spirit that accomplishes this, but for the continuation of the renewal process, we as believers must cooperate with the powers sent and imparted to us by the Holy Spirit.

Commenting on Eph. 4:22, Spener wrote,

The putting off or mortification or weakening of the old person is a work in which God, as well as the individual, does the work involved. In this way renewal is different from New Birth, which is simply God’s work, with individuals unable to do even the least. Because, however, they in the New Birth have received a few powers for good, they can and must use these in renewal. Therefore, it means here that the Ephesians, in cooperation with the Holy Spirit, must put off the old person.
Indeed, in this call to serious human commitment and cooperation with the Holy Spirit for the purpose of our renewal, Spener could ask his auditors and readers to seek the assurance that the Holy Spirit was still active in their lives. They would have sure testimony that this was the case if they still truly accepted Jesus Christ as Lord. They would also know if they were children of God if they were being led by the Spirit of God as Rom. 8:14 says, and if they were following the impulses of the Spirit’s leading in obedience. Without clearly defining it, Spener warned people again and again against pleasure and worldliness by which they could lose the grace of the Holy Spirit.

Thirdly, Spener saw renewal as being of lifelong duration. New Birth, like conception, happens in a moment; spiritual renewal, like the fetus’ growth in the mother’s womb, is slow and gradual. Actually, to complete the metaphor, Spener taught that the rest of the Christian’s life is really the gestation period for the soul and that at physical death, the New Birth occurs when the Christian is transferred by God’s grace from the kingdom of grace, in which we are now living as possessors of salvation in a limited sense, into the kingdom of glory, where we shall abide forever with God in the attained perfection that we sought but never achieved in this life, where the old nature is still clinging to us.

Here seems to be the point where Spener approached John Wesley’s doctrine of entire sanctification, but did not quite approximate it. His caution might be construed as being similar to Wesley’s exhorting people to entire sanctification and yet refusing to claim “sinless perfection” for them.

Thus, for Spener, physical conception is analogous to the new Birth, and physical growth in the womb is like sanctification or renewal. This sees the Christian life on this earth as a many years’ pregnancy until physical death (the New Birth) ushers us out of this mortal and sinful existence into the full light of God’s glory and imperishable salvation. Our renewal is never complete in this life.

Fourth, Spener taught that the New Birth and renewal differed in intensity. New Birth is far more essential and dramatic. It is like waking the dead. When the Holy Spirit cooperates with us in moving us from weak Christian faith and shabby Christian living to a more vital Christian life, that was somewhat less drastic. It is like healing the sick.

The Pietist patriarch used other analogies to renewal that revealed its less stringent nature. It was like rubbing an old corroded drinking vessel, freeing it from rust and making it constantly brighter. It was like breaking off sprouts from a tree trunk as soon as they appear so that the roots will eventually wither and die. Paul’s admonition to the Ephesians in chapter four regarding our putting off the old nature and putting on the new provided another example of renewal. Spener told his Berlin congregation,

New Birth is the beginning of our Christianity; renewal is, therefore, its constant usage. Renewal, accordingly, has two parts: the constant putting off of the evil still remaining within us and the actual so-called renewal or constant growth of good.
Fifth, Spener saw a connection between renewal and suffering. The actual means of renewal are the divine Word and sacraments. A secondary help that God uses, however, to penetrate our minds and to remove hindrances to the divine workings in our lives is “the dear cross.” It is a special help in the slaying of our old nature, which sanctification often promotes. Luther, who made suffering one of the seven marks of the church, had struck a similar note, saying,

“But when you are condemned, cursed, reviled, slandered, and plagued because of Christ, you are sanctified. It mortifies the old Adam and teaches him patience, humility, gentleness, praise and thanks, and good cheer in suffering. This is what it means to be sanctified by the Holy Spirit and to be renewed to a new life in Christ...”

Spener indicated that there is a greater usefulness in suffering than we might think. He intoned Paul’s words in 2 Cor. 4:16: “Though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed every day.” Suffering can contribute to our renewal.

Now what does all this say to us in 1994? What does it say to pastors, Christian educators, and diaconal ministers regarding their ministerial functions, as well as the Christian lives they and the laity in our congregations are endeavoring to live?

First of all, it says that in our congregations people need to hear doctrinal preaching alongside inspirational preaching. Sermons ought to deal with didache as well as kerygma. Or, pastors must be intent upon teaching theology. I taught an adult church school class at Trinity United Methodist Church in Wilmette, Illinois, where my wife and I attend. For seven years we looked at such materials as the Upper Room’s Living Selections from Devotional Classics, Cokesbury’s series on Paul and “The Cloud of Witnesses,” and the Articles of Religion and the Confession of Faith—two of the landmark documents in the United Methodist Book of Discipline. As we discussed Scripture, sin, grace, justification, regeneration, sanctification, and other doctrines of the church, more than once people said to me, “Jim, I’ve been a Methodist all my life. Why haven’t I heard these discussed before?” I say this not because I did this; I know that I am not the only one who has taught these doctrines to lay people. But I am also sure that only a small minority of people in Methodism know what these mean. To be sure, it is more important that they experience them than that they understand them. I suggest, however, that Methodism will be that much a more vital force for God when its people not only experience God’s saving grace in Jesus Christ, but can have some help being able to articulate what this actually means for them.

Secondly, it says that renewal comes not out of our own power, but only as we make use of the divine means of grace. Howard Snyder in his book Signs of the Spirit: How God Reshapes the Church contends that when the church is renewed, “…renewal certainly must spring from or result in a new or renewed experience of God’s grace, whatever other features it may have.” Spener, at the end of one of his sermons, reminded his people to seek growth and renewal by using the divine means of grace. He wanted them to know that from the Gospel alone and not out of the law comes the inner living power. This is why he never appealed to Christians in his day to be renewed through self-discipline. This was a work of the law and could only lead to
inflated pride and hypocrisy. Instead it was through Bible study, prayer, and faithful attendance upon the Lord’s Supper that renewing grace would come.

Thirdly, it says that we ought not to discount suffering as a means God uses to renew us. Recently I heard President Joseph Stole of Moody Bible Institute in a radio broadcast say that the first thing Job did after the three messengers had brought him the news of complete financial and family disaster was to worship God. I had never thought of it that way before. Job said, “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked I shall return; the Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord (1:21).” Something had prepared Job to see that God was in his anguish and that God would do something with it to refine his soul. Oh! we dare not blithely attribute the personal tragedies we or other people face to God, but we can say that God can use this suffering to renew and refresh the soul.

This was driven home to me in 1993 when my wife and I visited Israel. As our tour bus dropped us off in a driving rain at the Garden of Gethsemane, we entered “The Church of All Nations” built over the “Rock of Agony” at which our Lord reputedly prayed that night before his crucifixion. The church is kept in darkness to commemorate our Lord’s struggle at night with doing the will of God. What impressed me most, however, is the fact that a fence of thorns surrounds the rock, but on two corners doves are hovering as if to say that, like their Savior, Christians receive grace for renewal even in dark moments of anguish and suffering.

Finally, this says that the church needs to be reminded that renewal is connected with Christian love, that Christians are to be renewed in love as well as in faith, and that they are privileged to be the conduits, the channels through which God’s love can flow salvifically to others in a lost and broken world. Spener wrote that “…indeed love is the whole life of the man who has faith and who through his faith is saved, and his fulfillment of the law of God consists of love.” Pietism’s extensive social reform institutions stem from Spener’s and Francke’s concern in this regard.

Dr. O’Malley recounts a wonderful story in his book, Touched By Godliness, a delightful treatment of Bishop John Seybert and the Evangelical Association heritage that he and I have in common. Seybert, a truly pious man, was the Francis Asbury of the Evangelische Gemeinschaft in the mid-nineteenth century. A bachelor bishop, he too traveled thousands of miles, preached hundreds of sermons, held scores of annual conferences, and helped lead many people to Christ. In Seybert’s journal there is this 1846 entry describing how the bishop on a cold winter day encountered a constable hauling away the loom of a weaver who could not meet his debts. Seybert paid the debt and saved the weaver and his large family. The weaver and his family were converted to Christ and he became the leader of the class organized in that community. Steve O’Malley’s words are instructive for us all at this point. He wrote that Seybert “…knew that the Spirit’s fruits (Gal. 5:22f.) are what we are by virtue of the new birth. The fruits are the attributes of the new nature that we share in Christ.”

There is great need for the doctrine of sanctification or renewal to be experienced, preached, and taught by Christians in today’s world. It needs all the more to be manifested in loving service to the world.

Nietzsche is supposed to have said that “Christ’s followers should look more
redeemed.” He meant by that “more joyful.” I agree with that. Surely we would also add that “they should appear to be more renewed”—twice-born people who by God’s grace are growing to maturity “to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (Eph. 4:13).

NOTES
4. Ibid., footnote 50, 17.
5. Ibid., footnote 67, 20.
7. Ibid., 85.
13. Ibid., 546.
20. Hochwichtige Artirul, 967.
21. Ibid., 88-89.
22. Ibid., 977.
23. Ibid., 1041-1042; Einfüillige Erklärung, 400-403.
24. Hochwichtige Artirul, 951.
25. Ibid., 976.
26. Ibid., 970.
27. Ibid., 954-955.
32. Hochwichtige Artikel, 988-989.
33. Pia Desideria, 96.
REAL CHRISTIANITY AS INTEGRATING THEME IN WESLEY'S SOTERIOLOGY: THE CRITIQUE OF A MODERN MYTH

KENNETH J. COLLINS

The work of several American Methodist scholars suggests that the later Wesley significantly modified or even repudiated his basic understanding of what constitutes "real Christianity." For example, on the occasion of the two hundred and twenty-fifth anniversary of John Wesley's Aldersgate experience Albert Outler made the unsettling though largely unsupported claim that "Aldersgate was not the time when John Wesley became a 'real Christian.'" In a rather interesting move, Theodore Jennings actually obviated the whole question by claiming that it made little difference to John Wesley whether he served God as a servant or as a son. Randy Maddox, for his part, repeatedly criticized the "reigning" standard interpretation of Aldersgate which has contended, among other things, that Wesley was converted in 1738 "from a pre-Christian moralist into a true Christian believer." And most recently, John Cobb maintained—in the absence of very much argumentation—that Wesley was a "real Christian prior to Aldersgate."

Some of the evidence which is crucial to this contemporary reevaluation is found in John Wesley's "depressing" letter to his brother Charles in 1766 where the elder brother states: "I do not love God. I never did. Therefore I never believed in the Christian sense of the word. Therefore I am only an honest heathen, a proselyte of the Temple, one of the 'fearers of God.'" Other evidence can be garnered from Wesley's journal emendations of 1774 which represent a reassessment of the Methodist's leader's early idiom of the "almost Christian" in terms of the following two variables: A) a more developed and "nuanced" understanding of Christian assurance and B) in terms of the important distinction between the faith of a servant/the faith of a child.

Though modifications of the preceding two variables clearly resulted in some important changes in Wesley's soteriology, recent scholarship goes on to conclude that Wesley eventually put aside the distinction between an almost and an altogether

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Christian. Indeed, the general—though erroneous—view among some Methodist scholars today seems to be that Wesley either outright abandoned the language of real Christianity in his later years as he developed his views on assurance and the faith of a servant, or else he reduced this language so greatly as to include the latter. But the preponderance of evidence, as will be demonstrated shortly, suggests otherwise.

Since the whole matter of Wesley's 1766 letter and his later journal emendations has already been treated in my earlier writings, this present work will naturally focus on what has been largely neglected in recent assessments, namely, the motif of real Christianity itself, a motif which is not only valuable in its own right but which is also integral to a proper interpretation of Wesley's soteriology in general and to his understanding of Christian assurance and the faith of a servant in particular. Indeed, it will be maintained throughout that what Wesley understood by Christian assurance as well as the faith of a servant is not properly conceived except in terms of this salient motif. Observe that this present approach is quite the opposite of recent scholarship: that is, instead of ignoring the significance of real Christianity in the face of Wesley's changing soteriological views, those changing views will be interpreted precisely in terms of this ongoing motif.

Now in order to be historically sensitive and accurate, all of the theological themes just cited (real Christianity, the faith of a servant, and Christian assurance) will be tracked in terms of three major periods which range from 1725 to 1791. The results of this effort will then serve as the basis for a critical assessment of the continuity of particular soteriological elements in Wesley's writings—a task which should issue in a renewed appreciation for the salience of inward religion, the importance of spirituality, and the relatively high valuation of regeneration in Wesley's overall theology. Beyond this, the subtle shifts and nuances in Wesley's own theological vocabulary—the discontinuous elements—especially in terms of assurance and differing understandings of faith—will of course be considered as well. Some of the major questions to be addressed will include the following: 1) What did Wesley mean by the phrase "the faith of a servant"? Did this phrase also embrace non-Christian communities? If so, what are the theological implications? 2) What is the relation between the faith of a servant and the whole matter of assurance? Are all who lack assurance suitably described as having the faith of a servant? or are there exempt cases? 3) What are the implications of 1 and 2 for the motif of real Christianity as Wesley developed this theme throughout his life? 4) And lastly, what does the preceding reveal about Wesley's own estimation of the importance of spirituality and inward religion?

In a real sense, the interpretive task projected here is remarkably similar to that of literary criticism. In other words, the world of Wesley's texts—in terms of its idioms, rhetorics, and motifs—will become the principal interpretive framework for his changing soteriological doctrines. Wesley's thought, in other words, will be assessed in terms of his own vocabulary, his own theological themes, as he developed them over time. Other approaches, though valuable as well, are more akin to historical and theological criticism which may move beyond the world of the text to the historical precursors of Wesley's thought or to its contemporary relevance. The danger in each of these transitions is that we may learn more about what Wesley read than what he said, more about contemporary judgments than about his own. The present approach, then, will grapple with Wesley's theological judgments in terms of his own literary constructs, the themes which weaved their way throughout his entire literary
corpus. What will emerge from such labor should prove troubling to many popular beliefs, but it will, no doubt, further the debate among contemporary Methodist historians and theologians by employing an interpretive lens which heretofore has hardly been explored.

I. SIGNIFICANT MODIFICATIONS IN THE THEME OF REAL CHRISTIANITY: 1725 - 1747

Even as a young man, John Wesley realized that great national churches, like the Church of England, though they insured the numerical predominance of a particular version of the faith, often left nominal Christianity in their wake. Indeed, for many in the eighteenth century, to be an English person was to be a Christian. However, as early as 1725, the year in which Wesley clearly saw the end or goal of religion which is holiness, he challenged such glib assumptions among his compatriots and entreated John Griffiths, for example, “to let me have the pleasure of making him a whole Christian, to which I knew he was at least half persuaded already.” And a few years later, in 1734, in an important letter to his father, Samuel, the young son complained that the bane of piety is “the company of good sort of men, lukewarm Christians (as they are called), persons that have a great concern for, but no sense of, religion.”

While he was in Georgia, Wesley not only employed the distinction of an almost/altogether Christian (to Mrs. Hawkins of all people, in a rather favorable way), but he also proclaimed a gospel so rich and full that it sparked one observer to note: “Why if this be Christianity, a Christian must have more courage than Alexander the Great.” Not surprisingly, then, during the year 1738 in which Wesley encountered a gracious and redemptive God, he exclaimed: “Oh how high and holy a thing Christianity is, and how widely distant from that (I know not what) is so called....” But it was not until John wrote to his brother Samuel on October 30, 1738 that we begin to get a clearer indication of just what the younger brother deemed integral to the real Christian faith. In this letter, Wesley states:

By a Christian I mean one who so believes in Christ as that sin hath no more dominion over him; and in this obvious sense of the word I was not a Christian till May 21st last past. For till then sin hath the dominion over me, although I fought with it continually, but surely then, from that time to this it hath not, such is the free grace of God in Christ.

To be sure, so concerned was John Wesley with the idea of being a real Christian in his early years that he noted in retrospect in 1739 that his reason for undertaking the arduous work of a missionary in Georgia as well as his subsequent visit to the Moravians at Hermhut was his “desire to be a Christian.”

Though, in light of the preceding evidence, Wesley’s early definition of real Christianity obviously went far beyond the nominal Christianity typical of eighteenth-century England, to include such necessary elements as justification and the new birth, it appears that his definition went too far. For example, on January 4, 1739 Wesley reflected in his journal:

Though I have constantly used all the means of grace for twenty years, I am not a Christian. Yea, though I have all (other) faith, since I have not ‘that faith’ which ‘purifieth the heart.’ Verily, verily I say unto you, I ‘must be born again.’ For except I, and you, be born again, we cannot see the kingdom of God.”
At this juncture, Wesley had apparently confused the characteristics of the entirely sanctified, that is, freedom from the being of unholy tempers and affections, with the marks of the new birth. In fact, earlier evidence of this tendency, a consequence of what Wesley had thought the Moravians taught him, can be found in a desire which the young missionary expressed as he returned from Georgia: "I want that faith which none can have without knowing that he hath it... For whosoever hath it is 'freed from sin,' 'the whole body of sin is destroyed in him.'"

Moreover, this same kind of confusion with respect to real Christianity surfaced in Wesley's sermon, "The Almost Christian," produced a few years later in 1741. Indeed, the traits of the altogether Christian displayed in this piece more aptly describe not the children of God, but only those who have been perfected in love. Wesley states:

Now whosoever has this faith which 'purifies the heart,' by the power of God who dwelleth therein, from pride, anger, desire, from all unrighteousness, from all filthiness of flesh and spirit...whosoever has this faith, thus 'working by love,' is not almost only, but altogether a Christian. 6

As will be apparent shortly, much of what Wesley had to say about "altogether Christians" in the preceding sermon was later modified. Nevertheless, the theme of real Christianity remained a vital one for him during this period as demonstrated by its repeated emergence in his writings during the 1740s. In 1746, for example, in his Principles of a Methodist Farther Explained, Wesley rejects the argument that because the English were baptized as infants that they were, therefore, Christians now. And in a somewhat caustic vein, giving some indication of his sentiments on this subject, Wesley adds: "Consequently, [they] are no more scriptural Christians than the open drunkard or common swearer." 17 The next year, Wesley continues this theme and cautions against "that abundance of those who bear the name of Christians [who] put a part of religion for the whole—generally some outward work or form of worship." 18

During this early period, then, Wesley was right in searching for a standard to distinguish nominal from real Christianity. Indeed, such a normative judgment was vital to the success of the eighteenth-century revival. The problem was, however, that Wesley had set that standard much too high.

**A. The Faith of a Servant: 1725-1747**

Though such a course has not been taken recently in Wesley studies, it is perhaps best to consider the issue of "the faith of a servant" as well the doctrine of assurance not only in terms of the whole Wesley but also, and perhaps more importantly, in terms of the motif of real Christianity—a motif which undergirds and informs these issues to a significant degree. But first of all it must be asked how did Wesley define the faith of a servant during the years 1725 to 1747? Remarkably, the exact phrase "the faith of a servant" is hardly developed during this initial period, though one reference associates it with sincerity and with the precursor of Christian faith. For example, the Methodist Conference of 1746 queried: "Who is a servant of God? One who sincerely obeys him out of fear. Whereas a Christian, inwardly, is a child of God: One who sincerely obeys him out of love." 19 More importantly for the task at hand, the Conference then went on to declare that
a person can be both sincere and penitent and still not be justified, indicating that the elements most often associated with the faith of a servant do not necessarily issue in justification.25

The greatest development during this period, however, concerns not so much the direct explication of the phrase "the faith of a servant," but how Wesley linked this phrase with a key distinction which he did indeed explore in some detail at this time, namely, the distinction between the spirit of bondage and the spirit of adoption. In particular, the identification of the "faith of a servant" with the "spirit of bondage" is revealed in the late sermon, "The Discoveries of Faith," produced in 1788. In it, Wesley observes:

Exhort him to press on by all possible means, till he passes 'from faith to faith'; from the faith of a servant to the faith of a son; from the spirit of bondage unto fear, to the spirit of childlike love.31

What then are the traits of the spirit of bondage displayed in the sermon "The Spirit of Bondage and of Adoption," written in 1746, and which were later identified with the faith of a servant? Those under a spirit of bondage, Wesley argues, feel sorrow and remorse; they fear death, the devil, and humanity; they desire to break free from the chains of sin, but cannot, and their cry of despair is typified by the Pauline expression: "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" In this sermon Wesley specifically identifies "this whole struggle of one who is 'under the law'" with the spirit of bondage and with the spiritual and psychological dynamics of the seventh chapter of Romans.23 More to the point, these traits just cited are hardly the attributes which constitute real Christianity according to John Wesley since he defined true Christians, at the very least, as those who believe in Christ such that "sin hath no more dominion over him."34

B. The Doctrine of Assurance: 1725-1747

Among contemporary Methodist scholars today, it is well known that when John Wesley was under the strong influence of the English Moravians, he closely identified justifying faith with full assurance.25 However, at least by the summer of 1740, and possibly earlier, he began to realize that there are both degrees of faith and degrees of assurance and that a child of God may exercise justifying faith which is mixed with both doubt and fear.26 Nevertheless, a second issue, which can be differentiated from the one just cited, concerns the question of whether Wesley ever lowered or abandoned the standard of real Christianity in light of his newly articulated distinctions. This time, however, the question will be considered not with respect to the spirit of bondage, and its implications, but with respect to the whole matter of assurance.

On the one hand, the initial answer to this question must be "yes" since Wesley obviously modified his earlier erroneous views in two key respects: First of all, the English Moravians, who exercised a strong, early influence on Wesley, propounded a view of redemption which, according to Heitzenrater, "essentially equated conversion with perfection."27 In time, however, Wesley distinguished freedom from sin in terms of its guilt, power, and being, and thereby repudiated the Moravian doctrine on this score.29 Simply put, for Wesley, redemption or initial sanctification entailed freedom from the guilt (justification) and power (regeneration) of sin, but not freedom from its being (entire sanctification). In other
words, the carnal nature or inbred sin remained even in the children of God.

Second, and more importantly for the present theme, Wesley likewise modified his earlier view, noted above, which had associated full assurance with justifying faith.69 Indeed, less than a year after he began the practice of field preaching, Wesley conceived the doctrine of justification by faith no longer in terms of full assurance but in terms of a *measure* of assurance.70 But is this qualified assurance, occasionally marked by doubt and fear, necessary for redemption, for what constitutes real Christianity? Here the picture becomes somewhat complicated. For example, in a letter to John Bennet on June 1, 1744 Wesley states, among other things, that none is a Christian who does not have the marks of a Christian, one of which is “the witness of God’s Spirit with my spirit that I am a child of God.”71 Similarly, at the first Methodist conference that same year it was affirmed by those present that “all true Christians have such a faith as implies an assurance of God’s love.”72 However, by the time of the next conference in 1745 the question was reconsidered and a slightly different answer was offered. Wesley wrote:

Q. Is a sense of God's pardoning love absolutely necessary to our being in his favor? Or may there be some exempt cases?
A. We dare not say there are not.
Q. Is it necessary to inward and outward holiness?
A. We incline to think it is.73

In a similar vein, the conference Minutes of 1747 noted that there may be exempt cases, that justifying faith may not always be accompanied by a measure of assurance. But the conference then offered this caution: “It is dangerous to ground a general doctrine of a few particular experiments.”74 In addition, although this conference, like the one in 1745, recognized that there are, after all, exceptional cases, it nevertheless clarified its meaning and affirmed: “But this we know, if Christ is not revealed in them [by the Holy Spirit], they are not yet Christian believers.”75 In fact, in 1745, though this was a year of many changes, Wesley had still not retreated from his teaching that assurance is a vital ingredient of the true Christian faith as evidenced by his following remarks made in a letter to John Smith that same year:

No man can be a true Christian without such an inspiration of the Holy Ghost as fills his heart with peace and joy and love, which he who perceives not has it not. This is the point for which alone I contend; and this I take to be the very foundation of Christianity.76

Moreover, in 1747, Wesley continued this emphasis, once again in a letter to “John Smith,” and stated: “The sum of what I offered before concerning perceptible inspiration was this: Every Christian believer has a perceptible testimony of God’s Spirit that he is a child of God.”77

In light of the preceding evidence, it is clear that Wesley even after 1745 still identified, for the most part, the assurance that one’s sins are forgiven as integral to the proper Christian faith. Not surprisingly, then, in a revealing letter to his brother Charles, written a month after the 1747 conference, John illustrates his doctrine of assurance by pointing out: “(1) that there is such an explicit assurance; (2) that it is the common privilege of real Christians; (3) that it is the proper Christian faith, which purifieth the heart and overcometh the
Real Christianity as Integrating Theme

II. THE THEME OF REAL CHRISTIANITY DEVELOPED: 1748 - 1770

John Wesley's preoccupation with the theme of real Christianity, historically speaking, was undoubtedly reminiscent of the work of Johann Arndt and of such early German pietists as Spener and Francke. Arndt, for instance, had highlighted the themes of personal reform, the repudiation of stale intellectualism, criticism of doctrinal provincialism, and the importance of sanctification more than a century prior to Wesley in his Wahres Christianthum (True Christianity), a work which the latter saw fit to include in the first volume of his Christian Library in 1749. In particular, observe the opening lines of Arndt's work and the emphasis which they place on the practice of the Christian life.

Dear Christian reader, that the holy Gospel is subjected, in our time, to great and shameful abuse is fully proved by the impenitent life of the ungodly who praise Christ and his word with their mouths and yet lead an unchristian life that is like that of persons who dwell in heathendom, not in the Christian world.

In a similar fashion, Wesley cautioned against nominal or "mouth Christians" and was not above sarcasm as evidenced by the following account which appeared in his journal during the year 1755:

One spent the evening with us who is accounted both a sensible and a religious man. What a proof of the Fall! Even with all the advantages of a liberal education, this person, I will be bold to say, knows just as much of heart religion, of scriptural Christianity, the religion of love, as a child three years old of algebra.

Moreover, during this period, in a way characteristic of Continental Pietism, Wesley linked the motif of real Christianity to inward religion, to those dispositions and tempers of the heart which mark the regenerate believer. For example, in his piece "Upon Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount; Discourse the Sixth," Wesley underscores that Christ "has laid before us those dispositions of soul which constitute real Christianity: the inward tempers contained in that holiness 'without which no man shall see the Lord....'" This linkage, however, is even more emphatic (and perhaps more significant) in terms of Wesley's notes on Luke 17:21 ("For behold the kingdom of God is within or among you") where the English evangelical states not only that the kingdom of God is present "in the soul of every true believer," but also that "it is a spiritual kingdom, an internal principle." Beyond this, in his observations on Matthew 13:28, Wesley once again displays the connection between inward religion and real Christianity but this time more articulately as he develops a distinction between "outward" Christians and open sinners. Accordingly, in his Notes Upon the New Testament Wesley observes:

Damned, in the church, is properly outside Christians, such as have the form of godliness, without the power. Open sinners, such as have neither the form nor the power, are not so properly damned, as thistles and briers.
So then, open sinners lack both the form and power of godliness; outside Christians have the form but lack the power; real Christians, on the other hand, have both the form and the power of godliness.

A second emphasis which emerges during this era is Wesley's expanded use of the terminology "the almost/altogether Christian." Such a rhetoric has not dropped out of his writings, as is sometimes mistakenly supposed, though it has, of course, been modified. To illustrate, Wesley counsels John Trembath in 1760 that he must "recover that power and be a Christian altogether, or in a while you will have neither power nor form, inside nor outside." Elsewhere, in his journal of 1762, Wesley points out that at Newtown he left between "thirty and forty members full of desire, and hope, and earnest resolutions not to be 'almost, but altogether Christians.'" And a couple of years later, while he was in Madeley, the one-time Oxford fellow took great comfort in conversing once more with "a Methodist of the old stamp, denying himself, taking up his cross, and resolved to be 'altogether a Christian.'"99

The third major emphasis during this middle period as Wesley developed the motif of real Christianity was his insistence, to the consternation of some of his Anglican peers, that a Christian "while he keepeth himself...doth not commit sin.”50 In fact, in his sermons "The Marks of the New Birth" and "The Great Privilege of those that are Born of God," both produced in 1748, Wesley refused to depreciate this standard of teaching. In the former piece, for instance, he reasoned that "an immediate and constant fruit of this faith whereby we are born of God...is power over sin: power over outward sin of every kind..." And in the latter sermon he declared: "But whosoever is born of God, while he abideth in faith and love and in the spirit of prayer and thanksgiving, not only doth not, but cannot thus commit sin...he cannot voluntarily transgress any command of God.”52

With this standard of teaching in place, during the 1760s Wesley not only maintained that one could abstain from all evil, use the means of grace at every opportunity, and do all possible good (which is, in effect, to keep the General Rules of the United Societies) and yet be "but a Heathen still,"53 but he also declared in a letter to Lawrence Coughlan in 1768, indicating a need for both seriousness and caution on this subject, that "many think they are justified, and are not”54

Other elements of interest during this period include Wesley's reflections, on two occasions, of his Oxford days. He stated, for instance, not only that the very design of the Oxford Methodists was "to forward each other in true, scriptural Christianity,"55 but he also revealed in a letter written in 1769, to use his own words, that "when I was at Oxford, I never was afraid of any but the almost Christians."56 Moreover, the distinction between nominal and real Christianity was beginning to take on a paradigmatic flavor such that Wesley now began to speak not only of half Christians but also of half Methodists! Note his comments to Lady Maxwell in 1764:

And I entreat you do not regard the half Methodists- If we must use the name. Do not mind them who endeavour to hold Christ in one hand and the world in the other. I want you to be all a Christian...57
A. The Faith of a Servant: 1748-1770

Interestingly enough, it was not until this second period that the exact phrase "the faith of a servant" was explored in any significant detail. In 1754, for example, in his Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament, Wesley defines the faith of a servant in terms of the spirit of bondage and fear that cleaved to the old covenant. Elsewhere he associates the phrase with those who "fear God and worketh righteousness" as in his commentary on Acts 10:35. However, this latter usage makes clear that the faith of a servant was conceived in a very general way by the English leader and included all those believers of whatever religious tradition who endeavored to worship God according to the light and grace which they had. Wesley explains:

But in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness...is accepted of him through Christ, though he knows him not.... He is in the favour of God, whether enjoying his written word and ordinances or not.

Continuing this line of thought, since those who fear God and work righteousness are accepted even though they may be ignorant of Christ, the Holy Scriptures, and the sacraments, this demonstrates that such acceptance is not indicative of the real, proper Christian faith, as is often supposed, but instead is an important implication of Wesley’s doctrine of prevenient grace which is both universal and Christologically based. In fact, in this same commentary, but this time on the book of Romans, Wesley cautions his readers and affirms that "real Christians have not the spirit of bondage."

Moreover, when the Conference Minutes of 1770 are critically examined, it appears that Wesley explored two "tracks" of redemption: one for those who believe in Christ and another for those who have never heard of the Savior. In this and similar contexts, however, it should be borne in mind that Wesley never uses the word "justified" or its cognates. The "acceptance," then, of those who never heard of Christ may mean that they are "in process" so to speak; they are on the way of salvation. That is, they have received prevenient grace and so will be responsible for more. But they are hardly redeemed. And though Wesley did not speculate in this area, perhaps there will come a time when such God-fearers will be confronted in a more direct fashion with the claims of Christ and the gospel.

In light of these distinctions, a level of faith which issues in a degree of acceptance must not be confused with saving faith. For example, when Wesley explored the issue of the "unbelief" of the Disciples, their inability to cast out an evil spirit, as recounted in Matthew 17:14-21, he made the following observation:

But it is certain, the faith which is here spoken of does not always imply saving faith. Many have had it who thereby cast out devils, and yet will at last have their portion with them.... Now, though I have all this faith, so as to remove mountains yet if I have not the faith which worketh by love, I am nothing.

So then, if even the disciples at this point did not have saving faith, though they followed Christ and were in some sense accepted of Him—as Wesley seems to intimate—then again how is it possible that those who are ignorant of both Christ and the gospel can have redeeming faith—a faith which is not informed by fear but by nothing less than the salvific power of love? Indeed, for Wesley, the very substance of salvation is holiness, that is, the
love of God reigning in the human heart, but how can this love have its place as the foundation of human affections unless people first of all know that God has loved them in Jesus Christ—"We love because he first loved us." I John 4:19. And that this line of reasoning is descriptive of Wesley's own judgment is demonstrated by an appeal to a journal entry which he made in 1760. He writes:

The fundamental doctrine of the people called Methodists is, whoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the true faith; the faith which works by love; which, by means of the love of God and our neighbour, produces both inward and outward holiness.6

Moreover, Wesley's letters to Ann Bolton in 1768 and in 1770 illustrate the ongoing theme that the faith of a servant, though earnest and virtuous, falls far short of the promises which pertain to all real Christians. "I am glad you are still waiting for the kingdom of God," he writes to Ms. Bolton in 1770, "although as yet you are rather in the state of a servant than of a child." In short, the acceptance of those who fear God and work righteousness must not be confused with the proper Christian faith. That is, though there are degrees of faith as well as degrees of acceptance (and each degree is important), not all faith is saving faith. Saving faith is energized not by the power of fear, but by the power of love.

B. The Doctrine of Assurance: 1748-1770

In his correspondence with Richard Tompson during 1755, Wesley clarified his doctrine of assurance in two key respects: on the one hand, he argued that there is an intermediate state between a child of the devil and a child of God and that those who are not assured that their sins are forgiven may have a degree of faith and, therefore, may be admitted to the Lord's Supper.5 On the other hand, Wesley continued to emphasize the importance of assurance for the Christian faith and asserted: "But still I believe the proper Christian faith which purifies the heart implies such a conviction." Indeed, in this same piece Wesley pointed out with regard to assurance that "the whole Christian Church in the first centuries enjoyed it." And again he exclaimed: "If that knowledge were destroyed, or wholly withdrawn, I could not then say, I had Christian faith." In fact, in his summary sermon, "The Scripture Way of Salvation," produced in 1765, Wesley actually linked saving faith with assurance by maintaining: "And it is certain this [saving] faith necessarily implies an assurance...that Christ loved me, and gave himself for me."57

Wesley's subsequent letters to Richard Tompson the next year contained even further clarification on this topic and one significant, though seldom understood, exception. Concerning the last point, Wesley admitted to Mr. Tompson on 18 February 1756, in a way reminiscent of the 1745 and 1747 conferences, that one may be in a state of justification and yet lack assurance. These are the exempt cases or exceptions as noted earlier. Thus, when Wesley posed the question in his letter, "Can a man who has not a clear assurance that his sins are forgiven be in a state of justification?" he replied, "I believe there are some instances of it." However, it was not until much later that Wesley indicated the reason for this exception. In a letter to Dr. Rutherforth in 1768, Wesley elaborates:

Yet I do not affirm there are no exceptions to this general rule of the association of a measure of assurance with justification. Possibly some may be in the favour of
God, and yet go mourning all the day long. But I believe this is usually owing either to disorder of body or ignorance of the gospel promises."

Two issues need to be separated here which are often confused by contemporary scholars. On the one hand, the elderly Wesley still did not identify nor confuse the faith of a servant, and its measure of acceptance, with the assurance that one's sins are forgiven; since being under "the spirit of bondage," a servant, properly speaking, lacks justifying faith. On the other hand, the Methodist leader recognized that in some exceptional cases those who are justified and regenerated (and hence children of God) may lack an assurance that their sins are forgiven due to either ignorance or bodily disorder." This means, then, that Wesley actually defined the faith of a servant in at least two key ways: The first, which is a narrow usage and which occurs repeatedly in Wesley's writings, excludes justification, regeneration, and assurance and corresponds to the spirit of bondage, noted earlier. The second, which is a broad usage and which seldom occurs, corresponds to the exempt cases and exceptions noted above and it includes justification and regeneration but not assurance. Interestingly enough, although the faith of a servant in this second sense is obviously Christian (saving) faith since it includes justification and regeneration, Wesley still did not refer to it as the proper Christian faith since it lacks assurance. This is a subtle distinction, to be sure, but no less important for its subtlety. Unless otherwise indicated, then, the remainder of this essay will employ the phrase "the faith of a servant" in the narrow sense—a sense which is at the very heart of the debate in Wesley studies today.

The preceding discussion of Wesley's distinctions pertaining to assurance can now be outlined into three major groups as follows:

**Faith of a Child of God**
(Real Christianity)
A. Under the Spirit of Adoption
B. Have the Witness of the Spirit
C. Justified and Born of God
D. Have the Witness of the Spirit Due to Sanctifying Grace

**Faith of a Servant: Narrow Sense**
A. Under the Spirit of Bondage
B. Lack the Witness of the Spirit
C. Not Justified and Born of God
D. Lack the Witness Due to Sin (many instances)

**Faith of a Servant: Exceptional Cases (Broad Sense)**
A. Not Under the Spirit of Bondage
B. Lack the Witness of the Spirit
C. Justified and Born of God
D. Lack Due Not to Sin but to Infirmities (few instances; exceptions)

Two views which offer a different picture by contending that the faith of a servant is, after all, justifying faith are found in the writings of Scott Kisker and Randy
Maddox. The former, for example, attempts to solve the difficulty surrounding the soteriological status of the faith of a servant by distinguishing two kinds of justification, a broad and a narrow sense, and by arguing that the former includes regeneration and assurance, but the latter does not. This distinction, which by the way is never specified in Wesley's writings, permits Kisker to contend that those who have "the faith of a servant" are in fact justified (in the narrow sense), although they are not properly designated as "the children of God" since they have neither been born of God nor have they received an assurance that their sins are forgiven. This view, which separates justification and regeneration, in order to solve the soteriological problem, is nevertheless beset with difficulties.

First of all, Wesley repeatedly links justification with regeneration in his writings. To illustrate, beyond the evidence in the sermon "The New Birth," Wesley notes in the Conference minutes of 1745 that inward sanctification (the new birth) begins in "the moment we are justified." Much later, in 1762, he criticizes Thomas Maxfield precisely for severing the connection between justification and the new birth as revealed in the following critical remarks:

> I dislike your directly or indirectly depreciating justification: saying a justified person is not "in Christ," is not "born of God," is not "a new creature," has not a "new heart," is not "sanctified," not a "temple of the Holy Ghost."...

Second, Kisker confuses the degree of acceptance which pertains to those who have the faith of a servant with justification which, as noted earlier, is quite a different matter. Indeed, the servants of God, those who have not yet received freedom from the guilt and power of sin (which is received at justification and the new birth), are therefore yet under the convincing grace of God in terms of actual sins. Nevertheless these believers have a measure of grace. Put another way, Wesley realized that these sinners were on the way to redemption, so to speak; that is, though not justified, they were responding—painfully no doubt—to the convincing grace of God. Moreover, if they continued to respond to this grace, they would move, as Wesley puts it, from the porch through the very door of salvation.

Third, and perhaps most importantly, the separation of justification from the new birth almost invariably leads to the kind of antinomianism which Wesley impugned throughout his career. For although it is true that only sinners are justified, one cannot remain under the power of sin, typical of the faith of a servant, and yet be justified. Indeed, with the linkage between justification and regeneration severed, it comes as no surprise to learn that Kisker's interpretation suggests that one can be "justified" even while one continues in the practice of sin. He writes:

> The sinner is justified. However, that sinner does not necessarily perceive that fact, either by the direct witness of the Spirit or by evidences which stem from the new birth.... Thus the sinner is continually under conviction of sin and fear of God.

However, if sinners are "continually under the conviction of sin" as Kisker suggests, then it is clear that although they have a measure of grace (convincing) and a degree...
of acceptance (as they respond to the grace of God) they can hardly be deemed justified. Indeed, it must be borne in mind that for Wesley the forgiveness of sins pertains to those sins which are past, not to the ongoing practice of sin. Dissociating justification from the new birth and its marks, then, can easily undermine the central theme of Wesley's theology which is holiness. Linking the new birth with justification, on the other hand, will maintain the proper balance: first, that it is only sinners who are justified; and second, that men and women cannot remain justified if they continue in the practice of sin. Wesley held both these ideas together and without contradiction.

In some respects the position of Randy Maddox is similar to Kisker's. Accordingly, he, too, identifies the "servants of God" as justified, but he does so not on the basis of a distinction between justification in a broad and narrow sense, as Kisker does, but on the basis of a "gradualist" reading of Wesley's *via salutis*. Maintaining that "human salvation—viewed in Wesley's terms—would be fundamentally gradual in process," Maddox argues for a view of incremental growth and development which positions justification remarkably early in the *via salutis*. That is, it occurs in the "initial penitent responses to God's awakening work in their lives." Awakening, however, and even conviction of sin for that matter, do not necessarily issue in justification. To illustrate, the believer typified in Romans Chapter Seven is clearly both awakened and convinced, but he or she can hardly be said to be justified, as Wesley himself indicates, in light of the ongoing practice of sin.

Second, Maddox also applies his gradualist reading of Wesley's soteriology to the notion of regeneration, and this move allows him to affirm that the servants of God, those awakened by the power of grace, are regenerated as well. As with justification, regeneration occurs early in the *via salutis*; it is associated not with sanctifying grace—as one would expect—but with *prevenient* grace. Maddox elaborates:

The best beginning place is to recall the increasing stress that he [Wesley] placed on Prevenient Grace. Wesley understood this grace to effect a rudimentary regeneration of the basic human faculties in all persons from the moment of their birth.... As such, even the faith of a servant of God is possible only because of the presence of a degree of regenerating power of God's grace.

In this very idea of "degrees" of regenerating grace, of course, the mature Wesley was denying that regeneration per se occurs instantaneously.

There are several problems in this passage. First of all, it is perhaps better to use Wesley's own vocabulary of the new birth (initial sanctification) and entire sanctification in the discussion of these matters since Maddox's vocabulary of "rudimentary regeneration" is problematic in either of one or two ways. On the one hand, this definition leaves the impression that one is holy from the moment of (natural) birth! But this is hardly satisfactory given Wesley's doctrines of sin and grace. If, on the other hand, "rudimentary regeneration" does not imply holiness at all but simply the "restoration of faculties" as a result of prevenient grace, then the situation is equally troubling, for such a definition would indicate that the regeneration typical of the faith of a servant does not entail holiness—an odd use indeed! This means, of course, that Maddox's interpretation would face the same problem as Kisker's, namely, that people
who remain unholy (in their regeneration) are yet justified.

Second, contrary to Maddox, the new birth for Wesley must occur instantaneously. Here the issue is not so much chronology—although this is how it is often read—but soteriology. In other words, believers are waiting for something to be done first, then this reveals, to Wesley at least, that they are expecting salvation by works. If, on the other hand, the new birth, that act of grace which makes one holy, is a prerogative not of humanity but of God, then it can occur now. Put another way, the instantaneous elements of Wesley’s *via salutis* are his principal vehicles for underscoring the crucial truth that it is God, not humanity, who both forgives sins and makes holy. This means, of course, that Maddox’s suggestion that the instantaneous elements of the Wesleyan *via salutis* pertain to juridical themes while processive elements pertain to therapeutic (sanctification) themes is not quite accurate. Indeed, for Wesley, both justification and the new birth (and entire sanctification as well) are suitably described in terms of instantaneous elements (as well as processive elements) for the reasons already suggested.64

So then, Maddox’s use of the ideas of *degrees* of justification and regeneration allows him to claim that the servants of God are both justified and regenerated, but we must remember that this is a justification and a regeneration which falls far short of the standards which the seasoned Wesley set for scriptural Christianity, for it falls far short of holiness.

III. THE MOTIF OF REAL CHRISTIANITY RESPLENDENT: 1771-1791

It is well known among Methodist historians and theologians that when John Wesley was en route to Georgia aboard the Simmonds the powerful Atlantic storms revealed to the young aspiring missionary his fear of death. What has been less noticed, however, is that it was precisely the *mature* Wesley who continued to identify fearlessness in the face of death with being a real Christian. On December 27, 1772, for example, the Methodist leader made the following entry in his journal:

“I dined with one who in the midst of plenty is completely miserable through ‘the spirit of bondage’ and in particular through the fear of death. This came upon him not by any outward means, but the immediate touch of God’s Spirit. It will be well if he does not shake it off till he receives ‘the Spirit of adoption.’”

Even more emphatically, Wesley wrote to Ms. Cummins on June 8, 1773 and made the connection between real Christianity and fearlessness in the face of death explicit:

“O make haste! Be a Christian, a real Bible Christian now! You may say, ‘Nay, I am a Christian already.’ I fear not. (See how freely I speak.) *A Christian is not afraid to die.* Are not you? Do you desire to depart and to be with Christ?”

So then, if the elderly Wesley affirmed in 1770s that a real Christian is one who is not afraid to die, then what does that make him while he was in Georgia? The implication is clear.

Yet another characteristic of real Christianity which Wesley developed during this
Real Christianity as Integrating Theme

last period was that of "having the mind which was in Christ and walking as He walked." Real Christians, in other words, are those whose inward (and outward) lives have been transformed by the bountiful grace of God. "Unless they have new senses, ideas, passions, and tempers," Wesley counsels, "they are no Christians." Indeed, when the English cleric was in Ireland during 1773 he asked himself the question concerning the citizens of Galway, among whom were twenty thousand Catholics and five hundred Protestants: "But which of them are Christians? Have the mind that was in Christ and walk as He walked?"—a question which amply suggests his yet lofty standards for being a real Christian. And of his own people, the "English Christians in general," Wesley wryly noted in 1776, that they "know no more of Christian salvation (and hence of inward transformation) than Mahometans or heathens." And two years later, in a letter to Mary Bishop, Wesley made it abundantly clear what was at the heart of the gospel in his following observation:

Let but a pert, self-sufficient animal, that has neither sense nor grace, bawl out something about Christ and His blood or justification by faith, and his hearers cry out, 'What a fine gospel sermon!' Surely the Methodists have not so learnt Christ. We know of no gospel without salvation from sin."

Beyond this, during the decade of the 1780s Wesley continued to highlight the distinction between nominal and real Christians, and pointed out in his sermon, "The New Creation," employing a familiar rhetoric by now, that the former "have the form of godliness without the power." Clues, by the way, as to when Wesley himself determined in his own mind to be a real Christian are found in a late sermon, "In What Sense We are to Leave the World," where he indicates, once again, the significance of the year 1725: "When it pleased God to give me a settled resolution to be not a nominal but a real Christian (being about two and twenty years of age) my acquaintance were as ignorant of God as myself."

Moreover, as in an earlier period, Wesley reflected back on the Oxford Methodists, but this time in a letter to Henry Brooke in 1786, where he avowed that their design was nothing less than to be "Bible Christians." The next year, in his sermon "Of Former Times," the one-time Oxford fellow revealed that the goal of "the Holy Club" was above all to help each other to be "real Christians." But perhaps the most noteworthy accent during this late interval of Wesley's life was his strong identification of real, scriptural Christianity with the new birth and, therefore, with all the marks of the new birth such as faith, hope, and love. For example, in a pastoral letter to his nephew Samuel Wesley, who had converted to Roman Catholicism (though he later renounced this move), Wesley cautioned: "...except a man be born again...he cannot see the kingdom of heaven; except he experience that inward change of the earthly, sensual mind for the mind which was in Christ Jesus." Furthermore, in his sermon, "Walking by Sight and Walking by Faith," produced in 1788, Wesley proclaimed:

How short is this description of real Christians! And yet how exceeding full! It comprehends, it sums up, the whole experience of those that are truly such, from the time they are born of God till they remove into Abraham's bosom. For who are the 'we' that are here spoken of? All that are true Christian believers. I say
'Christian', not 'Jewish' believers. All that are not only servants but children of God.

And a year later, in 1789, Wesley's strong identification of real Christianity with regeneration, with the children of God, is again unmistakable. "How great a thing it is to be a Christian," he declares in his sermon On a Single Eye, "to be a real, inward, scriptural Christian! Conformed in heart and life to the will of God! Who is sufficient for these things? None, unless he be born of God."

A. Outler's Claim Considered

Perhaps the most serious objection to the foregoing argument comes from Albert Outler himself who has claimed that Wesley's perspective changed over the years and that he greatly modified his earlier distinctions of almost/altogether a Christian, and nominal/real Christianity. In his preface to 'The More Excellent Way,' for example, he claims:

This is a practical essay in Christian ethics that also illustrates how far the later Wesley had moved away from his earlier exclusivist standards of true faith and salvation. It should be read alongside 'The Almost Christian', the startling contrast between the two reflects a half-century's experience as leader of a revival movement and also a significant change in his mind and heart.

For the sake of clarity, it is best to divide Outler's claim into two separate issues: one concerning the definition of an almost Christian; the other, of an altogether Christian. Of the former term, Wesley writes in his sermon, "The Almost Christian," written in 1741, that these believers have a form of godliness; they possess the outside of a real Christian; and they utilize all the means of grace. Furthermore, if one compares these early descriptions with many of Wesley's writings during the 1780s, an essential continuity emerges.

What does change in time, however, is the latter part of the equation; that is, what it means to be an "altogether Christian." In "The Almost Christian," for example, altogether Christians are described as those who love the Lord their God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength—and their neighbors as themselves. Moreover, they have a faith "which purifies the heart, by the power of God who dwelleth therein, from pride, anger, desire, from all unrighteousness, from all filthiness of flesh and spirit." But the preceding are obviously apt descriptions not of the new birth, what it means to be a real Christian, but of entire sanctification. However, in 1741, as noted earlier, Wesley still mixed these ideas together, and it would not be until towards the end of the 1740s that he would clearly distinguish the graces of Christian Perfection from those of initial sanctification. So in this sense what Outler argues is, in fact, correct.

Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to contend (and I'm not suggesting that Outler did this) that because Wesley clarified his thought and distinguished initial and entire sanctification that he then lowered the threshold for the new birth which in turn eventually became his standard for what constitutes real Christianity. In his homily "On a Single Eye," for instance, written late in his career, Wesley not only still uses the language of a "real Christian" in 1789, but he also correctly identifies it with regeneration and not with entire sanctification as he once did. In other words, almost Christians, those who lack the marks...
of the new birth, are almost Christians still: in 1741, in 1747, and in 1789 as well.

Given this line of argument, Outler’s call for a comparison of “The Almost Christian” and “The More Excellent Way” is in one sense invalid, for he appears to assume that the distinction almost Christian/altogether Christian of the earlier sermon “The Almost Christian” corresponds to the distinction of the generality of Christians/the more excellent way as found in the later sermon “The More Excellent Way.” However, the two sets compared in these homilies are not the same. To illustrate, in the first sermon, the “almost Christian” is a person who lacks the evidences of both justification and regeneration as set forth in “The Marks of the New Birth.” The “altogether Christian” on the other hand is at the very least justified and regenerated (and possibly entirely sanctified—because Wesley set the standard much too high at this time). In light of this, is the phrase the “generality of Christians” as found in the later sermon, “The More Excellent Way” actually equivalent to “the almost Christian” as Outler seems to suggest? Not really. Observe how Wesley defines “the generality of Christians” in this later production:

From long experience and observation I am inclined to think that whoever finds redemption in the blood of Jesus, whoever is justified, has then the choice of walking in the higher or the lower path. In other words, these Christians are already justified and born of God and are about to embark either upon the higher path of entire sanctification or not. Simply put, in the sermon “The Almost Christian,” Wesley is comparing almost-Christians, though virtuous, with those who have at the very least been born of God. In his later sermon, he is comparing justified and regenerated (real) Christians with the entirely sanctified—or with the possibility of entire sanctification. Therefore, those who appeal to a comparison of these pieces in order to show that those who lack the marks of the new birth are indeed real Christians (and again I’m not suggesting that Outler did this) have failed to pay significant attention to Wesley’s own theological vocabulary. Once again, almost Christians remain almost Christians. The former part of the equation had never really directly changed.

B. The Faith of a Servant: 1771-1791

In a letter to Alexander Knox during 1777, Wesley, once again, clearly articulates an intermediate state between a child of God and a child of the devil, namely, a servant of God. “You are not yet a son,” Wesley advises Mr. Knox, “but you are a servant; and you are waiting for the Spirit of adoption.” Similarly, in his sermon “On Faith,” the Methodist leader displays, in part, what constitutes the difference between a servant and a child of God: “He that believeth as a child of God hath the witness in himself.” Moreover, as in the preceding period, Wesley maintains that one who is a servant of God, who “feareth God and worketh righteousness,” enjoys the favor of God and is, therefore, accepted “to a degree” as illustrated in his sermon “On Friendship with the World,” produced in 1786:

Those on the contrary ‘are of God’ who love God, or at least fear him, and keep his commandments. This is the lowest character of those that ‘are of God,’ who are not properly sons, but servants.
To be sure, in his early ministry, John Wesley had not fully appreciated the notion that those who fear God and work righteousness are indeed accepted of him, and because of this failure in understanding, he and his brother, Charles, caused great harm among those who were attentive to the early Methodist preaching. And in 1788, reflecting on this unfortunate situation, Wesley confessed:

Indeed nearly fifty years ago, when the preachers commonly called Methodists began to preach that grand scriptural doctrine, salvation by faith, they were not sufficiently apprised of the difference between a servant and a child of God. They did not clearly understand that even one ‘who feared God, and worketh righteousness’, is accepted of him. 136

That Wesley during the decade of the 1780s (and much earlier) had a greater appreciation of the faith of those ‘who feared God and worked righteousness’ is clear, but, once again, this last point of acceptance must not be mistaken for justification or with being a real Christian. Observe that Wesley holds two ideas together: on the one hand, he or she who fears God is not a rank unbeliever, but on the other hand, “One that fears God is [still] waiting for His salvation.” 137 In fact, late in his career, as noted in passing earlier, Wesley associated the faith of a servant, the spirit of fear, with the spirit of bondage. Additional evidence of this association is found in a letter to Thomas Davenport, drafted in 1781. Wesley states:

You are in the hands of a wise Physician, who is lancing your sores in order to heal them. He has given you now the spirit of fear. But it is in order to the spirit of love and of a sound mind. You have now received the spirit of bondage. Is it not the forerunner of the spirit of adoption? He is not afar off. Look up! And expect Him to cry in your heart, Abba, Father! He is nigh that justifieth! 138

Accordingly, this excerpt demonstrates that in this late period Wesley still did not confuse the issue of ‘acceptance’ (for the light and grace which they have), with justification, for those under ‘the spirit of fear’ are still waiting for the One who justifies. This means, of course, that these believers are in the way of salvation; consequently, if they continue in this grace, and unfortunately some will not, then the One ‘who is nigh’ will justify.

Though, in light of the preceding considerations, the servants of God obviously lack the proper Christian faith—and hence cannot enjoy the privileges of the sons and daughters of God—they yet have a measure of faith which arises from the prevenient and convincing grace which precedes it, and are for that reason not to be discouraged. Therefore, Wesley’s seasoned and relatively favorable estimation of the faith of a servant probably emerged from his consideration that such a faith, in the normal course of spiritual development, would in time become the faith of a son. In fact, in his sermon “On Faith,” Wesley highlights just such a consideration:

And, indeed, unless the servants of God halt by the way, they will receive the adoption of sons. They will receive the faith of the children of God by his revealing his only-begotten Son in their hearts.... And whosoever hath this, the Spirit of God witnesseth with his spirit that he is a child of God.” 139
Likewise, Wesley's appreciation of a degree of acceptance and his exhortation to the servants of God to improve the rich grace of God is revealed in a sermon produced in 1788, "On the Discoveries of Faith," in which Wesley counsels:

\begin{quote}
Whoever has attained this, the faith of a servant, ... in consequence of which he is \textit{in a degree} (as the Apostle observes), 'accepted with him.' ... Nevertheless he should be exhorted not to stop there; not to rest till he attains the adoption of sons; till he obeys out of love, which is the privilege of all the \textit{children} of God.\textsuperscript{135}
\end{quote}

Simply put, the faith of a servant of God is valued not only for the measure of faith that it is, but also for what it will soon become: the qualitatively different faith of a child of God. Indeed, for Wesley all soteriological distinctions are not one of degree—as is sometimes supposed—since a child of God who has been renewed through grace is \textit{holy}, but a servant of God, on the other hand, is not. That is, for Wesley holiness begins at justification and initial sanctification (the new birth) as noted earlier. And the crucial nature of this redeeming grace is highlighted, indicating something of a soteriological turning point, by Wesley's ongoing distinction between the value of works both before and after justification (and the new birth). On the one hand, works prior to justification are not "splendid sins" but on the other hand neither are they "good," properly speaking. And it is precisely this transition from "not good" to "good" works which amply demonstrates that the transition from the faith of a servant to the faith of a child of God is not simply a change in degree but one of \textit{quality}. As not all faith is justifying faith, so too not all faith is sanctifying faith.

\textbf{C. The Doctrine of Assurance: 1771-1791}

By 1771, Wesley had distinguished full assurance, which excludes doubt and fear, from initial assurance which does not;\textsuperscript{136} he had come to a greater appreciation of the faith of a servant and its degree of acceptance; and he had realized that in exceptional cases one may even be justified and yet lack assurance due to either ignorance of the gospel promises or due to bodily disorder. Nevertheless, the theme which Wesley chose to develop during this last period of his life was none other than a strong identification of assurance with the proper (real) Christian faith. To illustrate, in his sermon, "On the Trinity," Wesley declares:

\begin{quote}
But I know not how anyone can be a Christian believer till he hath (as St. John speaks) 'the witness in himself'; till 'the Spirit of God witnesses with his spirit that he is a child of God'—that is, in effect, till God the Holy Ghost witnesses that God the Father has accepted him through the merits of the Son....\textsuperscript{137}
\end{quote}

Similarly, in January 1787, Wesley acknowledged that "To believe Christ gave Himself for me is the faith of a Christian,"\textsuperscript{138} and a year later he not only once again clarified the distinction between the faith of a servant and that of a son, but he also maintained that assurance is an integral component of the proper Christian faith. In his sermon, "On Faith," Wesley reasons:

\begin{quote}
Thus the faith of a child is \textit{properly and directly} a divine conviction whereby every child of God is enabled to testify, 'The life that I now live, I live by faith in
the son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.' And whosoever hath this, the Spirit of God witnesseth with his spirit that he is a child of God."

Even more significantly, there is nothing in Wesley's often-quoted letter to Melville Horne in 1788 which detracts from this identification and emphasis. Thus, in this correspondence, Wesley maintains that the servants of God who lack assurance are not thereby condemned, a commonplace by now, but he then goes on to assert—and this is what has been missed by current scholarship—that "we preach assurance as we always did, as a common privilege of the children of God...."

IV. SOME CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

For the sake of greater clarity and also in order to display the comprehensive view which emerges from this brief study of the motif of real Christianity in the writings of John Wesley, the following theses are offered for consideration:

Theses Relevant to Future Discussion:

1. The Faith of a Servant

A. Wesley employed the phrase "the faith of a servant" in at least two distinct ways. The first, the narrow usage, does not include justification, regeneration, and assurance, and it represents the clear majority of cases. The second, the broad usage, includes both justification and regeneration but not assurance, and it corresponds to Wesley's exempt cases or exceptions. It represents the minority of cases.

B. The mature Wesley specifically identified the faith of a servant (in the narrow sense) with the spirit of bondage.

1. The characteristics of the spirit of bondage are sorrow and remorse; fear of God, death, the devil, and humanity; and the desire but not the ability to break free from the chains of sin.

C. The faith of a servant in both the narrow and broad senses lacks assurance (the witness of the Spirit)–the one due to sin, the other to infirmity.

D. Though Wesley eventually came to realize that the faith of a servant (in the narrow sense) involves a degree of acceptance such faith does not constitute justifying faith (See thesis # II.B.2 below).

1. Indeed, Wesley's soteriological language distinguishes between "acceptance" for those who are at the very beginning of the way of salvation and "justification" for those who are not.

2. The identification of Wesley's inclusive notion of "acceptance" (see his notes on Acts 10:35) with the proper Christian (saving) faith may move in the direction of a universalism which the Methodist leader rightly deplored.
Therefore, a distinction must be made between acceptance (according to the light and grace which they have; that is, according to prevenient and convincing grace) and saving faith which redeems by making one holy.

E. Wesley taught that the faith of all servants, in the normal course of spiritual development, should in time become the "proper Christian faith." They are, therefore, not to be discouraged.

II. Assurance

A. By the summer of 1740, and possibly earlier, Wesley realized that justifying faith does not imply full assurance since it is often marked by both doubt and fear.

B. At least by 1747 (and possibly as early as 1745), Wesley maintained that assurance does not always accompany justifying faith.

1. These exceptions pertaining to assurance, servants in a broad sense who are both justified and regenerated, are not many but few since Wesley repeatedly affirmed that assurance is the common privilege of the children of God. The faith of a servant in the narrow sense, on the other hand, which lacks justification, regeneration, and assurance, is characteristic not of a few believers but of many. Nevertheless even these are not without favor since they are under the leading of both prevenient and convincing grace.

2. In 1768, Wesley reasoned that the exceptions to the normal association of justifying faith and assurance (broad sense) are usually the result of bodily disorder or of ignorance of the gospel promises; that is, due not to sin but to infirmity. The faith of a servant in the narrow sense, on the other hand, lacks assurance not due to infirmity but to sin since they are under the spirit of bondage.

III. Real Christianity

A. Wesley developed the motif of real Christianity from the time he saw the goal of religion in 1725 until his death in 1791.

B. Through the influence of the English Moravians, Wesley initially placed the standard of real Christianity much too high so as to include elements which properly pertain to Christian perfection.

1. Eventually Wesley distinguished between the power and being of sin; the former relates to the new birth (and real Christianity); the latter to entire sanctification.

C. Wesley made a distinction between open sinners, outward Christians, and inward Christians in several places in his writings: the first lack both the form
and power of vital religion (open sinners); the second have the form but not the power (servants in the narrow sense); the third have both the form and the power (real Christians).

I. Wesley defined the purpose of the United Societies as being a fellowship of those who have the form of religion and who are seeking its power. This level of faith, therefore, does not constitute what Wesley called the proper Christian faith.

D. At its minimum, real Christianity entails regeneration (and therefore freedom from the power of sin), as one of its principal characteristics. In fact, it was precisely the mature Wesley who stressed this identification in his sermons “Walking by Sight and Walking by Faith” (1788) and “On a Single Eye” (1789).

E. Since Wesley taught that justification occurs simultaneously with regeneration (although they can be distinguished logically), then real Christianity must also entail justification by faith (and therefore freedom from the guilt of sin).

F. In almost every instance where the seasoned Wesley employed the phrases “real Christianity” or “proper Christianity” or “scriptural Christianity” he was referring to the theological complex of justification and regeneration by faith (the latter as evidenced by the marks of the new birth) and a measure of assurance. In other words, the Methodist leader almost never identified a faith which lacks assurance (the faith of a servant in both senses) with the real proper Christian faith. Nevertheless, since the servants of God in a broad sense are both justified and born of God, and since they lack assurance not due to sin but to infirmity, they may suitably be called the children of God.

G. Since virtually all Methodist scholars agree that Aldersgate was the time of John Wesley’s assurance and that he was justified and regenerated at least by this time, and since these theological elements are the very ingredients which the seasoned Wesley deemed to constitute the proper Christian faith, then Aldersgate must be the time when Wesley became a real Christian by his own mature definition—Albert Outler’s unargued claim notwithstanding.

Given the preceding evidence which has been carefully culled from Wesley’s entire literary corpus, recent—and some not so recent—pronouncements on the subject of Wesley’s understanding of the motif of real Christianity as well as the value he placed on his Aldersgate experience in light of this motif must now be reassessed by the scholarly community. Indeed, since the elderly Wesley continually defined real Christianity in terms of justification, regeneration, and a measure of assurance, then his Aldersgate experience, contrary to Albert Outler, must now be viewed as the time when Wesley became a real, true, scriptural Christian. In fact, even if Aldersgate is simply deemed the time when the last piece of the puzzle, so to speak, was put in place, namely, assurance, as Maddox and others seem to suggest, the conclusion
remains the same: that is, 24 May 1738 was the time when John Wesley had the faith, not of a servant, but of a son; when he had the faith, in other words, of one who had finally entered into "the kingdom of God."

NOTES
8. Ibid., 25:400. Though Wesley was a faithful son of the Anglican church, he was critical of state churches which often mixed religion and politics to the detriment of the former. Indeed, Wesley criticized the emperor Constantine, in several places in his writings, as the initiator of this unfortunate trend. Cf. Thomas Jackson, ed., The Works of John Wesley, 14 vols. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1978), 6:261, 7:26, 164, and 276.
10. Ibid., 18:499-500. In particular, what had sparked this response was Wesley's scriptural proclamation that "Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world, even our faith." 1 John 5:4.
12. Ibid., 1:264. The significance of Aldersgate, at least as it appears in this letter, lies not so much in the matter of assurance (indeed, Wesley claims at this point that "the seal of the Spirit: the love of God shed abroad in my heart...this witness of the Spirit I have not; but I patiently wait for it.") but in freedom from the power of sin. Again, Wesley exclaims: "Some measure of this faith, which bringeth salvation or victory over sin, and which implies peace and trust in God through Christ, I now enjoy by His free mercy."
15. Ibid., 18:216. Emphasis is mine. It would take Wesley a few more years to articulate clearly the distinctions between the guilt, power, and being of sin as these distinctions relate to the justified, the regenerate, and the entirely sanctified.

20. Ibid., 8:288-89. In this setting, the Conference defined sincerity as "a constant disposition to use all the grace given." The Conference's judgments about sincerity and justification, then, remind one of Wesley's teaching that "a person can be saved if he will, but not when he will."

22. Ibid., 1:258.
23. Ibid. Observe that the servants of God are awakened, but they see not a God of love, but One of wrath. It is, therefore, important not to confuse the issue of awakening with regeneration (and conversion).

24. Baker, Letters, 25:575. Also note that although Wesley eventually made the distinctions between freedom from the guilt (justification), power (regeneration), and the being (entire sanctification) of sin, as evidenced in his sermon On Sin in Believers, he continually maintained that even a babe in Christ has freedom from the power of sin. Cf. Outler, Sermons, 1:314 ff.


26. Ibid., p. 89.
27. Ibid., pp. 68-69.
29. In his sermon, "Free Grace," written on April 29, 1739, Wesley argues that "the assurance of faith which these enjoy excludes all doubts and fear." However, by the end of the year, as Heitzenrater aptly notes, this emphasis was gone. Cf. Outler, Sermons, 3:550 and Heitzenrater, "Great Expectations," p. 81.

30. Earlier, in June 1738, Wesley had been thrown "into much perplexity," by a letter which maintained that "no doubting could consist with the least degree of true faith; that whoever at any time felt any doubt or fear was not weak in faith, but had no faith at all." Such a claim so disturbed Wesley that he immediately engaged in a round of bibliomancy and hit upon I Cor. 3:1 ff., a passage which soothed his mind—at least for the time being. Cf. Ward, Journals, 18:254.

32. Jackson, Wesley's Works, 8:276. The biblical evidence to which the Conference of 1744 appealed in substantiation of its position included the following: Romans 8:15; Ephesians 4:32; 2 Corinthians 13:5; Hebrews 3:10; and 1 John 4:10, 19.


35. Ibid. Bracketed material is mine.

37. Ibid., 26:246. Emphasis is mine. In an earlier letter to "John Smith" Wesley had main-
tained that "Every one that is born of God, and doth not commit sin, by his very actions saith, 'Our Father which art in heaven'; the Spirit itself bearing witness with their spirit that they are the children of God." Cf. ibid., 26:232.

38. Ibid., 26:254-55. Emphasis is mine. It is also interesting to note that Wesley's thinking on the issue of assurance and real Christianity led him to conclude that "the Apostles themselves had not the proper Christian faith (since they lacked the witness of the Spirit, at the very least) till after the day of Pentecost." Such a conclusion undermines the argument, often made by some Holiness scholars, that the Apostles were "real Christians" prior to the resurrection of Christ such that Pentecost represents their entire sanctification! Cf. Jackson, Wesley's Works, 8:291. Notice also that Wesley in commenting on Acts 1:5 reveals that all true believers, not simply the entirely sanctified, have been baptized with the Spirit: "Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost—And so are all true believers to the end of the world." Cf. John Wesley, Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament (Salem, Ohio: Schmul Publishers), p. 275.


40. Ibid., p. 21.


42. Part of the problem with some contemporary assessments of Wesley's doctrine of regeneration is that the Methodist leader's understanding of the degrees of this work of grace is misconstrued with the result that regeneration is linked, at its minimum, not with the new birth, as it should be, but with prevenient grace. Here the concept of regeneration becomes so broad that it even includes the initial restoring activity of grace, the awakening of faculties, in terms of unrepentant sinners. To illustrate, Randy Maddox, who is typical of this scholarship, writes: "Wesley came to emphasize that there was a crucial degree of regeneration prior to the New Birth: the universal nascent regenerating effect of prevenient grace." John Wesley, on the other hand, though he did indeed postulate degrees of regeneration, linked its lowest degree not with prevenient grace, as is sometimes supposed, but with the new birth and with power over sin—characteristics which do not typify the unawakened sinner. Cf. Randy L. Maddox, Responsible Grace: John Wesley's Practical Theology (Nashville, Tennessee: Kingswood Books, 1994), p. 159. For Wesley's description of degrees of regeneration cf. Davies, Societies, p. 64; Jackson, Wesley's Works, 11:421; Ward, Journals, 19:32; and Albert C. Outler, ed., John Wesley, The Library of Protestant Thought (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 140.


44. Wesley, NT Notes, p. 188. See also Wesley's notes on Rom. 14:17 where he indicates that "true religion does not consist in external observances; but in righteousness, the image of God stamped on the heart..." Cf. Ibid., p. 401.

45. Ibid. For an excellent treatment of the cruciality of inward religion in terms of the dispositions and tempers of the heart (as well as their soteriological significance) cf. Gregory S. Clapper, John Wesley on Religious Affections: His View on Experience and Emotion and their Role in the Christian Life and Theology (Metuchen, New Jersey: Scarecrow Press, 1989); and "Orthocardiak: The Practical Theology of John Wesley's Heart Religion," Quarterly Review 10 (Spring 1990): 49-66.

46. Ibid., p. 49.

47. Telford, Letters, 4:103. Emphasis is mine. For a treatment of John Wesley's doctrines of


49. Ibid., 21:481. Compare this with Wesley’s letter to the editor of Lloyd’s Evening Post on March 26, 1767, where he links being a ‘true Methodist’ with real Christianity: “These are the principles and practices of our sect; these are the marks of a true Methodist (i.e. a true Christian, as I immediately after explain myself.” Ward, Journals, 22:72.


51. Outler, Sermons, 1:419.

52. Ibid., 1:436.

53. Jackson, Wesley’s Works, 10:365. This means, of course, that the standard of real Christianity is higher than the mere observance of the Rules of the United Societies. Cf. Davies, Societies, pp. 69-73.


55. Ibid., 4:120. Moreover, in A Plain Account of the People called Methodists Wesley maintains that the Methodists had one point in view, namely, “to be altogether, scriptural, rational Christians.” Cf. Telford, Letters, 5:153-54.

56. Ibid., 5:137.

57. Ibid., 4:263-64.

58. John Wesley, Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament (Salem, Ohio: Schmul Publishers), p. 646. In this commentary on Jude, Wesley also defines a servant in a second sense as one who has the spirit of adoption, but note that this is a definition which is rarely used and is not the one which forms the first prong of the distinction the faith of a servant/the faith of a son since only the latter prong is marked by the spirit of adoption. Cf. Wesley, Notes, p. 646.

59. Ibid., p. 304.

60. Ibid.

61. See Wesley’s sermon On Conscience for more details on this aspect of prevenient grace in Outler, Sermons, 3:480 ff.

62. Wesley, Notes, p. 382.


65. See Wesley's notes on 1 John 4:19 where he points out that “This is the sum of all religion, the genuine model of Christianity,” in Wesley, NT Notes, p. 638.

66. Ward, Journals, 21:286. This journal entry is actually a part of a letter which Wesley sent to the Editor of Lloyd's Evening Post in order to offer a defense of Methodism.

67. Telford, Letters, 5:207. See also 5:86 for the letter of 1768. Emphasis is mine.

68. Baker, Letters, 26:575. Observe, however, that Wesley slipped back into his all or nothing language a few years later in 1759 when he wrote: “Is He not still striving with you? Striving to make you not almost but altogether a Christian? Indeed, you must be all or nothing—a saint or a devil, eminent in sin or holiness?” Cf. Telford, Letters, 4:52.

69. Ibid. Emphasis is mine.

70. Ibid.

71. Ibid.

72. Outler, Sermons, 2:161. Bracketed material is drawn from the immediate context. Notice
that, in this context, there are echoes of Luther's pro me description of his own faith. For evidence concerning the several distinctions which Wesley made in terms of assurance (full assurance of faith, full assurance of hope, etc.) cf. Telford, Letters, 2:385, 3:161; Wesley NT Notes, pp. 575, 632, and 638; Jackson, Wesley's Works, 9:32, and Davies, Soteries, 9:375-76.

73. Telford, Letters, 3:163. Emphasis is mine. Nevertheless, not even this significant exception undermined Wesley's strong association of real Christianity and assurance. Indeed, a month later, in March 1756, Wesley wrote to Richard Tompson: "My belief in general is this—that every Christian believer has a divine conviction of his reconciliation with God." Cf. Telford, Letters, 3:174. See also Wesley's letter to Mr. Tompson on February 6, 1756.

74. Ibid., 5:358. Bracketed material is mine.

75. In addition, Wesley wrote to Dr. Rutherford in 1768: "Therefore I have not for many years thought a consciousness of acceptance to be essential to justifying faith." Cf. Telford, Letters, 5:359. See also Lycurgus M. Starkey, Jr., The Work of the Holy Spirit: A Study in Wesleyan Theology (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), 68-69.

76. This sermon, in part, reads: "In the moment we are justified by the grace of God...we are also born of the Spirit." Cf. Outler, Sermons, 2:187.


78. Ward, Journals, 21:395. Wesley's concern here, of course, is the question of antinomianism. It is not surprising, then, that Wesley also addresses this issue in at least two places in his Dialogue Between an Antinomian and His Friend. Cf. Jackson, Wesley's Works, 10:273-74 and 10:279.

79. The real distinction in Wesley's soteriology is not between a narrow and a general sense of justification, but between "acceptance" and "justification." Accordingly, the problem with Kisker's interpretation, and others like it, is that it does not interpret "acceptance" in relation to its pastoral context, as it should be (that those to whom this term was applied were on the way to justification and regeneration and therefore should not be discouraged); instead, it views "acceptance" in terms of Wesley's theological context of justification, regeneration and other normative doctrines. This is a subtle shift, to be sure, but no less important for its subtlety. Its consequence, again, is to undermine holiness.


82. Maddox, Responsible, p. 152.


84. Cf. Wesley, Notes, p. 379. Wesley points out that although this believer is "sincerely...striving to serve God, to have spoken this of himself [Paul, or any true believer, would have been foreign to the whole scope of his discourse...."

85. Maddox, "Continuing," p. 238. Bracketed material is mine. Oddly enough, Maddox apparently renounces the connection between justification and regeneration at the end of this piece by rejecting my call for a "conjoined experience of initial justification and regeneration." If this is the case, Maddox's position would then face the same prospects of antinomianism as does Kisker's. Cf. p. 241.

86. To highlight the instantaneous aspect of the new birth Wesley draws an analogy with natural birth: "In like manner, a child is born of God in a short time, if not in a moment." But when he underscores the instantaneous element of entire sanctification, he appeals not to the image of birth but of death: "And if sin cease before death, there must, in the nature of the thing, be an instantaneous change; there must be a last moment wherein it does not exist, and a first moment wherein it does not." Cf. Outler, Sermons, 2:198, and Jackson, Wesley's Works, 8:329.

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88. Telford, Letters, 6:31. Emphasis is mine. As is also characteristic of this period, Wesley asked Ms. Cummins if she had "power over all sin." See also Wesley's journal of March 17, 1772 for an example of his ongoing use of the distinction almost/altogether Christians; his entry of August 12, 1772 for the use of the term "notional" believers; and his letter to Patience Ellison in 1777 where he links the distinction between almost/altogether Christian with being an outside/inside Christian. Cf. Ward, Journals, 22:311 and 22:345, and Telford, Letters, 6:274.
89. Outler, Sermons, 2:467. Bracketed material represents a change of verbal form.
90. Ibid., 4:175. Bracketed material is mine.
91. Ward, Journals, 22:367. In this same year, Wesley was not beyond calling the Christianity of Henry VIII, Oliver Cromwell and even a pope (Sextus Quintus) into account. Cf. Ward, Journals, 22:384. For an additional reference to Wesley's association of real Christianity with the mind of Christ, cf. Outler, Sermons, 2:467.
92. Telford, Letters, 6:201. Bracketed material is mine. Oddly enough, during this period, some people were deprecating inward transformation and placed all their emphasis on social change. Wesley responded to this impoverishment of Christianity in his following observation: "That 'the regulation of social life is the one end of religion' is a strange position indeed. I never imagined any but a Deist would affirm this." Cf. Telford, Letters, 6:205.
93. Ibid., 6:326-27.
97. Outler, Sermons, 3:452-453. See also Wesley's "Thoughts on a Late Phenomenon," where he reveals that the goal of the Oxford Methodists was to be "scriptural Christians." Cf. Davies, Societies, 9:533.
99. Outler, Sermons, 4:49. Observe, in this late period, that Wesley links the faith of a servant not with the Christian faith but with Jewish (or legal) faith.
100. Ibid., 4:121-22. Emphasis is mine. Though Wesley distanced himself from the English Moravians in terms of their association of continual joy with the new birth, the elderly Wesley apparently reverted back to such a linkage, at least on some level, as evidenced by his following remarks to his niece Sarah Wesley in 1790: "Perpetual cheerfulness is the temper of a Christian. Real Christians know it is their duty to maintain this, which is in one sense to rejoice evermore." Cf. Telford, Letters, 8:234.
101. Ibid., 3:152. Note #40.
102. Ibid., 3:262.
106. Ibid. 1:137.
107. Ibid., 1:139.
110. Ibid., 3:266.

111. Naturally, if a change is made in terms of what constitutes an altogether Christian, this indirectly affects what it means to be an almost Christian. Nevertheless, the basic characteristics which Wesley employs to describe almost Christians hardly change. The real changes lie elsewhere. Cf. Outler, Sermons, 1:131-37.


113. Ibid.


115. Ibid., 3:130. Observe that Wesley revels in the notion that the Methodist societies build on a “broad foundation,” for he notes in his journal that these societies require of their members “no conformity either in opinions or modes of worship, but barely this one thing, to fear God, and work righteousness.” Now if “fearing God and working righteousness” is the foundation of the Methodist societies, then this cannot be the proper Christian faith, otherwise Wesley would be requiring those who entered the Methodist societies to be Christians before they entered or to become Christians immediately thereafter in order to continue in the society—thereby putting the power to become a Christian in human hands, essentially equating it with the decision to enter or remain in a particular religious society. Cf. Curnock, Journal, 8:5.

Moreover, this constitutes Wesley’s “narrow” use of the phrase “fear God and worketh righteousness.” For the “broad use” of this phrase, where Wesley ties it to the “exceptional cases” noted in the earlier chart, cf. Telford, Letters, 5:262-63; Outler, Sermons, 2:543, 3:130.


117. Telford, Letters, 7:157. Albert Outler, however, pushes these tensions in the other direction and concludes that Wesley’s mature understanding of degrees of faith “comes closer to an explicit statement of his vision of universal saving grace than anything else in the Wesley corpus.” My own position, on the other hand, highlights the universality of grace (like Outler), but then goes on to note that not all grace is saving grace; that is, prevenient grace must not be mistaken for redeeming grace. Cf. Outler, Sermons, 3:491.

118. Ibid, 5:55.

119. Outler, Sermons, 3:497-98. The first emphasis is mine.

120. Ibid, 4:35.

121. For two important references to Wesley’s doctrine of full assurance, cf. Outler, Sermons, 3:549, and 4:36.

122. Ibid., 2:385. Emphasis is mine.

123. Telford, Letters, 7:361-62. Wesley’s response to Mr. Fleury, who had claimed that Wesley pretended to extraordinary inspiration, was to associate the witness of the Spirit (assurance) as vital to the Christian faith: “I pretend to no other inspiration than that which is common to all real Christians, without which no one can be a Christian at all.” Cf. Davies, Societies, 9:392.


125. Robert Southey, The Life of John Wesley (New York: W. B. Gilley, 1820), 1:258. Emphasis is mine. That Wesley maintains that assurance is the common privilege of the sons and daughters of God suggests that it is rare when assurance, marked by doubt and fear, does not soon follow the new birth.

126. Maddox, Aldersgate, p. 145.

All attempts to illumine clearly the point at which the theological conflict among us arises render a commendable service. So it is fitting to welcome the contribution by Paul Jäger in *Die Christliche Welt* 25 (1905). Without sentimental phraseology and with serious effort to establish a clear position, Jäger demands that theology utilize "the atheistic method." His remarks were prompted by Lüügert's statement that even in historical observation and judgments God is not to be ignored; an untheological theologian would be a self-contradiction. To this Jäger replies that the atheistic method is the only scientific one: "We wish to explain the world (including religion, whether its social formation or the experience of the individual) on the basis of this world," i.e., "we wish to explain it, without any recourse to the concept of God, on the basis of the forces that are immanent within the world process." In Jäger's view, then, today's dominant leitmotif in all branches of science must function in the same way in theology. Jäger has therefore boldly countered Lüügert's remark. While Lüügert indicates that it is impossible to ignore God, Jäger answers: " Entirely right! And we do not wish to ignore him; rather, we wish to negate him. For whoever wishes to explain all phenomena "immanently" (on the basis of this-worldly factors alone)—whether Jesus' divine Sonship or our own knowledge of God, whether human sinfulness or the apostolic gospel—does not ignore God but negates him. Any recourse to God is here excluded not only temporarily from scientific thinking, say in the interest of producing pure, authentic observation, but is categorically banned. The essential characteristic of theology becomes that it is blind to God. "The scientific method," says Jäger, "ignorat deum, knows nothing of God."

This blindness toward God is naturally characteristic of the theologian only in

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terms of his scientific functioning; as a religious person he does not possess it. The religious person keeps his piety separate from his scientific endeavor. In this regard Jäger’s presentation is not some new proposal that could hamper scientific observation. It is the old, sharply delineated dualism that we have long since learned from Kant, Jakobi, Schleiermacher, Fries, etc.: The heathen head and the pious heart, the atheistic scientific knowledge and the religious sentiment, etc., etc. Yet in contrast to the older attempts to split up the person, the situation has shifted significantly. Formerly the atheistic head produced things like natural science, knowledge of the world, philosophy, piety, including theology, stood alongside these as a separate domain. Now Jäger argues not merely that our interpretation of nature or epistemology is unavoidably atheistic and knows nothing of God; he says this of theology. The dualism which he recommends to us takes the following form: As theologians you interpret religion immanently, apart from God; as religious persons you consider it to be relationship with God. In other words, as theologians you must demonstrate what you as Christians deny. And as pious people you have to affirm what you as theologians oppose.

Logically it is entirely clear—or as Jäger might put it, “explicable in purely immanent terms”—that the older forms of dualism are carried further in this harsher formulation. Since religion is a part of human history and, parallel to that, of individual life-histories as well, there exists a science of religion. If science is inherently atheistic, and if it is obligated to wall itself off from the concept of God, this inevitably applies to the science of religion, too. Once one has assigned to “piety” the task of stating its views in opposition to the “scientific explanation of the world,” one must also grant it the capacity to state its views in opposition to theology. But this intensifies the old dualism to such extent that it is bound to tear apart both the individual personality, inasmuch as it participates in the scientific and religious life simultaneously, and the fellowship that is peculiar to the church.

Jäger calls his article an aid “toward understanding”; this subtitle is completely appropriate, since what he writes sheds bright light on the entire difficulty of our church situation. That which is still unclear in what he says merits thorough consideration.

1. SHOULD DOGMATICS ALSO BE ATHEISTIC?

Regarding this question Jäger’s remarks are imprecise. His final formulation of the problem (“The question we face is this: Should theology be religious science or the science of religion?”) is muddled. We all support the science of religion, i.e., scientific inquiry whose object is religion. And the issue is also not “religious science” in general without determination of its object. The question turns rather on the formulation of the relationship in which science stands to religion as fact and experience. Does the science of religion affirm or deny religion? Does it dispute religion and dismiss it as illusion or give an account of it? The question centers not on isolated specifics and ramifications of religious occurrence, but on the central matter, the affirmation or denial of God. The logical confusion of Jäger’s question arises from the confidence with which he puts forth his concept of science as the only possible and valid one. From the outset “the science of religion” means for him the atheistic criticism and explanation of religion. That is why he sees it in self-evident logical opposition to “reli-
Jäger goes on to say about his science of religion: "Since science does not acknowledge God, the science of religion and therefore also scientific theology have to do only with the subjective attitude of man. This holds true for the history of religions in general as well as for biblical and church history." Here theology is conceived exclusively as history, and dogmatics, along with ethics, is either forgotten or eliminated by a hasty amputation. Even if it be only forgotten, the fact that a theologian can speak of the superfluity of the concept of God in theology, without so much as even a thought for dogmatics, is highly illuminating. Yet the problem is not the specific formulation of Jäger's train of thought. It lies in the fundamental orientation of the approach he describes. The aims with which the dogmatician and ethicist go about their work are taboo for "scientific theology." In other words, it would be a mistake to suppose that the atheistic method of theology implies an atheistic dogmatics and ethics; these must, on the contrary, simply cease to exist. If our historical observation is thought to establish firm conviction regarding God, so that some event becomes for us a revelation of God, Jäger's response is that such "inconsistency in academic work would have to be called dogmatic method and rejected." Dogmatic and scientific are here conceived as mutually excluding opposites, and the denial demanded for the one by each component of the other is for Jäger self-evident. True, he wishes to establish for theology its rightful place within the entire complex of scientific work in the university. But his concern does not extend to theological labor in its entirety. In the university and in the sphere of science, the dogmatician and the ethicist are nothing but withered trees to be cut down.

Since Jäger wants to move us "toward understanding," it will be helpful if opponents of thinkers like Lütgert and me get a clear grasp of why we do not renounce dogmatics as a science. Emotional attachments are not what move us, as if our mood required production of some sort of conceptual literature to stay afloat. Far more important, though not yet finally decisive, is the consideration that the renunciation of dogmatics destroys religious community. There is no Christian congregation without dogma, without shared affirmations resulting in common convictions. So the question of what grounds and shapes the Christian congregation and its fellowship as a common certainty is of profound importance for every Christian. And the more unsteady and fluid the spiritual devotion of the congregation becomes, the more important the question grows. Now an opponent might reply to us: 'What kind of a narrow-minded notion this is; as if science had anything to do with praxis or theology with the church!' But such protest would reflect thinking that is really not modern at all but breathes the spirit of a past generation, one haunted and tormented by the shadow of a fanciful "pure reason" which in olden times fluttered around over reality and therefore never made connection with the praxis and the great social relations of life which shape us. In the contemporary university a theology would be eminently justifiable whose most earnest concern were to provide the church the theory it requires for it to be a religious community. Indeed, with their scientific work even our medical authorities and natural scientists, our national economists and historians, stand in intimate relationship to "practical" tasks of the present time.

Yet in glancing at the church's need we have not yet touched the most profound
reason for insisting on dogmatics. We must have dogmatics for truth's sake.

Jäger's reduction of "theology" to history sidesteps the truth question and thereby does damage also to the concept of science. The historian who seeks to observe what happened, and under what conditions, and what is perhaps a causal factor lying behind an event, is unquestionably obedient to the canon of truth in his work. But that same canon sets him limits. To the extent that he is the observer intent on an object, he grants the canon its power. But only to that extent: To go farther would be to suspend the canon. The canon cannot furnish him, as long as he is only a historian, unconditioned mastery. He holds his own personality in a state of suspension and abstains from forming the judgment that he might be inherently inclined to make. Thus he presents religious illusion as well as the ethically pure will, the frivolous atheism as well as that faith which upholds the Protestant doctrine of justification, with the same fidelity "as a photographic camera," to use Jäger's phrase. Even the inner life of the individual is understood according to this same method: The historian elucidates how the religious conceptions arise within him; which circumstances cause them; what becomes visible, perhaps regarding causal links; between the events he scrutinizes. With this his attentiveness has borne all the fruit it can. His knowledge has reached its limits. Is his task complete? If we say yes, then we are in a cowardly way evading the truth question.

No refinement in the historian's art can alter this. We may deepen the concept of "history" ever so much; we may be realists in the highest sense in historical research and bear within us the deep conviction that what has occurred in the past affects us with causal force, that the past generates and forms us even in the course of our thinking and willing. Nevertheless, at no time are we able to grant absolute formative power over us to past events, so that the narration of that which once took place renders our own judgment superfluous, tradition replacing our own thinking and external norms of volition, acting on us from without, replacing our own volition. We remain continually summoned to an act of thought in which our own personality forms its judgment. That is a central tenet of biblical, or if the opponent does not grant this, certainly Protestant spiritual devotion. The historian, however, never reaches this point; he must maintain a suspended state of personal indecision and irresolution, so long as he is nothing but a historian and knows nothing but that which took place in the past. And that is why a theology that is nothing more than history is intolerable for the Protestant church and is its death: Such theology leaves untouched its scientific obligation.

Jäger is governed by the dictum: dogmatic, therefore unscientific. But in fact the relation between the goal of historical and dogmatic theological inquiry runs in the opposite direction as soon as the truth question in its absolute form is opened up without restriction and stipulation. For a theology which can only tell little stories and thus is frozen in indecision and thoughtlessness is a farce when measured by scientific standards, even if it gives its historical novels titles like Life of Jesus or New Testament Theology. Such a theology must cower in shame when compared with the realism of natural science—but also compared with the earnestness which inheres in the history of language, of law, of the nation and the state, etc. On the other hand, if theology does not permit its goal to be attenuated and leaves room for the truth- and God-
question with their absolute gravity, then it stands parallel to the other branches of research in their close ties to reality. Admittedly this opens the possibility that we will also receive negative, atheistic dogmatics and ethics, e.g., a dogmatics for which the atheistically-conceived, closed-nexus concept of the world does not function solely as a "methodological" principle but is earnestly affirmed, thus transforming theology into cosmology. However, a negative dogmatics, which opposes the concept of God and of course is obligated to ground its thesis in the same way as positive, God-affirming dogmatics, will always be an aid to clear distinction and decision in thinking and volition, while the reduction of theology to mere history with its endless observing and penchant for exotic religious expression radically undermines thought and volition in the end.

2. WHY SHOULD THE HISTORY OF RELIGION BE ATHEISTIC?

Let us now follow Jäger where his interest leads him: Why does the history of religion require the atheistic method? With welcome clarity he states his claim not as a theoretical certainty, scientific proposition, or the like, but as a decision: "We will" to explain the world immanently, so the scientific "leitmotiv" should be purely immanent in conception, i.e., conceived in such a way that the God-question may not arise at all. I call this welcome because it says good-bye to formulations like absolute science and pure reason. Jäger thus makes use of an important gain in today's understanding of the knowing process; he too is aware of the close relation between the course of thinking and willing. All thinking contains within it a volitional component, so that what "we will" appears in our science. In saying this, of course, none of us attributes to ourselves a sovereign power of establishing facts that is exempt from all substantiation and justification. If thinking and willing are bound together, then thinking is not denied and reduced merely to willing. For Jäger, too, "The leitmotiv of science is something arrived at and sustained by thinking."

The question therefore stands before us: Why do "we will" thus? In the first place, who are the "we?" Formerly, right down to the previous generation, they did not exist in the church. True, rightly or wrongly the exclusion of the idea of God from theological observation, occurred often enough; nevertheless, up until the present time there was never a theology that as a matter of principle banned the idea of God from its sphere of labor and sought to explain religion "immanently without recourse to the idea of God." Not until recently have the "we" made their debut. Jäger himself tells us as much: The type of theological work that he recommends is as a matter of principle distinct from all earlier work in the church, which he deems to have been "unscientific." Now for the theologian the unity of the church is not some trivial notion having absolutely nothing to do with the effort to perceive and understand with all possible diligence the transformations that have taken place in the church's thinking and willing. Commonality with the earlier work of the church takes on great weight for the theologian because of the easily sustainable observation that we, in our own religiosity, are incorporated into a common life binding successive generations to one another. In view of the whole inner situation of Protestantism, however, it is not at all surprising that Jäger facilely makes a radical break. What can the past offer to the theologian?
“We cannot close our minds to the fact,” says Jäger, that we have to forge a new theology, one that breaks with all that has heretofore gone by that name. So forget about the ancients, who in their unmodern unscientific way thought that they must deal earnestly with the knowledge of God in theology! “We” in the universities must internalize and further modern definitions of our goals. And why is this the case?

“We will to have a scientific theology, i.e., a science of the religious life, that stands in precise contact with the scientific awareness and labors of our time. We want to remain in touch with what is today generally regarded as scientific.” The atheistic method “is the seminal scientific idea of our time.”

Is Jäger observing correctly? It seems to me that here once again mists from an earlier time have blurred his vision. The absolute rationality and explicability of nature was at one time the leitmotif for the Cartesian and Spinozan interpretation of nature. But is it really still true today that natural science is ruled by the motivating principle: “I wish to explain, and to do so on the basis of purely this-worldly factors”? Natural science wishes to observe, certainly also to explain, yet only so far as observation suggests causal connections to us. And that is utterly true of historical science! Where is an earnest laborer in the discipline of history who is not painfully aware of the immense difficulty involved in really seeing and observing in the face of historical processes, and how much caution is required of us to guard against cheap pseudo-explanations? The concept of the world as Jäger wields it, which he understands as a self-generating and self-sustaining unity, does not come from the observation of nature, much less from historical perception, but grows from speculative roots. It is on this basis that Jäger demands of the theologian that he undertake what every other scientific enterprise refuses, namely, to allow its operating principle to be forced upon it by allegedly omniscient speculation. In rejecting Lütgert’s thesis, “In every historical method lies a hidden dogmatics,” Jäger at the same time furnishes the finest evidence for it. For his idea of “world,” which confers atheistic self-sufficiency on “world,” so that in the entire realm of historical occurrence nothing may or can become visible except for “world,” constitutes in itself a dogmatics. But it is a dogmatics that is worthless at the outset, because it is not arrived at and substantiated by effort but rather adopted as law merely because “everyone” accepts it. “The age accepts it; therefore I must accept it, too”; that is certainly a novel theological method; till now such talk was never heard in the church.

We all see that atheistic tendencies are widespread in the universities. We also all see that they contain at least a measure of the earnestness of scientific verification, i.e., they are based on our contemporary view of nature and arise from careful apprehension of the discrete systems that make up the natural process as well as the power pervading that process even to the whole of the inner life. If Jäger had said: “You must explain religion on the basis of nature; everything that you call religious experience is a physical occurrence, and the concept of God is a confused synonym for nature,” then his formulation would actually stand in continuity with the currents of the time. And it would likewise point to one of the great challenges that our present age poses for theological work.

But mark this. Even if we come to terms with the scientific energy that animates
today's atheistic mood, and if we keep alive its power over the circle of those who labor in the realm of research and new discovery, that still gives no legitimate basis for the will that states: “We will to explain religion solely on the basis of this-worldly factors.” What obligates us as members of the universitas litterarum [the scholarly guild] as an inviolable duty is that we, in the field of labor appointed to us, succeed at seeing, at chaste, unsullied observation, at a comprehension of the real event, by one that took place in the past or one that is just now happening. That is the ceterum censeo for every labor within the university. Science is first seeing and secondly seeing and thirdly seeing and again and again seeing. From this vocation nothing absolves us, whatever else may occur in other scientific fields of labor. Let us grant that the atheistic disposition of the natural scientist arises in natural science with compelling necessity, or that the cultural historian in the course of his observations generates, legitimately and unavoidably, a skepticism worthy of Montaigne. Still, none of that would ever in itself legitimate the atheistic theologian, nor relieve us of our duty to approach our own field of labor with open observation. The fruit of colleagues’ work may have the greatest significance for us, or it may create problems of weightiest, indeed impenetrable mystery. Regardless, the theologian remains obligated to regard the realm of occurrence entrusted to him with resolute devotion to his own object. He can arrive at the verdict of atheism only by way of observation of the religious occurrence itself. If he borrows it from the general mood or natural science, then his atheism dishonors him. If theology were a comprehensive knowledge of the world like the older philosophy, then it would admittedly have to go borrowing and begging. There are, however, entirely distinct events which produce both the certainty of God for humanity and within the individual life. This certainty is bound up with them and works its effects through them. As theologians we owe these events an eye that is not deceived by a borrowed leitmotiv but that seeks to comprehend its object with a complete devotion to it. Even if it were true that the natural scientist nowhere found cause to arrive at the idea of God; even if it were true that the historian nowhere encountered events pointing beyond humanity, nowhere encountered a law greater than human will, nowhere encountered a judgment that breaks to pieces human will as sin; even if it were so that also in the theological domain of observation there nowhere emerged a well-founded consciousness of God, nowhere except—let us say: in the way that Jesus lived in God, here however it emerged as an undeniable reality with a power demanding assent from the theologian—in this case the basis and content of theology would be admittedly small, but atheistic theology would be destroyed. Jager, however, does not wish to engage in painstaking observation; he knows a priori that in Jesus he is dealing only with man, just as he also knows a priori that when he encounters the sinful will in man, he has only come in conflict with a human notion of what matters. “Theology,” Jäger states, “stands on equal footing in the framework of the universitas litterarum only so long as it too can, frankly and honestly and not just in appearance, advocate the universally recognized scientific methods.” But there are no general methods which can be transferred from one area of inquiry to another beyond those rules that are grounded directly in the way that cognition takes place. Therefore it is a general and inviolable scientific rule that every judgment must be preceded by
painstaking observation, and all our own conclusions must be preceded by the act of 
reception, without which our own production bursts into wind and illusions. The athe-
istic conception of the world is not a category constituent of the act of cognition. 
Surely the history of recent generations proves this sufficiently. Up to and including 
the time of Kant's death, the concept of God was looked upon as an essential posses-
sion of reason. For the generation after Kant the self-consciousness of reason was one 
with the consciousness of God. Now for the "we" blindness toward God is the essen-
tial attribute of all science. Theology is too serious a matter, and it is entrusted with an 
area of life too significant, for it to allow itself to ape such deviations in servile defer-
tence to fleeting contemporary moods.

Jäger offers us the friendly advice "to have the resolve to withdraw from the univer-
sity" since we do not find ourselves in agreement with the atheistic disposition in it. 
For us, too, our honor in the sphere of scientific researchers is an important regulating 
principle, for the simple reason that it is an effective means of work, which is what 
gives honor its moral worth in all relationships. But it remains for the moment an 
open question whether we have lost that honor by openly remaining theologians, to 
the extent that individual energy permits, and as theologians observing honestly and 
thinking valiantly. And it is far more doubtful that the atheistic theology would 
deserve that honor. In any case, the atheistic theological enterprise would be the most 
certain means of destroying the theological faculties. If it ever really comes to pass that 
our students read the New Testament just like they read Homer, and our exegetes 
explain it like they do Homer with determined elimination of every God-directed 
idea, then the theological faculties have reached the end of the line.

3. WHAT DO WE LOSE WITH THE ATHEISTIC METHOD?

Jäger fears no loss from his method: Only the theologian would be atheistic, not his 
personal identity; only the method of scientific work, not the personal status of the 
worker; only the science, but this would be merely "the maidservant of human 
inquiry, not its lord" and "does not speak the last word."

But here the concept "method" contains a striking ambiguity. It merely points a 
"way," Jäger claims—but the choice of the way occurs here through the fixing of the 
goal. The proposition: "We will to explain Christ, and for that matter Christianity, both 
as corporate entity and personal experience, on the basis of this-worldly factors alone, 
without any reference to God," contains a fully determined intellectual goal which 
specifies the result of the entire theological enterprise. Here method does not simply 
furnish preliminary guidance dealing with the technique which theological work 
should employ. Rather it pronounce a judgment on the emergence and essence of 
religious phenomena. If I say: Chemistry is to be explained on the basis of physical 
processes, or that changes in philosophical outlooks are to be explained from the dif-
fences of climate and nutrition, these are no longer methodological principles but 
theories which must not be allowed to govern observation but must rather emerge 
from observation. Of course, I can make merely methodological use of such princi-
pies; in this case I use them to bring into sharper focus those phenomena in my area 
of investigation which my theories regard as the sole causative powers. There has
never been a theory that cannot in turn be employed methodologically. Thus also Jäger's thesis may be employed merely methodologically. Then it says simply that we have to take account of what it signifies for the religious occurrence that it is incorporated into the cosmic, historical nexus. But we hardly need Jäger's encouragement to take this step; such methodological impulses have been fully and effectively adopted into theology for more than a century already, i.e., since the theologian too had to deal seriously with the concept of history. If that is all that Jäger intended to state, then why his polemical tone and talk of the fresh beginning of a new theological enterprise, different from all that has gone before?

But Jäger also has cheerful counsel for those who have accepted the abandonment of the concept of God as determinative for theology. They should still feel quite free to exercise their piety undisturbed as befits their taste and capacity. But this freedom stands on mysterious footing. The strivings of the older generation (Schleiermacher, Fries, etc.) to establish and secure such a dualism were incomparably more earnest; what we hear in Jäger gives the impression of being disorganized and lacking in profundity. So, for example, he suddenly talks again of "higher knowledge." In the old dualism this expression made tolerable sense, since it regarded only the understanding of phenomena as atheistic; alongside that understanding some "higher knowledge" might still crop up somewhere, say if alongside pure reason yet another, additional reason were discovered. But now, after even theology is to be atheistic—where does "higher knowledge" still come from? Jäger likens the results of theological labor to a photograph that captures the object at a certain angle, noting that "obviously it doesn't achieve everything." What kind of a mysterious spirit could achieve more? Would it maybe embellish the photograph or even impart motion to its image? It is true enough, as Jäger writes, that the theologian does not speak the final, most profound word. But then who does speak it? Certainly not the New Testament, for we have already "explained" it "without recourse to the concept of God."

In such an approach neither science nor religion retain what is due them. After science has first explained everything in purely human terms, it now suddenly becomes remarkably modest, more modest than is permitted if it really explains. First it has been demonstrated to us scientifically that our praying is obviously only a monologue. Then there suddenly comes a "higher voice" and overturns the verdict of science, and science—it beats a hasty retreat. Will it really be so well-behaved and silently take its leave at the right moment? First science elucidated for us how Jesus' self-consciousness necessarily acquired its eccentric form under pressure from the ideas and tendencies present in contemporary Judaism. Yet we endorse this chain of thought only as "theologians"; we retain the freedom to believe his claim in which he designates himself the One having come into existence through God. But what about science! Oh—let's forget about it for the moment. Genuine science is not there so that we can forget about it.

How solemnly Jäger begins: "We want a scientific theology!" Hats off to this magnificent aspiration! The appearance is given of occupying the heights of resolute love of truth, of being gripped with a burning desire for certainty and an earnest longing for reality. But where we end up does not match where we started out: Intrinsic to this "science" is a profound skepticism. It passes judgment on everything, bold, sover-
eign, "without recourse to the concept of God." Then it ultimately confesses that it actually does not compel any particular judgment that would amount to a seriously binding affirmation, nor does it want to.

In negotiation with Kantianism it has already been said quite clearly for a long time that dispensing with the idea of God is inevitably tantamount to dispensing with the idea of truth and is therefore destructive of science. The way in which Jäger dismisses his "science" at the moment it is convenient for him is more support for this argument.

And religion? Here too one need only repeat what has already often been said: Such a dualism makes unattainable a complete, life-determining devotion of the self to God. How can double-mindedness be avoided if the theologian and the Christian stand in irreconcilable opposition to each other in one and the same person? Greatest caution is required toward that which delivers from science, i.e., delivers from the canon of truth and earnestness for truth, working mischief in us individually and in the church in the form of feeling, opinion, "ultimate word," etc.

Of course Kant is also brought in to console us: Science has to do only with "appearance," not with "essence." But the natural scientist who breaks off his experiment, says to himself "All just phenomenal!" and doesn't take seriously his results does not deserve our admiration. Nor does the historian studying Caesar Augustus or Napoleon who suddenly claps hand to forehead, cries out "Only phenomenal!" and on that account grants the last word to a "higher voice" instead of to his investigation. The same goes for the theologian, who first explains religious activity atheistically and thereafter primly says: "There you are; I have explained only the appearance; think what you will about the essence." We have no other life than that which we lead as persons endowed with consciousness. In this life, so constituted, a faith surrendered to God arose and continues to arise. The flight from this life to a "thing in itself" is a sham.

4. What Do We Gain with the Atheistic Method?

It is possible to speak of an advantage only if the method is seriously employed solely as "method." That means it gives direction to the observer's attention, which applies itself to the relation between religious occurrences and the "world." In this respect Jäger's hopes are not entirely illusory and are in part confirmed by scholarly methods already long in use. He can rightly say: It would be highly instructive to see how far an interpretation would get which contemplates religion, thus e.g. Jesus, the New Testament, the church, our personal faith, only as a product of humans and the world. The concept of "world" is no phantom; we also cannot measure a priori to what extent the historical sequence of events is a closed unity. Far less can we measure a priori how the presence and activity of divine grace and truth are mediated within that unity. To be sure, presently the physiological aspect of the concept of "world" is still meaningless for the theologian. Questions like: Are the religious processes contingent upon individual formations of the brain? If so in what way? To what extent does race exercise an influence? etc., result only in empty prattle. Such observations obtain theological significance only when they have become an assured part of anthropology and are not just empty words for an impenetrable mystery. It is different with those observations which are directed toward the relationship of the
individual to the people, of private thought to speech, of the individual will to the collective will of the community, of the spiritual heritage of some present moment to the past and the logical and ethical bonds transcending the individual which are at work here. Along this line we have already observed much. And there remains much more painstakingly to assimilate in the areas of biblical history, church history, and the course of individual lives, our own as well as others. But offsetting this gain from the approach hailed by Jäger as the exclusively justified one is a vast quantity of mistakes. And the more his approach ceases actually to be method and assumes lordship as "leitmotif," the more it becomes a disastrous source of error.

Observation is not an empty word; the wonderful ability to see is granted to us, also in the historical sphere. By observation we can discern the occurrences that form the inner life of the human individual and of humanity. And yet—how fragmented and divergent our contemporary theological literature, even in those matters that are determinative for our judgment on the basis of ostensibly empirical considerations! Why? Because it is just as certain that observation requires the use of our own eyes, and they are informed by that which, as our intellectual holdings, exercises control over us. The relinquishing of ourselves which is part of every authentic observation, which takes the form of devotion to that which has happened, can never and should never obliterate us. We are the ones who must see, and our eyes are our primary equipment for carrying out the work of thinking. That is why it is no light matter which "leitmotif" we submit ourselves to. Now if we determine to explain religion based on solely this-worldly factors, then from the outset our observation consistently stands in radical contradiction to our object, which emphatically does not lend itself to such explanation, but loudly and steadfastly insists upon the concept of God. Our object intends that we think about God; the observer wills to think "without recourse to the concept of God." Here lies a sharp conflict of wills; if enmeshed in it, are we still able to see what lies before us? And the more we determine not merely to observe but also to explain, the more the object is shaped to fit into the scheme that we have already constructed, and the more our work becomes a caricature of science. What purports to be science transmutes into polemic against its object, and the result is not an account of the past but a novel whose main character is the historian.

Perhaps the opponent will rebuke me by calling attention to the antiquated theology which "explains" the world and Scripture "solely on the basis of God," along with that theology's historical attainments in exegesis, in christology, in the preservation and shaping of the recollections of the experiences of the church, in the biographies of the saints, etc. There, the opponent will point out, it was not the "atheistic method" that was guilty of clouding the picture of history, but its opposite. I take it to be just as little the calling of the theologian to "explain religion solely on the basis of God" as to "explain it solely on the basis of this-worldly factors." The theological rationalism of the Greeks was as mistaken with its postulates as the profane, modern manufacture of conjectures is. If we succeed at truly grasping what generates the certainty of God for us humans, how that certainty so secures itself in us that it becomes certainty and we are able to believe, how it manages to furnish us the inner motivation for will and action, so that the love of God arises and obedience springs up, and all this in such a
way that not only hermits here and there in shattered isolation experience the illumination of God’s light, but in such a way that the church of God comes into being—that would be theology enough for now. Admittedly such theology does not come about “without recourse to the idea of God”; it rather has its sole object and goal in him.

Briefly just a couple more matters: The invitation for us to subscribe to the atheistic method of theology has been published in *Die Christliche Welt*, which takes great pains to stay abreast of the growth of Catholic theology. If one looks back at the relationship between Catholic and Protestant theology in the first half of the nineteenth century, the reversal in Catholic outlook is highly instructive. Does *Die Christliche Welt* think that the atheistic method in Protestant theology will improve that relationship? Will that relationship be enhanced by the Protestant faculties’ avoidance of the truth-question, their burying the question of God and their “explaining religion solely on the basis of this-worldly factors”? If the Protestant faculties still talk of “religion,” but no longer retain any knowledge of God, and their Catholic colleagues are the only ones left to pose the question of God, and they answer it by the means at their disposal (even if these are only the means furnished by Thomism), then it is likely to become obvious pretty quickly who needs help from whose theology.

And one last point: Jager’s summons has reminded us of the dignity that we possess as members of the university. As already stated, I absolutely respect this appeal to the high intellectual ideals of our universities. But it is not only to colleagues in the philosophy department that we are under obligation. As members of the university we have our dignity above all in that we stand as teachers before those studying under us. Should we turn our young people into ministers according to atheistic method? Should we face them having retreated to Jager’s position: ‘True, theology that has surrendered the concept of God does not achieve everything; but there are still final, deepest words beyond theology?’ Certainly: There are still final words to be added to theology proceeding on atheistic premises. And sometimes they will be unwelcome words—yet sometimes words by which actually someone besides the theologian begins to speak, tearing atheistic theology, its concept of the world, and its concept of religion locked up in human subjectivity to shreds.

I would like to express my gratitude to Professor Peter Stühlmacher of Tübingen, Mrs. Anna Kuhn and to Professor Robert Yarbrough for reading over this translation and offering many helpful suggestions.—Trans.

NOTES


2. Whoever shares Jager’s view cannot possibly be surprised if those who are deeply concerned for the gospel manifest a deep suspicion and spirited protest against “theology,” and if for many in Germany it is gradually becoming a weighty question how the church can be sup-
plied with suitable clergy, since the scientific activity of the theological faculties is becoming increasingly unsuited for this.

3. It is also interesting that ethics is forgotten, because it documents the scant connection that exists between the theological activity called for by Jäger and the New Testament. Simply reading the Epistle to the Romans does not make anyone a Paulinist, but it is hardly thinkable that someone reading Romans could avoid colliding with the problem of the will. He would from then on be aware of questions like: What does the exercise of fleshly will involve, and what about spiritual, divine willing? How do we become free of the former and participate in the latter? etc. And whoever is gripped by such questions certainly does not forget ethics when he speaks of the goal of theology.
THE RHETORICAL
ARRANGEMENT OF HEBREWS

JOHN R. WALTERS

Author’s note: The following paper was originally read at the 1989 Christmas Conference of the John Wesley Fellowship, held at Candler School of Theology. Since that time, numerous requests have been made for access to the paper, and it has now been cited in several published sources. The author has decided to make the paper available as originally delivered in order to remain consistent with its citations in the published literature, and an addendum has been attached to bring the article more up to date.

The Epistle to the Hebrews presents a number of critical challenges and complexities. Authorship, date of composition, literary genre, intended audience, purpose, and plan are debated with no real consensus to be found. This article attempts to further our understanding of the arrangement of Hebrews by way of examining the author’s rhetorical use of biblical texts in this “word of exhortation” (13:22).

A. A SURVEY OF SCHOLARSHIP

Scholars have produced markedly different results in the attempt to define the arrangement of this epistle. A brief survey of the analytical variety is offered to show both the limitations and the consensus of our scientific probing to date. Following that survey, another proposal will be offered.

A generation ago the common approach was to divide Hebrews into two portions, didactic and admonitory, much like the divisions seen in the letters of the pauline corpus. Nairne saw the argumentative core (5:1-10:18) enclosed by a prelude (1:1-4:16) and an exhortation (10:19-13:25). Westcott took the theme of the epistle to be the finality of Christianity and divided its argument into five parts, the first four didactic and the final one admonitory. Moffatt traces the argument of the epistle and notes the exhortations by way of digression. The

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argument ends at 10:18 and is followed by appeals for constancy (10:19-13:24). Continental scholarship of that time was less inclined to follow this ready two-part arrangement. Windisch says, "Auch die früher übliche Zerlegung in einen mehr theoretischen (1-10,18) und mehr praktischen Teil (10,19 ff.) ist nicht angängig..." Instead he argues that Hebrews is not composed as a seamless fabric well thought through, but as the jotting of one whose musings ebb and flow. It only really hangs together generally in its presentation of the high-priestly work of Christ. In fact, it offers a series of six theological musings on the high-priesthood of Christ marked off by three intervening digressions (3:1-4:13; 5:11-6:20; 7:26-8:2), which are largely admonitory in nature. As of 10:18 these reflections are concluded, and paranetic considerations follow, again interrupted by a great digression (11:1-40).

Present scholarship likewise tends to view the paranetic passages as ancillary to the development of the main theme(s). Wikenhauser sees three parts to the arrangement of Hebrews: the superiority of the new revelation (1:1-4:13), Jesus the true High Priest (4:14-10:18), and exhortation to loyalty (10:19-13:17). Grant apportions Hebrews into eleven sections, basing the divisions on the author's use of connectives and rhetorical periods. The fourth section (5:11-6:20) is offered only parenthetically because it consists of exhortation in consideration of the third point, viz., Jesus being the great High Priest who has passed through the heavens. The ninth section draws ethical implications (12:1-29), and the tenth section offers various injunctions (13:1-17). Hunter also finds the argument interspersed with exhortation and, noting the author's habit, divides the discourse anyway into main argument (1:1-10:18) and closing exhortation (10:19-13:25). Guthrie sees only two sections, argument and exhortation: the superiority of Christianity (1:1-10:18) and exhortations based thereon (10:19-13:17). Kümmel, too, regards the presence of paranetic passages throughout the exposition as interruptive, though he recognizes "these are actually the real goal of the entire exposition." Recent scholarship has taken three paths. One focuses on the relationship of the paranesis to the theological argument in seeking to refine the outline of Hebrews. Childs, for example, finds a clue to the book's arrangement in the "interchange between dogmatic and paranetic sections of the letter." Long ago Zahn pointed out that "the longer as well as the shorter theoretical discussions always end in practical exhortations." This point has been overlooked by the scholarly community. Zahn goes on to state:

Nor do these exhortations give the impression of being an appended moral. The intensity of their language and the detail with which they are frequently worked out, would seem to indicate that they express the main purpose of the letter to which even the most artificial and detailed discussions are subordinate. Exhortation is not to be viewed as superfluous to the progression of thought in Hebrews. Rather, argumentation serves exhortation.

The second fruitful direction taken by more recent scholarship has been to investigate the author's use of Scripture as an indication of arrangement. Guilding suggests that lectionary readings may explain the author's selection of scriptural texts.
goes a step farther to argue that the author treats the Old Testament writings as a mashal requiring typological and messianic explanation. The framework of the epistle in his view is supplied from the Psalter: psalms 8, 95, 110, and 40 heading the main sections of the work. To that list of texts Lohse adds one more important biblical passage, Jeremiah 31, from which this sermon in its several sections is derived. Koester is in agreement, stating, "The interpretation of Scripture is certainly the key for understanding Hebrews, and its outline can be explained as a sequence of scriptural interpretations under the heading of certain theological topics." This point will be elucidated below.

Vaganay has taken a third, fresh approach to Hebrews. He suggests its plan is discernible and is characterized by the use of inclusio and concatenatio. The inclusio is denoted by a verbal correspondence between the beginning and the end of a literary unit. Vaganay argues for the occurrence in Hebrews of mots-crochet, "hook words," anticipating and linking the end of one unit to the onset of the next. This approach has been followed and presented in more refinement by Vanhoye. He has observed other rhetorical devices in the epistle, such as alternation of genres (exposition and exhortation), concentric symmetry, contrasts, and les annonces du sujet, i.e., oblique references in advance to a theme only later to be treated. He divides the book into concentric or chiastic sections: Exordium, 1:1-4; A (Eschatology), 1:5-2:18; B (Ecclesiology), 3:1-5:10; X (Sacrifice), 5:11-10:39; B' (Ecclesiology), 11:1-12:13; A' (Eschatology), 12:14-13:18; Conclusion, 13:20-21. Indebted to the work of Vanhoye, Spicq and Swetnam offer their own variations.

In this survey we have seen the variety of approaches taken with respect to the arrangement of Hebrews. Almost uniformly they are based on the doctrinal argument(s) presented there. Only the more recent studies are placing the paranesis on par with the exposition. Consensus has long recognized Hebrews to employ varied and creative rhetoric, but its definition and significance for the book's arrangement and argument are debated still. What can be said with confidence is that major breaks are noted commonly before 2:5; 3:1; 4:14; 8:1; 10:18; and less commonly before 5:10; 7:1; and 13:1.

In an article just published Lindars has brought various threads together remarkably well in an insightful analysis of the epistle's structure. He rightly argues that the climax of the argument is not to be found in the treatment of the high priesthood of Christ, or of his sacrifice, but in the following section on faith (and its response). The author is not concerned to garner assent for his novel doctrinal presentations; rather, his aim is to persuade a dissident faction of Christians in a certain locale to change their behavior to be in conformity with their original confession of Christ. He states, "The whole composition is parenesis (or παράστασις, 13:22), and the doctrinal exposition is subordinate to this purpose." The central argument is not a proof of the efficacy of Jesus' death as sacrifice, but a proof of the permanence of its efficacy as sacrifice for sin once for all. The dissidents, in consciousness of their (post-baptismal) sins according to Lindars, are seeking remedial help once again in the ministrations of their former Judaism. This conjecture is debatable but no one disputes that the author is calling them back to their original confession and urging them to move forward in
fidelity to Christ by stepping "outside the camp" of their former religious associations. Thus, in Lindars' view the grand finale is 12.18-29, and chapter thirteen reintroduces calm by way of closing. Lindars has chosen to lift up the rhetorical aims, methods, and responses embedded in Hebrews rather than to delineate the actual structural framework. So, this will be attempted below, and to do so (at least) one further rhetorical element to the puzzle needs to be lifted up.

In an article now thirty years old G.B. Caird presents evidence that links the structure of Hebrews to the argument it puts forward. Recognizing the ultimate purpose of the book's discourse to be a pastoral one, Caird proposes that the author's argument is arranged in sections around four biblical passages, each one after the first itself introduced by a long catena of biblical quotations) placed at the head of its respective section. This marshaling of proof-texts is done with a purpose:

It is not the purpose of the author to prove the superiority of the New Covenant to the Old, nor to establish the inadequacy of the old order. His ultimate purpose, of course, is pastoral, for he has been appalled at the spiritual lethargy, the slackening of morals, which has overtaken his friends, and he writes to summon them to that constant striving towards maturity of faith which Christianity demands and makes possible. To this end he attempts to show them that they are living in the day of grace and opportunity to which the whole history and education of the people of God have been directed. His argument falls into four sections, each having as its core an Old Testament passage which declares the ineffectiveness and symbolic or provisional nature of the Old Testament religious institutions. All other scriptural references are ancillary to these four (Pss. 8, 95, 110, and Jer. 31), which control the drift of the argument.20

This proposal has the merit of explaining rhetorical features of the author's argumentation that many, Caird included, have not related to each other. More will be said about this in a moment.

It is well known that paranesis is interspersed in blocks throughout the document. W. Nauck has argued that the book is structured by means of the paranetic passages that mark the beginning and ending of each of the three major sections he sees: 1:1-4:13; 4:14-10:31; 10:32-13:17. This is an important insight and explains in part the flow of the book. It has the important advantage of providing some rationale for the placement of exhortation in blocks throughout the epistle. However, it leaves further questions unanswered.

A variant on Caird's approach has been followed by two other investigators. F. F. Bruce finds an extensive use of the Psalter in Hebrews:

First a section of the Psalter is quoted more or less verbatim, and then words and phrases from the quotation are incorporated into the following exposition, somewhat in the manner now familiar to us from the pesher texts at Qumran. Again, more than once he starts a phase of his argument with a psalm quotation and then turns to other Old Testament passages dealing with the same theme for material to elaborate his argument.21
As Bruce sees the epistle's structure, the primary texts upon which it is based are Pss. 8, 95, 110, and 40. The purpose behind this selection is as follows:

The purpose of our author's exegesis of Old Testament scripture, as of his general argument, is to establish the finality of the gospel by contrast with all that went before it (more particularly, by contrast with the Levitical cultus), as the way of perfection, the way which alone leads men to God without any barrier or interruption of access. Again, this analysis is similar to Caird's with the one exception that Caird made the additional point that the texts chosen actually argue the self-attested ineffectiveness of the old covenant. The author's case is based on the Scripture's witness against itself. It is this observation that leads Caird to take Jer. 31 as the epistle's fourth main text rather than Psalm 40.

Eduard Lohse agrees with Bruce that scriptural citations are given and then explained in an argument designed to show the supremacy of God's revelation in Jesus Christ. Lohse differs, though, in his choice of primary texts. He takes the same passages suggested by Caird and Bruce and combines them together: Pss. 8, 95, 110, Jer. 31, and Psa. 40. But, the particular strength of Caird's article is that it shows more clearly than do Bruce and Lohse the rationale behind the principal quotations and the connection between them in the author's overall argument.

A nagging problem remains. The various analyses of the arrangement of Hebrews leave 10:19-13:25 disconnected from what precedes. Even Caird, Bruce, and Lohse do not show precisely how the paranesis fits into the structure and argument of the letter. The tendency of scholars in approaching Hebrews has been to emphasize theology at the expense of exhortation in the epistle. In each case their concern is to explain the theological argument of the discourse, consequently their analyses of the epistle's arrangement are theologically oriented. Invariably, they do not go on to explain how the final chapters relate to the structure they propose but treat them as an appendage. Lindars alone has correctly placed the climax of the epistle in the paranesis of the closing chapters. After all, if this epistle recognized by all to have a pastoral or exhortative thrust reveals anything about the author's intentions, surely it is his desire to move his audience to keep their eyes fixed upon Jesus (12:1-2) and to go forth to him outside the camp (13:13). The exhortation throughout points in this direction, but the final three chapters really drive the point home. The analyses of Caird, Bruce, and Lohse leave the final three chapters somewhat disconnected from the tight theological argument they see employed through chapter ten.

The epistle is so rich theologically that one might easily but mistakenly focus on the content of the epistle rather than its intent. If, on the other hand, theology is the handmaiden of paranesis in this λόγος τῆς παρακλήσεως as the author himself describes it, then one should expect the employment of primary scriptural texts somehow to apply to the closing paranesis of the letter. The other blocks of paranesis noted by Nauck as significant for each section build to this final extended call; it is the paranesis that holds the various sections of the discourse together in a unified whole. Such passages as 12:1-2, 18-29 and 13:13-16 offer in miniature the entire purport of the book.
Nor is theology lacking in the last three chapters as might be concluded from the analyses of those who find no primary texts beyond chapter ten. The discussions of faith from a perspective of salvation history in chapter eleven and of divine disciplining in chapter twelve provide clear theological content. At the close of the book as all the way through it, theology serves paranetic interests.

B. A PROPOSAL

Hebrews is the clearest New Testament example of rhetorical composition. The writer is not only a brilliant theologian but also a masterful orator. One rhetorical device employed is the emphasis on God speaking both in past and present via the Scriptures. The entire introduction (1:1-2:4) focuses not on the superiority of Christ to angels but on the eschatological communication of God. Psalm 95 is introduced as the present (eschatological) communication of the Holy Spirit to the target community (3:7-14). Psalm 2:7 and 110:4 are the statements of God conferring upon Jesus the glory of high priesthood (5:5-6). Indeed, the author refers to Psalm 110:4 as the very oath of God sworn to Jesus (7:20-21). The new covenant prophecy of Jeremiah 31 is the performative proclamation of God relegating the Mosaic dispensation to obsolescence (8:8-13). In quoting Jeremiah 31 again later on, the author introduces it as the present eschatological witness of the Holy Spirit to the target community (10:15-19). Habakkuk 2:3-4 is cited as the eschatological promise of God yet outstanding to those who do not shrink back but move forward in faith (10:37-38). The emotive climax of the whole work is the passage recalling the Sinai theophany (12:18-29). More precisely, it is a theophony because God is not seen but heard in trumpet blast and oracular voice. The warning is given not to refuse to hear the voice presently speaking from heaven. God is speaking, and the audience is called to respond in faith. Briefly put, that is the argument of Hebrews.

The author uses the additional rhetorical device of arranging his argument as a series of six scriptural explications, each framed with exhortation. A principal passage of Scripture is introduced, its eschatological message is expounded, and the admonition is applied freely yet pointedly. By way of this technique the whole book from 2:5 through 13:19 is arranged.

Another way of looking at the argument of the book will explain more fully the relation of the last three chapters to what precedes. According to Caird, the key citations serve the theological purpose of pointing out "that the Old Testament is not only an incomplete book but an avowedly incomplete book, what taught and teaches men to live by faith in the good things that were to come." This point is important and must not be forgotten, but the issue involved at the heart of this word of exhortation (13:22) is more than strictly a theological one.

The theological concern of the author is subservient to his pastoral office. The author does argue the avowed incompleteness of the scriptural record, to be sure. However, once he has proved his point about the avowedly provisional nature of the Old Testament cultus, he does not merely rest his case. Instead, he demonstrates the necessity of sustained response to the eschatological word of God in Jesus Christ. It is eschatological in one sense because it is the fulfillment of scriptural expectations. The
destiny intended for humanity has been achieved by Jesus who stands for us all (2:9). It is eschatological in another sense because it gives rise to expectations yet unfulfilled, i.e., promises that will be inherited only by those who hold fast to the profession of Christ (4:14). The argument of the epistle is directed to the eschatological call for unwavering faithfulness, particularly because Christ has come as high priest of the good things now in place (9:11).

The entire document falls readily into a structure organized according to scriptural quotations and directed toward exhortation, a structure eminently suitable for homiletic discourse and not simply doctrinal formulation. This structure carries forward through the whole book, but in order to show it a slight emendation of Caird’s analysis is necessary. In addition to the four primary quotations noted by him, two later ones are present and carry the argument to its paraletic conclusion. This emendation posits six passages that make the eschatological point that the good things to come and to which the Scriptures avowedly pointed are now realized only in Christ, and faithfulness is required to see them finally realized in the lives of those who would follow him. It is the very same purpose Caird has stated above, but it is viewed from the pastoral rather than theological side. Caird overlooked the final two passages because they did not satisfy his theological requirement that a primary quotation demonstrate the avowedly provisional nature of Scripture’s witness. His theological requirement overlooked the recognized fact that the book’s ultimate purpose is pastoral and that theological considerations are offered to elicit a response from the audience. It seems only appropriate that having shown Scripture to point beyond its Levitical institutions to Christ the author should apply it motivationally to his audience.

Before we proceed to map out the organization of the book in more specific terms, something must be said about Psalm 40:7-9. Both Lohse and Bruce see this quotation in 10:5-7 as the key to a portion of the author’s argument. If it is indeed a primary quotation like the others, one should expect the subsequent argumentation to derive from it as, for example, chapters three and four derive from Psalm 95, chapters five through seven derive from Psalm 110, and chapter eleven derives from Habakkuk 2. Unmistakably, though, the author uses Psalm 40 as the basis of his line of thought only for the next three verses before he returns again to his previous theme of the high priesthood of Christ and the supersession of the old covenant in the institution of the new. Indeed, he even quotes Jeremiah 31 again subsequently to his treatment of Psalm 40. It rather appears that Psalm 40 is ancillary to the more prominent theme offered by Jeremiah 31, i.e., the institution of the new covenant is to be seen in two pieces of evidence supplied by the Bible itself: the old covenant’s provisions for sacrifice are not ultimately as pleasing to God as the body He himself has prepared as their replacement; secondly, someone has come with the express purpose of performing the will of God, the very thing the former covenant could not bring about. These two points provide a parallel to the thought of Jeremiah 31, which presents a new covenant to replace the old one and a new humanity capable of the obedience necessitated by relationship to God. Psalm 40 turns out to be of little more importance to the argument of this section than are Exodus 24:8, which is quoted in 9:20, and Deuteronomy 32:35 and Psalm 135:14, which are quoted in 10:30.

It is significant that Nauck’s findings and Caird’s thesis, with the emendation pro-
posed, correlate quite well together. The paranetic passages group themselves fairly uniformly in proximity to the six primary scriptural quotations, as the following table shows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTION</th>
<th>VERSES</th>
<th>OT TEXT</th>
<th>PLACEMENT</th>
<th>PARANESIS</th>
<th>PARANESIS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Point:</td>
<td>2:5-18</td>
<td>Psa. 8</td>
<td>2:6-8</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;You Crowned Him&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>2nd Point:</td>
<td>3:1-4:13</td>
<td>Psa. 95</td>
<td>3:7-11</td>
<td>3:1,12-14</td>
<td>4:1,11</td>
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<td>&quot;Today&quot;</td>
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<td>3rd Point:</td>
<td>4:14-7:28</td>
<td>Psa. 110</td>
<td>5:6</td>
<td>4:14-16</td>
<td>5:11-6:12</td>
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<td>&quot;A Priest Forever&quot;</td>
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<td>4th Point:</td>
<td>8:1-10:31</td>
<td>Jer. 31</td>
<td>8:8-12</td>
<td>10:19-29</td>
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<td>&quot;A New Covenant&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;By Faith&quot;</td>
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<td>6th Point:</td>
<td>12:3-13:19</td>
<td>Prov. 3</td>
<td>12:5-6</td>
<td>12:3-29</td>
<td>13:1-19</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Do Not Lose Heart&quot;</td>
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<td>Closing</td>
<td>13:20-21</td>
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Nauck's insight that the major sections of the epistle begin and end in paranesis holds even when the book is divided along the lines of Caird's analysis. Caird's point that each section (after the introduction) opens with a primary scriptural quotation is also valid. Under this arrangement the final three chapters are seen to be consistent with the previous chapters in following the same rhetorical device. This suggested emendation consisting of two additional primary quotations fully accounts for the analytical insights of both scholars, yet allows the argument of the letter to flow directly to its crowning, paranetic conclusion:

Let us then go to him outside the camp and bear the abuse he endured. For here we have no lasting city, but we are looking for the city that is to come. Through him, then, let us continually offer a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that confess his name (Heb. 13:13-15, NRSV).
C. ADDENDUM

If anything, the most recent attempts to define the structure of Hebrews have failed to present any breakthroughs. There remains no real agreement on the number of main sections to the epistle, where they begin and end, their connections one to another, their flow in relation to the author’s overriding purpose and message. The use of literary and structural analyses to solve this problem has yielded masterful, if unconvincing, suggestions. One extensive research proposal, however, deserves special mention. George Guthrie has revisited the whole discussion in a monograph on the structure of Hebrews. After summarizing the attempts to explain the organizational scheme of the book from the patristic period to the present day, and after giving due emphasis to modern rhetorical analysis, he notes the difficulties of any method looking for similarities between Hebrews and ancient Greek oration crafted for legal or political venues. The homily in the Diaspora Christian synagogue uses standard oratorical devices for its novel purposes, deviating freely from the public conventions of the day to accomplish its own goals. Guthrie chooses, then, to pursue text-linguistic (discourse) analysis as the method by which to unlock Hebrews. He focuses on cohesion shifts involving various categories such as genre, topic, perspective, actor, grammatical function, or lexical form, he focuses on inclusio as a device, and he focuses on lexical cohesion and transitions. On his analysis, the argument of the epistle falls into two discourses, each with embedded subelements and both treating the position of the Son in relation to other divinely ordained authorities. The second discourse, 4:14-10:25, closely follows Nauck’s primary inclusio involving 4:14-16 and 10:19-25. He concludes that “the hortatory material builds on elements from the expositional material” and that “the expositional material serves the hortatory purpose of the whole work.” The two genres do interrelate, but are not closely integrated:

They move along different lines but hasten toward the same goal. Each in its own way builds toward the goal of challenging the hearers to endure. The expositional material builds toward the goal by focusing on the appointed high priest as a superior basis for endurance. The hortatory passages move toward the goal by reiteration of warnings, promises, and examples used to challenge the hearers to endure.

Even granting Guthrie the importance of Nauck’s inclusio, I cannot agree that the author’s intention is to urge the recipients of the homily to endure abuse. In 4:14-16 and 10:19-25, the passages that define the supposed inclusio, the emphasis is not on endurance per se, but holding fast to the confession of Christ and drawing near to the throne of grace when former alternatives appear to be more attractive. Both actions involve a conscious decision to confirm identity with and relationship to Christ, to grasp the benefits of a unique standing before God, rather than merely enduring opposition such as Jesus did. I find these conclusions frustratingly generalized, given the almost one-hundred and fifty pages of intricate analytical detail and close examination of stylistic elements. Nor does Guthrie explain clearly the author’s placement of paranesis in relation to the organizational arrangement he proposes. The analytical data he assembles from text-linguistic analysis is interesting and helpful, but it by no means puts the question of the book’s arrangement to rest.
The increasing complexity of our critical investigations can become more a reflection of our own analytical sophistication than an accurate rendering of the epistle’s secrets. I remain unconvinced that the rhetorical arrangement of Hebrews is not fairly simple, an opening introduction utilizing a catena of texts and signalling the scriptural framework to follow in six main points, each of the six sections with its primary scriptural passage near the beginning of the section, and each section (after the first) typically punctuated with paranesis at beginning and end, the final, climactic section largely paranetical (as befits this self-styled word of exhortation), and followed by a simple conclusion.

The real question is what criteria of selection prompted the author to assemble the individual scriptural passages together in such a way as to frame an entire homiletic discourse from them? A theological answer as to the superiority or unique position of the Son is not sufficient, nor is the proposal that Scripture avows its own obsolescence in the greater purpose of God. Each of the six passages announces well in advance of that pivotal day the eschatological activity of God in moving beyond the familiar covenantal categories formerly known to Israel; each of the six passages places the hearer in an eschatological tension of fulfillment and anticipation; each of the six passages calls for a sustained response of faith in recognition of the one great divine act that changed the human predicament for all time to come. Endurance is less the issue than a full and complete recognition of the new situation, the new standing afforded God’s people, and the steps needful to ensure it is not forfeited. Naturally, each passage under such an eschatological hermeneutic will bear new truth to the hearer and also call for a new and sustained response. When even one of the primary passages would have sufficed to garner the purposed effect, the author dramatically chose the reinforcement of an additional five such proofs. The close correspondence of 4:14-16 to 10:19-25, striking though it is as paranesis, is less an explicit rhetorical device gleaned from Hellenistic handbooks on oratory than it is a pastoral burden resoundingly reiterated to the assembled audience.

NOTES
5. Ibid.
The Rhetorical Arrangement of Hebrews

13. Ibid.
22. Ibid., p. 392, note 2.
25. F.F. Bruce, op. cit., p. lii.


29. Cited, op. cit., p. 49.

30. Acts 13:15 uses the very same language. If it is any clue, the author has intended this book to be a sermonic discourse.

31. Many commentators end this section at 10:18. There are good reasons for not doing so. 10:19 emphasizes the eschatological reality of entering even now the heavenly sanctuary directly in contrast to the lack of access under the old regime pointed out in 9:8. 10:20 is a restatement of 9:12 and 9:24. 10:21 echoes 8:1. 10:26 can only be understood as a hypothetical denial of the truth stated in 9:26. 10:29, in mentioning "the blood of the covenant," is directly dependent upon the Jer. 31 quotation, which is the focus of the entire section. The section properly concludes with 10:31.

32. Again, the sentence in 12:1-2 belongs more properly to what precedes than to what follows, as the connective τοὐχετος suggests. Furthermore, the "cloud of witnesses" refers to the cavalcade of faith's heroes just called to mind throughout chapter eleven. More pointedly, οὐκ ἔχειν or endurance as a posture of faith is recalled from the beginning of the section, 10:36. Finally, 12:2 explains 11:39-40.

12:3 begins the final section, an extended call to consider Christ and take heart. The theme tolls repeatedly like a great bell throughout the section: 12:5,12,24-25; 13:8,12-13,15; and culminates in the powerful benediction of 13:20-21.

33. The final three verses of the book are not part of the discourse itself, but appear to be a brief note appended to it by the author at the time it was sent.


35. For example, Louis Dussaut, *Sywine structurale de l'Epirste aux Hebrewes: approche d'analyse structurelle* (Paris: Éd. du Cerif, 1981), follows the concentric approach of Vanhoye centering on 9:11, and proposes a four-layer structure to the epistle: the work itself; the work in three main parts; the three parts in seven columns (2,3,2); the seven columns in fourteen sections, arranged in even and odd sequence chiasically.


37. Ibid., p. 32f.

38. Ibid., pp. 141, 143.

39. Ibid., p. 146.
Astronomical phenomena are in a sense mere celestial phenomena, but actually much more. Suffice it to think of the enormous conceptual surplus which is seen in such ordinary celestial phenomena as comets, eclipses, and planetary conjunctions whenever they are seen through the eyes of astronomy and not merely with the naked eye, strengthened as this eye may be by geometry. The surplus in question should seem even more obvious in reference to such extraordinary celestial phenomena as supernovae. Whatever the relative unimportance of their motion through space, their mostly spectroscopic study too rests on the full formulation, since the times of Newton, of the three laws of motion. \(^1\) It is on the application, immediate or remote, of those laws that all physical science, including astronomy, rests.

This distinction between mere celestial phenomena and astronomical phenomena bears also on the inspiration which they respectively produce. Let us take the respective reactions to the same kind of phenomena, supernovae, between 1054 and 1987. In June 1054 Chinese stargazers spotted a novel bright spot in the sky which, not surprisingly, they took for a guest star (hho hsing), the Chinese name for comets. The fact that it did not infringe on Aldebaran inspired in them the view that the rule of the emperor would be beneficial. \(^2\) Such an inspiration belongs in the class of vain hopes and unnecessary fears triggered by comets and other celestial phenomena listed above. The prospect of removing such fears from the human mind was, in fact, a chief benefit which Halley celebrated in the ode he prefixed to Newton's *Principia*. \(^1\) Inspiring as this prospect could be, it remained for long but a prospect and not a result to be shared broadly.

Considerable improvement in correlating positions, either through naked-eye observations and/or more refined geometrical methods, did not raise inspiration to a level...
much higher than the class described above. This is amply revealed in the reaction of Tycho Brahe, the most accurate observer of the sky prior to the advent of telescopes, to the second spotting, in recorded history, of a supernova. Not knowing anything of what those Chinese stargazers had seen in 1054, Tycho Brahe felt that he had made a truly historic first when, on the evening of November 11, 1572, he noticed a very bright star in Cassiopeia. This novelty was in fact the very first item Tycho Brahe mentioned in the long-winded title of his De nova et nullius aetatis memoria prius vita stella... a book of 104 small quarto pages which he published in short order, excited as he was by what he had seen.

As far as inspiration was concerned, the title of Tycho Brahe’s book could seem promising on a superficial look. The new phenomenon, he stated, inspired him to engage in “mathematical contemplation.” Of course, the contemplation had nothing to do with the kind of contemplation of which mystics are the best authority. Tycho Brahe’s mental eyes were fixed on the astrological art of predicting the weather from the planets’ positions. He felt that once those positions were related to the new star’s position the credibility of that art would be greatly strengthened. In other words, Tycho Brahe’s inspiration was an increased sense of job-security. Whatever the genuineness of such an inspiration, it certainly has a strong touch of modernity. Tycho Brahe was not, however, so modern as to see in the new star a refutation of the Aristotelian-Ptolemaic doctrine of the incorruptibility of the heavens.

Historians of science would look in vain for traces of some rationalist or iconoclastic modernity in the elegy with which Tycho Brahe introduced his booklet on the new star. The elegy betrays the kind of inspiration which would best be called lucubration. Indeed, this was the very word which Tycho Brahe, at the last moment, did not let grace, or rather disgrace, the title page of his hardly inspiring booklet.

Much more modern, and certainly far deeper, was the inspiration which Kepler derived from his observations of the nova of 1604. Excited he certainly was. Otherwise he would not have dashed off a book De stella nova in petie Serpentarii. But his excitement was that of a deep-seated concern. The new star could easily be taken for a disproof of the starry sphere and for a proof of the presumed truth of the idea that the universe was an indefinite, infinite agglomerate of stars. By 1604 Giordano Bruno had already created some excitement with his strange inspirations about infinite worlds, all forever changing into one another, with no basic difference between stars and planets. Kepler sensed that had Bruno not been burned at the stake in Rome in 1600 (a fate Bruno had escaped twenty or so years earlier in Geneva where he was forced to abjure his doctrines), he would have seized on the nova of 1604 as a licence for a reckless wandering across infinite spaces. To nip in the bud this kind of use of astronomy and its phenomena, Kepler felt that “astronomy was to be forced to return to its very confines. For certainly nothing good was to be gained by vagabonding through that infinity.”

Unlike Kepler, many modern astronomers love that vagabonding. Often they register, with no trace of agonies, their view that the better the universe is known, the more purposeless it appears.” However, they fully share Kepler’s excitement about the heuristic value of precise measurements. There is something mystical in Kepler’s singing the praises of Tycho’s measurements as the key to the breakthroughs which later became known as Kepler’s three laws and greatly helped Newton to make modern scientific astronomy possible.
Precise measurements were in fact the basic reason for the variety of inspirations which suddenly filled astronomers in late February 1987. On February 24, to be exact, their instruments alerted them to the flare-up, in the southern hemisphere, of a supernova. Apart from the excitement felt over the novelty, the first data inspired them at least in the sense that they would not soon run out of research problems. The sense of job security is not something to be taken lightly even when it is accompanied by the sobering realization that long-standing theories about the origin of supernovae would have to be drastically revised.

Before long this somber mood yielded to a sort of exultation. By June specialists in supernova structure and evolution felt confident that the data dramatically strengthened their theories, worked out over several decades. A reason for this was, as The New York Times reported, that already in early March "astronomers and technical experts, usually jealous of their findings, were pooling their observations" as they tried "to solve the supernova's many mysteries." An inspiration certainly commends itself when it helps eliminate selfishness and promotes cooperation. Before long, still another kind of inspiration made itself felt as leading astronomers took the view that the data pouring in would shed much light on the ultimate fate of the universe.

The history of modern astronomy shows many other cases about these two kinds of elation felt over a new astronomical phenomenon, or discovery. One such elation is felt over the fact that the astronomical phenomenon provides the seal of truth on a theory. The other form of such elation is related to the fact that the astronomical phenomenon opens vistas of further work which may carry the theorist far beyond the range of what has already been worked out. Take, for instance, the discovery by Leverrier, in 1845, of Neptune, a planet postulated by periodic disturbances in the orbit of Uranus. A stunning proof of the truth of Newtonian celestial dynamics, the discovery of a new planet produced so great an elation as to make Auguste Comte decry it as insane. But there was nothing insane in the heroic work of W. C. Tombaugh, which ultimately led to the discovery of Pluto.

Comte had an ax to grind. Nothing was more dangerous for his positivism than anything really novel in science, especially in astronomy. He did not live to hear the voice of jubilation that greeted Higgins' observation of traces of helium in the spectral lines of the sun. Here too an astronomical phenomenon provided an inspiring capstone on a work already under way, a work initiated by Fraunhofer. Higgins' work also spurred the registering, in vast numbers, of spectral lines. The theoretical co-ordination of those spectral lines began with Bohr's model of the hydrogen atom. When first told about it, Einstein was inspired to state: "But this is then the greatest of all discoveries."

A capstone on the truth of theories about a very early hot state of the universe was provided by the discovery of the 2.7 K cosmic background radiation in 1965. The excitement went hand in hand with the inspiration to do further and extensive study, theoretical as well as experimental, on that radiation. But the inspiration had other aspects as well. Such a hot early state could not be reconciled with the steady state theory. While this and other consequences of that radiation exhilarated the proponents of what by then had been known as the Big Bang, it inspired the grim resolve of the champions of the steady state theory to keep working out alternatives to an apparent cosmic beginning.

Champions of the steady state theory disclosed only now and then that their opposi-
tion to the Big Bang was motivated by a counter-theological inspiration. The rank materialism of most champions of the steady-state theory dictated that the Universe was the ultimate entity and as such it had to be without a beginning. Unfortunately, only on rare occasions was that materialistic inspiration exposed by prominent astronomers. One of these was Arno Penzias, co-discoverer of that radiation. He was, however, hardly right in buttressing the opposite kind of inspiration with his claim about Genesis I. In the phrase of Genesis I, “Let there be light!” Penzias saw an anticipation of the 2.7°K cosmic background radiation. This was a most unfortunate echo of that blind inspiration which animates those who nowadays refer to themselves as creationists, that is, those who take Genesis I for a science textbook.

Counter-theological, or strictly materialistic, inspiration is not absent either in the effort to find the so-called missing matter. In itself the effort is purely scientific. Clearly, not enough matter is known to exist if the rotational dynamics of galaxies obeys Kepler’s third law. But one wonders whether non-scientific inspiration is not strongly at work in sustaining the search for the missing matter. A successful outcome of that search would be taken by not a few as a proof of an eternal cosmic dynamics. Had not such motivations been at work, less despondency would have greeted the news that the very first experiments completed with the Keck Telescope in Hawaii, the largest telescope in the world, yielded evidence about a surprisingly large abundance of deuterium in the distant, and therefore early, universe. This was inspiring news for advocates of the Big Bang, but very bad news for those searching for the missing matter, let alone for rearguard advocates of the steady-state theory.

For both camps there remained, of course, the excitement or inspiration, about the prospect of vastly improved observational possibilities. This is what John N. Bahcall seemed to have emphasized in saying that the result in question had astronomers “dancing in the dark corridors of their observatories.” The new telescope was so great a success, he continued, that “some of the questions that astronomers have sought to answer for decades may be solved in a night’s observations with these new eyes.”

It is not, however, easy to keep from view the religiously colored inspiration in reference to even the latest astronomical phenomena. A case in point is George Smoot’s announcement of slight variations in the 2.7°K cosmic background radiation. The news produced an outburst of reactions, many of them inspirational in a religious sense. Smoot himself first took the view that, to quote his very words, “if you are religious, it’s like looking at God.” A week or so later, being reminded of this, Smoot tried to balance that religious inspiration with a distinctly secularist one: “What matters is the science; I want to leave the religious implications to theologians and to each person, and let them see how the findings fit into their idea of the universe.”

Underlying this balancing act is the fact that one and the same astronomical phenomenon can generate inspired states of mind which, differ as they may from one another, subjectively can be designated by the same word, inspiration. This can happen even when the same religious sentiments are intensely shared. While John Donne was downcast by the apparent vanishing of all coherence because of the rise of heliocentrism and atomism; both were taken by Pierre Gassendi, also in holy orders, for harbingers of good news. More wisely, Pascal, greater than those two as a philosopher, as a scientist, and as a
Christian, argued that science is absolutely impotent to deliver even a drop of that supreme inspiration which is genuine selfless love. Of course, when religious sentiments, let alone the same religious sentiments, are not shared, it is almost inevitable that the same astronomical phenomenon will produce widely different inspirations. One such difference became a legendary page in the history of astronomy. To the question of Napoleon, who found no reference to God in Laplace’s *Système du monde*, Laplace answered that he did not need that hypothesis. While this was a most defensible position, Laplace conveyed something of the practical atheism which animated him in those years. Indeed, countless writers and speakers took his words for a proof that atheism or agnosticism is the inspiration appropriate to the science of astronomy. It is rarely mentioned that when Laplace uttered those memorable words, Herschel was present and politely disagreed.

There was no such confrontation between the Abbé Lemaître and Robert Millikan as they served on the panel which the British Association sponsored in 1931 on the latest in cosmology, the expansion of the universe and, by implication, its origin. This is not to suggest that the confrontation was not a distinct possibility and all the more so as both Lemaître and Millikan distinguished themselves with work on cosmic rays and both saw the question of the origin of cosmic rays as relevant to the question of the origin of the universe. Far from agreeing with the suggestion that perhaps “an infallible oracle” might provide the answer, Lemaître preferred the oracle’s silence so that “a subsequent generation would not be deprived of the pleasure of searching for and finding the solution.” Millikan, however, suggested that if theories proved that annihilation processes went on in interstellar spaces and not only within the stars themselves, this would “obviously influence strongly not only present theories but also all future theories of the origin and destiny of the universe.” What Millikan expected was nothing less than a scientific proof of the view, hardly verifiable scientifically, that matter is eternal. Unlike Lemaître, who kept his philosophico-religious inspiration apart from doing science, Millikan readily grafted on science a counter-religious inspiration.

While Millikan, and like-minded scientists in the West, had the freedom not to do so, scientists in the Soviet Union were forced to mix their scientific inspiration with a materialistic counter-inspiration imposed on them. I was the personal witness of one such case, the last minute appearance of V. A. Ambartsumian as member of the cosmology panel at the 17th World Congress of Philosophy in Düsseldorf in 1978. There, in order to reward the Party for the opportunity to go abroad, he suddenly departed from his topic dealing with stellar evolution. He did so in order to declare in a phrase or two that no scientific conclusion had better empirical foundation than the doctrine of dialectical materialism about the eternity of matter.

But even when non-scientific sources of inspiration are kept out of focus, the inspiration sparked or sustained by work on much the same astronomical phenomena can reveal differences worth noting and all the more so because they clearly point beyond what is strictly scientific. Edwin Hubble concluded his classic *The Realm of the Nebulae* in words in which grim resolve to continue the exploration of space is coupled with scorn for theoretical reflections. What made Hubble scorn theories was not, however, his love for experimental work, but his infatuation with empiricism. At the dim boundary, or the
ulmost limit of our telescopes. Hubble wrote, "we measure shadows, and we search among ghostly errors of measurements for landmarks that are scarcely more substantial. The search will continue. Not until the empirical resources are exhausted, need we pass on to the dreamy realms of speculation." A philosophically very different end-note was struck by Richard C. Tolman in his equally classic *Relativity, Thermodynamics and Cosmology*: "It is appropriate to approach the problems of cosmology with feelings of respect for their importance, of awe for their vastness, and of exultation for the temenity of the human mind in attempting to solve them. They must be treated, however, by the detailed, critical, and dispassionate methods of the scientist."24

The contrast between these two grand conclusions should seem all the greater as both were first published about the same time, the mid-1930s. The second came from a leader in a highly theoretical relativistic cosmology who clearly relished the inspirational power of theorizing. The first came from one so disdainful of theories as to fail to acknowledge that all empirical observations are theory-laden and, indeed, to so great an extent as to beckon to domains open only to eyes which are inspired by much more than mere science. To treat with empiricist contempt such domains is no less mistaken even from the purely astronomical viewpoint than to wade into its vast reaches with the presumption that scientific skill is enough to do philosophy and theology even moderately well.

One need, however, be on guard against believing that the consideration of the history of astronomy may readily impose a fair measure of sobriety on students of the realm of the stars, nebulae, and, indeed, of the astronomical universe as such. And what if sobriety begins to parade in the garments of that subtle dizziness which is known as solipsism? Two highly regarded surveys of the history of twentieth-century cosmological theories fully illustrate this fearful outcome. For whatever the markedly pragmatico-idealistic philosophies of their respective authors, the theories surveyed by them provide ample material for supporting their doubts about the reality of the astronomical universe. They, however, failed to see that by taking the latent or unabashed solipsism of many a cosmologist and astronomer for science they not only did rank injustice to the cosmos or universe but also cast doubt on the merit of the very titles of their books. For if one could not have rational assurance in the reality of the totality of things which is the universe, there is clearly no such a thing as "the measure of the universe."25 On the same supposition cosmic reality can but degenerate into "an invented universe" impossible to invent for the purposes of any science which cannot take its instruments for mere inventions.26

The author of *The Invented Universe* found that all modern cosmology tends to substantiate W. De Sitter's prediction that the universe is but a hypothesis which "may at some future stage of the development of science have to be given up, or modified, or at least differently interpreted."27 This dispiriting prophecy can be seen to come true in that incoherent statistical ensemble into which the coherent totality of things, or Universe, is turned in quantum cosmological theories. Their proponents are signal oblivious to the fact that conviction about the rational coherence of all things, however distant from one another, has from the start been the great inspiration which propelled science, including astronomy. The inspirational lifeblood of astronomy depends indeed on giving a firmly affirmative answer to the question, *Is There a Universe?*28 taken that universe for the strict totality of consistently interacting material entities.
These details, old and new, from the history of astronomy put one face to face with a wide variety of meanings which the word inspiration may carry. Therefore it may pay well to take a close look at the word itself. Otherwise this conference too may suffer the fate typical of almost all of them. All symposia, so goes a slightly sarcastic remark, begin in confusion and end in confusion, though on a much higher level. Those who have already sat through a dozen or so symposia would hardly disagree with this far-from-flattering generalization.

If one looks for the reason, one may find it in the failure of the organizers to call for a clear definition of basic terms. Or one may find it in the speakers' unwillingness to come clean. In modern academia, haziness, couched in convoluted language, has come to be taken for profundity.

Will that haziness be dissipated by consulting the 18-volume *Oxford English Dictionary*? On a first look, the effort may seem promising. The word inspiration, together with its verb form, to inspire, takes up five columns, or ten times the mere half a column which is the average space allotted to the 400,000 words listed in the 8,000 quarto pages of that truly magnum opus.

Should one therefore expect that the hundred or so uses of the word inspiration listed there would stand for a great variety of meanings? Far from it. All those meanings fall into three distinct groups, of which one, the physical act of breathing, or to breathe air into something, may be conveniently ignored for our purposes, unless boredom or the summer heat calls for inspiration, that is, artificial respiration, or mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. Another meaning of the word inspiration is related to God who supernaturally inspires some thoughts or courses of action. This essentially theological meaning may also be ignored, at least for the moment. Of immediate interest is the third, or essentially figurative meaning. All the varieties of that meaning, filling most of those five columns, hinge on the last word of its definition: Inspiration is “a breathing in or infusion of some idea, purpose etc. into the mind; the suggestion, awakening, or creation of some feeling or impulse, esp. of an exalted kind.”

Inspiration is then connected, as was already surmised in the beginning of this paper, with a state of exaltation. Unfortunately, about that state the same vast dictionary does not offer the kind of enlightenment which is clarity. We are told that one is having an exalted thought when, figuratively speaking, one takes some higher ground or perspective. Herein lies hidden a sort of tautology, something even worse than a mere paradox. Taking a higher ground means exaltation which in turn is the principal ingredient of inspiration. Conversely, once one is inspired, one is exalted and therefore on a higher ground. One may indeed ask: When using the words excitement and inspiration are we not running in a circle? Is not the luxury of having two or three different words at our disposal a mere cover-up for intellectual poverty when those three inspiration, and higher ground—define one another?

This hardly enviable situation is made worse by the fact that in reference to the state of excitement the dictionary makes no mention of the fact that in such a state one is usually animated with a strong sense of purpose, or at least by an illusion of it. In view of this connection, one is entitled to say that an absence of sense of purpose, a sense of being lost, would be on hand whenever excitement would yield to its opposite, namely, dejection or despondency. Therefore one could just as well coin a new word, counter-inspiration.
ration, a word not listed in that huge dictionary, although it lists many composite words that begin with "counter" and, assuming their meaning to be obvious, does not give their definition. Counter-inspiration would then mean to feel not only very low or dejected, but also to feel deprived of a constructive or abiding sense of purpose, or even more picturesquely, to feel one's self to be mere flotsam and jetsam on unfathomable cosmic waters. More of this shortly.

But first the so-called higher ground. It is a treacherous ground when claimed by science and scientists, even when they merely talk of being inspired. Charles Darwin fully recognized this when in 1845 he set himself the rule, "Never use the words higher or lower!" Darwin himself disregarded this rule more often than not. At any rate, the rule meant that even though a monkey should seem to occupy a ground much higher on the evolutionary scale than a mouse, let alone a mollusc, no biologist should call one higher and the other lower for a simple reason: Such a grading is a kind of value judgment which has no place in empirical science.

Even more applicable should seem the same rule in the field of exact physical science, of which astronomy is a principal branch. Unlike biology, or life science, that deals with flesh and blood organisms, of which one is patently more complex and powerful than another, astronomy, like physics, is a systematic leveler. It only deals with lifeless entities, and is interested only in the quantitative properties of their motions. There is nothing higher or lower there, only bigger and smaller, longer and shorter, farther or nearer, but never anything that in purely astronomical terms could be seen evocative of "nearer to you, oh God," or even of nearer to you, oh man.

Such is at least the case as long as we define physical or astronomical science as was done above. On more than one occasion I have felt it appropriate to define physical science as the quantitative study of the quantitative aspects of things in motion. The reason for this was my resolve to save the sciences and the humanities from mutual encroachments and, if I may add, leave whatever inspiration they may offer, in compartments that are at least methodologically separate.

Since I doubt that Leon Lederman shared that resolve of mine, I was all the more pleased to find in his book, *God Particle*, a very similar definition of physical science: "Physics is a study of matter and motion. The movement of projectiles, the motion of atoms, the whirl of planets and comets must all be described quantitatively. Galileo's mathematics, confirmed by experiment, provided the starting point." Lederman's words are a combination of plain truth, of a rank half-truth, and of some basic assumptions that cannot be justified by physics, but without which physics (or astronomy) hangs in mid-air. The plain truth is that unless physics gives a quantitative account of what it deals with, it is not yet physics. The half truth relates to Galileo's mathematics. It was not mathematics but, as Duhem showed already in 1913, a long medieval tradition that gave Galileo the idea of that accelerated motion which is the only kind of motion, be it the free fall of bodies, that obtains in the real world. Moreover, it was neither mathematics nor geometry that assured Galileo in the first place that matter and motion invariably lend themselves to quantitative considerations. One could, of course, delight, as Galileo did, in the marvelous coherence of mathematics and become greatly excited on that score.
But what assumption justified for him the application of quantities to the physically real? Certainly not the quantities themselves, for this would be a begging of the question itself, a petitio principii. The justification can be made only on the basis of assuming that the human mind can know matter and motion, before saying anything quantitative about them. The justification would also imply the tacit acknowledgment that the human mind can validly talk about the totality of quantitatively coherent physical matter which is the universe. At any rate, Galileo found the justification with an eye on the Creator: nothing showed so much the excellence of the Creator than that created human mind with its ability to know quantities as "objectively" as God himself did."

Such an inspiration was fraught with great perils. Galileo indeed claimed that quantities alone counted, and all secondary qualities (taste, colors etc.) had to be considered purely subjective." The uninspiring cultural results are too well known to be detailed here. In sum, if Galileo's claim is correct one may just as well write off all humanities and take the plague of scientism for a sign of health. Since to that plague not a few great scientists gave, at least in recent times, an unwitting help, the most effective antidote against it may be best sought in statements made by eminent scientists.

The most impressive of those statements may be the one by Eddington, partly because of its succinct character. The line between the sciences and the humanities does not run, Eddington wrote, "between the concrete and the transcendental but between the metrical and the non-metrical." This remark, carried to the four corners of the scientific and academic world, did not inspire a climate of thought although it should have. Yet only by keeping in mind that boundary is it possible to distinguish two kinds of ingredients in the inspiration felt by an astronomer about astronomical phenomena. Some ingredients are scientific, such as the mathematical simplicity of the explanation. Some other ingredients, which are often far more decisive, have nothing to do with the science of astronomy but almost everything to do with the ideology or religion, or perhaps plain counter-religion, of the astronomer.

For unless that distinction is made, there remains no remedy for a cultural disaster in the making. It is the flooding of the societal scene with the kind of inspiration of astronomical phenomena which is a rank counter-inspiration, in the sense defined above. A notorious example is a passage by a prominent humanist who clearly had no confidence in his métier which is obviously about the non-metric in human reflections. I mean Carl L. Becker, a leading American historian of the Enlightenment. To make matters more revealing, most readers of his The Heavenly City of 18th-century Philosophers have been more shocked by a factual truth than by a thorough misinterpretation of some very scientific facts. The factual truth was that the gurus of the Enlightenment were led not by reason but by a dream about heaven on earth. The misinterpretation of the facts is best given in Becker's own words, spread by now through more than thirty printings in twice as many years:

Edit and interpret the conclusions of modern science as tenderly as we like, it is still quite impossible for us to regard man as the child of God for whom the earth was created as a temporary habitation. Rather we must regard him as little more than a chance deposit on the surface of the world, carelessly thrown up between two ice ages by the same forces that rust iron and ripen corn, a sentient organism endowed...
by some happy or unhappy accident with intelligence indeed, but with an intelligence that is conditioned by the very forces which it seeks to understand and to control. The ultimate cause of this cosmic process of which man is a part, whether God or electricity or a “stress in the ether,” we know not. Whatever it may be, if indeed it be anything more than a necessary postulate of thought, it appears in its effects as neither benevolent nor malevolent, as neither kind or unkind but merely as indifferent to us. What is man that the electron should be mindful of him! Man is but a foundling in the cosmos, abandoned by the forces that created him. Unparented, unassisted and undirected by omniscient or benevolent authority, he must fend for himself, and with the aid of his limited intelligence find his way about in an indifferent universe.

The entire passage is a valuational misinterpretation of facts, well established by science, and a presentation of some assumptions as if they were integral parts of science. One needs merely replace the ether with zero-point oscillations in the vacuum, the electron with Higgs bosons, the ice ages with periodic extinctions of life on earth, and Becker’s passage would be wholly up-to date as well as wholly misleading with its counter-inspirational fallacies. No astronomer or cosmologist of note is known to have protested the passage above which countless undergraduates have had to swallow for the past sixty years. If prominent humanist admirers of Becker found fault with his book, it did not relate to his having fallen victim to a tactic which claimed him as he penned that passage.

The tactic still works, although Pascal had already unmasked it three and a half centuries ago. He did so as he described the haplessness of the libertine, that is, of the agnostic or sceptic who, in looking out into the vast depths of the cosmos, was terrified by mere distances. Pascal could have also remarked that already the Aristotelian universe was vast enough to unsettle those who sought comfort in short distances. Publications of prominent recent interpreters of astronomy can at most put a brave face to the terror they conjure up as they try to discredit common sense perception with intimations of the unimaginable magnitude of millions and billions of light years. They merely trigger misguided bewilderment.

The result is a feeling of utter dejection about being “lost in the cosmos,” to recall the title of a much ignored book of Walker Percy. As a sane novelist, unwilling to play to the galleries, Percy put his finger to that sensitive spot which can never float into the focus of any telescope or microscope. That spot was fully alive in a Mount Wilson astronomer’s wife who divorced him on the ground of “angelism-bestialism.” The source of this strangely hybrid trait derived from a travesty of inspiration which the astronomical phenomenon known as quasars could spark. The astronomer in question, Percy reported, was “so absorbed in his work, the search for the quasar with the greatest red-shift, that when he came home to his pleasant subdivision house, he seemed to take his pleasure like a god descending from Olympus into the world of mortals; ate heartily, had frequent intercourse with his wife, watched TV, read Mickey Spillane, and said not a word to wife or children.”

Clearly, in this case (and many others could be quoted) nothing was gained in the way of genuine inspiration by stretching the limits of the known universe from a few light
years to billions of times that amount. But the root of the loss of true inspiration lies not in
the observatories. It lies with Christians "in whose eyes the traditional Christian content
and promise had become 'absurd.'" Such is the diagnosis of Hannah Arendt, an agnostic
Jew. She also notes the laughable character of the excuse that either the atheism of the
eighteenth century or the materialism of the nineteenth offered serious arguments against
that content and promise. Those arguments, she notes, were "frequently vulgar and, for
the most part, easily refutable by traditional theology."

Whether Pascal was just as antirational as was Kierkegaard, both of whom Arendt blames
equally for the introduction of the Cartesian dubit into religious belief, is a minor issue. The
principal issue is that the Cartesian dubit set up mathematical logic as the only reputable
form of cogitation. Precisely because of this, there followed a growing distrust in man's direct
registration of external reality, be it a physical or an historical event. Among the results was a
disregard for the factual historical origin or birth of science. In place of facts, myths came to
be cultivated by historians of science. When Bergson wrote that science, the daughter of
astronomy, "has come down from heaven to earth along the inclined plane of Galileo," he
failed to realize that he had given an inimitably concise rendering of one such myth.

The origin of science had indeed much to do with the heaven, though with a distinctly
Christian one, anchored in unique facts of salvation history. This is why the question of
the origin of science has been a very upsetting topic for many a historian of science. The
counter-inspiration which exudes from their accounts of scientific progress has much to
do with that unease of theirs. But the disregard of the true origin of science meant also a
disregard for the true source of inspiration that liberated science from its repeated still-
births and provided its only viable birth. Of course, once the basic laws of physical sci-
ence were in place, it could further develop in terms of its purely scientific attainments,
with no consideration for the inspirational spark of its origin.

The spark was belief in creation out of nothing and in time. This belief, because of the
status assigned to Christ, worked within Christianity as a unique antidote against the pan-
thetism which caused the stillbirths of science in all great ancient cultures and nipped in
the bud the prospect of science even in the medieval Muslim context. This is not to sug-
gest that today one needs to be a Christian to do physics or astronomy or cosmology
worth a Nobel Prize or two. But if the same physicist wants inspiration which is much
better than Cartesian "angelism" or Darwinist "bestialism," or both fused into one, he or
she will have to look in the direction specified by Arendt.

What happened to the attitude toward external reality should be of no less interest as
far as the inspiration and counter-inspiration of astronomy is concerned. The cogito ergo
sum, which was Descartes' resolution of the dubitio, reached its ultimate unfolding in the
principle, "I think, therefore the Universe is," a half-hearted spoof of the anthropic cos-


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words of wisdom, unless they take it with an eye on a very specific God. I mean the God whose very first recorded act in Genesis I was to let his breath, his inspiration, float over what was to become a universe. This remark may sound like plain sermonizing. If it does, I refuse to apologize. To support my refusal I could recall a Copernicus, a Galileo (yes, a Galileo!), a Newton for whom belief in the Creator of the astronomical universe was a signal source of inspiration to give a better scientific account of the starry sky. Why, one may ask, was Copernicus so inspired as to be willing to commit a rape of his very eyes?52 I hope that such and many similar details of the history of astronomy are not entirely unknown. At least they can be learned by anyone ready to consult well translated classics of its history.

Here, to support my refusal to apologize I would put the emphasis on a book which is the furthest possible cry from Christian, let alone from Roman Catholic, sermonizing. I mean Sigmund Freud's *Civilization and its Discontents*. To be sure, Freud still refrained from describing the Catholic Church as "the implacable enemy of all freedom of thought" which "has resolutely opposed any idea of this world being governed by advance towards the recognition of truth!"50 While Freud could not be blamed for having been unaware of the Christian sources of belief in progress, he had no excuse for ignoring Bury's memorable unmasking the secularist idea of progress as a mere begging of the question.51 At any rate, in *Civilization and its Discontents* Freud stated that "only religion can answer the purpose of life."52 Not that he viewed the answer of any religion as satisfactory. Far from it. But, implicitly at least, he ruled out science, even his own science (or rather pseudo-science), of psychoanalysis, as a source of an answer about purpose. The most science could do was to palliate the discontent for some, though hardly for all.

If around 1930 Freud could be struck by a high-level of discontent in our increasingly scientific civilization, one wonders whether he would not be literally dumbstruck today. As an antidote to that grave discontent not a few astronomers, relatively greater in number than say thirty years ago, offer science. Carl Sagan is a prime example. He and others hope perhaps against hope—that with more science there will be less religion. They all share something of the delusion, memorably voiced by Herbert Spencer in 1850, that once science-oriented education is universal, equally universal will be the disappearance of crime.54 Actually, crime is becoming universal, owing in no small part to the misuse of tools provided by science and technology.

Today, we have more science than ever and more scientific education than ever, but also a crime rate which is sky-rocketing. Partly because of this we have much more religion as well. The reason for this is the unquenchable hunger of mankind for a sense of purpose that can carry one through crimes, tragedies and abide even beyond that disaster which is the grave. No talk, however exquisite in its rhetoric, about cosmic brotherhood or a biocentric universe proves indeed to be of any personal comfort when, say, a promising young man puts his shotgun into his mouth and blows his brain to pieces.55 Science failed, miserably failed, to still that hunger for purpose. Not that it had ever been its task to do so. The task of science has indeed been greatly compromised by ever recurring efforts of scientists, especially during the last half a century, to force science to give what it cannot deliver.56 But if scientists fail to gain a sense of abiding purpose from a source other than science, their scientific inspiration may not rise higher than the level of feeling some
excitement. From there it is but a short step to what I have described as the lowlands of counter-inspiration. Would that ever fewer would present it as a higher ground, let alone a genuine inspiration. As to those who are truly inspired may they never lose heart to keep breathing it far and wide.

NOTES
1. This emphasis on the full formulation should be a reminder of its long prehistory. Newton must have known that he owed the second law (action equals reaction) to Descartes who, in turn, could not be unaware of the late medieval origins (unearthed and documented by Pierre Duhem early in this century) of the first law. Thus Copernicus had relied on the notion of inertial motion given in terms of an initial impetus as an idea too familiar to his readers to demand justification or explanation.
5. Published in 1666. For details, see my The Paradox of Olbers’ Paradox (New York: Herder & Herder, 1969), pp. 30-34.
6. And love it to an astonishing extent. A century ago Lord Kelvin declared finitude to be incomprehensible while at the same time writing off all infinity beyond the confines of our Milky Way as of no physical consequence. (For details, see my Paradox of Olbers’ Paradox, pp. 168-70). Inattention to basic mathematical and logical problems inherent in the notion of the physically infinite mars F. J. Dyson’s Gifford Lectures, Infinite in All Directions (New York: Harper & Row, 1988).
7. I have in mind Steven Weinberg’s concluding words in his The First Three Minutes, for which he offered a lame apology in his Dreams of a Final Theory (New York: Pantheon Books, 1992).
10. Heroic, indeed, as it implied the scanning, with a mere magnifying glass, of hundreds of thousands of photographic plates over a period of thirty years.
11. The reason for this was Comte’s ambition to formulate a scientifically definitive form of sociology. Obviously, then, the prospect of new major breakthroughs in physical science had to appear most upsetting for Comte. For details, see my The Relevance of Physics (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966; new ed Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1992), pp. 468-77.
15. For details, see my God and the Cosmologists (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1989), pp. 70-75.
18. "All bodies together, and all minds together, and all their products, are not worth the least prompting of charity. This is of an infinitely more exalted order." See Pascal, The Pensées, tr. J. M. Cohen (Penguin Classics, 1961), p. 284 (#829).
21. Ibid., p. 597.
22. See my God and the Cosmologists, p. 61.
28. The title of my Forwood Lectures, given at the University of Liverpool (Liverpool University Press, 1993). There I offer a proof of the reality of the universe, a proof which, steeped as it is in considerations about quantities, is strictly philosophical.
31. Darwin wrote those words on a slip of paper which he kept in his copy of Chambers' Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation (1844), a book which presented evolution as a God-directed process toward ever higher forms of life.
33. Or to quote Duhem: "By the middle of the 16th century, Parisian scholars had considered as basic these truths. The free fall of a body is a uniformly accelerated motion. The vertical ascent of a projectile is a uniformly retarded motion. In a uniformly changed motion, the path traversed is of the same length as its length would be in a uniform motion of the same duration, whose velocity would be the mean between the two extreme velocities of the uniformly changed motion.... In favor of these laws Galileo could provide new arguments, drawn either from reason, or from experience; but, to say the least, he did not have to discover them." Études sur Léonard de Vinci. Troisième Série. Les Précurseurs parisiens de Galilée (Paris: Hermann, 1913), pp. 561-62.
35. "I think that tastes, odors, colors, and so on are no more than mere names so far as the object in which we place them is concerned, and that they reside only in the consciousness." The Assayer in Discoveries and Opinions of Galileo, tr. S. Drake (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1957), p. 274.
38. The blindness of those humanists is unwittingly documented in the symposium held on the 25th anniversary of the publication of Becker's classic at Colgate University on October 13, 1956 and published under the title, Carl Becker's Heavenly City Revisited (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1956).
Press, 1958). Only one of them, R.R. Palmer of Princeton University, called attention to the counter-theological basis of Becker's despairing outlook, and even he did not want to appear to have endorsed thereby a genuinely supernatural Christian perspective.


49. See Galileo's *Dialogues*, p. 328, 334 and 339.


53. Spencer did so in his *Social Statics*, published in 1851. For details, see my *The Purpose of it All*, p. 13.

54. The young man was the son of a friend of mine who until that tragic day found meaning for life in cogitation about extragalactic cousins.

55. As I have shown in my book, *The Relevance of Physics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966, p. 452), the religious commitment of scientists changes in much the same way as does that of other professional groups. Those changes are not, however, reflected in superficial generalizations such as the often referred to materialism of the 19th century. Leading physicists and astronomers (as well as other scientists) of the 19th century professed Christian convictions in a surprisingly high proportion. See on this the reprinting, with my introduction, of A. Kneller, *Christianity and the Leaders of Modern Science* (Clinton, Mich.: Real View Books, 1995), originally published in German in 1902 and translated into English in 1911.
A MISSIONARY CASE STUDY

MARK ROYSTER

INTRODUCTION

Joshua Marsden began his Methodist missionary career in 1800, sailing from England for Halifax, Nova Scotia. During the following eight years he ministered on the frontier of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick among English, French, and African Canadian settlers. In 1808, his health severely damaged by harsh exposure and rigorous travel, he was appointed to start a Methodist mission in Bermuda, then called the Somers Islands.

The previous attempt in 1799 had failed completely, resulting in the trial and imprisonment of missionary John Stevenson and the entrenchment of strong anti-Methodist sentiments. At the time of his appointment Marsden's prospects were bleak. Yet, by the end of only four years' ministry, Marsden had succeeded in establishing a healthy, self-sufficient, multi-racial Methodist society, complete with a network of schools, indigenous leadership and a fully integrated Methodist chapel.

This done, Marsden left Bermuda in 1812, hoping to return home for the first time in twelve years. His plans were altered, however, by the outbreak of the War of 1812 which stopped commercial traffic between America and England. In 1814 he finally secured passage home by way of France, and in 1816 published the account of his missionary work from which the following case study has been drawn.

It sold under the lengthy, descriptive title, The Narrative of a Mission to Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and the Somers Islands, with a Tour to Lake Ontario, to which is added, The Mission, an Original Poem, with Copious Notes, Also, A Brief Account of Missionary Societies, and Much More Interesting Information on Missions In General. This little-known document is one of the first missionary manuals to come out of the great missionary nineteenth century.

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This study limits its attention to the four years of remarkable ministry which Marsden and his young family spent in Bermuda. Marsden's work was a hybrid of both cross-cultural mission and church renewal in a complex racially and socially heterogeneous society. His amazingly successful ministry within such a context calls contemporary students and practitioners of mission to a detailed examination.

Marsden showed keen sensitivity to the subtleties of initiating ministry within a stubborn, defensive, and antagonistic British subculture in Bermuda. At the same time, he also built a strong rapport within the black (former slave) community. More amazingly, he was able to bring the two together within an indigenous Bermudian Methodist worship context completely their own. The parallel challenges of some post-colonial mission contexts today again calls for further exploration of Marsden's approach. The following case study will look for clues to his success.

THE BERMUDA METHODIST MISSION, 1808-1812:
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In 1609 an English ship wrecked on the rocks around Bermuda. The sailors found the resources of the islands so plentiful and the climate so congenial that following their safe return to New England in 1610 there began a gradual settlement and colonization process. Marsden reports that most of the settlers were from Presbyterian or Dissenting churches. A few were Anglicans. However, by the late 1700s Bermuda's spiritual condition was in extreme neglect.

Darkness and sin spread their desolations throughout every part of the otherwise lovely domain. It is true there was one church in each parish, with three clergymen belonging to the establishment, and also a Presbyterian minister, who preached at a small church, in Heron bay: notwithstanding which, the parishes, in general, were only favoured with one sermon every fourth sabbath, and even to this scanty morsel of the bread of life, many of the poor black and coloured people had no access.

In 1798, Bermuda caught the attention of Thomas Coke, then overseeing Methodist mission activity, as its condition stood in stark contrast to the Methodist revival currently spreading throughout the West Indies. His particular concern was for the black population, and looking primarily toward their evangelization, he sent John Stevenson in 1799 as missionary.

At that time, nothing could have been more repugnant and threatening to the white Bermudian population than the evangelization of their now-endangered labour force. Stevenson had walked into a hornet's nest of opposition which eventually drove him from the islands. From one perspective the timing of his mission could not have been worse. Marsden records:

It was a perilous moment for the friends of the Africans, as, at this period, many who owned slaves, were smarting under the abolition this inhuman traffic, which had recently taken place, and were not fully without their fears of the further interference of the British legislature, in behalf of this injured portion of the human family. Slavery is as jealous of its power as freedom is of its liberty; hence, whoever touches that, touches the apple of the planter's eye.
Using Stevenson's lack of formal education and ordination as a pretext for persecution, the Bermudian legislature passed a bill 'to exclude all persons pretending, or having pretended, to be ministers of the gospel, or Missionaries from any religious society whatever, and not regularly invested with holy orders...from propagating any doctrine upon the gospel or otherwise.' Stevenson felt conscience bound to disobey the ordinance. He was promptly jailed for six months and fined fifty pounds for his efforts. Carving his own defense in the prison cell floor with his knife, Stevenson wrote: 'John Stevenson, Methodist Missionary, was imprisoned in this jail six months, for preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ to the poor negroes.'

Marsden's Arrival

This was the foundation laid for Marsden when he received his commission from Coke and the Methodist Conference of 1808. Knowing something of what they would face, it is not surprising that he and his wife immediately set aside every Friday until their departure for fasting and prayer. Marsden described the news as 'an appointment that was as unwelcome to the flesh and blood as “smoke to the eyes, or vinegar to the teeth”.' Yet, it seems that Marsden's strenuous eight-year apprenticeship in Nova Scotia had specially prepared him for the challenges of his new task.

Personal apprehensions aside, Marsden's official reply to Coke was energetic, and full of hope that God would be laying the right foundation for his witness:

When I think of the forlorn condition of the Bermudians, my heart longs to be with them, to preach the precious gospel of my Lord and Master in that island. O that the God of Abraham may send me good speed, and prepare the people for the reception of his dear Son's gospel, that you may have cause to rejoice in your exertions to supply Bermuda with a missionary.

No doubt these were cheering words to his mission boss. However, by the time of their arrival at port in Bermuda, Marsden plainly admits he had no hope of success. 'I knew not a single person; and was come upon an unwelcome errand.' The description of his first venture ashore captures some of the dynamics of the situation:

I inquired, in vain, for Methodists,—the hated sound seemed to startle even some who appeared as if they wished to show me civility if I had come upon another errand: as a tumbler, buffoon, dancing master, or conjurer; I might have been welcome; but to preach the gospel, yea, and to preach the gospel to negroes: this shut up every avenue of civility, and rendered my person as forbidding, as my errand was disagreeable.

Marsden finally found one old Methodist man on a neighboring island—apparently the last survivor of the earlier persecution—but the condition of this fellow only deepened his despair. 'I returned to St. George with a heavy heart, not without frequent starting, tears, and mingled desires to change my gloomy and unpleasant situation for the quiet of the grave.' Adding to his concern was the safety and comfort of his wife, 'far advanced in her pregnancy,' and seventeen-month old daughter still staying aboard the ship because he could find no housing ashore. Sympathizing with his situation, the captain offered to take them on to the Bahamas and back to Nova Scotia,
"adding," Marsden records, "in his honest and blunt manner, "they are not worthy of a Missionary;—let them die in their sins."

Marsden declined the captain's offer, and shortly began to see signs of light. A letter of recommendation from a British Colonel—recently converted under Methodist ministry in Nova Scotia—provided Marsden access to the governor of Bermuda who assured him he would do all in his power to further his mission, for the sake of his friend Colonel Bayard. After conferring with the attorney-general and chief justice (who was very reluctant to accept Marsden's credentials) the governor gave him provisional permission to proceed with his preaching until further notice. That same day 'an unknown friend' found two rooms available in the house of 'man of colour.' He moved in immediately and, wasting no time, asked his new landlord to give public notice of the first preaching service scheduled for the next day.

The first Methodist congregation consisted of no more than ten people, including Mrs. Marsden, 'the ship's captain, the mate, the supercargo and his wife, the rest black and coloured persons,' but by then Marsden was prayerfully hopeful:

I continued to labour with many prayers and fears; and though my prospects of doing good to the whites were rather gloomy, yet a glimmering of extensive usefulness among the black and coloured people often revived my spirits and cheered my path. My little domestic congregation [they met in one of Marsden's two rented rooms] continued to increase, so that by the time I had preached six weeks, the six who first attended, were multiplied to sixty, and some of these afforded signs that the word was not as chaff blown away by the wind of carelessness.

FIRST FRUITS

It is interesting to see Marsden's manner of discerning signs of spiritual awakening. He apparently made no strong evangelistic appeal, rather he noticed those among the attenders who stayed later than others in prayer, or who seemed most interested in the preaching. These he would 'speak to...concerning their souls.' The first converts were two women who came to him 'and after some hesitation, informed me that they wished me to direct them how they might save their souls.' Marsden expressed his joy in the language of the Biblical growth metaphors: 'These first budings of a gracious nature...were as pleasing to my heart as the reviving sun to the Greenlander.'

The next converts were 'Tony Burges, a venerable old black man,' and his wife. Their children soon 'followed the example of their parents, until the whole family was drawn to God.' A neighbour, Sally Tucker, was next. She was followed by the Marsdens' 'coloured' landlord, Mellory, and his wife. The impact was not limited to the black portion of the congregation. Marsden mentions several other white young men and the three daughters of a sea captain, all of which, with the first black converts, were to make up the first Methodist society:

All became close attenders of the preaching, and were graciously drawn to a serious and impartial inquiry after divine things; these, with many others whom I could name, inclining in the same way, and becoming reformed and serious, I formed into a little society, reading the rules, and pointing out to them the nature of each, for all
A Missionary Case Study

this was new and interesting respecting Christian fellowship;—this was the first Methodist society ever raised up in the Somers Islands, about forty in number.

Marsden’s joy in this speedy response among his hearers in this seemingly hopeless setting was understandably exuberant:

I rejoiced over them as a tender father over a first-born son; the seed that was sown in tears I now began to reap in joy; the design of Providence began to unfold itself in my appointment to the island, and I no longer walked with my book in my hand through the cedar trees and by the sea side as a solitary and mournful exile, unconnected and alone in the islands.

PASTORAL CARE AND COMMUNITY BUILDING

The formation of the society of more serious seekers, in addition to the general congregation, called for specific pastoral attention. Marsden began a programme of house-to-house visitation. It was a time of building the deep, well-rounded relationships that characterized his ministry for the next four years.

He also made trips to some of the communities on the neighbouring islands, preaching where he could among the small Anglican congregations. By comparison with his fervent congregation in St. George, Marsden’s ministry with these was pale:

My congregations were respectable people, who treated me with attention, politeness and hospitality; but alas! they had need of nothing: they were too polite to treat me rudely, too complaisant to gainsay, and too innocent, moral, and good to need a Saviour.

In spite of initial apathy, Marsden adopted a method calculated to win the hearts of the Anglican whites. He began by preaching in terms of the ‘data’ familiar to them all, namely the primary faith affirmations of the Church of England. He also attended the Anglican services whenever he could. Gradually and gently Marsden won their confidence, and even some of their support:

By these means, their prepossessions against us as a body, gave way, and many respectable people expressed themselves as glad that I had come to the islands: Stowe Wood, Esq. a respectable magistrate, invited me to his house, as did also Captain Walker, Mr. White, and Captain Newbold, and a number others.

Immediately following this progress report, however, Marsden writes the following, indicative of his ministerial priorities, ‘Meanwhile, I omitted no opportunity to bring forward my little black and coloured flock in St. George.’ Here is a clear example of the effective combination of outreach and pastoral care. Marsden had learned in his struggles on the Nova Scotia circuits the desperate need of Christians for on-going pastoral nurture. While reaching out to new areas, he was intent on ‘keeping’ what he had already gained. To this end he began serious efforts in literacy training in order to provide the new society with the means for its own support in the Scriptures.

He also lost no opportunity to build the self-esteem of the recently-liberated former slaves. In his visitation he provided Scripture portions and Testaments to those who
were showing progress in their reading. He also composed 'a little pamphlet of hymns' designed especially to encourage the faith and confidence of the black Christians.

As might be expected, these efforts to strengthen the black population met with mixed responses among the white population. The use of certain 'freedom' metaphors in the hymns led some to fear a violent uprising. Also the mixed worship services in the cramped quarters of Marsden's apartment, drove some of the whites away. Yet the work was allowed to go on, in spite of periodic opposition. The society at St. George remained racially integrated, though the whites were in the minority. At the time, such membership for white Bermudians was a form of social suicide, and so indicated a high degree of commitment. Marsden commented, 'Indeed, joining the society in Bermuda at this time seemed like changing caste in the East Indies, so that none who set much value upon the opinions of others durst come among us.'

**Indigenous Leadership and Solidarity**

In due course leaders and preachers began to emerge from within the small society. Men such as the Marsdens' landlord, Mellory, and another, Peter Hubbert, assumed pastoral responsibility early on, allowing Marsden to travel and to preach in more of the island communities. In these he met with mixed responses, however, among the most receptive areas was the town of Hamilton. Ironically this town had been the centre of John Stevenson's earlier persecution. There Marsden rented a large room for preaching, and it was quickly filled beyond its capacity. Among the fruit of this particular effort were 'several respectable white females.' Two of these, incidentally, later married Methodist missionaries, and in Marsden's words now 'adorn the precious gospel.'

The time seemed to have come to raise money for a proper Methodist chapel of their own, not only for the sake of needed space, but also to ensure a meeting place that could not be affected by any racial bars. The wealthy white Bermudians who had in the last decade jailed the Methodist missionary gave generously. Marsden interpreted the resounding success of this project as a profound endorsement of his ministry in Bermuda, given the tremendous odds against its success.

Marsden was so energized by the project that his previous lung ailments which had driven him from Nova Scotia no longer bothered him:

I never had better health in my whole life: the people wondered, and said my constitution must be like iron, as most of the weather was burning hot, and compelled others to take refuge in the shade, while I had often to spend from nine to twelve hours a day, exposed to the range iscl of the almost vertical sun; and then hasten to some appointment to preach, returning home so exhausted as hardly able to pull off my clothes, and rising with new vigor, to pursue the same toil.

In this same exhilarated mood, Marsden greeted the completion of the chapel and his first sermon from its pulpit:

Thus after preaching two years from house to house in a sultry climate, I had at length the happiness to ascend a pulpit, and proclaim to four or five hundred
people who had met at the opening. 'This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.' I now also realized one of the nearest objects to my heart, that of having a spot in the centre of the Islands, where the neglected Africans might be raised to the dignity of worshipping God, without being separated from their fellow men like cattle in a stall.

The rest of the story of the Methodist mission is characterized by the expansion of the work already established. Marsden, and the local lay preachers continued to minister throughout the islands. With an eye toward the future, Marsden especially focused on providing for schools and training primarily in reading. He also began lectures in doctrine for the more serious members of the society, with the goal of ensuring the continuation of the work.

My heart being set upon the prospect of doing the blacks and coloured people some lasting good, I set apart one evening every week to instruct as many of them as could possibly attend in the most important and fundamental doctrines of the gospel;

Sadly, this priority apparently was not shared by Marsden's successors. By the time he wrote his account of the mission Marsden had opportunity to hear what had become of the work he left behind. In regretful retrospect he commented, 'I am persuaded that if this method had been continued by my successors, the society would not have fallen away from 136 to 68.' The need for serious, on-going discipleship, already proven by Marsden's success, was now doubly proven by his successors' failure.

After a wrenching farewell, Marsden left the core society 136 members strong, with many times more than that participating in regular worship. Although he remarked later that had he been more 'faithful in the improvement of every opening and the discharge of every duty,' their number might have been five hundred, he was by no means discouraged about the prospects of Methodism in Bermuda. He left strong indigenous leaders, and counted on the arrival of other missionaries to replace him.

Looking back on his departure he summarized the four years:

Bermuda was a little world to me; I had gone there a despised and unendeared man; God had given me friends, respect, a chapel, a society, a love for the place, and all that could render parting and separation painful in the extreme. Many, of both blacks and the whites, manifested the most poignant grief: they wept aloud, and strongly reminded me of St. Paul's departure from the church of Ephesus.

REFLECTION
Throughout this account of Marsden's work we have made note of principles and practices which seem to account for his success:

1. Prayerful dependence upon God in what appeared to be an impossible missionary assignment;
2. Humble determination and a willingness to start small;
3. Confidence in the preceding work of the Holy Spirit preparing hearts for the Gospel, and with that a gentle, sensitive approach to work with what God was
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already doing;
4. Patience to accept slow growth at first, rather than pushing for immediate 'success';
5. Keen awareness of the importance of Christian community and fellowship, seen in the nurturing of group activity and corporate worship;
6. Commitment to on-going discipleship and pastoral care;
7. Determination to anchor new believers in the Word and sound doctrine, extending to such practical concerns as literacy;
8. Willingness to nurture and trust indigenous leadership;

In addition to these listed, one further commitment in Marsden's ministry bears comment. In recent years Church Growth theorists have debated the now famous 'homogeneous unit principle.' This principle is based on the observation that people tend to come to Christ most easily and to receive Christian nurture most readily in the context of their own culture, race, or class group. In practice this has led to a form of segregation in which Christians of different cultures and background enjoy worshipping together with 'their own people.'

Clearly, Marsden was not prepared to accept any such segregation, even though in the early stages of his ministry in a context of extreme economic, racial, and cultural diversity such divisions might have seemed more practical. Marsden was prepared to accept very small results rather than make concessions to what he saw as irrelevant social differences. Those who were reluctant to seek God's grace and sing God's praises in the presence of their former slaves were, in Marsden's mind, not truly sincere in their intentions. And he was willing to let them wait for the Holy Spirit to instill a deeper sense of need, rather than provide a more comfortable alternative.

In the great English revival of the previous century John Wesley had called people to gather into groups on the sole basis of their shared desire to flee the wrath to come—rich and poor, educated and illiterate alike. True to his Wesleyan heritage, Marsden recognized that the only relevant distinction between human beings anywhere was the difference between those who are responding positively to the wooing of the Holy Spirit and those who are resisting His call to repentance. Likewise, the most significant bonds between human beings are not cultural or racial, but the shared communion of repentance and faith. On this foundation Marsden built a strong, integrated community of believers in Bermuda. It remains to be seen if a modern application of the same principle today would meet with similar success.

Theologically, most of Marsden's missionary practice can be traced directly to John Wesley's understanding of God's 'prevenient grace.' Briefly outlined, early Methodists understood prevenient grace to be: 1) the completely unmerited activity of God on the basis of Christ's atonement alone, 2) reaching out universally to persons blinded and paralyzed by the effects of sin, 3) providing for all an initial salvation from the effects of the Fall, for which they bear no personal responsibility, 4) giving all persons some awareness of their inadequacy, guilt, and prideful resistance toward God and his previous overtures of grace, 5) providing the freedom/power to respond positively to subsequent directions from God, 6) for the purpose of preparing them for the gift of
faith and a fully saving relationship with God here and now.

It would be difficult to articulate a more energizing and confidence-inspiring basis for missionary activity. But even more, for those who apply its implications, this understanding of God's always-previous grace offers profound guidelines for mission practice. Marsden went out in the confidence that God did not want any of His children to perish, and that He had sent His Holy Spirit to the hearts of all men in preparatory activity. Marsden expected to find God at work even in the dark and difficult Bermuda field. Because of that confidence he took time to observe the signs of God's activity and tried to align his own work with God's. Yet, while affirming what God was doing already through prevenient grace, Marsden never lost sight of the purpose of this grace—the preparation of souls for full salvation. Such was his confidence in the broader provisions of God's salvation plan that Marsden was unwilling to make any concession to the 'flesh.'

The Methodist doctrine of prevenient grace can be seen in Marsden's work to provide a theological basis for respecting and striving to understand people as they are, under God's love and provision. Yet, at the same time we see no weakening of the missionary zeal to see people become all that God wants them to be. In contemporary missiology these two dynamics continue to challenge us both theologically and practically. This case study is offered as a contribution to the goal of sensitive, yet determined, mission outreach in harmony with the Holy Spirit's preparatory ministry on the basis of the full atoning work of the 'Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.'
NO PLACE FOR WISDOM?
AGE DISCRIMINATION IN THE CLERGY CALL PROCESS

JOHN CHARLES COOPER

To speak of Age Discrimination against pastors may sound strange, but Age Discrimination is not new. Despite the myth that elders were more respected in the past, the 2,500-year-old Greek drama, "Oedipus At Colonus," is a savage reply by Sophocles (then nearly 90 years old) to his son who was trying to take over the dramatist's estate on charges of senility. In the play, the character berates the younger generation for ingratitude. More importantly, Sophocles clearly proves by his masterful handling of the dramatist's art that older persons are not incapable of work and creativity. As in the case of many philosophers, composers, poets, and novelists, the productivity of extreme old age represents the high point of the creative mind's contributions to humanity. Henry Roth, author of Call It Sleep at age 28, recently released his second novel at age 88, the first of a projected series of five novels. Perhaps even more telling, during June, 1994 scores of men in their late seventies and eighties celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of D-Day by parachuting into France just as they had done as young men in World War II. Aristotle was right; one must live long in order to achieve happiness, and to make lasting contributions to society.

Religion, supposedly, has always fostered respect for age. The Commandment enjoining respect for parents (Exodus 20:12), which by extension means all elders, is the first Commandment with a promise: the most important of all, that of the land. Leviticus 19:23 is a beautiful call to honor "The hoary head...the face of an old man," connecting that to reverence of the Lord. Both Genesis and Deuteronomy connect extremely long life with holiness and social importance. (See Genesis 5:25, 27 for Methuselah and Deuteronomy 34:7 for Moses.) And the Psalmist in Psalm 92:14 declares of the saints: "They shall bear fruit in old age."

Contrast that last sentiment with this: Federal Age Discrimination in hiring lawsuits are up 30 percent—to almost 20,000—from 1992 to 1993. If we think that is
in the Church. To illustrate the dimensions of the present situation, I will cite statistics from one major American Protestant denomination, the 6.2 million member Evangelical Lutheran Church in America—of which I am a pastor. Despite the fact that the average age at ordination in one Protestant denomination, the ELCA, through October 31, 1993 was 36.1 years, it is becoming increasingly difficult for pastors nearing 50 and older to secure calls to new pulpits. Association, Presbytery and Conference Officials are frank in disclosing this to pastors in their 40s and up. One Church leader put the situation perfectly, observing, “Congregational Call Committees want pastors 35 years old with 30 years of experience.” Another leader observed, “distance and age does affect the ability to interest Call Committees in even talking with a pastor.” It seems that the hoary head need not apply.

Age Discrimination is an equal opportunity evil affecting persons of both genders, as well as all races, ethnic backgrounds, and lifestyle orientations. It is not solely a problem for white, middle-aged men; it is a problem that may prove to be even more damaging to the Church than it is to the individual. In view of this all pastors must work to overcome the inappropriate understanding of the pastor’s role that leads quite often to unobtainable expectations of pastoral candidates. We must all stand up for justice, and no one is better equipped to do so than the older pastor, in whom God, through the grace of time, may have begun to create wisdom.

In looking over the ELCA Clergy Roster, of 13,168 active pastors, some 10,183 are over 40 years of age (and “everyone wants a younger pastor”) while the average age at ordination in 1993 was 36.1 years—a figure which has increased by 3.1 years since 1989.

Of the 10,183 clergy over 40, 5,465 are over 50 years of age (41.5% of the entire roster). Once more, 1,871 active pastors are over the age of 60 (14.2% of the entire active roster). And 406 active pastors are over the age of 65 (3.3% of the active roster). The average age at death of pastors, over the past five years (active and retired) is 77.2 years. These figures support the conclusion of an aging pastorate, becoming older not only by passage of time but by the growing age of the newly ordained. There is no reason to believe that Age Discrimination will be any less a problem in the future for minority pastors (or for women) than it is for male Caucasians now. America's youth-oriented culture cuts across all sociological sectors.

Finally, although records are incomplete on pastors who leave the clergy roster voluntarily, not as the result of discipline, we find 394 persons recorded, whose median age is 42.5 years. If we take 36.1 as the average age of ordination that means 6.4 years of active service. To be more fair, we may take the 1982 figure of 30.6 years at ordination, but this still yields only about 12 years of active service. Probably the real length of service is somewhere between 6 and 12 years of active service, or one, and possibly two “calls”. Pastors are in their prime at 42.5 years of age—or they should be. Did these former pastors come to realize that while the experience they had was appreciated, the age they had attained in gaining it was not?

A successful pastor in Kentucky put it succinctly: “With ordination at over age 36, and call committees getting ‘hinky’ when you're in your mid-40s, you've got one call you can count on.”
THE PROBLEM

Despite preaching against prejudice, the American Protestant Church, as an institution, is guilty of the worst sort of discrimination, Age Discrimination, self-destructively directed towards its own leadership cadre, the ordained pastorate.

This is not a thoughtless charge. Any Church official will frankly disclose the problem. "I have difficulty placing pastors over 40 years of age," one Southern Church leader remarked. "Perhaps the best we can do is secure an interim pastorate," a Midwestern leader observed. It is not surprising that Church officials routinely inquire of older pastors seeking new positions, "Are you ready to retire?"

There seems no place for the victim of age discrimination in the Church to turn. Church leaders are usually sympathetic but offer no alternatives except to suggest interim pastorates. It is high time the various denominations in their Assemblies took notice of this problem and formulated plans to overcome it. Ignoring the issue will not make it go away, for, over time, the situation will drive pastors approaching middle age from the ministry. "Younger" middle-aged pastors will see the Mene, Mene, Tekel, Parsin clearly etched on the wall blocking their future and leave. History teaches us that discrimination not only destroys individual lives but the institutions that discriminate, also.

I invite the lay leaders of the Church to unite to address the problem, both as a University Ethics Professor and as a 61-year-old pastor who knows now, in my own life, what minorities, the handicapped, and women have long known was a hateful and destructive misuse of their talents and strength: Discrimination. As an active participant in Church activities I have seen the frustration boiling within pastors, of all denominations, who feel blocked in their careers, but worse, in their ministries.

My arguments here are based on both what I've been told by pastors and on the statistics made available to me by concerned Church staff members.

WHY THE CONGREGATIONAL PREJUDICE AGAINST OLDER PASTORS?

Why do congregational leaders so often think that a younger pastor would serve them better than an older pastor? This is the crux of the problem: local congregational lay leadership. Church leaders didn't invent the situation, they discovered it in the experiences of pastors with Call Committees.

First, Call Committees may believe that an older pastor may not be as physically healthy and as energetic as a younger pastor when they say, "We need someone with lots of energy!" However, self-starters, highly energetic persons among the clergy, tend to be self-starters and working dynamos throughout life, not just in their youthful years. The same observation is true of every field, professors, military officers, and mechanics. Youth and age have little to do with personality and motivation. Church leaders recognize that there are many underachieving younger pastors, too. People live longer and are healthier and active longer now than was the case in even our parents' lifetimes. Again, illness, accidents, and the need for operations occur in younger persons' lives, also. If a pastor was vigorous and hard working in his early years the odds highly suggest that he will be vigorous and active in his later years. Indeed, a Methodist pastor friend of mine is vigorous and active at the age of 83!

The trend to favor younger pastors is a prime example of the enslavement of the
churches to secular culture. The cultural fashion for 75 years has been to worship youth and beauty. We're all familiar with this charge but we all seem equally powerless to rise above it. The billions spent on cosmetics, exercise equipment, dieting plans, and hair coloring shows what many of us truly worship. According to Luther's interpretation of the First Commandment, this is idolatry, for whatever you place all your hopes in and the desire of your heart on is really and truly your god. Our clothing styles show where our trust is, as do the types of autos we drive, and also our popular speech. "Young is good, old is bad," is written on our foreheads. What is written there also says, "We fear age because we deeply fear death." In a Christian, that is unbelief.

Yet, deep in our minds are images of "the old woman" and "the old man," interpreted, if only unconsciously, as "wise." Our dominant fashion of worshipping youth grows out of Sigmond Freud's outlook: sex is all important, and death is a terror to be pushed away as long as possible. Youth-oriented culture is almost synonymous with the rise of the cinema, and later television, with its exhibitions of beautiful women and virile, younger men. The question for the Church is: "How do we make an exodus from this crass cultural enslavement that denies the spiritual and spurns the glorious hope of Resurrection?"

It's hard for us to believe that one's later years are better than one's youth, but the testimony of the wise and the good are all on the side of age. Our Creator surely knows what He was doing in establishing the life cycle. Growing older is not a sufficient condition for becoming wise but it certainly is a necessary condition.

Thirdly, it is often the older persons in congregations who seem most set on "having a younger pastor." In speaking with other clergy of several denominations, they have noted this, too. I've also noted the desire of elderly ladies to "mother" younger pastors. To think that normal, family-type psychological relationships are not operating in a pastor congregational member setting is foolish. Church members often see younger clergy as the son they never had, or a substitute for the one they didn't turn out the way they wished. Older men may dominate the younger male pastor, both out of father-son dynamics and out of the power differential established by their professional success and greater wealth. Unconsciously, older members of the congregation may sense that they will neither be able to mother or father nor dominate an older pastor. With both their drives to nourish and to control thwarted, such church members may, without consciously realizing it, become dissatisfied with the local church. "We need a younger pastor" translates into "We need someone we can control."

**WHEN PARANOID ISN'T PARANOIA**

One bad reason for ignoring age discrimination is the facile response (by those who so far have not been discriminated against in this way) of "sour grapes." The implication is that a person is griping because they weren't called to a desired congregation. Now, pastors are human and "sour grapes" is always a possibility, but it stretches logic to consider the many cases that are self-reported and reported by church leaders as all "sour grapes." That response simply won't wash, logically.

Another, even more broadly expressed but still irresponsible response, is to put charges of age discrimination down to middle-aged, white male "paranoia"—persecution fears—in an
age of "affirmative action." Once more, there may be cases of middle-aged, white male "paranoia" out there, but the likelihood that such insecurities on the part of all pastors who find it difficult to receive new calls is the "reason" for the perceived situation is logically improbable.

The real overthrow of this charge of "paranoia" or self-servingness is a simple reality check. Not many persons, on the clergy roster or not, are going to change race, gender, ethnic or linguistic background, yet all of us—regardless of race, gender or ethnic group—are going to age over the coming years. (If we're fortunate!) If age discrimination in the employment of pastors is not effectively checked now, it will affect minority members of the clergy in the coming decades just as surely as it affects white males in the second half of life now. There is no reason why, given the conditions developed over the past 75 years in our society, that congregations won't want a younger Black, Hispanic, Asian or Native American pastor. Age is the great leveler; it discriminates against no one. Those who believe the age discrimination suffered, chiefly, by white male pastors now, will not affect minority members in the ministry eventually, are deluding themselves. The worship of "youth" is color-blind and gender-blind.

**IS THERE AN ECONOMIC BASIS FOR AGE DISCRIMINATION?**

Perhaps the most important reason for difficulties in securing a new call by older pastors is the same one given for many other inequalities in the United States, the Economic Reason. Congregations, especially smaller ones, may seek younger (often newly ordained) pastors because the new pastor may accept a lower salary than a pastor with many years of experience. Someone has suggested that there may be a "glut" of pastors at the upper end of the age scale. A reality check of the Lutheran congregations shows that to have no basis.

Why? The ELCA has many smaller congregations that have no pastors, some of which have been vacant for long periods. An ELCA study revealed that there were 1,639 vacant congregations as of October 25, 1993. Of course, 945 were congregations with 175 or fewer members. In point of fact, many of the very small congregations were probably unable to pay the accepted salary for a pastor of any age or any number of years experience. While some of the "larger" small congregations may be able to meet the expected salary (barely) for a young, or inexperienced, pastor, most probably cannot. Therefore, since smaller congregations (at present) cannot "afford" a well-trained pastor of any kind, it is false to hold that these smaller congregations necessarily desire younger pastors in order to save money. We see that an argument that is probably true, i.e., higher expected salaries keep very small congregations from having any full-time professionally trained pastoral services, is used by an illegitimate switch to prove that older pastors are simply priced out of the market in such cases. Actually, older pastors, without children at home, may well be willing to take lower salaries than younger men fresh out of Seminary or Graduate School. Offering older pastors these congregations at salaries such congregations may be able to pay might mean the strengthening of ministry throughout the Protestant churches.

In any case, the economic issue needs to be addressed. Several potential solutions immediately come to mind:

- First, congregations (smaller and otherwise) that have financial difficulties affording full-time pastoral leadership could use Assembly or Convention subsidy to enable ministry to take place.
Second, very small congregations that are not realistically expected to grow might close or merge into more viable units so as to be able to support pastoral ministry. Actually, such consolidation is going on, to a degree, in every mainline denomination.

Third, very small congregations that have promise of growth might be served by the "Tentmaker Ministries" of pastors who earn their living in universities, counseling centers, as consultants, as public school teachers, or by retired pastors.

Finally, salary expectations could be lowered. More cannot be expected from lay people than they can reasonably do. Let the "market" regulate itself, as economists, business leaders, and politicians are continually chanting. There may be pastors, glad for a new challenge, who will not let a lower salary stop them from accepting a call. That is, after all, the way it has been for centuries.

Note that these last three possibilities require no "top down," Convention or Assembly, involvement. They can be put into practice at the local and regional level.

**SOME SUGGESTIONS TO LAY LEADERS FOR A SOLUTION TO AGE DISCRIMINATION**

Age Discrimination in clergy selection needs to be addressed with hard nosed solutions for the spiritual health of the Church. Lasting solutions will only come from the pooled wisdom of the deacons, elders, presbyters, lay leaders, pastors, Conferences, Meetings, Synods, Assemblies, Presbyteries, and the Assemblies of the several denominations. Here are some directions that this group thinking might explore:

- Adopt an "Age Affirmative Action" Program within the churches.
- The Publication Board could prepare educational materials on Age Discrimination and how to overcome it in both video and workbook forms, to be studied at meetings, Assemblies and at the National Convention of the SBC and other denominations, as well as made available to all congregations.
- A course entitled "Calling A Pastor" could be prepared by the Publication Board and offered to every congregation seeking a pastor. This course should cover all aspects of calling a pastor, not just material on Age Discrimination. It should address ethnic and racial discrimination, as well as attempting to build a reasonable set of expectations for the pastor.

Just recognizing the damage done to the morale of the ministry and the longer term ill effects on the larger Church caused by Age Discrimination in the clergy call (and retention) process is a good start. Becoming aware of just what we are doing to fellow Christians (our pastors) and to Christ's Church in depriving the first of employment and the second of the slowly matured wisdom of Christian leadership should make every Deacon, Elder and other leader an advocate of keeping mature pastors. Recognizing the internal dynamics, the prejudice against age and the desire for "younger preachers" should help, too. Are we aware of just how controlling many of us are? Are we aware that the desire to exercise such control may be a very real resistance to the Holy Spirit? It is the Spirit, after all, and not our knowledge and power who is the true leader, guide, and counselor of the Church.

It is time every church member comes to terms with the fact that God made the world and the ways in which it operates. No one starts out at full power, with all knowledge. The young, no matter how well educated, have much—you are inclined to say, everything—yet to
learn. God calls a person to the ministry but he doesn't at the same time fill his head with
Greek, his heart with sensitivity, and his mind with experience. All that knowledge and
learning takes time—a lot of time. Even the life of holiness, of growth in sanctification, takes
time; in fact, a lifetime. There is nothing wrong with youth. Youth is youth, but youth means
no experience. I Timothy 5:22 warns the Church not to lay hands quickly on anyone.
Christian leadership needs to be developed. Like everything else that God makes, from
apples to mountains, it takes time. As Paul tells Timothy: “Let the elders who rule well be
considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching.”
(I Timothy 5:17)

We often decry the contemporary breakdown of traditional family values today but gen-
erally, have no real clue as to why the decline in respect for self and others and in the fear of
God has occurred. Some American philosophers spoke of this decline as much as thirty
years ago, and traced it to a breakdown of respect for authority. The basis of all authority is
the respect of the younger for the older. Once that is gone, respect for all forms of secular
and churchly authority goes, too. The preference of the Church’s Call Committees for
younger men and the rejection of older pastors is a clear case of the breakdown of respect
for authority among “Christians.” Is it any wonder that more and more “Christian” homes
are broken by divorce? Is it a surprise that the children of “Christian” homes end up on
drugs, pregnant, murdered, or in prison? Traditional family values jump out at us on every
page of Scripture, and they all rest on the basic, fundamental respect of the younger for the
elder. Brethren, think seriously about these things!

Discrimination is discrimination, and while we must make the Church aware of discrimi-
nation in its many forms, it is not enough if we neglect to educate against the one kind of
discrimination that will eventually hurt everyone, from white males to Hispanics, Blacks, and
Native Americans as well as the handicapped: our pervasive discrimination against older per-
sons in the ministry. Even more importantly, we must make room for older pastors, many of
whom, by God’s grace, bear a hard-won wisdom from the past down to now, and on to the
Church of the future. The answer of any servant church to the question, “Is there no place
among us for wisdom?” must be a resounding “Yes!”

Pastor Cooper wishes to note that he deliberately did not name pastors and church leaders quoted
in this article, yet all quotes are factual. He apologizes for demolishing certain arguments with Logic
but that is a condition that affects people who teach Logic as well as Ethics. Dr. Cooper, particularity,
thanks the Department of Research and Evaluation in the Chicago office of the ELCA and,
especially, to Martin Smith of that office for his efforts in getting current and invaluable statistics which
the author has used in this article. He is also grateful to United Presbyterian, United Methodist,
Disciples of Christ, and Southern Baptist pastors, staff persons, and theologians who shared their expe-
riences and insights so generously and openly with him. In the end, all labels fade away and we are all
servants of Christ and pastors of His One Body, the Church Universal throughout all time and
throughout the world.
The experience of Methodism and of the Wesleyan/Holiness movements was significantly different in Belgium and the Netherlands than in areas of Europe where Methodism and the Evangelical Association established themselves at early stages in Methodism’s development. For example, in Norway, Sweden, and Germany, Methodism developed a strong presence at a period when the Holiness Movement in American Methodism was strong. In all three areas there were strong emigration contacts with the United States and to a lesser extent with Great Britain. In Belgium and the Netherlands, however, Methodism did not establish a significant presence during the 19th century. The British Wesleyan Methodists had some missions and small congregations in Belgium, but these remained dependent on the English church for most leadership and financial support. The American Methodist Episcopal Church, South, established a rescue mission in the ruins of Ypres in 1919 which rapidly passed from social work to evangelization. By the mid-1930s Methodists listed fifteen “worship and meeting points” in Belgium including three separate French, Flemish, and English groups meeting at one location in Brussels. Because the Holiness Movement had decades before been expelled from the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, there was little Holiness influence in the Belgian Methodist Church, despite the fact that the creed still affirmed a Wesleyan understanding of sanctification.

This does not mean that there was not a larger Holiness and Methodist influence in Belgium and the Netherlands. There was, and is, a significant influence. It is merely more subtle. The method of this essay is to examine that influence in a variety of contexts leading up to the development of Pentecostalism in the Low Countries. It is argued that there is a clear lineage of networks as well as a distinct intellectual trajectory from the Wesleyan/Holiness evangelists of the 1870s.
to Pentecostalism, and that the Tendenz did not develop in a vacuum. Reference will be made to Réveil, the Evangelical Alliance, the impact of Robert Pearsall and Hannah Whitall Smith, the Salvation Army and the development of Pentecostalism. It is also understood that all of these drew heavily, directly and indirectly, on understandings of Christian spirituality developed in the various pietist contexts and on a reading of early Christian sources (including the Bible) variously mediated from those same contexts as well as from the Carolingian revivals in England.

THE RÉVEIL

The Réveil began in Switzerland about 1810 and spread through France, Belgium, and the Netherlands. It had its roots in Pietism and the Swiss Reformations but was also heavily influenced by the Methodists and eventually by the Darbyists. The foci of concern varied from country to country and from decade to decade. However, the basic issues were the nature of the Church, the spirituality of the Church and its social witness. There was insistence on a personal conversion and a developing Christian life congruent with the leading of the Holy Spirit.

In the Netherlands, the Réveil flourished between 1817 and 1865. Under the leadership of its principle figures, Da Costa of Amsterdam and Groen van Prinsterer of the Hague, it sought to further both individual spirituality and social reform. Da Costa's seminary in Amsterdam played a central role despite its political conservatism. After the 1860s, popular support for the movement declined and, looking around for allies internationally, the American Wesleyan/Holiness movement, as developing in the British context, was discovered. All the persons who attended the Oxford (1874) and Brighton (1875) meetings for the "Promotion of Christian Holiness" from Belgium and the Netherlands were from the Réveil.

The historians of Belgian Protestantism have devoted less attention to the impact of the Réveil. However, a survey of the foundations and/or development of individual Protestant churches in Belgium makes clear that the primary impetus to growth and renewal came through the Réveil. However, the development of independent denominations of missions in both the Netherlands and Belgium were hindered by church establishment traditions. It was only after the 1870s in the Netherlands and the 1880s in Belgium that the legal restrictions were lifted, and the persecution of non-Catholics in many Belgian villages remained a fact of life through the 1960s.

Despite the lack of an imposing ecclesial community, within the Netherlands, France and Belgium, Wesley and Wesleyan theologians remained an important source for those who would, in a Protestant context, combine radical demanding personal Christian developmental spirituality with social activism. It is for that reason, for example, that Wilfrid Monod in his widely circulated historical theology of the Réveil, "La Nuit de Témoins," devoted significant attention to the "reform of the reformation" by John Wesley and William Booth. This appreciation of Wesleyan thought developed through contacts with American Wesleyan/Holiness tradition at an early stage, especially in the Netherlands, as immigrants to the United States returned for visits or sent literature. Contacts with British Methodists, such as William Arthur, author of the perfectionistic analysis of Wesleyan thought "Tongue of
Between the Rêveil and Pentecostalism

When the campaigns of Dwight Moody, William Taylor, William Boardman, Asa Mahan, Hannah Whitall Smith and Robert Pearsall Smith began in England in early 1870s, they would find an open, informed, and eager audience for Wesleyan/Holiness ideas in the Rêveil circles of France, Belgium, and, especially, the Netherlands. The American revivalists were initially accepted into a network of evangelical activists centered at Mildmay, London, under the leadership of William Pennefather.3

THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE

It was in the context of the Evangelical Alliance that individuals from the Rêveil came to know each other on an international level. William Arthur, British Wesleyan Methodist, had been an influential participant in the founding meetings of 1846 and became a regular speaker at the British and international conventions as did the French pastor, Adolphe Monad. The emphasis on ecumenism (the nature of the church), the aversion to developing rationalism, the commitment to traditional forms of pietistic orthodoxy, and fear of a revitalized Roman Catholic Church united the Evangelical Alliance. The Evangelical Alliance was primarily a network of leaders of the various "higher life" traditions before 1880. Concern for radical spirituality had not yet been suppressed by the developing liberal consensus of the academic elite.4 The international meetings, the proceedings of which were nearly always published, allowed an exchange of ideas and provided an organizational basis for the American Wesleyan/Holiness revivalists to use in the 1870s. The Continental participants at "The Union Meeting for the Promotion of Scriptural Holiness" at Oxford, August-September 1874, were active participants in the Evangelical Alliance, including T. Monad, M. Combes, G. J. Elout van Soeterwoude, J. van Loon, G. van Prinsterer, G. Monad, and F. Bovet from France and the Low Countries, and Germans such as V. von Niebuhr, Baron J. von Gunmingen, T. Jellinghaus, O. Müller, and O. Pank.5 The tour by Robert Pearsall Smith of European cities before the Brighton "Convention for the Promotion of Scriptural Holiness," 29 May-7 June 1875, was organized, funded, and promoted within the structures of the Evangelical Alliance.6

THE ROBERT PEARSALL SMITH PHENOMENON IN THE LOW COUNTRIES

Reports of the English revivals led by Moody and Sankey as well as the efforts of R. P. Smith, William Boardman, and Asa Mahan in Britain had wide circulation in the Netherlands during 1873 and 1874.4 The Dutch press, following the lead of the British press, described in detail the theoretical structures as well as the revivalistic phenomena witnessed at the meetings. Dutch participants at the Oxford meeting recounted their experiences. These were understood by both the participants and the press to be part of larger evangelization effort and Moody encouraged the converted to go to the Smith meetings at Brighton to learn how to grow in spirituality.9 In April 1875, the first work by Hannah Whitall Smith was published in Dutch, a pamphlet entitled Het inwonen in het land der Belofte [=Dwelling in the Land of Promised One].6 This was reviewed positively in the press and sold widely. Thus, a ready audience existed for the visits of Robert Pearsall Smith to the Netherlands in 1875.
R. P. Smith visited the Netherlands as the guest of G. J. Elout van Souterwoude, founder of the Dutch Evangelical Alliance (Nederlandsche Evangelische Protestantsche Vereeniging), in the Hague. Meetings for the promotion of holiness were held in his home. Among those in attendance were Queen Sophia, Prince Frederik, and his daughter Princess Marie, as well as Groen van Prinsterer and Baron J. W. van Loon, a member of the steering committee of the Dutch Evangelical Alliance and a prominent supporter of the Reusel. These meetings went very well and many experienced the American Wesleyan/Holiness version of sanctification. After the meetings, van Souterwoude recruited pastors and academicians to attend the Brighton Convention and personally paid the way of many. Among those who attended were Abraham Kuyper, Gerth van Wijk, Adama van Scheltema, and Baron van Boetzelaar. Frans Lion Cachet wrote an analysis of the meetings which interpreted the experience in enthusiastic tones to a wider Dutch audience.\footnote{From this important Dutch presence at Brighton came several results: a periodical publication, an active translation program, several small denominations, and, eventually, second thoughts on the part of the leaders after the removal of Smith from the British evangelical scene for his perfectionist teaching.}

From this important Dutch presence at Brighton came several results: a periodical publication, an active translation program, several small denominations, and, eventually, second thoughts on the part of the leaders after the removal of Smith from the British evangelical scene for his perfectionist teaching. The periodical, Der weg ter Godsdijheid, was organized at a meeting held at the home of Abraham Kuyper in August 1875. Edited by A.H.L. de Bel, its intent was to spread the Wesleyan/Holiness ideal of "sanctification by faith through entire consecration." Meetings were held throughout the country and there was an active pamphlet campaign both for and against the concept.

The translation program to make available to Dutch readers the thinking of American Wesleyan/Holiness writers was significant. After the pamphlet of Hannah Whitall Smith mentioned above, her book, The Christian Secret of a Happy Life and \textit{Frank} were both published in Dutch in 1875.\footnote{The former, \textit{Des christens heiligheid}, went through seven printings by 1909. These were accompanied by several volumes of Sankey's revival songs, \textit{Opwekkingsliederen}, which were published in Amsterdam between 1875 and 1887. Most importantly, two volumes by Asa Mahan were translated, \textit{Christian Perfection} and \textit{The Baptism of the Holy Spirit}. Both of these volumes achieved a wide circulation in the Netherlands. Other writers, including Wesley, would be translated and others, such as Andrew Murray, would write to develop similar ideas within a reformed theoretical framework. More recently, the most translated (into Dutch) Wesleyan/Holiness writers have been E. Stanley Jones, David Seamands, and Howard Snyder. The work of Seamands and Snyder have been translated and published by Pentecostal companies.} The former, \textit{Des christens heiligheid}, went through seven printings by 1909. These were accompanied by several volumes of Sankey's revival songs, \textit{Opwekkingsliederen}, which were published in Amsterdam between 1875 and 1887. Most importantly, two volumes by Asa Mahan were translated, \textit{Christian Perfection} and \textit{The Baptism of the Holy Spirit}. Both of these volumes achieved a wide circulation in the Netherlands. Other writers, including Wesley, would be translated and others, such as Andrew Murray, would write to develop similar ideas within a reformed theoretical framework. More recently, the most translated (into Dutch) Wesleyan/Holiness writers have been E. Stanley Jones, David Seamands, and Howard Snyder. The work of Seamands and Snyder have been translated and published by Pentecostal companies.

Kuyper became a primary mover behind the effort to develop a Free Church movement (congregational system) in the Netherlands. In 1880, he founded the Free University of Amsterdam. This resulted in ecclesiastical fragmentation in the Netherlands, without parallel in Western Europe. The smaller "holiness" churches were usually influenced by the American or British Wesleyan/Holiness teachings. Many of these either remained independent or joined with the Bond van Vrije Christelijke Gemeenten (Union of Free Christian Churches) founded in 1881. Among those who had second thoughts was Kuyper himself. He became discour...
aged both by the “fall” of Robert Pearsall Smith and by an emotional breakdown probably caused by stress. Although he continued to reflect many of the values of the Wesleyan/Holiness traditions, he self-consciously developed his spirituality within a Reformed framework. He became convinced that the excesses perceptible in Smith’s perfectionism were merely a clarified version of the Dutch liberal Arminian tradition which had already departed from the stable Calvinist tradition.

The Belgian participation at Brighton was less extensive (Protestants formed only an infinitesimally small percentage of the population of this predominantly Roman Catholic country). At least five participants have been identified: K. Anet (Liège); A. Brocher (La Louvière), J. Nicolet (Liège); E. Rochedieu (Brussels, President of the Église Evangélique), and J. Hocard, fils, (Brussels) who was listed as a (British Wesleyan) Methodist pastor. It is certain that both French and Flemish readers had available the Wesleyan/Holiness tomes produced and/or translated in France, Switzerland, and the Netherlands. As of the present, I have been unable to track with any certainty developments in Belgium resulting directly from Brighton.

Thus while the Brighton Convention received an enthusiastic participation from Dutch and Belgian Christians, there was little enduring structural institutionalization of the experiences. The ground was laid, however, for other developments, especially the advent of the Salvation Army in the Low Countries and, after the turn of century, Pentecostalism.

**The Salvation Army**

In 1867, William Booth founded the East London Christian Mission later renamed the Christian Mission and, eventually, The Salvation Army. Since then this British Wesleyan/Holiness group has become the largest Wesleyan/Holiness ecclesial body in the world. Despite its beginnings in Britain, it has been greatly influenced by the perfectionistic American Wesleyan/Holiness traditions. The Salvation Army established a regular presence in the Netherlands, holding its first meeting there in Amsterdam on 8 May 1887. Within one year there were eleven centers and 3,000 converts with more than 1,000 soldiers inducted. The Dutch Salvation Army newspaper circulation reached 14,000 per week. The liturgical innovations adapted from American and British revivalism were part of the success. However, The Salvation Army also reaped part of the harvest of the Brighton movement which had recently suffered from defection of key leaders such as Kuyper. When General William Booth visited Amsterdam in 1892, he was greeted by a crowd of more than 65,000 persons.

In Belgium, The Salvation Army arrived in May 1889 when centers were opened first at Mechelen (Malines) and later in Ghent and Antwerp. In 1890, centers were opened at Brussels and other larger cities in French-speaking Belgium (Wallonia). In 1891, the first Belgians were inducted into The Salvation Army for training as officers. By 1902 there were about thirty officers, eleven centers and two social service institutions. These were combined with Salvation Army activities in Italy and France under a single command. The Salvation Army has become the eighth largest Protestant group in Belgium. It would appear that there was little contact with Methodists in 1919. However, both the theology and practice of The Salvation Army had a significant
impact, it would appear, on churches related to the Réveil and to the eventual Pentecostal communities. Salvation Army sources are frequently cited in the early Belgian Pentecostal periodicals. In both Belgium and the Netherlands, The Salvation Army has maintained a Wesleyan/Holiness presence.

**PENTECOSTALISM IN THE NETHERLANDS AND BELGIUM**

It has recently, and definitively, been demonstrated that the Wesleyan/Holiness roots of Dutch Pentecostalism are to be found in the Salvation Army, the Dowie Movement and Brighton tradition. Polman, the founder of Pentecostalism in the Netherlands, was trained as a Salvation Army officer in Rotterdam. He served as a prominent officer until 1902. In October 1903 he and his wife joined the John Alexander Dowie center at Zion City, Illinois, U.S.A., where he studied and was ordained a deacon in July 1904. In January 1906, they were commissioned to the Netherlands where they started a ministry center modeled after that of Dowie. Another former Salvation Army officer, M. D. Voskuil, arrived at the Amsterdam center in October 1907 and reported that the “Baptism in the Holy Spirit” was to be accompanied with glossolalia. In April 1908, Polman began publication of the first Dutch Pentecostal periodical, *Spade Regen/The Latter Rain*. Pentecostalism in the Netherlands would retain many of the features of American and British Wesleyan/Holiness traditions, including the concern for the life of holiness, but for the most part, without the perfectionism of the American movement. The perfectionism retained, as in much of American Pentecostalism, was central to the theories of “baptism in the Holy Spirit,” not to eradicationism as taught during the late 19th and early 20th centuries in the U.S.A.

The situation in Belgium developed quite differently. There were Pentecostal groups in Antwerp and in Brussels as early as 1909. However, it was not until the early 1930s that Pentecostalism began to develop as a major religious perspective in Belgium as well as in France. The leading center was Paturages in the coal mining region of southern Belgium, also a focus of Réveil and Salvation Army activity. There Henri Théophile de Worm, pastor of the protestant church, inspired by reports of revival in the Anglo-Saxon world and by memories of the high tides of the Réveil began to publish a revivalist periodical, *Son de nos cloches*. This was superseded by a remarkable cooperative effort, *Esprit et vie* (1932-1939) edited by de Worm and Louis Dalière, a young Harvard educated French theologian and philosopher who became the apologist and leading theoretician of the French and Belgium Pentecostal revivals before he withdrew to lead a prayer center at Charmes sur Rhône; Dalière and de Worm were both steeped in British and American Wesleyan/Holiness authors, as is revealed by their writings and the citations appropriated for the periodicals they edited.

The sources of Belgian (and French) Pentecostal thought were diverse. However, the two most cited groups in the early periodicals remain the Réveil writers and American and British Wesleyan/Holiness writers. This was reinforced by contacts with Norwegian and Swedish Pentecostal missionaries who were, and are, very active in Belgium. The Scandinavian Pentecostals were dependent upon the same sources for the framework of their spirituality.
CONCLUSION

The interaction between Methodists and the Wesleyan/Holiness traditions was less in Belgium and the Netherlands than in several other European countries. However, the Wesleyan/Holiness presence in the religious culture of both nations was important and has contributed significantly to the Protestant religious culture of both countries. In the present realities of Belgium and the Netherlands, the Pentecostal churches are the heirs and primary promulgators of the ideas which were first implemented in force on the Continent with the visit of Robert Pearsall Smith in 1875. In both contexts they are also the heirs, along with continuing Réveil/Charismatic believers in the Protestant churches, of the Réveil of the early 19th century.

What is missing in Europe are the structures for cooperation among the different groups of Christians who have been nourished by the Wesleyan/Holiness traditions. It is to be hoped that Methodist scholars who have been reexamining the Holiness and Pentecostal traditions, and the Pentecostal scholars who have been reexamining their Wesleyan heritage in the context of the Conference on Pentecostal and Charismatic Research in Europe will find the occasion to meet together and explore the implications of their common heritage for religious life in Europe today. It is also hoped that European Wesleyan/Holiness scholars from throughout Europe could participate in such an event.

NOTES

6. For example: M. Wylock, Histoire de la paroisse protestante de Charleroi (Charleroi: n.p., n.d.); E. M. Braekman, Histoire de l'Église de Dour (Brussels: Librairie Protestantte, 1977); J. Verlinden, Histoire de l'Église protestante de Fataques depuis les origines jusqu'à la seconde guerre mondiale...

7. See for example, the narrative of F. L. De Meester, Pionieren ... Wat is dat? (n.p., 1976).
9. William Arthur, Tongue of Fire (London: William Hamilton, 1865) was accepted as a classic statement of Wesleyan/Holiness theology on both sides of the Atlantic. It was translated into French, Dutch, and Swedish. It became an important source for the early Pentecostal thought in the U.S.A., Britain, and on the Continent. It was frequently cited in early Pentecostal periodicals from Norway to Croatia. It remains in print in both Holiness and Pentecostal circles.


12. "Oxford Conferences." The Christian's Pathway to Power 1, 10 (2 Nov. 1874), 200; Account of the Union Meeting for the Promotion of Scriptural Holiness held at Oxford, August 29 to September 7, 1874 (London: Barratt and Sons, 1875).

13. See the numerous reports of meetings with information about the hosts, as well as other meetings held as parallel to the Smith meetings throughout Europe in The Christian's Pathway to Power as well as The Christian. See also Account of the Convention for the Promotion of Scriptural Holiness held at Brighton May 29th to June 7th, 1875 (Brighton: W.J. Smith; London: S.W. Partridge, 1896).

17. F. L. Cachet, Tien dagen te Brighton; Braven aan een vriend (Utrecht: n.p., 1875). Sermons given at Brighton were quickly translated into Dutch by Mrs. Faure and published under the title, Brighton en het levend woord: Toespraken te Brighton gehouden (Utrecht: n.p., 1875). From French was translated the apologetic of Theodore Monod, Wat betekent de Brighton-beweging? Uit het Fransch door N. deforge, met een toevoegel van den verfasser (Goes: n.p., 1880).

18. Twelve fascicles of this periodical appeared between November 1875 and January 1877. See Krabbendam, Zeilenverbrijzelaars, 83-84.
21. On Kuyper's development, see Krabbendam, Zeilenverbrijzelaars, 95-97 et passim. See also, Briefevisering van Mr. C. Groen van Prinsterer met Dr. A. Kuyper, 1864-1876 (Groen van Prinsterer: Schriftheid nakantenschap Deel V, Briefen IV, red. van F.C. Gerretson en A. Goslinga; Rijks Geschiedkundige Publicatien; Kampen: H. Kok, 1937) and F.C. Gerretson, 'Het eerste contact tusschen Groen en Kuyper, 1864-1876.' Versamelled Werke (Baarn: C. Puchinger, 1974) III, 234-237. Kuyper's life during this period remains an important desideratum for research.
22. Addresses of Foreign Visitors to the Brighton Convention (ed.).
25. Wiggers, History, passim; Braekman, 150 Ans de vie protestante, 203-204.
26. Braekman, 150 Ans de vie protestante, 211.
27. Cornelis van der Laan, Sectarian Against His Will: Gerrit Roelof Polman and the Birth of Pentecostalism in the Netherlands (Studies in Evangelism, 11; Metuchen: Scarecrow, 1991). This is the slightly revised form of a dissertation directed by Professor W. Hollenweger at the University of Birmingham. Details about the life of Polman narrated below are taken from van der Laan. A Dutch translation of the English was published as: idem, De Spand Regen; Geboorte en groei van de Pentecoste bevordering in Nederland, 1907-1930 (Kampen: J.H. Kok 1989).

Significant attention has been given by theologians over centuries to the "Christian" understanding of the resurrection of the body. In the modern period that attention has focused on the soul which, without doubt because of initial technical concerns, has seemed an easier item to transfer and store. This has been the case both in academic theology and in popular expressions of theology. In the post-enlightenment period, academic theologians and historians have generally been reticent to discuss an issue so foreign to most accepted scholarly and scientific theoretical frameworks. However, during the early Christian and medieval periods, the preservation and/or resurrection of the body was generally considered a matter of importance and related to concepts of salvation and holiness. Alternative theories were expressed in art, belles lettres, and music as well as theological discourse and to her credit Bynum has reflected on these sources. The issue was of central importance and is a recurring factor of the surviving texts. It was not merely a matter of prurient speculation but was integrally connected to theories of humanity and divinity. In the work of Caroline Walker Bynum, one has, for the first time, a thorough presentation and analysis of the initial and shifting understandings among selected Christian thinkers as to the resurrection of the human body. It is Bynum's argument that the theories worked out in this period still undergird the understanding of person and personal worth in Western culture (pp. 431-433).

After an introduction (pp. 1-17) which indicates foundational images from biblical, hellenistic, Jewish apocalyptic and contemporary texts, the first chapter, "Resurrection and Martyrdom: The Decades Around 200" (pp. 21-58), traces the evolution of the biblical metaphors, especially those in the Pauline texts, through the works of Athenagoras, Irenaeus, and Tertullian (with reference to many other writers). It is clear that despite the various solutions to the problem and the divergent textual interpretations, the resurrection was generally seen as "victory over partition and putrefaction" (p. 58) and a factor of issues related to concepts of martyrdom.

The second stage of the volume (pp. 59-114) takes the developments to the end of the fourth century and into the fifth. The social, cultural, and theological context had changed and so had the issues related to the resurrection of the
body. With the ascendency of the relic cults and asceticism, the focus became increasingly the material body, a body which was rendered incorruptible by the avoidance of physically and spiritually corrupting influences in this life. The paradigm was no longer the martyr but the saint. The central concern was the nature of death and the permanence of the material body. This “extraordinary materialism of the early fifth century set the course of discussion for years to come” (p. 113).

Part two of the volume (chapters 3-5; pp. 115-225) discusses developments in the twelfth century with special attention to Herrad of Hohenberg, Honorius Augustodunensis, John Scotus Erigena, Hildegard of Bingen, Peter the Venerable, and Otto of Freising as well as Scholastic theology, iconography, and burial practices. Bynum states that this period was “the high point of literalism and materialism in treatments of resurrection” (p. 223). Drawing inspiration perhaps from Ephrem of Syria, it was argued that the earthly bodies would be regurgitated (from earth and other consumers) and reassembled into a changeless heavenly context which would absolutize, to the most finite details, the earlier earthly form.

The final section (pp. 229-343) focuses on the decades toward the end of the thirteenth century. Central figures examined include Bonaventure, Thomas Aquinas, Giles of Rome, as well as figures such as Godfrey of Fontaines and Robert of Anjou. Careful attention is given to the interaction of the theologians with Aristotle’s thought as portions of that writer’s oeuvre became available again in the West. It is demonstrated that the vision of God by the soul became sufficient for salvation. Dualism, had, perhaps, become established in Western thought. The resurrection of the body was not denied, but the identity of the “saved” person’s earthly body and the heavenly form had been found untenable. Burial practices were diversified and scholarly research on the body became an option for Western scholars.

An important subtheme of Bynum’s work is the contribution of women to the discussion both as subject and participants, especially among the mystics, in the definition of resurrection. This participation was both at levels of theory and development of practice congruent with those practices. Another contribution, which it is hoped that historians and theologians will remember, is the demonstration that when various texts of Late Antiquity or the Middle Ages affirm “resurrection of the body” they are pointing to a complex matrix of social, cultural, philosophical, and theological factors and understandings. This articulation of the philosophical context within which was made possible the reflection on resurrection of the body is one of the major contributions of the book. Finally, at most every point, Bynum interacts with a variety of scholarly analysis and opinion in the notes which in themselves provide an introduction to the problems for students and scholars in support of their reflection and research. This book is truly an important contribution to the study of Western theology and culture.

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When I first read the title of Cobb's work, I immediately assumed that this book would be similar in purpose and structure to Colin Williams' classic, *John Wesley's Theology Today*. But I quickly discovered I was wrong. Whereas Williams' concern was to explicate Wesley's major theological themes and to demonstrate their ecumenical significance in light of the theological developments which have taken place since Wesley's time, Cobb's treatment is much more narrowly focused. Like Williams, Cobb utilizes Wesley materials—ever aware of our different historical perspective—but unlike Williams, Cobb's dialogue with Wesley is concerned not with the broad perspective of inter-church relations and dialogue, but with developing "some central convictions" around which United Methodists "might be able to reach enough consensus to move faithfully into the future" (p. 15). Its genre, then, is more akin to the recent spate of works which belabor the decline of United Methodism (Wilke, Carothers, etc.) and are, therefore, searching for a solution; the chief difference, of course, is that Cobb's response is unswervingly theological and political.

For the most part, this process theologian's exploration of his central thesis in the initial chapters is refreshing and remarkably honest. Indeed, the pretense that there is nothing wrong theologically with United Methodism is dispelled throughout the work. Cobb notes, for instance, that "we United Methodists have lost our way theologically. We are fragmented in the extreme" (p. 8). And, sociologically speaking, he considers that "we are far more like the Church of England of Wesley's day than like the people who responded to Wesley's preaching" (p. 15). This candor is no doubt one of the book's strengths, though at times it appears that Cobb mistakes the orientation of the leaders of United Methodism for that of the laity, especially in terms of his observation that few United Methodists today are existentially interested in pursuing the question of justification and sanctification (p. 22).

The second chapter of the work, "God and the World," is for the most part good, though the discussion on mysticism is clearly inadequate. It is not evident, for example, that Cobb understands either the reason why Wesley rejected mysticism or the extent of his criticism as well as the broader significance, soteriologically speaking, of all this. To enhance the argument here, Wesley's letter to William Law in 1756—not just the one in 1738—should have been critically examined as well as Wesley's numerous comments on the works of Tauler and Behmen (Boehme). Indeed, on this topic—as elsewhere—Cobb is far too dependent on secondary sources (Tuttle in this chapter, and in later ones Maddox) in his interpretation of Wesley, and his writing, therefore, lacks the freshness, the clarity, and the orchestration of detail so typical of Wesley scholars.

The weakest chapter of the book from my perspective, however, is Chapter Four, "The Way of Salvation, I." Here Cobb seems to have little appreciation of the element of order in Wesley's *via salutis* and he, therefore, for the most part, leaves undeveloped the relations between the soteriological doctrines within this broader framework. More to the point, Cobb's handling of Wesley's *via salutis* is merely sequential more
than anything else: one doctrine simply follows another with no apparent connection. Such a treatment, not surprisingly, lacks the dynamism of Wesley’s own way of salvation with its implicatory relations, its parallelism and, above all, its processive nature.

Beyond this, Cobb seems to be unaware of the debate (Maddox and Collins in *Methodist History*) which has already taken place concerning Wesley’s employment of the phrase “the almost Christian.” In fact, the current discussion is far more advanced and much more sensitive to nuance than Cobb’s treatment allows. How, then, is this a Wesleyan theology for today? In fact, Cobb’s assertion, that “as time passed he [Wesley] acknowledged the judgment of his friends that he had been a Christian long before Aldersgate is both problematic and contested. Therefore, in order to make this claim now, Cobb must first of all explore: a) Wesley’s changing use of the phrases “the almost/altogether Christian,” and the phrases “the faith of a servant, the faith of a child/son,” b) Wesley’s motif of real, rational, scriptural Christianity (which Cobb explores towards the end of his manuscript, though in another context) as this motif relates to these preceding phrases, and c) the question of dominion over sin and the reception of assurance (the spirit of bondage and of adoption) as they relate to both a and b above. In a real sense, a strong case has already been made that Wesley’s later writings (especially during the 1780s) demonstrate that though he modified the distinction between the almost Christian and the altogether Christian—overcoming some Moravian-inspired confusion—he never equated these terms. Cobb’s claim then, if he wishes to put forth a different view, needs to be supported by a well-developed argument.

In chapter Six, “The Role of Law,” the description of the historical background which informed Wesley’s understanding of the law is both engaging and genuinely helpful. However, Cobb’s claim that “the law that Wesley would preach to unbeliever and believer alike was not the natural moral law of the rationalists... Neither was it the Ten Commandments” (p. 119) is not quite accurate. Admittedly, Wesley often defined the law in terms of the Sermon on the Mount as Cobb maintains, but he also conceived of the law in terms of the Ten Commandments as the sermon “The Original, Nature, Property, and Use of the Law” clearly demonstrates (cf. I.5). This factor, considered in light of Wesley’s preaching record and the numerous references to Exodus 20:1-17 in his published sermons, indicates that Wesley viewed the Ten Commandments as an earlier—though still valid—expression of the same moral law which the Sermon on the Mount more clearly elucidates. The key difference, of course, between the two forms of law is that the latter places a premium on intention. But, for Wesley, there was not and cannot be any contrariety here in terms of substance.

The last two chapters of the work, “Openness to Difference,” and “The Wesleyan Quadrilateral,” address the theme of unity in a more direct fashion than do the previous chapters. However, in exploring the issue of unity and religious pluralism, Cobb makes a category error and therefore not only misconstrues Wesley’s teaching, but also misunderstands Dr. Jerry Walls’ basic argument. More to the point, Wesley’s sermons “The Catholic Spirit,” and “A Caution Against Bigotry,” are preoccupied not with the relationship of groups within Methodism (which is the way Cobb wants to press the argument), but with the relationship of Methodists to groups beyond their circle of faith. In other words, in these sermons Wesley explored external relations not
internal ones. In fact, Wesley's Model Deed, adopted by the Conference of 1763, required that his preachers uphold the standard of doctrine evident in his *Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament* as well as in the four volumes of his *Sermons*. Furthermore, as his Journal clearly indicates, Wesley was not reluctant to exclude from the pulpit those lay preachers who spoke against his cherished doctrine of Christian Perfection. Indeed, in terms of relations within Arminian Methodism Wesley stressed unity, not diversity, and his style of leadership was frankly authoritarian. So then, if Cobb wants to find a champion of theological diversity within Methodism, he will have to look elsewhere.

The last chapter of the book considers the theme of unity in terms of the issue of authority. In Cobb's treatment of the quadrilateral, for example, it is clear that what is ultimately authoritative—despite his claim that "It is Scripture enters in...because we United Methodists today acknowledge its authority and are informed by it..." (p. 160)—is not Scripture, but reason and experience. Nevertheless, the reader needs to be aware that Cobb is not really referring to just any kind of experience, nor to human experience in general (certainly not in an existential way). Instead, he continually refers more specifically to the experience of the first half of the following polarities: female/male, black/white, homosexual/heterosexual, and poor/rich. Here Cobb's thought is little different from the liberal "progressivism" of certain sectors of American politics. The chief difference, of course, is that Cobb invests his own political judgments with the aura of sanctity and religion. A sacred canopy—to borrow Berger's phrase—has been placed over post-60s political liberalism and its judgments. This supposedly (and oddly enough) is the basis for unity around which United Methodists should coalesce. But how can the balkanization of American social and cultural life as well as the tribalisms of group politics—which we have all witnessed of late—become the basis for unity within the church? Moreover, many United Methodists may be as equally concerned about social justice as Cobb, but they may differ from him in terms of a) political judgments and strategies and b) the suitability of making any political thought or task the basis of ecclesiastical unity.

An equally disturbing departure from the principles which could actually make for unity (the universal love of God manifested in Jesus Christ) is found in Cobb's use of the term "we" throughout the book. To be sure, this term is never inclusive, never indicative of all United Methodists—certainly not of Evangelicals—but only of a party within "United" Methodism. Other views have simply and conveniently been defined out of existence. That is, Cobb mistakes his own particular vantage point, with all its limitations, for a universal one. What emerges, then, is a very acculturated form of Christianity—a Christianity which lacks a critical perspective on the life and movements of our times.

Under this larger topic of authority, though both Scripture and tradition undergo serious criticism in light of their historical nature, reason and the experience of preferred social groups remain, for the most part, untouched. However, postmodernism has made us increasingly aware that reason is never as objective as we initially suppose, but is always "interested" reason, that is, reason with a viewpoint, a perspective, perhaps even a bias ever behind its use. Second, Cobb is apparently unwilling to identify the
evil, the self-absorption, and the lust for power of "favored groups." His critical knife, in other words, is unevenly applied. This, once again, makes for a skewed and unrealistic analysis and belies his claim made towards the end of the work "I believe that my proposals...cannot be easily categorized in polarizing ways" (p. 177). On the contrary, it is clear to the reader, if not to Cobb himself, that his argument is actually dependent on the establishment—and maintenance—of the polarities and the privileging of the "correct" half of these poles. In fact, even Cobb, himself, admits towards the end of his argument, "No doubt I have interpreted Wesley in terms of these judgments and prejudices" (p. 177). Is this the basis of hope, is this the much-awaited unity from which United Methodism will face the future? I hope not.

Despite my strong criticism, I like what Cobb is trying to do in this book. One can certainly applaud a theologian as he grapples with his own church and its relation to the contemporary world. One can also appreciate the quest for unity amidst a cacophony of voices in Methodism today. Truly, such a quest is both noble and needed. However, Cobb's work, in rejecting the broad theological themes of Chapters Two through Six as a possible basis of unity, and in celebrating contemporary political liberalism in a largely uncritical fashion, will have the ironic effect, in the end, of displaying why we are and will continue to be "lost...theologically and fragmented in the extreme."

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One may tire of hearing that we are at a crisis point in the relationship between culture and Christianity, and it may be endlessly so, but it is especially true right now. The West, as we have known it through the Reformation and Counter-Reformation, the Enlightenment, and the Ages of Discovery, Reason, and Science is dying. Modernity is passing away, Post-Modernity is emerging. But, no one knows what it will look like. Thus, the crisis. Perhaps New Age spiritualism will either marry or bury science. Perhaps dialectical materialism will give way to a philosophy where both the thesis and the anti-thesis are true in their own way without synthesis. Perhaps authoritarianism will give way to such libertarianism that all groups collapse into the black hole of individualism. Or, perhaps, if even reluctant Jonahs can be found, the message of Jesus Christ will save this generation as in Nineveh.

Newbigin's question is the same one Augustine wrestled with: "When the world as we know it falls apart, where do we start to rebuild?" Newbigin blames Descartes for starting in the wrong place (unattainable certainty), and thus producing modern cynicism for any absolutes. Now that we have reached the end of our modern rope—"a
place of technological optimism and literary despair" according to Carver Yu (Newbigin, 19)—what is the challenge and opportunity for the Christian Church?

Newbigin, with his years of experience in missions and in ecumenical work, is uniquely positioned to give us a reasoned and balanced starting point. He notes that some think that the appropriate strategy is to conquer the public domain of values and institutions, laws and legislatures. They decry a pluralist society and look for another Constantinian victory. But, they ignore the results of that kind of victory for the church.

Others glory in pluralism and some even produce enough guilt to lift up competing ideologies over the gospel. For them the church is just one of many private organizations that "do good." It does not occur to them, until it is too late, that the church loses its authority to critique society when it becomes a clone.

Newbigin rejects both "fundamentalist" and "liberal" strategies for the missionary work required to evangelize the West. The liberals are satisfied to live by the rule that faith is a private matter with no relevance for public issues. The fundamentalists prefer to lay siege to the City of Mankind in order to force a change. Newbigin steers a course between the Scylla of ineffective faith and the Charybdis of ingrown faith to secure the place of Christianity in this Post-Modern world.

In three chapters, which were three lectures given as the Osterhaven Lectures at Western Theological Seminary in Michigan, Newbigin identifies the problem, weighs the solutions, and, like the Christian statesman he is, offers some advice about where to start. Using the Barmen Declaration as his example, Newbigin stakes out the mission of the church in post-modern society to be "to declare the sovereignty of Christ over every sphere of human life without exception" (p. 72) and "to reject ideologies which give to particular elements in God's ordering of things the central and absolute place which belongs to Christ alone" (p. 80). Since both liberals and fundamentalists tend to absolutize their positions, Newbigin calls the church not to take sides, but to affirm the truth publicly and to anathematize all false ideologies publicly.

This is fine and perceptive writing, all tightly packed into a few pages. Newbigin is full of quotable quotes. For example, he notes that "it is clear...that free markets are the best way of continuously balancing supply and demand. But it is also clear that when the free market is made into an absolute, outside of rational control in the light of ethical principles, it becomes a power that enslaves human beings. The free market is a good servant but a bad master" (p. 76).

Newbigin's writings are to the point. He does not chart a simple strategy, but thoughtfully lays the foundation for the work of theology. To succeed in the coming age, we must make Christ the center, as did the main architect of the Barmen Declaration, and yet speak directly to the false ideologies of our culture.

"It is not the business of the Church to make an alliance with either right or left in the present political scene. It has to unmask the ideologies that permeate them and offer a more rational model for the understanding of the human situation. Both sides in the argument use the language of the rights of the individual" (p. 76).

But the church is to be different. The church has to reject "an ideology of freedom, a false and idolatrous conception of freedom which equates it with the freedom of
each individual to do as he or she wishes. We have to set against it the Trinitarian faith which sees all reality in terms of relatedness." (p. 75). Newbigin reminds us that the cornerstone in any age is Jesus Christ, and then warns the builders to be careful how they build.

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One of the most fundamental debates going on in the Church concerns the "classical" concept of God. Besides such traditional attributes as omnipotence, omniscience, and perfect goodness, this concept also involves such relatively more arcane notions as impassibility, immutability, simplicity, and timelessness. Much of the earlier impetus for this debate came from the challenge of process philosophy. More recently, however, theologians and philosophers of more conservative and evangelical orientations have been employing the tools of broadly analytic philosophy to explore the same terrain. Many are convinced that careful analysis along with more honest biblical exposition calls for some revision of the classical view of God.

Alan Padgett’s book deals with one of the most difficult of the issues involved in this debate, namely, that of God’s relation to time. The dominant traditional view has been that God is “outside” time or timelessly eternal. Padgett challenges this conception on several fronts.

One of the central questions in this whole dispute is the nature of time. As Padgett notes, recent writers on the matter of God’s relation to time have not always considered this fundamental issue even though one’s stance on the nature of time will have a large impact on how he conceives its relationship to God. Two basic views about time have been held, namely, the stasis view and the process view. The former of these holds that “there is some sense in which all episodes of all existing objects exist (in a tenseless sense of the word ‘exist’) no matter what time human beings identify as ‘now.’” Accordingly, it denies the reality of process, although it allows that different events occur at different dates. But all of these events exist tenselessly as a totality and this totality does not change. The process view, by contrast, maintains that: “Only the present episode of an event exists, period. There is no sense in which past or future episodes exist tenselessly.”

After laying out these and other definitions, Padgett surveys the teaching of Scripture on God’s relationship to time. While he allows that the biblical material is compatible with the view that God is absolutely timeless, he believes it actually points in another direction. “Exactly which notion of eternity one develops from Scripture will depend as much on our philosophical theology as on our exegesis.” The bulk of the
book is accordingly devoted to philosophical considerations.

After an historical sketch of the doctrine of divine timelessness, Padgett develops a coherent model of the notion. He maintains, however, that such a model is coherent only if the stasis theory of time is true. Next, then, he subjects the stasis theory to a careful critique and concludes that it cannot stand up to critical scrutiny. This discussion is one of the most useful parts of the book.

All of this sets the stage for the final chapter in which Padgett offers "a new doctrine of eternity." Over against the classical claim that God is absolutely timeless, Padgett proposes that He is "relatively timeless." God is not absolutely timeless because He sustains our world in which process is a reality. However, there are also important senses in which God transcends time. For instance, He could have created a timeless world, but He chose otherwise. "God's choice, then, to live a certain kind of life—to be dynamic, active, changing—is the ground of the temporality of the universe." God is also the Lord of time because He is not limited by any amount of time nor is He pressed by time in the way finite beings are. Moreover, God is not in what Padgett calls "measured time" for two reasons: (i) God is not subject to the laws of nature, as anything in Measured Time must be; and (ii) any Measured Time is relative to a particular frame of reference, which need not apply to God's time." He concludes the chapter by answering objections and situating his position in relation to the views of two significant writers on time, namely, Whitehead and Barth.

The book is clearly written even though it deals with matters which are rather abstract and difficult. The critique of the timelessness view is, however, more extensive than the development of the new alternative which Padgett favors. The last chapter is relatively brief, particularly in view of the range of matters it covers. It is also somewhat disappointing that Padgett ducks the whole issue of divine foreknowledge as it relates to the matter of timelessness. Nevertheless, this book serves very well as an introduction to the history and current state of the debate for those who have both philosophical and theological interests, and it points in a promising direction for further explorations.

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Several years ago, Clark Pinnock edited a volume entitled Grace Unlimited and followed it up more recently with The Grace of God, The Will of Man. Pinnock's volumes provided a critique of Calvinism and a defense of Arminianism from several angles by a variety of biblical scholars, theologians, and philosophers. The similarity in titles
between the work under review and Pinnock's volumes is no accident for several authors reply specifically to essays in those books. The present work is, however, more than merely an answer to these earlier books. It is a defense of traditional Calvinism which is put forward (in words from the cover) as "a full orbed response to modern objections."

The similarity of titles is, however, instructive of what is at issue, as the editors note in their introduction. Both sides in the debate agree that fallen man is in bondage to sin apart from grace. The issue is how grace breaks the bondage of the will. Pinnock's titles underline the conviction of Wesleyan and Arminian theologians that grace is given to all persons to enable them to be saved, but the will of man finally decides whether or not to accept that grace. But as Calvinists see it, bondage of the will is broken only for the elect by grace which is necessarily effective in producing salvation.

The essays in these volumes are divided into four parts which defend Calvinism from the following perspectives: biblical, practical, historical, and theological-philosophical. The biblical section includes papers on divine election in John, Paul, and one devoted specifically to Romans 9. John Piper offers an interesting attempt to reconcile the Calvinist doctrine of election with God's desire to save all persons. The pastoral section deals with matters such as prayer, evangelism, and preaching.

Several of the essays in the historical and theological-philosophical sections will be of particular interest to Wesleyans. Richard A. Muller contributes a fine historical essay on Arminius and the Reformed response to his theology. He shows that Arminius employed Molina's notion of middle knowledge—roughly, God's knowledge of what all possible persons would freely do in all possible situations—in developing his views on grace and election. This is significant because it has been suggested that Molina's views might allow for a "Calvinist-Arminian rapprochement." Muller maintains that middle knowledge "is the heart and soul of the original Arminian position. Middle knowledge is not a middle ground" (pp. 266-267). A rapprochement on these terms would require Calvinists to concede virtually the whole debate. Molinism is also treated in a philosophical article by J. A. Crabtree who argues that there are two incompatible accounts of middle knowledge in Molina. One of these is compatible with libertarian freedom but is wholly mysterious while the other is intelligible but incompatible with such freedom. Another historical piece of interest is Thomas J. Nettles's assessment of Wesley's contentions with his contemporary Calvinist opponents.

Wesleyan biblical scholars and theologians should take special note of the critical discussions of the Wesleyan doctrine of prevenient grace by editors Schreiner and Ware. Both recognize how crucial this is for the integrity of Wesleyan theology and both attack its biblical credentials. According to Schreiner: "What was most striking to me in my research was how little scriptural exegesis has been done by Wesleyans in defense of prevenient grace" (p. 382). One of the few treatments of the doctrine he located was, however, an Asbury Seminary D. Miss. thesis by Mark Royster.

One of the most fascinating essays in the volume from my perspective is John S. Feinberg's attempt to solve the logical problem of evil from a Calvinist perspective, a notoriously difficult task, as he recognizes. In his concluding paragraphs, he expresses full confidence that he has succeeded, given his ground rules. Even granting these, I
would argue that he has not shown why God cannot eliminate all evil since he believes we are free only in the compatibilist sense.

Although at times the authors overstate their case, the essays are generally fairly argued. (As an example of the former, the Introduction claims that Paul Helm “effectively punctures” the theory of limited foreknowledge even though Helm devotes only two pages of a brief thirteen-page chapter to that theory). These essays are a good measure of the current state of Calvinism. Wesleyans who turn to them will be reminded afresh that Calvinism remains one of the serious options in the mix of often anemic alternatives, an option that requires engagement at the level of substantive biblical and theological scholarship.

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This volume gathers two extended essays presented at the 1992 meeting of the Historical Commission of the European Commission of the Evangelical-Methodist Churches. The authors are established scholars. Professor O’Malley, of Asbury Theological Seminary, has throughout his career focused on the Evangelical United Brethren Church in the U.S.A. and Germany, contributing several books and articles to the subject. Thomas Lessmann is pastor of the Evangelical-Methodist Church at Recklinghausen, Germany. An earlier scholarly contribution was published in the same series: Rolle und Bedeutung des Heiligen Geistes in der Theologie John Wesleys (Beiträge zur Geschichte der Evangelisch-methodistischen Kirche, 30; Stuttgart: Christliches Verlagshaus, 1987). The method of the review will be to look at the two studies on “sung holiness” and then offer a general appreciation.

O’Malley’s study of the role of Gottlieb Fussle in the Holiness Movement within the contexts of the Evangelischen Gemeinschaft in Germany and Switzerland (the Evangelical Association, which became EUB) is the first major study of this influential musician. Fussle (4 Sept. 1839-17 March 1918), born at Plochingen, Württemberg, Germany, experienced conversion at age 14 while listening to the preaching of the Evangelical Association travelling preacher Johann Nicolais. By 1865 he was song leader at the annual conference. Eventually, he settled into a pastoral role, first as the assistant of his mentor J.C. Wollpert near Reutlingen. Fussle accepted in 1878 the pastorate of the Zionskirche in Stuttgart where he remained forty years until his death in 1918.
His musical output was significant as he sought to give voice to his spiritual insights. These were formed through his Pietist heritage in interaction with the American Holiness movement, first as experienced through the traveling preachers and missionaries of the Evangelical Association, and then, following his meeting of Robert Pearsall Smith in 1875, by a wider range of Holiness thought. Füssle reported on his experience of Smith and the Holiness revival in *Die Heiligungversammlung in Stuttgart mit Beziehung auf die A//ianzversammlung in Basel und das Auftreten R. Pearsall Smiths bei der selben mit Auszügen aus seinen Predigten* (Stuttgart: G. Füssle, 1875), a treatise which remains one of the most important sources for this incursion of the American Holiness movement into Europe during early 1875. Füssle wrote extensively in the *Evangelische Botschafter* and contributed a number of books on a variety of subjects related to the Holiness and Pietist heritage.

It was however his hymnody, the largest collection of which was published in *Pilgermann* (Stuttgart: Christliches Verlaghaus, 1906) which influenced developments on both sides of the Atlantic. O’Malley analyzed the theological themes of the hymns and categorized them into major and minor groups. The largest group reflected on the nature of the holy life in classical Holiness and Pietist terms. Successive themes were: (1) the new birth; (2) sanctification; and, (3) "the wandering pilgrim on the way to God’s kingdom" (p. 25). Secondary themes of Füssle’s hymnody identified by O’Malley included the nature of Scripture (conservative but not fundamentalist), christology, sin, ecclesiology, the community of the Spirit, healing. Füssle also dealt with the eucharist, the role of women and secularization. O’Malley concluded that the themes were developed in ways congruent with the Pietist and Holiness heritage of the 19th century Evangelical Association.

Lessmann’s study of Ernst Gebhardt is the first major study of this foundational German Methodist Holiness theologian/hymnographer since the somewhat hagiographical study of Theophil Funk, *Ernst Gebhardt der Evangeliumsänger* (Stuttgart: Christliches Verlaghaus, 1969). Gebhardt (12 July 1832-9 June 1899) was a very productive writer; no one had even attempted to establish a list of his compositions, translations and original hymn texts. Lessmann ascertained that Gebhardt published, between 1870 and 1895, sixteen hymn and song books, only five of which are undated. From this corpus, Lessmann compiled a list of 605 contributions, including 179 original compositions, 369 translations and 108 compositions (pp. 63-74). This list provokes many yet unanswered historical questions, not the least of which is who did Gebhardt translate, why and for what contexts.

Lessmann identified several “theological accents” in Gebhardt’s work. The soteriological themes were found to be prominent as were issues of christology and sanctification. Lessmann is careful to point out that, according to his analysis, only four percent of Gebhardt’s publications and ten percent of his works and translations focus on themes ideosyncratic to the Holiness movement. The conclusion that he was not therefore the “hymnist of the Holiness movement” is, in this reviewer’s opinion, too quickly drawn. There are still the questions of what, when, and why. The Holiness movement, despite the efforts of some of its enthusiasts and critics, was never a single issue movement. This was certainly not the case in Germany where Gebhardt and
most of the proponents of the holy life remained in contact with a diverse public through ecumenical cooperation within the context of the Evangelical Alliance. Most remained within either the German state Lutheran church or the Methodist Church until the advent of Pentecostalism in Germany. It would appear that Gebhardt's theological and musical themes reflected that context.

Such interpretative qualms aside, Lessmann's work is a significant development in the critical study of Gebhardt. The list of titles will give subsequent researchers more immediate access to the mind and heart of this influential Methodist Holiness theologian and hymnographer. O'Malley's work on Füssle is indeed a pioneering work which has implications for the development of transatlantic Holiness movement research. His identification of the confluence of Holiness and Pietist themes will merit considerable reflection and research. The volume makes a major contribution to the quite neglected subject of Wesleyan/Holiness music.

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