



HADDINGTON HOUSE JOURNAL

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Editorial Policy

1. The journal will seek to provide students, laity and ministers with an annual publication to develop their minds and souls through in-depth articles and reviews reflective of the theological basis and ethos of the Trust.
2. The journal will seek to keep readers informed about new books or other publications and thus to be a means of encouraging their stewardship of time and money.
3. The selection of articles and works for review in each journal will usually reflect the fourfold division of the departments in the theological curriculum: biblical theology, systematic theology, historical theology and applied theology, thereby providing balance as to the content of the journal but also providing harmony for the readers to see the unity of the curriculum. It will not be a journal devoted to one department of the theological curriculum.
4. The journal will endeavour to highlight, by way of articles, reviews or book notices, works to assist students in their studies and others in their ongoing training.
5. The journal will encourage the cultivation of writing and provide an avenue for publication and the exchange of knowledge.
6. The journal will include one article or review devoted to the theme of theological education.
7. The journal will also endeavour to include some news about the wider evangelical Presbyterian community of churches or efforts in mission or theological work.
8. Prior to publication, all articles and reviews will be read by select individuals who uphold the theological basis and ethos of the Trust. It will be their task to comment, proof and ensure the quality of the journal.

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Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island

Editor's Preface

First, let me give a word of sincere appreciation to all the contributors for the 2009 *Haddington House Journal*. Without you there could be no journal.

Second, a word to our readers, to whom I may also say “without you there would be no journal”. I want to briefly introduce to you the contents of this year’s journal. We start under our “General Articles” with a chapel sermon delivered at Mukhanyo Theological College by Dr. Flip Buys. I believe you will be as blessed as I was when I heard it delivered. It is my particular prayer that it will be a real blessing to theological students and will help them to understand more about their calling and their spiritual life. Since Dr. Buys teaches in South Africa, we have followed his sermon with an article we asked Bill Lindner, Jr., to write about the 1860 revival in South Africa. We then move to an author who lives in a country bordering modern South Africa, Namibia. This is a very warm and engaging article on the call to preach by Pastor Rieck of Windhoek. I believe the writer gives sound instruction here on the subject. Following Rieck, there is an article by Michael Haykin, now of Louisville Seminary, Kentucky, which will certainly edify and strengthen one’s spiritual life.

In this year’s journal, we have included a missiological article on mission philosophy and strategy for leadership education and training. We hope that this article will help missiologists as they discuss leadership development and lay people to better understand the thinking and strategy behind such efforts.

The second last general article is a reprint essay by J. C. Ryle, the noted Anglican Bishop of Liverpool. This article appeared in *The Fundamentals: A Testimony to the Truth* in the early twentieth century. I make further comment on the significance of *The Fundamentals* in my editorial note to the Ryle article. *The Fundamentals* contain much of value for today.

The final general article is a “bridge” between the general articles and the book reviews in that it is a review article of five books which are brought together because of their commonality in having an African Christian theme. This is a good bridge to the in-depth book reviews and the shorter book notices which follow. You will find about twenty new books reviewed in this year’s journal. The reader is encouraged to take time to read these reviews and notices as they are not only informative of some recent publications but also attempt to offer evaluation and reflection.

The last section of the journal contains academic articles. These are generally more demanding and may be of greater interest to those studying in one of these particular fields. Here there are three articles: the first discussing rhetoric and the art of preaching (Breitkreuz), the second relating to the Reformation and post-Reformation controversies on the epistle of James (Cooper), and the last examining two theologians, a Scot and an American (Evans).

Once again we send out this volume with prayer that the Body of Christ may be edified.

J. C. Whytock,
Editor

God's Credentials for Church Leaders

P. J. (Flip) Buys*

** The following was a devotional message given by Dr. P. J. (Flip) Buys on 21 January, 2009, for chapel at Mukhanyo Theological College, KwaNdebele, South Africa. Dr. Buys serves as the Principal of Mukhanyo and is also involved in the newly formed Centre for Reformational Urban Ministry in Africa (CRUMA). He is a very active member of the World Reformed Fellowship, serving on its Board of Directors and its Commission on Theological Education and as Chair of its African Regional Board.*



You are our letter, written in our hearts and known and read by everyone. You are demonstrating that you are Christ's letter, produced by our service, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts. (2 Corinthians 3:2,3)

What is it that really makes a person fit for the ministry of the Gospel? What credentials should a pastor have? Which certificates or papers or letters of recommendation should a pastor have to prove that he is suitable for the work of God?

We know that churches often want to consider the credentials of pastors, particularly when they are either seeking a new pastor or handling some problem surrounding a pastor. What are the credentials that should be considered?

People always have placed, and probably always will, some confidence in letters of reference or certificates, diploma or degree papers or testimonials with specific stamps on them. Yet we know testimonials are often exaggerated and diploma and degree papers can even be falsified or forged. They are not always accurate or truthful.

Even very recently we have had several examples of people in high governmental positions who claimed to have doctor's degrees, and now it has been discovered that they are not competent to do their work and have produced fake papers.

Many people also have the idea that wearing certain clothes is the best way to prove that people are highly qualified. They say that if the students of a college or university do not wear grand robes at their graduation ceremonies, such institutions are not of a high standard – as if a piece of cloth can guarantee the content of learning that has been offered. There are also people of certain churches that will not accept the words of a pastor or bishop if he does not wear a stunning gown or uniform. What is it that really makes a person fit for the ministry of the Gospel?

Background of 2 Corinthians 3

2 Corinthians 3 gives a unique answer to this question.

The background of 2 Corinthians 3 is that there were people in the Corinthian church who accused Paul of pride and arrogance. There were others who accused him of not being as learned as the Greek philosophers and of not having their deep kind of wisdom.

Paul declared that he did not corrupt the Word of God as many do, and that his ministry was based upon a true call of God (2 Cor. 2:17). He knew that those who opposed him were going to jump on this claim and again accuse him of being not really fit for the ministry. That is why he dealt with the question. This question is extremely relevant for you and me, for any person who wants to enter into the pastoral ministry, or for anyone who wants to become better equipped for the work of the ministry of the Gospel in some way.

Very simply, the question in 2 Corinthians 3 is this: Why should the Corinthians or anyone else listen to the words of a pastor? What credentials should he have that would cause people to listen to him and his message?

God Values Love Letters in your Heart

In answering the question and in establishing his credentials, Paul makes it very clear that the things God wants to see are not in the first place letters of commendation, certificates, or diploma or degree papers. What God appreciates as important is not a letter of reference, but something of far more value. God does not primarily look at our papers; He looks into our hearts. He wants to see whether we have such

deep love for Him and the people to whom we are ministering that they – the people – are written like letters in our hearts.

Look how clearly Paul stresses it in verse 2: “You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts” Paul actually says that the Corinthian believers were written upon his heart. Anyone who knew him could see that he deeply cared for the Corinthian church, that he was always praying for them and expressing love and concern for them. He cherished them. They were dear to him, so dear that he could actually say that they were *written in his heart*.

Thus God makes it clear to us in this passage: the first credential of the pastor is the human lives written upon his heart. The people to whom you and I are ministering are much more important than our diplomas or degrees or other papers or gowns or robes. The day when we as pastors die and stand before God, he is not going to ask us: “Let me see your diplomas and degree papers.” No! He is going to ask: “Where are the people I have given to you to minister to? Are they really in your heart?”

The point is this: people are far more important than papers. A pastor's commendation is not letters or certificates of recommendation, but a heart . . .

- that has people written upon it.
- that endears people to itself.
- that loves and cares for people.
- that deeply feels for people.
- that cannot let people go.
- that must reach and grow people for Christ.

The work of a godly pastor amongst the people where he is ministering should prove that he has such an overruling love for them that he could also say to them as the Apostle Paul said to the Corinthians:

- in 2 Corinthians 6:11: “We have opened wide our hearts to you”
- or as in 2 Corinthians 7:3: “. . . you have such a place in our hearts that we would live or die with you.”
- or with 12:15: “. . . I will very gladly spend for you everything I have and expend myself as well.”

The Source of the Godly Pastor's Love for the Church

You know, if you read in this letter how often Paul tells the Corinthian church how much he loved them, you could perhaps get the impression that Corinth must have been a fantastic congregation that served their pastor very well. Perhaps they paid him a high salary? Perhaps they happily accepted all his teachings? Perhaps they had great respect for him?

The amazing thing was that of all the churches where Paul worked, Corinth was the problem church. In 2 Corinthians 6:12, he says that they were closing their heart to him and were withholding their affection from him. It was in fact a church that could not manage to pay him any salary so that he had to work with his own hands and make tents to raise some money to feed himself.

What was it then that stirred up such a glowing and self-sacrificing love in his heart for this church? He gives the answer in 2 Corinthians 5:14, where he says that *Christ's love compelled* him, because he came to the understanding that Christ died for him. Yes, he says, Christ died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for Him who died for them and was raised again (2 Cor. 5:15).

Only if we are so deeply touched by the love of Christ that we are now willing to give ourselves wholeheartedly to Christ and His cause, are we really qualified to be regarded as real pastors who are called by God. If we think of the love of Christ dying on the cross for us and we sing with Isaac Watts, "Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all", then we have the basic qualifications to be pastors. Someone who does not have a glowing love for Jesus Christ is not qualified for the ministry, even if he has the most impressive diplomas and degrees or gowns and robes. That is why Jesus also asked Peter three times, "Do you love me? Do you love me more than the other people here", before He gave him the charge to feed His sheep.

Let us answer that same question afresh today: "Do you truly love Jesus?" If you as a pastoral student truly love Jesus Christ, you will love people and have the desire to bind them to Christ. If we as lecturers truly love Christ, we should love the students and have a deep desire to draw them even closer to Christ.

Look how Paul does it with the church of Corinth according to 2 Corinthians 11:2 in saying to them: "I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him."

Changed Lives of People

Paul also makes it clear that he had gone to Corinth to minister to the people, and some had been reached and others had grown in the Lord. In 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 he mentions how sinful some of them were before their conversion. He mentions sexually immoral people, idolaters, adulterers, male prostitutes, homosexual offenders, thieves, greedy people, drunkards, slanderers, swindlers and then says: "And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God." (1 Cor. 6:11) Their testimony of transformed lives was his letter of commendation, and their testimony before the world was far more important than a letter of commendation.

We must always remember that a pastor's greatest commendation is the changed lives of people. The fact that a pastor has led people to Christ and grown them in Christ speaks far more than any other letters of commendation.

Transformed Lives Become Open Letters to the World

Paul makes it clear that if a pastor loves his people with the love of Christ and faithfully ministers Christ to them, the members of the church become letters not only in the heart of their pastor but open letters that will also be read by the unbelievers. Believers are said to be "read by all men". Day by day believers must be careful what they write by their lives, for the public is closely observing and reading exactly what they do.

Therefore, the second credential of the pastor is the lives written by Christ *through the ministry* of the pastor. This is a critical point to note, for the pastor is not the one who converts and changes the lives of people. It is Christ and Christ alone through His Holy Spirit who converts and grows people. The lives of believers are said to be "the epistle [letter] of Christ." Christ is the author of the believer's life, the author of his conversion and righteousness. Whatever change is wrought in the believer's life – whatever love, joy, peace, and assurance of life – is all due to Christ. The lives of believers are not written with ink which men use, but with the *Spirit of the living God*.

When the pastor faithfully and lovingly preaches Christ, the Spirit of God does not write the message upon tables of stone, as He did when He gave the commandments to Moses, but upon the fleshy tables of men's hearts. He puts His message upon the hearts of men which causes men to live changed lives.

Paul is saying that Christ creates the letter, the lives of believers, using the pastor's ministry as an instrument. It is the pastor who ministers to the lives of believers. Thus, the greatest credential that a pastor can have is not letters of recommendation, but . . .

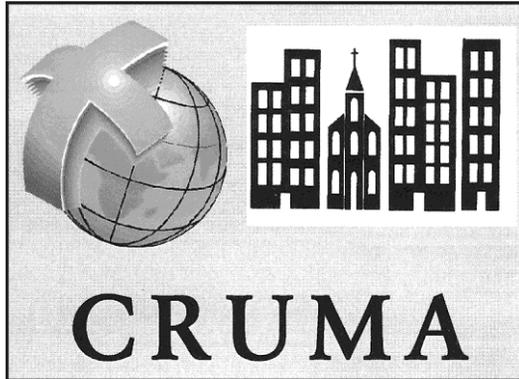
- Christ written in the lives of people.
- the Spirit of the living God written in the conduct and behavior of people.
- the law of God written upon the hearts of people.

Such people come face to face with Christ. This means that the believer is given the privilege of standing face to face with Christ, the privilege of knowing Christ personally and learning all about Him. There is no veil over the face or eyes of the believer, nothing to keep him from knowing the Lord. Then God receives glory through the ministry of the faithful pastor, because when the believer beholds (grasps, understands, studies, lays hold of) the glory of the Lord, the same glory is created in him. When the believer beholds the glory of the Lord, the believer progresses and grows from one stage of glory to a higher stage. Look how the passage ends: "We who reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit."

The outstanding characteristic of a Christian is this unveiled frankness before God so that his or her life mirrors Christ for other lives. By being filled with the Spirit, we are transformed and become mirrors. You always know when a person has been beholding the glory of the Lord; you feel in your inner spirit that this person is the mirror of the Lord's own character.



Mukhanyo Theological College, KwaNdebele, South Africa



Centre for Reformational Urban Ministry in Africa

Dr. Buys and Mukhanyo Theological College are involved with a new venture in urban ministry in Africa. This new venture, CRUMA (Centre for Reformational Urban Ministry in Africa) began in 2005. We include this brief news clip from their brochure to inform our readers.

Editor

Being the church . . . in the city . . . in Africa

The whole world is in motion. A tidal wave of urbanization is not only flooding the whole of the Western world but is also actively changing the whole demographic structure of Southern Africa. South Africa will be 73% urbanized in 2010. Millions of people are streaming across South Africa's borders to find the proverbial pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. On the other hand, more than a million people – those who were able to – have left the country to find a more secure living environment overseas.

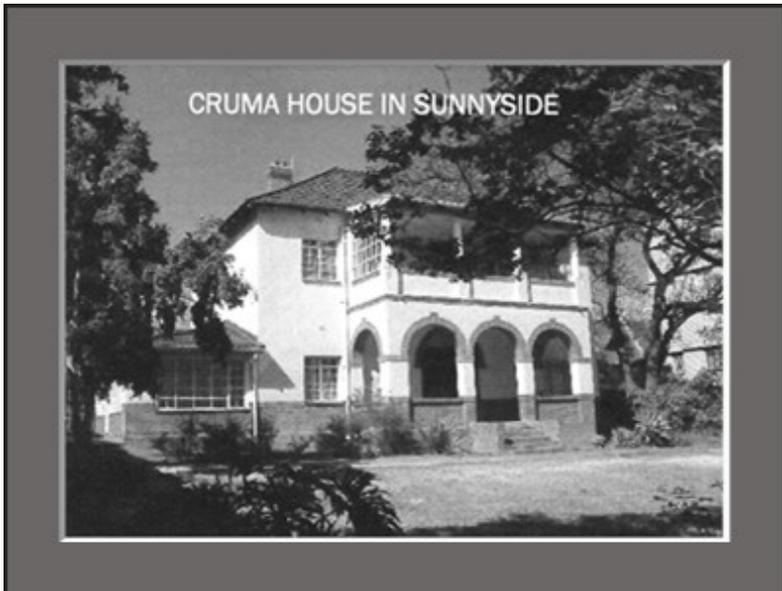
To be Christ's church in the city was always difficult, especially since the traditional way of doing ministry was originally developed for a rural setting. This rural ministry model does not satisfy the needs of the urban context. Church leaders struggle to keep all the church members within their fold, while church members are complaining about the lack of personal attention paid to them by church leaders. The city does have a very cruel way of destroying relationships.

CRUMA and the Local Church

- CRUMA wants to serve the local church within the African Urban context by way of relevant and practical theological research and training. Basic, refresher and further theological training is offered for pastors, church leaders, elders and deacons, as well as training for the laity that want to serve within their congregations and communities.
- Through a **Community Development Focus**, CRUMA wants to initiate and coordinate mercy ministries in order to address the diverse and growing needs within urban communities.
- CRUMA is also committed to the publication and distribution of Reformational research and books, particularly material that is relevant to Urban Mission work.

CRUMA?

CRUMA was formed in 2005 when two Reformed congregations in Pretoria (Rietvallei and Pretoria-Brooklyn), in close cooperation with Mukhanyo Theological College (Dr. Flip Buys) and Prof. Derrick Mashau (TSP-Potchefstroom), started to focus on the new urban realities that were facing the local church within the growing cities of Pretoria and Johannesburg.



South Africa's Great Revival of 1860

William Lindner, Jr.*

** Dr. Bill Lindner is the author of Andrew Murray and John Calvin in the Men of Faith Series (Bethany). He is a graduate of Davidson College, Union Seminary (Virginia) and Gordon-Conwell, has a special interest and passion for biblical revival and did his D.Min. dissertation on Andrew Murray. He is an ordained Evangelical Presbyterian minister and served in Mount Pleasant, Michigan, for fourteen years. Presently he and his wife, Mary Lynn, live in Asheville, North Carolina. They have three grown children.*



The year was 1860. The place Worcester, South Africa. Andrew Murray had been installed as pastor of the Dutch Reformed Church there on Pentecost Sunday, May 27, preaching from the text of 2 Corinthians 3:8 – “Will not the ministry of the Spirit be even more glorious?” Looking back, it seems almost oddly prophetic.

Just a few months later the Great Revival of 1860 would begin in South Africa, with concurrent expressions around most of the English speaking world. At the moment of its beginning in Worcester, J. C. deVries was a layman leading a meeting of the church's youth. Years later, as a Dutch Reformed pastor, he would write this eye-witness account:

On a certain Sunday evening there were gathered in a little hall some sixty young people. I was leader of the meeting, which commenced with a hymn and a lesson from God's Word, after which I engaged in a prayer. After three or four others had (as was customary) given out a verse of a hymn and offered prayer, a coloured girl of about fifteen years of age, in service with a farmer from Hex River, rose at the back of the hall, and asked if she too might propose a hymn. At

first I hesitated not knowing what the meeting would think, but better thoughts prevailed and I replied, *Yes*. She gave out her hymn-verse and prayed in moving tones. While she was praying we heard as it were a sound in the distance, which came nearer and nearer, until the hall seemed to be shaken, and with one or two exceptions, the whole meeting began to pray, the majority in audible voice, but some in whispers. Nevertheless, the noise made by the concourse was deafening.

A feeling which I cannot describe took possession of me. Even now, forty-three years after these occurrences, the events of that never-to-be-forgotten night pass before my mind's eye like a soul-stirring panorama. I feel again as I then felt, and I cannot refrain from pushing my chair backwards, and thanking the Lord fervently for His mighty deeds.

At that time Rev. Andrew Murray was minister of Worcester. He had preached that evening in the English language. When service was over an elder (Mr. Jan Rabie) passed the door of the hall, heard the noise, peeped in, and then hastened to call Mr. Murray, returning presently with him. Mr. Murray came forward to the table where I knelt praying, touched me, and made me understand that he wanted me to rise. He then asked what had happened. I related everything to him. He then walked down the hall for some distance, and called out, as loudly as he could, "*People, silence!*" But the praying continued. In the meantime, I too kneeled down again. It seemed to me that if the Lord was coming to bless us, I should not be upon my feet but on my knees. Mr. Murray then called again out loud, "*People I am your minister, sent from God! Silence!*" But there was no stopping the noise. No one heard him, but all continued praying and calling on God for mercy and pardon. Mr. Murray then returned to me and told me to start the hymn-verse commencing "*Help de ziel die raadloos schreit*" (Aid the soul that helpless cries). I did so, but the emotions were not quieted, and the meeting went on praying. Mr. Murray then prepared to depart, saying "*God is a God of order, and here everything is confusion.*" With that he left the hall.

After that, the prayer meetings were held every evening. At the commencement there was generally great silence, but

after the second or third prayer the whole hall was moved as before, and everyone fell to praying. Sometimes the gathering continued till three in the morning. And even then many wished to remain longer, or returning homeward, went singing through the streets. The little hall was soon quite too small, and we were compelled to move to the school building, which also was presently full to overflowing, as scores and hundreds of country folk streamed into the village.

On the first Saturday evening in the larger meeting house, Mr. Murray was the leader. He read a portion of Scripture, made a few observations on it, engaged in prayer, and then gave others the opportunity to pray. During the prayer which followed on his, I heard again the sound in the distance. It drew nearer and nearer, and suddenly the whole gathering was praying.

That evening a stranger had been standing at the door from the commencement, watching the proceedings. Mr. Murray descended from the platform and moved up and down among the people, trying to quiet them. The stranger then tiptoed forward from his position at the door, touched Mr. Murray gently, and said in English: "I think you are the minister of this congregation: be careful what you do, for it is the Spirit of God that is at work here. I have just come from America, and this is precisely what I witnessed there."¹

Rev. deVries writes an account of what might be called the "moment of revival." This is a moment where the Holy Spirit surprisingly and powerfully enters a community of believers, touching people's lives with the transforming grace of the gospel in a way that is far more than simply a cognitive grasp of information. From the day of Pentecost in Jerusalem to Luther's grace encounter in Germany to Azusa St. in the United States, with innumerable other less visible encounters across the centuries and around the planet, this is the experience that typically comes to mind when people talk about "revival."

All too often, this moment of revival turns out to be far more an expression of human emotionalism than the seed of a history-changing movement like Herrenhut Revival with Zinzendorf and the Moravians.

¹ From Johannes Du Plessis, *Andrew Murray of South Africa* (London: Marshall Brothers, 1920), 194-196.

History and common experience are filled with far more examples of this sort of misguided or stillborn religious exuberance than we could wish. I live in the United States' Southeast where "Revival" has become little more than an intense week of extra meetings seemingly designed to manipulate religious commitment as a regularly scheduled part of the church calendar. I am also old enough to remember the "Toronto Blessing" and the "Brownsville Revival" as I now watch the "Lakeland Revival" of Todd Bentley.

Study and experience have convinced me that seeing revival as an experience or moment is bound to send the church in a wrong direction. Authentic revival is more than a moment or event. It is a process of God at work through His people on planet Earth. If authentic revival is only the moment described by Rev. deVries, then the goal of ministry would be to facilitate and create that moment as often or for as long as possible. I believe that such a ministry goal is often the richest source of corruption in nascent outpourings. The aim of maintaining that original sense of intensity becomes a motive for manipulation and a pressure for theological compromise.

Instead, authentic revival is better seen as a process, a series of circumstances and encounters overseen by God and responded to by His people. Moments like deVries records are best understood and considered within the context of that larger process.

A Process Model for Understanding Authentic Revival

In his book *Dynamics of Spiritual Life*, Dr. Richard Lovelace gives a summary outline of what our understanding of the "process of revival" could look like. As a doctoral candidate of his during the '90s I was privileged to examine a wide array of historical revivals through this lens. It deeply enriched my understanding and leadership. It equipped me with an ability to see points at which people experiencing this "moment of revival" would diverge from God's truth or veer off into experiential corruption and eventually find themselves a mere passing footnote in the history of the Father's redemptive plan. With the hindsight of history, we could watch the process of revival work itself out with more or less fruit. As a pastor, this perspective has guided my prayer and ministry in the local church as we pursue faithful renewal as well as seek to discern the times in which we live.

Here is Lovelace's outline, more completely developed and wonderfully illustrated in the book. I am using the term "revival" and especially "authentic revival" interchangeably with his term "renewal."

-
- I. Preconditions of Renewal: Preparation for the Gospel
 - A. Awareness of the Holiness of God
 - 1. His Justice
 - 2. His Love
 - B. Awareness of the Depth of Sin
 - 1. In Your own Life
 - 2. In Your Community

 - II. Primary Elements of Renewal: Depth Presentation of the Gospel
 - A. Justification: You are Accepted in Christ
 - B. Sanctification: You are Free from Bondage to Sin in Christ
 - C. The Indwelling Spirit: You are not Alone in Christ
 - D. Authority in Spiritual Conflict: You have Authority in Christ

 - III. Secondary Elements of Renewal: Outworking of the Gospel in the Church's Life
 - A. Mission: Following Christ into the World, Presenting His Gospel
 - 1. In Proclamation
 - 2. In Social Demonstration
 - B. Prayer: Expressing Dependence on the Power of His Spirit
 - 1. Individually
 - 2. Corporately
 - C. Community: Being in Union with His Body
 - 1. In Microcommunities
 - 2. In Macrocommunities
 - D. Disenculturation: Being Freed from Cultural Bonds
 - 1. Destructive
 - 2. Protective
 - E. Theological Integration: Having the Mind of Christ
 - 1. Toward Revealed Truth
 - 2. Toward Your Culture²

² Richard Lovelace, *Dynamics of Spiritual Life* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1979), 75.

The “moment of revival” could be defined as an experiential encounter with particular aspects of the Preconditions or Primary Elements in Lovelace’s model. It is clearly a sovereign work of the Holy Spirit. In the best of circumstances, it is far *more* than *simply* an intellectual grasp of a theological concept like God’s holiness or the doctrine of justification. When seen in the larger context of the process of revival though, it can never be *less* than that. It is more, because this encounter strikes to the broad landscape of our humanity – our emotions, our memory, our values, our hope, our will and our community of faith, indeed, the very depth of our soul – in a way that is much bigger than just our thinking. When seen in light of the process though, this “moment of revival” should never be *less* than an intellectual encounter. That is to say that the moment of revival is not really cultivated or enhanced by bad theology or by an exclusive focus on emotional experience.

When revival is seen as a “moment,” then the event that Rev. deVries records for us is little more than a passing experience that may or may not be of interest to us. When seen as a portion of a larger process of the Father at work in His church across the world, then we can see this “moment” in a very different light and learn very different lessons from it. It is my conviction that the life and ministry of Andrew Murray is well placed to consider the 1860 Revival through that larger process perspective.

Let us now turn to examine and learn from the Great Revival of 1860, using Lovelace’s model of revival process, and briefly illustrate from the life and writings of Andrew Murray.

The Preconditions of Renewal: Preparation for the Gospel

Much was astir in the Dutch Reformed Church (DR) of South Africa by 1859. The Theological Seminary at Stellenbosch had opened in November with three professors, one of whom was Andrew Murray’s older brother John. Andrew himself was moving his young family from what had been a frontier pastorate in Bloemfontein to the town of Worcester. In April of 1860, Worcester was the site of a gathering of ministers from the DR church across South Africa for a first-of-its kind ecclesiastical conference. The Murray family was heavily represented with the aging Andrew, Sr. and his sons John and our Andrew all key leaders. In all, seven of the younger ministers at the conference were either sons or sons-in-law of Andrew, Sr.

The most important outgrowth of this conference was the sending of a certain Dr. Robertson to Holland with the charge of finding new

ministers willing to relocate and serve DR congregations in South Africa. This passage from his October 1860 letter back to the sending committee gives fascinating insight into the state and convictions of both the Dutch and the South African churches.

All Christians admit that the condition of the Reformed Church in the Netherlands is exceedingly parlous (*sic*). Liberalism – for so the prevalent form of unbelief is called – has spread itself over the whole land, and seeks to rob the Church of Christ of its most cherished truths. The trinity, the divinity of Christ, the personality of the Spirit, the vicarious suffering of Christ, and naturally all that stands in closest connexion with these truths, are not merely denied but assailed. Miracles are declared to be impossible, and it is flatly denied that they ever happened, while everything that is said of the miraculous in Holy Scripture is declared to be legend or allegorical story. Yes, there are many who hold that the resurrection and ascension of Christ are not facts, but that whatever is said of these events must also be accounted legendary. The eternity of punishment is, of course, also denied as in conflict with God's goodness and love and as for sin, it is looked upon as necessary, and therefore derived from God, or at least willed by Him.

I refrain from lengthy observations on these terrible errors, but feel bound to add that those who judge strictly and conscientiously are of opinion that, of the 1,400 or 1,500 ministers in Holland, only about one hundred can be looked upon as thoroughly orthodox; while others who judge more favourably think that they could find about two hundred. Is it to be marveled at that under such circumstances I could secure but few orthodox ministers in Holland? The congregations in general – let me say this to their honour – desire to have pious and orthodox clergymen. I should find little difficulty in obtaining ministers of liberal leanings for the Cape; but these I do not wish to accept. It would be in direct conflict with the trust committed to me, as well as with the declaration demanded by our Church of all ministers.

. . . It is generally acknowledged here that no minister of liberal views who desires to act honestly can sign the declaration demanded at the Cape. . . . If our Cape Church is to remain orthodox and faithful to the confessions of the fathers, it ought to admit no ministers coming from Holland,

whether they be South Africans or Hollanders, without previously instituting a serious examination into the faith that is in them, and obtaining from them a clear and unequivocal affirmation of their adhesion to the fundamental truths which our Dutch Reformed Church confesses.³

The orthodoxy of the South African DR church as a whole was no mere formalism either. Another person who came to Christ under Andrew Murray's ministry and went on to be a minister, Rev C. Rabie, gives us direct insight into Andrew Murray's heart and ministry:

Mr. Murray's share in (the earlier part of) the Conference of 1860 was confined to a prayer, but it was a prayer so powerful and so moving that souls were instantly brought under deep conviction of sin, and we may safely say that the revival which ensued dated from that moment.⁴

In addition. . .

Mr. Murray was a man of power in his catechizations. I was one of those privileged to be confirmed by him. He carried his catechumens to the Bible, and made them read and explain it. When the class was over, two or three were directed to remain behind, in order that he might speak with them about the condition of their soul. These were moments never to be forgotten. Not a few date their spiritual birth from these talks.⁵

We see here clear evidence of the convictions of the ministers who gathered at the 1860 Worcester Conference and Andrew Murray in particular. Their orthodoxy is clear, and even stark when compared to the clergy in the Netherlands. Robertson describes as "most cherished truths," "the Trinity, the divinity of Christ, the personality of the Spirit, the vicarious suffering of Christ . . . the eternity of punishment . . . and sin." These were truths about God that the DR church wanted to guard from compromise. These truths are what Lovelace calls the "Preconditions of Renewal" and lead us to a first observation.

³ Johannes Du Plessis, *Andrew Murray of South Africa* (London: Marshall Brothers, 1919), 190-191.

⁴ Du Plessis, 199.

⁵ Du Plessis, 199.

Observation #1: Authentic Revival only comes to solidly orthodox communities of faith – denominations, regions or local churches.

It is my observation that for any group of people like the one described by Dr. Robertson, there is simply nothing to be revived. These communities would instead need conversion or reconstitution. It is more a missionary venture to reach these people than a move of revival. A church community that has left the faith has more in common with a community that has never come to faith, than it does to a church in need of revival. This is an important distinction for a pastoral leader whenever there is a “stirring of the Spirit.” A community whose faith has been revived will present different needs and opportunities than does a community that first comes to faith, and especially if that community coming to faith has considered itself a church all along.

Believers who are revived are experiencing the Holy Spirit's application of the truth they believe to the depths of their soul. Emotions may run high. Decisions may be made and lives may be redirected. Truths they have held are now made vibrant and life-changing. By contrast, communities that are first experiencing the impact of these life-changing truths may have similar demonstrations: high emotions, new decisions and the like. Without the preconditions of a growing sense of God's holiness and their need though, this conversion experience may be short and shallow. An experience of grace that is not grounded in the context of God's holiness and humanity's brokenness may start with great exuberance but will soon run dry – or go pursuing other sources for exuberance. In the words of Jesus, the moment of revival would be more like a dramatic growth spurt in the cycle of fruit-bearing. The moment of conversion is better considered in light of the Parable of the Seed in Luke 8:4-8.

The Primary Elements of Renewal: Depth Presentation of the Gospel

Dr. Lovelace points to four primary elements of renewal: Justification, Sanctification, the Indwelling Spirit, and Authority in Spiritual Conflict. All four of these could be subsumed under the theological heading of “Adoption” and are strongly connected in the New Testament to the Pauline phrase “in Christ.” It should not be lost that authentic revival, at its core, is about a life-encompassing encounter with the living Christ. Whatever other behaviors, convictions or experiences might occur in a “moment of revival,” the headwaters are this encounter with the Gospel. To the extent that these headwaters

of revival become mixed with or supplanted by other behaviors, convictions or experiences, the ensuing process of revival becomes polluted.

This is exactly the point at which Dr. Lovelace's process model of revival becomes most helpful. If revival is an event, then the event at Worcester soon passed and things returned, in some degree, "back to normal." From this perspective, the "revival" is over and the church faces a major decision. If revival is the highest goal of ministry, then the aim would be to return to the ongoing experience of that first event. And nearly anything done to accomplish that becomes acceptable. If authentic revival is seen as a larger process though, we look to what Lovelace calls the primary and secondary elements of renewal. We look as well with a longer timeline. We examine, to keep with the words of Jesus, the roots and fruit over time.

Clearly, the impact of Andrew Murray's life and ministry had far more to do with what followed the Great Revival of 1860 than for what happened in that "moment of revival." He pastored, traveled, wrote and spoke throughout the Dutch, Afrikaans and English-speaking world for another fifty-seven years. He was many times the Moderator of the DR Synod in South Africa. He was involved in the building of schools, colleges, missionary training institutes and missionary organizations. It is my conviction that he embodies the primary and secondary elements of renewal.

Observation #2: Authentic Revival continues to the extent that it stays true to the primary elements, not to the ongoing experience of the initial encounter.

As pointed out, Andrew Murray's life went on after his initial encounter with a "moment of revival." There is no sense whatever of wanting to continue or maintain that moment, though his future was clearly shaped by it. Murray ministered with Dwight Moody and spoke at the Keswick Conventions in England, so he could rightly be considered a revivalist. There was no hint in all of this though that maintaining that "moment of revival" was the aim of his ministry. What happened over those months in Worcester was not the pinnacle of Christian experience for Andrew Murray. Instead it was a blessed moment in the larger process of the Father's work among His people. The passing of that moment was not a sign of unfaithfulness or an end to the Father's work. It was merely the Father moving on in His work bringing the Gospel to every tribe and tongue and nation. How

different this is from a revivalist perspective that aims to maintain that “moment of revival” as the normative Christian experience.

Murray would have been thankful for “moments of revival,” but he clearly looked beyond them to the larger process of God’s work. That is because he understood these moments as gracious seasons of blessing from a sovereign Father and not the response of the Father to any human effort or faithfulness. While the Great Revival came first to people who were praying for it, Murray, as a Reformed pastor, would have been certain that it was not the prayers of the people that caused or produced the revival. Seasons of revival were God’s blessing, not the result of the faithfulness or efforts of God’s people. These are seasons that we may receive with great joy, but they are not blessings that we earn. Murray was always earnest in his pursuit of God and the life of holiness. His preaching and books were constantly calling people to faithfulness, devotion and absolute surrender, but always because these make God’s people more available for His work, and not because such devotion causes God to work. This is an important distinction. It is one thing to think that our devotion causes renewal. Such an important end, ie. revival, will raise the pressure to justify any means to get there. It is quite another thing to think that our devotion better sets our lives to receive the Father’s ongoing work, whatever expression it takes in that season.

It is interesting to note that for nearly a decade following the Great Revival, Murray – along with the other revival participants – was involved in a protracted battle with theological liberalism that was finally settled in favor of the decidedly orthodox views. No sooner had the “moment of revival” come and gone, than the challenge arose to maintain the integrity of the DR Church’s commitment to doctrines that make up Lovelace’s Primary Elements of Renewal. An event view of revival would see these as disconnected circumstances, always hoping to return to a “moment of revival.” The process view better connects the faithfulness that preceded the outpouring of 1860, the actual “moment of revival” that Dr. deVries records, and the following decade of ecclesiastical wrangling. One would say that the Great Revival made experiential the doctrines held before. These great doctrines, now enlivened to the soul by the Great Revival, were defended with great passion and effectiveness because they were more than ideas or ideology. They were the expression of a life-changing encounter with the living reality of God and the Gospel. In this view, authentic revival and theological integrity are deeply connected, each feeding the other.

Observation # 3: The impact of Authentic Revival is best measured not by the initial encounter but by the secondary elements over time and across cultures.

Jesus himself points us to the fruit of a person's life as an important indicator of what is going on in their heart. (Matt 7:15-20; Luke 6:43-45) In a similar way, we ought to look to the fruit produced over time by any movement that claims its origins in God. This may make heat-of-the-moment evaluations difficult at first, and so worth avoiding. Over time though, matters have a way of coming into focus. Lovelace's Secondary Elements of Renewal (see above) are simply a good working model of a "fruit check for Renewal." It takes time for them to develop, but their development over time will ensure authenticity to the experience from which they flow. For instance, looking for these Secondary Elements of Renewal help us to conclude objectively what most would agree to intuitively: the Brownsville Revivals of the 1990's were of far less impact than the Azusa St. revival that began in 1906. Of real importance for pastoral leaders with a heart for authentic revival, these Secondary Elements of Renewal can be a vital reminder of what the Father would begin to do in the midst of any truly revived community over time. As we pray fervently for a visitation of God – a "moment of revival" – we do well to remember that our prayers would be drawing us through that moment into a community life marked by these Secondary Elements.

One could easily see the fifty-seven years of Andrew Murray's ministry that followed the Great Revival of 1860 as the working out of these Secondary Elements in his life and ministry. Though these elements were hardly absent before the Revival, they certainly flourished and continued for decades afterwards, marking his primary legacy. All but one of his written works are post-Revival in date. Two Secondary Elements are of particular importance in the legacy of Andrew Murray.

Mission

Murray's eleven-year pastorate in Bloemfontein prior to the Great Revival was essentially missionary in nature. One pastor in a sparsely populated territory of 50,000 square miles is not a typical "parish" arrangement. By all accounts Murray certainly ministered with a missionary passion. One six-week trip to the Transvaal covered more than 800 miles, usually by slow-moving ox wagon. His careful records show that he preached at six different stations, conducting thirty-seven formal services. Incredibly, he baptized 567 children and confirmed to

membership 167 young people, less than half the number of candidates that applied.

There can be no greater testament to the missionary zeal in the Murray household than the fact that three of their seven children would enter into cross-cultural missionary work. Andrew himself was a well known missions speaker. Many from his congregations and conferences would sense the call to missionary service and respond. His writings often spoke to the encouragement of missionaries and the central missionary calling upon all Christians.

Forty-one years after the Great Revival, Murray wrote *The Key to the Missionary Problem*. Written in response to the historic Ecumenical Missions Conference in New York City in 1900, Murray challenges every Christian to see that the key to any missionary problem is first a matter of the believer's love for Jesus. In the third chapter, Murray points to Zinzendorf and the Moravians as an example of passionate love for Jesus that expresses itself in missionary zeal.

What marked him (Count Zinzendorf) above everything was a tender, childlike, passionate love to our Lord Jesus. Jesus Christ, the Originator and inspirer of all mission work, possessed him. The dying love of the Lamb of God had won and filled his heart; the love which had brought Christ to die for sinners had come into his life; he could do nothing else but to love and, if need be, die for them too.

When he took charge of the Moravians, that love, as his teaching and his hymns testify, was the one motive to which he appealed, the one power he trusted, the one object for which he sought to win their lives. The love of Christ did what teaching and argument and discipline, however necessary and fruitful, never could have done. It melted all into one body; it made all willing to be corrected and instructed; it made all long to put away everything that was sin; it inspired all with the desire to testify of Jesus; it made many ready to sacrifice all in making that love known to others, and making the heart of Jesus glad.⁶

There is a clear connection for Andrew Murray between the revived heart of love for Jesus and fruitful missionary service. Any lack of the

⁶ Andrew Murray, *Key to the Missionary Problem* (Fort Washington, PA: Christian Literature Crusade, 1979), 62.

former will produce a lack of the latter. The entire book is more of a call to a revived experience of the love of Christ than the expected exhortation to missions. For Murray, the heart truly touched by the love of Jesus would naturally find its way to missionary service, and without that love any missionary service would soon become burdensome, oppressive and dry.

Prayer

This may well be Murray's most enduring legacy. It was certainly my first contact with him and continues to be the aspect of his ministry and writings most widely known. So prolific was he on the matter of prayer that it is risky to pick any single example from his writing. My favorites would include *With Christ in the School of Prayer* (1885) and *The Ministry of Intercession* (1897), twenty-five and thirty-seven years after the Great Revival respectively.

His writings on the subject all bring the believer to see prayer as the expression of a heart revived by the love of Jesus. In turn, it is in prayer that the heart is revived meeting the living Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit. Prayer was more than a spiritual discipline, activity or means to lay hold of blessings for Murray. It was the place where the believer found the ongoing grace for life. The passion first discovered in a previous "moment of revival" was rekindled and supplied in the place of prayer. Even when Murray spoke to those other aspects of prayer, his view was always based on prayer that grew from the soul in love with God and a soul that renewed its love for God each day in the place of prayer.

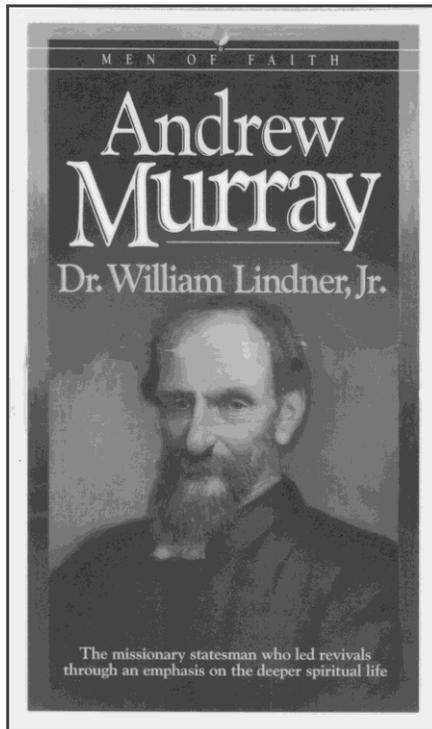
By His Holy Spirit, He has access to our heart, and teaches us to pray by showing us the sin that hinders the prayer, or by giving us the assurance that we please God. He teaches, by giving not only thoughts of what to ask or how to ask, but by breathing within us the very spirit of prayer, by living within us as the Great Intercessor. We may indeed most joyfully say, "Who teaches like Him?"⁷

In closing, it is interesting to note that prayer is seen in Lovelace's model as a secondary element of authentic revival. Prayer is something that remains and grows after the initial "moment of revival" when that moment is part of healthy and biblical process. Historically, prayer that

⁷ Andrew Murray, *The Believer's School of Prayer*, orig. title: *With Christ in the School of Prayer* (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House Publishers, 1982), 4.

is aware of God's holiness and our sin is also the precondition of renewal. We know that Andrew had been preceded in Worcester by the thirty-five year pastorate of a Rev. Henry Sutherland, a man who confessed that he was better at prayer than at preaching. For years before Andrew's arrival, a humble group of intercessors had worn a small footpath to a hilltop looking out over Worcester from where they prayed for the people below.

If revival is an event, then it arrives, or happens or is given or is produced depending on one's theological perspective. If we see authentic revival as a process though, just as Lovelace suggests, we can then see real prayer as the fruit that remains from one season of revival, only to become the seed for the next season of the Father's redemptive work in the world. What we most need in order to bear the fruit of the Kingdom – these secondary elements of renewal - is an experience of authentic revival that produces such fruit and goes on to be seed for the next until the knowledge of the LORD covers the earth like the waters cover the sea (Isaiah 11:9).



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The Call to Preach

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Allow me, to begin with, to be somewhat biographical. The first indication of a call to pastoral ministry, and hence the call to preach, came to me in November 1984. A farmer-friend of our family here in Namibia had died. Unbeknown to me then, he had told his wife: “If I die, I want you to get that young man to bury me.” Apparently the sharing of the gospel around a campfire on his farm in 1980 must have left some impression upon his soul. Whether he was ultimately converted, I do not know.

Here I was, a young man, a manager of a large retail outlet and a committed member of my church, now called to conduct a funeral of a man I had shared the gospel with four years earlier. The problem was that I had never preached before. Even worse – I had never been to a funeral before. My parents did not believe in taking their children to funerals. Thus I was called to do two things I had never done before. I had never preached, and I had never conducted a funeral!

I received a little help from my pastor in terms of a sermon text and some hints on how to conduct a funeral, and so I “preached” to a congregation of forty rough-looking Namibian farmers. I had prepared myself in the best way I knew, casting myself upon the mercy of God for this onerous task.

It was like a nightmare! I felt very inadequate, and the sermon (if you can call it that) was I’m sure, a hermeneutical and homiletical atrocity. I sensed however that I had urgency whilst I spoke. An amazing thing happened at this funeral. The only son of the deceased

man was converted during that meeting. The mystery of preaching! God can truly use a donkey to speak.

Following this event, the call to preach came to me in a forceful way in June 1985. I resigned from my employment and went to a theological seminary for the next four years. Since then it has been a continuous journey of learning how to become a preacher.

Apparently it takes a life time to become a preacher, and some of the best lessons in the school of preaching are learned in the school of hard knocks. Martin Luther did say that three things make a preacher: prayer, study and temptations (trials)!

The Call to Preach

Where does this call to preach come from? How do we know that there is a call to preach? What is preaching? I believe that these three questions are vitally related. Let us therefore explore these in turn.

1. The call to preach comes from God

I know that this sounds obvious. However, in practice it seems to me that many do not really understand the nature of this call. Many are poorly guided in this matter. To illustrate: In 1989 I was part of a graduating class of sixteen at seminary. I believe that 19 years after graduation only three of us may be left in the office of pastor-teacher. The majority has not continued in the call to preach consistently in a pastoral setting. This high drop-out rate remains, I believe, a reality. There are not a few men that believe that they have “heard the call”, perhaps through a rousing missionary sermon by their pastor concerning “the fields that are white unto harvest.., and the need to pray for laborers in the harvest field”, and on the basis of this “call” have gone off to a theological seminary in order to be equipped as pastors or missionaries¹, only to drop out of the ministry a few years later.

Has God’s call failed? Clearly not, for the Scripture says that “God’s gifts and His call are irrevocable” (Rom 11:29). I know that this text speaks of God’s election of His people, but the gifts (Gr. “*charismata*”) which God gives to people at conversion are included in this call. The Reformed doctrine of the perseverance of the saints surely applies not only to the calling but also to the gifts. My contention is therefore that those that are truly called to and gifted for

¹ I have come to understand that the only viable candidate for the mission field is a man who has been trained and approved as an elder by the church.

the office of a pastor-teacher shall persevere, because God perseveres with them. The experience of the Psalmist in Psalm 139:5 surely is the experience of the preacher: “You hem me in – behind and before; you have laid your hand upon me” The prophet Jeremiah persevered against many odds because God had called him. God was able to make him stand, and God had said to him: “Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you and will rescue you” (Jer. 1:8).

2. How do we know that there is a call to preach?

(i) The call to preach can only come after a man is truly converted.

Conversion is the fundamental prerequisite for the performance of any Christian service. I know a man who had studied for the pastoral and preaching ministry but who was only converted much later in his life. Needless to say, he did not last in the ministry, but thank God that he is converted today. Incidentally, it is also evident today that he does not possess the gift of preaching.

(ii) The call to preach needs to be tested.

Usually it is not advisable for a gifted young man to occupy the pulpit immediately after his conversion. A man of Spurgeon’s caliber, who started preaching and shepherding at the age of eighteen, needs to be seen as an exception rather than the rule. As a rule, an aspiring young preacher needs to be tested and tried. He needs to learn the discipline of humility. The elders of the church *and* the church are the best judges on earth to judge an aspiring preacher. My humble opinion regarding the seminary which I attended is that most men were not thoroughly tested in respect of the call and the gifting required by God for the preaching ministry. The blame cannot be entirely placed upon the seminary. The churches from which these men came had sent them without subjecting them to a thorough test.

We also need to reckon with the problem that Paul addresses in the context of spiritual gifts in Romans 12:3: “By the grace given me I say Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.” Living with a fallen nature is never easy. We do not have the instinctive capacity to “think of ourselves with sober judgment”. That is why the subjective or “inward call” to preach must always be tested, firstly by the standard of Scripture itself, and secondly by an objective call. We have already asserted that the elders of the church and the church herself provide the best evaluation for a potential preacher. The church always calls and sends. If only we stuck

to this rule, there would be fewer people wasting their time at seminary!

The most obvious test should be whether there is evident fruit produced from a preaching ministry. Are people converted under the preaching? Are people helped and built up by the preaching? Do they turn from sin as a result of hearing the preaching? When the Apostle Paul began to truly preach after his conversion (Acts 9), the grace and favour of God upon his ministry was evident. The marks of a gifted preacher are that people are converted, helped and changed under his ministry.

The urge to preach is a tell-tale sign. A preacher is a man with a divine calling. He cannot help but to preach. If he is out of the pulpit he is miserable, because he has to preach. That is why a preacher who finds himself sitting under another preaching ministry sometimes suffers from a critical spirit. He is critical not simply because he is analyzing the sermon in his mind. He is critical because he is a preacher. He is itching to be in the pulpit. He could, like John Calvin, preach every day of his life – even though this intense activity which demands so much energy could kill him.

(iii) The call to preach needs to be developed.

We can hardly expect a man to be an accomplished preacher right from the start. We may even assert that the gift of preaching initially may not be visible –it may be latent. Therefore it must be stirred up. Paul speaks about this to Timothy when he says: “Fan into flame the gift of God which is in you . . .” (2 Tim. 1:6). It is important therefore that senior pastors give their young people opportunities to test their desires, to see if there is a calling. A Sunday school class, small group or youth meeting may be a good starting point.

Apart from this, a preaching gift may need to remain latent for quite a while. A helpful footnote in Charles Bridges’ classic *The Christian Ministry* says this:

The duties of an evangelical preacher before he begins his ministry are:

- a. To grow in piety, by feeding on the bread of prayer.
- b. To give his zeal time to wax strong by reading the Holy Scriptures and the Fathers.
- c. To continue in silence and retirement, till God is pleased to bring him out and to show him to the world . . .²

² Charles Bridges, *The Christian Ministry*, 32.

God may keep a man in hiding until He thinks the time is right to bring him out. It is interesting to note that in Christ's case (though He was sinless and not subject to the common immaturities of young preachers), His empowerment to preach came out only after His baptism! God chose to "bring His Son out and show Him to the world" only after thirty years! What a Preacher the Son of Man proved to be! What extraordinary work was accomplished in the span of a mere three years!

Similarly we have reason to believe that the Apostle Paul was not a high profile minister directly after his conversion, but that he might have spent a good number of years in low key ministry and meditation in Arabia (Gal. 1:17), before God brought him out. And when God did bring him out, what a missionary preacher he was. Roland Allen says: "In little more than ten years St Paul established the Church in four provinces of the Empire, Galatia, Macedonia, Achaia and Asia. Before AD 47 there were no churches in these provinces; in AD 57 St Paul could speak as if his work there was done"³

3. *What is preaching?*

With humility we must confess that **effective** preaching is not always that which has come from the mouth of a silver-tongued orator or from a John Chrysostom (347- 407 AD.), who was also known as "the Golden Mouth", trained in the finest schools of Greek rhetoric.⁴ Many men in our day are trained as "pulpiteers", dazzling many by their oratorical performance and skilled "turn of phrase", but not necessarily with a "demonstration of the Spirit's power" (1 Cor. 2:4). For Paul preaching meant God glorifying, Christ-centred, Spirit filled, prayer soaked, unction filled proclamation!

The man who was God's chosen instrument for the conversion of C. H. Spurgeon was a shoemaker, an unschooled man by all accounts.⁵ He had to preach on a cold, freezing December morning of 1849 when the minister of the Primitive Methodist Church could not come because he was snowed in. His text from Isaiah 45:22 spoke to Spurgeon with converting power that day. As I read Spurgeon's testimony, I could not help but think that though this man did not have a prepared sermon when he preached, yet he did as well as he knew how, and he clearly possessed the necessary unction. He was not theologically ignorant. He knew Christ, and He knew how to present Him to sinners.

³ Roland Allen, *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours?*, 3.

⁴ E. C. Dargan, *A History of Preaching*, vol. 1, 86.

⁵ A. Dallimore, *Spurgeon: A New Biography*, 18.

So it was with the men that Jesus called to preach. When the Sanhedrin examined Peter and John after the miraculous healing of the crippled beggar at the gate called “Beautiful” (Acts 3), they asked them concerning their authority and their source of power (Acts 4:7). They discovered that these were “**unschooled**, ordinary men . . . and they took note that **these men had been with Jesus**” (Acts 4:13). The primary fact about this text is not that these men were unschooled. The primary fact of this text to be noted is that these men had been with Jesus. This is the major priority of any gospel preacher – “to have been with Jesus”! The preacher comes from his communion with God before the people and as His spokesman says: “Thus says the Lord . . . !”

Christ’s disciples may not have had a classical training in any rabbinical school, but they were certainly not theologically ignorant. They were perhaps theologically **more astute** than the Sanhedrin, having been with Jesus and having been trained by Jesus to read and understand the Scriptures accurately and with the proper focus. They were taught by Jesus to think biblically about doctrine and life. They were taught to put Him at the centre of their interpretation.

Above all they were not “dead” men. They were empowered by Christ (and by the Holy Spirit at Pentecost) to preach. Therefore they were bold and earnest men as they proclaimed the gospel of the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ. They were men in the hand of God, and therefore the Word which they spoke was effective and powerful to their hearers.

The major qualification for the preaching ministry is certainly not a degree in theology. An unknown poet penned these humorous words:

A lad at college called Breeze,
Weighed down by B.A.’s and Ph.D.’s
Collapsed from the strain,
Said the doctor: “It’s plain!
You’re killing yourself by degrees.”

The major qualification for the preaching office, as we have already seen, is the call and gifting from God. Some preachers such as Spurgeon, Lloyd Jones and A. W. Pink never had formal seminary training in the accepted sense of that word. And yet they all had a remarkable and influential ministry. Though being dead, they still speak today through their voluminous printed sermons and books. They were rigorous students! A. W. Pink studied the Scriptures twelve hours a day! They submitted to the rigorous disciplines that accompany effective preaching: exegetical accuracy, doctrinal substance, clear

structure, vivid illustration, pointed application, helpful delivery and supernatural authority.⁶

I am not for a moment suggesting that formal theological training is a hindrance in terms of developing a preacher. We have many examples of men that greatly profited from their training and went on to be fine pastors and preachers. The fact remains however that good preaching, or “life giving preaching”, is not necessarily possessed by those that have learned all the necessary homiletical and hermeneutical skills before they mount a pulpit. Preaching is firstly clearly a gift from God. The preacher is firstly a man in the hands of God. The mystery of preaching begins there! God chooses a man and tells him, “You are my chosen instrument . . .” (Acts 9:15). Having said that (and in the interest of balance), we need to assert that preaching is not only a matter of gifting, but also of hard (heart) work.

Preaching skills require hard work and must be developed

We have already seen that the preaching gift must be stirred up and developed (2 Tim. 1:6). While God undoubtedly uses the preaching of unschooled men to bring saving life to unregenerate people, I doubt that I as an “unschooled” young man preaching on the “off chance” at a funeral or Spurgeon’s shoemaker-preacher could have sustained a ministry of feeding the sheep without the disciplines that accompany effective preaching.

I have already made reference to Stuart Olyott’s helpful book *Preaching – pure and simple* in which he outlines the elements of true preaching that must be developed and worked on. I close with a short synopsis of his points. Good preaching requires hard work at all these various levels:

Exegetical Accuracy

Study which brings out the intended meaning of words and sentences is called exegesis. We cannot preach what we think the Scriptures mean. Our preaching must be exegetically accurate. We must study hard in order to understand the text.

Doctrinal Substance

Every sermon should be full of doctrine and rich in theology. Stuart Olyott says: “If at the end of the sermon my hearers understand the preaching passage, but do not have a better understanding of the *system*

⁶ Stuart Olyott, *Preaching – pure and simple*, 24, 25, 147.

of truth that is taught in the Bible, then my preaching is a failure.”⁷ We need to work hard to make sure that our hearers get the doctrinal substance entrenched in their minds and in their lives.

Clear Structure

Unity, order and proportion are important so that our hearers can follow us when we speak and remember afterwards what we have said. All our hard work will be wasted if our hearers cannot understand us.

Vivid Illustration

Illustrations are like windows that let light into a dark room. People tend to understand pictures better than abstract, theoretical reasoning. Illustrations explain the truth, make the truth attractive and make the truth memorable. Preachers need to work hard at making the truth understood. Good illustrations often “switch the lights on” in people’s minds.

Pointed Application

Since we are called to be doers of the Word and not hearers only (James 1:22), we must work hard on pressing the demands of a text upon the consciences of our hearers. Application is important, because it takes the hearers beyond “sermon tasting” to show them how the subject applies to them and what practical demands it makes of them. The preacher must preach to the people and not just *in front of* them. The Truth must take root in our hearers.

Helpful Delivery

The best sermon in the world will be of little value if delivered poorly. Therefore, the preacher will have to work hard in this matter. He has to watch his spirit, his language, his simplicity, his grammar and pronunciation, his voice, his non-verbal communication, his appearance, his movements and gestures and also the time!

Supernatural Authority

No amount of exegetically sound, doctrinally correct, well structured sermons will have an effect on an audience if the preacher does not possess unction, a divine sense of urgency and passion that breathes life into the sermon.

⁷ Olyott, 55.

Conclusion

All this leaves us in no doubt that the call to preach is not to be trifled with. The call to preach is the call to be a spokesman for the King, and what the spokesman has to say on the King's behalf needs to be accurate, precise, and delivered in the spirit in which the King would have spoken had He spoken Himself.

The call to preach is therefore not for those who have carnal ambitions to occupy a speaker's platform. It is not the place to show off one's oratorical skills. The pulpit is the place where the preacher pours out his heart for his King with exegetical accuracy, doctrinal substance, clear structure, vivid illustration, pointed application, helpful delivery and supernatural authority. Therefore the preacher had better make sure that he has a call from God to preach.

Collecting Money and Maintaining the Unity of the Spirit¹

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Among the most precious texts of God’s Word is Ephesians 5:25b: “Christ...loved the church and gave himself for her.” Before time began or space was formed, the One we know as the Lord Jesus Christ had set his heart on dying for human sinners. Not out of necessity nor from need, not by constraint nor grudgingly, but from a heart of love, out of mercy and kindness, freely and willingly, Christ came into this world to die for the Church.

Equally the Holy Spirit, whom Christ gave in his stead when he ascended to the right hand of the Father, also loves the Church for which Christ died. After all it was the Spirit who laid the Church’s apostolic foundation on the day of Pentecost.² And it is the Spirit who adds men and women to the Church as he enables them to confess Christ as Lord.³ It is the Spirit who pours the love of God into their hearts and draws them to worship God and pray to him as “Dear Father.”⁴ It is the Spirit who lavishes gifts upon the Church that she

¹ This article was given as an address at a conference for ministers held at Bala, Wales, in June 2008.

² Acts 2. See also Ephesians 2:19-22; 3:5.

³ 1 Corinthians 12:3.

⁴ Romans 5:5; Philippians 3:3; Galatians 4:6.

might grow in spiritual maturity and bring glory to the One who is ever at the centre of all the Spirit's work, namely, the Lord Jesus.⁵

It properly follows that one of the marks of being filled with the Spirit is participation in this love of the Spirit for the Church.⁶ Those who are led by the Spirit, those who are filled with the Spirit, love the people of God.

“The Love of the Spirit”

The Spirit's creation of love for the people of God seems to appear in a verse in Romans 15. Paul is about to embark on a dangerous trip to Judea and Jerusalem, where he knows he will face “unbelievers” who are strong opponents of the gospel.⁷ So Paul requests his readers in Rome not to forget to pray for him. Adding to the solemnity of this appeal for prayer is the two-fold basis upon which the Apostle makes his request. First, the admonition that Paul gives to his readers is “through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Here Paul invokes the authority of the one Lord, to whom both he and his readers are bound as servants.⁸ He says in effect that because Christ is their Lord, they ought to pray for his servant who is seeking the advance of his Master's kingdom and the exaltation of his dear name.

Then, he makes this request “by the love of the Spirit.” This is a unique phrase in the Scriptures. Elsewhere when the Scriptures speak of the love of one of the divine persons, it is the always the love of the Father or the love of Christ.⁹ Moreover, it is not immediately clear what Paul means by the phrase.

- Is it the love that believers have for the Holy Spirit?
- Or the love that the Spirit has for believers?
- Or should it be understood to mean the love that the Holy Spirit produces in believers for one another?

⁵ 1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4:11-13; John 16:14.

⁶ 1 John 3:16-24.

⁷ Romans 15:30-31.

⁸ C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (1979 ed.; reprint Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1986), II, 776.

⁹ Gordon D. Fee, *God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994), 632. For an exposition of the love of the Spirit for the believer that draws on a variety of biblical texts about the Spirit's work, see Robert Philip, *The Love of the Spirit Traced in His Work* (1836 ed.; reprint Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2006).

Few commentators think that the first option is a possibility here. The second has been held by, among others, John Ryland, Jr. (1753-1825), the close friend of William Carey (1761-1834),¹⁰ and John Murray (1898-1975), the Presbyterian theologian who taught at Westminster Theological Seminary for much of his life and who wrote a superb commentary on Romans.¹¹ The interpretation of John Calvin (1509-1564), though, is the one that probably makes the best sense here. He interprets the phrase as the love “by which the saints ought to embrace one another.”¹² As Calvin goes on to say: “The love of the Spirit means the love by which Christ joins us together, because it is not of the flesh, nor of the world, but proceeds from His Spirit who is the bond of our unity.”¹³

In this reading of the phrase, Paul is basing his appeal on the fact that his readers are indwelt by the Spirit and as such know something of the love that the Spirit produces in believers for one another. Paul thus expects that love for God’s people will in part be demonstrated by prayer for them. To paraphrase the Apostle John: the one who says he loves God’s people and never prays for them is a liar.

“Constrained by the Spirit”

Now, this trip to Jerusalem is also treated at some length by Luke in the final section of the Book of Acts. On the way to Jerusalem, Paul with his apostolic band and a few other brothers,¹⁴ stop at Miletus, from where Paul asks the elders in Ephesus to come and meet him. As Paul meets with the Ephesian elders in Miletus, he tells them that he is “constrained by the Spirit” to go up to Jerusalem. He is not certain what awaits him there, although the Spirit has been bearing witness through various Christian prophets that he will face “imprisonment and afflictions.”¹⁵ A little further on in the journey Paul and his apostolic band reach the ancient Phoenician city of Tyre where, during a meeting

¹⁰ “The Love of the Spirit” in his *Pastoral Memorials: Selected from the Manuscripts of the Late Revd. John Ryland, D.D. of Bristol* (London: B.J. Holdsworth, 1828), II, 42-43.

¹¹ *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publ. Co., 1965), 221.

¹² *The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Romans and to the Thessalonians*, trans. Ross Mackenzie (1960 ed.; reprint Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publ. Co., 1973), 317. See also Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence*, 633.

¹³ *Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Romans and to the Thessalonians*, 317.

¹⁴ For a list of some of those accompanying Paul, see Acts 20:4.

¹⁵ Acts 20:22-23.

with some brothers, they urge the Apostle – “through the Spirit,” Luke tells us – not to go to Jerusalem.¹⁶

At Caesarea, yet another stop on the journey, Paul and his co-workers lodge with Philip the evangelist. While there, Paul is again warned, this time by the prophet Agabus, of what awaits him at Jerusalem. “Thus says the Holy Spirit,” Agabus solemnly announces as he takes Paul’s belt and binds his own hands and feet, “This is how the Jews will bind the man who owns this belt and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.” This is too much for Paul’s companions who now plead with him not to continue in the journey. But Paul, knowing that the Spirit is leading him up to Jerusalem, is determined to go on. He is ready, he tells his friends and the brothers in Caesarea, “not only to be imprisoned but even to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.”¹⁷

So the Spirit led Paul up to Jerusalem, where he did indeed experience afflictions and imprisonment at the hands of the Romans.¹⁸ But – and this is vital to answer – why did the Spirit lead him up to Jerusalem? In short, the answer to this question can put this way: was it not because of the Spirit’s love for the Church and especially his delight in the unity of believers in Christ?

The Collection and the Spirit

Go back to Romans 15, where one discovers the reason that Paul took this dangerous trip to Jerusalem in the first place. There Paul informs the Roman believers that he is coming to Rome and that he intends to go from there to Spain. But before he headed off to Rome he first had to go up to Jerusalem.¹⁹ As he writes in verses 25-28:

At present, I am going to Jerusalem to bring aid to the saints. For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make some contribution for the poor among the saints at Jerusalem. They were pleased to do it, and indeed they owe it to them. For if the Gentiles have come to share in their spiritual blessings, they ought also to be of service to them in material blessings. When therefore, I have completed this and have delivered to them what has been collected, I will leave for Spain by way of you.

¹⁶ Acts 21:4.

¹⁷ Acts 21:13.

¹⁸ See Acts 21:27-28:31.

¹⁹ Acts 15:23-24.

Paul was going up to Jerusalem to deliver a collection of money for the poor believers there. But who were these poor saints and how did they come to be poor? What were the historical circumstances that prompted Paul to begin making such a collection as this in the first place?

To answer these questions we have to go back to the earliest days of the Jerusalem church when, soon after Pentecost, the first Christian community exuberantly sold their real estate and their personal possessions, “had all things in common,” and sought to ensure that there were no poor among them.²⁰ In doing this, these believers were not seeking to obey any explicit commandment from Christ. Rather, they were simply motivated by a desire to make manifest and plain for all to see that in Christ they had “one heart and one soul.”²¹

In disposing of their financial reserves in this way, however, the community placed itself in a highly vulnerable position. Persecution would only have aggravated this situation.²² Moreover, during the 40s there were a series of food shortages in Palestine and then a particularly severe famine in 48 AD which appears to have triggered a financial crisis in the Jerusalem church.²³ Thus, when the Apostle Paul went up to Jerusalem in the very year that this famine struck he was specifically asked by the leaders there to “remember the poor.”²⁴

In making this suggestion the leaders of the Jerusalem church little knew how it was to become a major part of Paul’s life and ministry for nearly a decade. Scott McKnight goes so far as to describe it as “Paul’s *obsession* for nearly two decades.”²⁵ While this is probably something of an exaggeration, it clearly was of great importance to the Apostle.

This collection involved the making of elaborate plans to gather together what was a substantial amount of money from the various

²⁰ Acts 2:44-45; 4:32-35.

²¹ Acts 4:32; Max Scheler, *Ressentiment*, ed. L. A. Coser and trans. W. W. Holdheim (New York: Schocken Books, 1972), 111-112.

²² Compare the persecution described in Hebrews 10:33-34, where the loss of material possessions and goods was involved.

²³ Keith F. Nickle, *The Collection: A Study in Paul’s Strategy* (Geneva, AL: Allenson, 1966), 24, 29-32; S. McKnight, “Collection for the Saints” in Gerald F. Hawthorne and Ralph P. Martin, with Daniel G. Reid, eds., *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* (Downers Grove, IL/Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 144.

²⁴ Galatians 2:10.

²⁵ McKnight, “Collection for the Saints”, 143.

churches that Paul had planted among the Gentiles.²⁶ Then, once the money had been gathered, it was to be delivered to the Jewish believers in Jerusalem to help provide succour and aid for the poorest of them there. But Paul came to see that this collection was a marvelous opportunity to demonstrate to the Jerusalem church and Jewish believers everywhere that even as there was one Lord and one gospel, so also there was one people of God.²⁷

In Romans 15:27 the Apostle indicates succinctly what his view of the collection was: it is nothing less than a concrete and visible expression of the unity that Jewish and Gentile believers had in Christ. It was from the Jewish believers in Palestine that Paul and other missionaries to the Gentiles had been sent out to bring the light of the gospel to those who were imprisoned in the dark dungeon of paganism. In so doing the Gentiles had been partakers in their spiritual blessings. Through the witness of Jewish believers these Gentiles had been taught the things of the Spirit. Having such unity in spiritual things, it was only proper that the Gentiles minister to their Jewish brothers and sisters in material things. In fact, the word that Paul uses in Romans 15:26 to describe the collection is *koinonia*, which in other contexts in Paul's writings is translated "fellowship." The sharing by Gentile believers of their financial resources with their brothers and sisters in Palestine is not simply a gift of money and nothing more. For Paul it speaks of their common life in Christ and, as such, it is a sign of fellowship, proof of their love for the brethren.²⁸

It is noteworthy that in this text, his last word on the collection, Paul gives no indication that he thought this substantial gift of money would solve once and for all the financial hardship and problems of the Jerusalem believers. But he hoped and prayed that it would convince the believers in Jerusalem that just as there is one gospel and one Lord, so there is one people of God, bound together by one Spirit and demonstrating that unity in real, tangible ways. The collection had become for Paul far more than a gift to relieve poverty and physical suffering. It was nothing less than a powerful symbol of the unity of God's people in the Spirit, a unity that had been brought into being by

²⁶ See 1 Corinthians 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8-9. The reference in 2 Corinthians 8:20 to this collection being a "lavish gift" points to the substantial amount of money involved.

²⁷ McKnight, "Collection for the Saints", 145.

²⁸ James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 38B (Dallas, TX: Word Publishing, 1988), 875.

a Spirit-empowered embrace of the gospel. The one gospel preached to different ethnic groups had produced one people of God.

As has been pointed out, in taking this collection up to Jerusalem Paul was well aware of the dangers that he faced. Thus, he asked the Roman Christians to pray fervently that his “service for Jerusalem” would be “acceptable to the saints.”²⁹ Paul’s sense of the dangers that awaited him in Jerusalem were not unfounded. After he had delivered the collection to the believers there,³⁰ the presence of one of his Gentile brothers with him got him into trouble. Seen by Jewish zealots in the Temple who hated him and the gospel which he preached, he was wrongly accused of defiling the Temple by bringing one of the Gentiles, the Ephesian Trophimus, into those areas of the Temple reserved for the Jews.³¹ A mob sought to kill the Apostle and he was rescued only at the last moment by the Romans. Placed under arrest, he would spend the next four years as a Roman prisoner and it was in chains that he finally arrived in Rome.

“The Unity of the Spirit”

One of the Apostle Paul’s deepest convictions was that the death of the Lord Jesus had not only accomplished the reconciliation of God and those for whom Christ died, but it had also broken down the barriers that divide men and women from one another. This conviction first comes to expression in Galatians, where Paul asserts that in Christ Jesus “there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female.”³² In the presence of God, all men and women are on an equal footing: all are sinners and all need to come to God the same way, through faith alone in the Lord Jesus Christ alone. In the context of this letter this verse is a sharp rebuke to those individuals who were troubling the Galatian believers by urging them to believe that for salvation one had to embrace all of the distinctive features of Judaism. Not so, Paul strongly responds. Religious background, race, even gender, are meaningless issues when one stands in God’s holy presence. There, one thing, and one thing alone matters: does Christ Jesus know you as his own? One’s religious heritage, one’s economic standing, one’s gender – all fade away in the light of one’s

²⁹ Romans 15:31.

³⁰ See Acts 24:17 for the sole reference to the actual collection in Acts.

³¹ Acts 21:27-29. Trophimus had come up with Paul to Jerusalem as a representative of the churches in Asia. For the other representatives, see Acts 20:4.

³² Galatians 3:28.

answer to that most important of all questions, “Do you know God through his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ?”

A few years later, when some Corinthian believers, “restless experientialists,”³³ had become overly impressed with one of the more spectacular spiritual gifts, namely, speaking in tongues, and were in danger of despising those who did not manifest this gift, the Apostle was quick to remind them that *every* believer in the body of Christ is a gifted individual whom the body needs to function properly.³⁴ “In one Spirit,” he declares, all believers were “baptized into one body – Jews or Greeks, slaves or free – and all were made to drink of one Spirit.”³⁵ The fundamental unity of Christians, established by the Holy Spirit on the basis of the death of Christ, is a unity that transcends religious heritage, economic status, and in this context, even spiritual giftedness.

In Romans Paul again returns to the issue which he had taken up in his letter to the Galatians: how do sinful men and women find complete and full acceptance by a holy and just God? Some Jewish Christians found it extremely difficult to shed the basic assumptions with which they had grown up, namely, that the Jewish religious heritage, epitomized in circumcision and strict adherence to the Jewish food laws, was necessary for salvation. We see this struggle, for instance, in the life of the Apostle Peter, who, as a believer of some years’ standing, was still clearly wrestling with whether or not it was right to eat with Gentile believers.³⁶

Paul’s response to this particular struggle was twofold. First, he systematically laid out, for his own day and for all time, the only way that a man or a woman finds peace with God: since “all,” both Jew and Gentile, “have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,”³⁷ then all must come to God in the identical way, namely, through faith in Christ Jesus, who was crucified for sinners. As Paul says later in the tenth chapter of Romans: “There is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. For ‘everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved’.”³⁸

³³ This apt description is that of J. I. Packer, *A Quest for Godliness: The Puritan Vision of the Christian Life* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1990), 30.

³⁴ See 1 Corinthians 12-14.

³⁵ 1 Corinthians 12:13.

³⁶ See Galatians 2:11-13.

³⁷ Romans 3:23.

³⁸ Romans 10:12-13.

Then, Paul was willing to give his life for the sake of this unity created by the Spirit and take up to Jerusalem a tangible witness to that unity: a collection of money from Gentile Christian pockets for the relief of poor Jewish believers. When Paul later wrote from a prison cell in Rome to the Ephesian church that they needed to be zealous to preserve the “unity of the Spirit,” the Apostle knew from real experience something of what this might cost.³⁹ Many years later John Calvin well expressed the heart of Paul’s thinking when, in his preface to his commentary on 2 Thessalonians, he said of himself – but the words can equally apply to Paul – “my ministry...ought to be dearer to me than my own life.”⁴⁰ But Paul knew that all who love what the Spirit loves can walk no other path.

If one compares this Paul, willing to die for the Spirit’s work in unifying believers, to the Saul, whom the Risen Christ transformed on the Damascus Road, what a change in temper and passion! That Saul was a religious zealot filled with hate and violence for the followers of the Lord Jesus. This Paul was now a man of love, willing to be killed for the sake of Christ and his work through the Spirit in the Church.

And why the change? The Spirit who had come to indwell him was none other than the Spirit of love and a Spirit of unity. And so it is with all truly Spirit-filled men and women.

³⁹ Ephesians 4:3.

⁴⁰ “To the distinguished Benedict Textor, Physician” in *Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Romans and to the Thessalonians*, 385. I am indebted for this reference to Victor Shepherd, “My Ministry is Dearer to Me than Life” (Sermon, Annual Meeting of the Centre for Mentorship and Theological Reflection, Toronto, at Tyndale Seminary, Toronto, June 5, 2008).

A Mission Strategy for Equipping National Leaders: The Mobile Theological Training Team

*Training national Christian leaders in their own
country and culture*

Jack C. Whytock*

** Theological education and training in the mission context has been a subject that has interested me for many years. I can trace this interest back to the 1980s when I was in seminary and faced with a decision about whether to accept a teaching position in East Africa or to undertake further studies. Thus, it has been a burden on my heart for a long time. My first experience teaching overseas was in Eastern Europe in 2002, and since then I have taught block courses about twenty-five times in Africa, Asia and South America. Over the years I have endeavoured to develop a missiological philosophy and strategy that you will find expressed in this article. Many readers have asked for an in-depth article on this subject, and I offer the following as a work-in-progress on this exciting subject.*



- JCW¹

The purpose of this paper is to outline the contextual origins and vision of the Mobile Theological Training Team (hereafter referred to as MT3²) together with basic philosophies, strategies and key principles. The ministry of MT3 is to train national leaders primarily in the non-Western world through providing visiting faculty to partner institutions. This paper is a working effort to place in written form the

¹ Dr. Whytock serves as the Team Leader of MT3.

² The Mobile Theological Training Team formally began in 2003 and received its name in 2004.

above mentioned matters, and it is understood from the outset that this will be expanded, revised and refined.³

1. Origins and Context

The last fifty years have seen incredible changes in global Christianity, mission approach, strategy and need. MT3 is representative of many of these developments both globally and methodologically in the delivery of theological education.

a.) Global Christianity: The Overall Context

We see here briefly the dramatic change in Christianity around the world in the last fifty years, perhaps the most significant in at least a two hundred year period of modern missions. The following statistical comparison says a great deal:

1960 67% of Protestants lived in the Western world⁴

2000 75% of Protestants lived in the non-Western world

We may “tweak” these statistics slightly depending upon sources, but the reality is more than clear. Since 1960 a radical shift in the centre of the numerical Protestant majority has taken place. This is being described with language such as Western, non-Western, the rise of the global south, the globalization of Christianity, etc.⁵ Obviously this shift applies to Christian leadership as well. South Korea is now the second largest nation in the world for sending Christian mission workers, while the United States still ranks as number one.⁶ Some may query these statistics, but they are becoming increasingly difficult to ignore. Things have changed greatly since 1960, not just in where Protestants

³ I am indebted to many over the years who have helped me with my thinking on this subject. I dare not name names for fear of missing someone!

⁴ The terms “Western world” and “non-Western world” have certain aspects of fluidity within their definitions. In this paper the term “Western world” is basically used to mean Western Europe, North America, Australia and New Zealand. For many the term “non-Western world” is interchangeable with *developing world*, *majority world* and *two-thirds world*.

⁵ Many studies have been emphasizing this shift. See Philip Jenkins’ two works, *The Next Christendom: The Rise of Global Christianity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002) and *The New Faces of Christianity: Believing the Bible in the Global South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).

⁶ Jane Lampman, “How Korea Embraced Christianity”, *The Christian Science Monitor* (March 7, 2007), <http://www.csmonitor.com/2007/0307/pl4s01-lire.html> (11 March 2007).

are located, but in the make-up of the missions force itself, and these shifts appear to be realities for the foreseeable future.

b.) Short-Term Missions (STM): The Contextual Missions Phenomenon

Since 1960 there have been other significant changes. One of the most significant relates to travel and the rise of short-term missions (STM). It is now clearly recognized that short-term workers far outnumber the traditional “career missionaries”. In 1960 one would have been very hard pressed to find mission agencies employing coordinators for short-term missions. Today virtually every sizeable mission agency has “retooled” itself in some fashion to include these ministries. In 1960 you would not have found such things as “The Seven Standards of Excellence in Short-Term Mission” or national, annual conferences devoted to short-term missions. An entire range of literature and professional teaching has arisen around STM.⁷ Surely it is significant that the *Evangelical Missiological Society* devoted its September 2007 National Conference to the theme “The Short-Term Volunteer Movement: Missiological Implications”. There is clearly a new level of interest in critically assessing the STM movement, both positively and negatively.⁸ A very concise and well-crafted article on STM has just appeared in the new *Dictionary of Mission Theology: Evangelical Foundations* reviewed elsewhere in this journal. I highly recommend this short article by I. Makuku and V. Calver.⁹

⁷ For a sample of recent literature on STM, see J. Mack and Leeann Stiles, *Mack and Leeann’s Guide to Short-Term Missions* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2000); Tim Dearborn, *Short-Term Missions Workbook – From Mission Tourists to Global Citizens* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2003); and Chris Easton and Kim Hurst, *Vacations with a Purpose: A Planning Handbook for Your Short-Term Missions Team (Leader’s Manual)* (Colorado Springs: Cook Publications, 1991). Also see www.stmstandards.org and www.nstmc.org.

⁸ See Robert J. Priest, Terry Dischinger, Steve Rasmussen, and C. M. Brown, “Researching the Short-Term Mission Movement”, *Missiology* 34 (4) (October 2006) 431-450; Edwin Zehner, “Short-Term Missions: Toward a More Field-Oriented Model”, *Missiology* 34, no. 4 (October 2006): 509-510. Zehner summarizes well both the positive and negative aspects of short-term missions.

⁹ I Makuku and V. Calver, “Short-term mission”, in *Dictionary of Mission Theology: Evangelical Foundations*, ed. John Corrie, cons. eds. Samuel Escobar and Wilbert Sheck (Nottingham/Downers Grove: IVP, 2007), 360-362.

c.) Theological Education by Extension (TEE), etc.: The Contextual State of Theological Education

Since this paper's focus is theological education, we must note one more missiological trend since 1960. Prior to 1960, theological education in the mission context emphasized a residential model. However, in the early 1960s this began to change with the rise of models such as Theological Education by Extension (TEE).¹⁰ Such models stressed contextually appropriate learning, practical field work exposure and a variety of learning modes – self-study/correspondence, seminars, workshops, etc. Some of this, i.e. the technology, may have been new, but in reality not everything associated with TEE was as novel as sometimes thought.¹¹ From the 1960s onwards there has been much more variety in the theological training of national Christian leaders thanks to work such as TEE or consortium networks, etc. There is a whole vocabulary that is stressed today in the delivery of theological education reflective of these changes: commitments, mobility, flexibility, cultural appropriateness, worldview integrations, educational creativity, outcomes assessment, cooperative agendas/partnerships/networks.¹² The number of new theological training agencies, institutions and networks which have been arising since the 1960s continues to multiply. Several of these did not exist as recently as ten years ago.¹³ Within this movement we are seeing certain

¹⁰ There is a vast area of literature about changes in theological education in the mission context since 1960. Some of these include: Ralph D. Winter, ed., *Theological Education by Extension* (South Pasadena: William Cary Library, 1969); F. Ross Kinsler, *The Extension Movement in Theological Education: A Call to the Renewal of the Ministry* (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1981); Lester Hirst, "Making TEE Serve the Needs of the Churches", *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 22, no. 4 (October, 1986): 420-424; Robert Newton, "Neocolonialism and Theological Education: A Philippine Case Study" (unpublished manuscript, 1989); and Douglas L. Rutt, "Some Caveats for Theological Education by Extension" (private paper, 1991), 1-19.

¹¹ See Jack C. Whytock, "Theological Education and Training and the Modern Rise of Distance Learning", *Haddington House Journal* 5 (2003), specifically pages 11-12 on a brief historical excursus.

¹² See Larry J. McKinney, "Evangelical Theological Education: Implementing Our Own Agenda" [delivered at the 2003 ICETE International Consultation for Theological Education (in High Wycombe, England)]; Gary M. Floyd, *Theological Education by Extension: an Annotated Bibliography* (1996); and Gregory Lund, *Theological Education in Africa: An Annotated Bibliography* (Wheaton: Billy Graham Center, 1992).

¹³ Such as Third Millennium (IIIM), website: www.thirdmill.org.

characteristics develop that are distinct from the early 1960s. Here I think of the ethnic diversity of the Western Christian Church and the rise of nationals from the West assisting nationals outside the global West. Some of these are approaches within an overall movement. Again, mission agencies are responding with a new emphasis on nurturing leadership. Gone is the “colonial” approach. Now the desire is to liberate national leadership and thus lose the caricature (some of which may have been justifiable, some of which I believe has been over-reactive) of a failure to develop a nurturing indigenous leadership arm in missions. The point is clear – since 1960 the delivery of theological education in the mission context has seen many developments.

d.) Observations leading to conclusions:

- The point certainly is well taken that Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, Latin America and the Middle East are transforming world Christianity and its shape today. In many of these locations, the evidence is numerical and manifests a clear need for the “training mandate” to be stressed in the nurturing of leaders, many of whom have little formal theological training.
- Missionary approaches via short-term work and continuing changes in the delivery of theological education (1960-2000) are factors we must bear in mind as we consider the ministry of MT3.
- As a Christian historian, I see a providential context for the work of MT3 today. Given many of the pedagogical changes in theological education, combined with the short-term phenomenon and the changes globally, the door is open for work in this area of mission. Surely the time is right.
- Though MT3 may at first be viewed as part of this short-term phenomenon, it is only such to a degree. MT3 develops “personal relationships” through regular trips to the same fields by team members over a “long term”. Hence the proposal to use the term “long-term short-term” as the strategic term of MT3 is an attempt to make the distinction from the short-term volunteer movement.
- Some may continue to see the travel by MT3 missionaries as in the volunteer category of short-term missionaries. This will present problems of perception about MT3 full-tier members, who are really career missionaries, but in a mobile mode,

undertaking their calling as theological educational missionaries, similar in mode to the traveling evangelist or traveling preacher to a globally dispersed people group.

2. The Second Prong of the Great Commission: Nurturing Requires Leaders

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

Matthew 28:19-20 (NIV)

The Great Commission, as we have come to popularly express it, found in Matthew 28:19, 20, is a solid starting point for a scriptural understanding of MT3. It is one unified commission, yet in essence it contains two aspects. These are well outlined in the Westminster Confession of Faith, 25:3: “Unto this catholic visible church Christ hath given the ministry, oracles, and ordinances of God, *for the gathering and perfecting* of the saints in this life...” [italics mine] There is the gospel call (*gathering*) and initiation into the Church: “...make disciples of all nations, baptizing...”. Yet disciples are always nurtured (*perfecting*) in the faith. This occurs in various places and at different levels. The nurturing process is aided through leaders; and we desire to see nationals taking up this nurturing ministry together, of course, with evangelism. Thus we devote time to the training of nationals for the ongoing ministries of nurture and evangelism. Hence theological education is used to equip leaders who will “teach[ing] them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you”. The foundation of evangelical theological education maintains a strong commitment to this second prong of the Great Commission – “the training mandate” – recognizing that much of the fruit of gospel work is surely put at risk without the nurturing of leadership.¹⁴

Article eleven of the Lausanne Covenant (1974) concisely articulates the place of nurture, leadership and education:

¹⁴ *Overseas Council International Strategic Plan 2001-2010* (Indianapolis: ICI, 2003), 2.

Education and Leadership

We confess that we have sometimes pursued church growth at the expense of church depth, and divorced evangelism from Christian nurture. We also acknowledge that some of our missions have been too slow to equip and encourage national leaders to assume their rightful responsibilities. Yet we are committed to indigenous principles, and long that every church will have national leaders who manifest a Christian style of leadership in terms not of domination but of service. We recognize that there is a great need to improve theological education, especially for church leaders. In every nation and culture there should be an effective training programme for pastors and laypeople in doctrine, discipleship, evangelism, nurture and service. Such training programmes should not rely on any stereotyped methodology but should be developed by creative local initiatives according to biblical standards. (Col. 1:27, 28; Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5,9; Mark 10:42-45; Eph. 4:11,12)¹⁵

3. What Trained Leaders Do

For a moment let's unpack more about what we believe trained Christian leaders do in terms of the Great Commission and the two aspects of that Great Commission.¹⁶

- (1) Trained leaders “*model*” the Christian faith. They set before the world and fellow believers what the Christian faith looks like. They ideally incarnate a living Christian faith and practice, not just as a testimony or example, but one worthy of imitation in the correct biblical sense. (See 1 Thess. 1:5, 6.)
- (2) Trained leaders develop and conduct a whole range of specific ministries. It is interesting to observe these ministries “coming alive” as the Church grows and matures. The range is wide – environment, addiction ministries, care facilities, counselling, Christian education, training centres, etc. As leadership

¹⁵ “The Lausanne Covenant (1974)”, *Haddington House Journal* 9 (2007): 176.

¹⁶ I have adapted four summary points from The Overseas Council International and expanded these. Thanks to Dr. Manfred Kohl for bringing this to my attention.

- develops, the Church engages in a holistic range of Christian work. The New Testament model in Acts and Paul's and John's epistles provide us with hints of the diversity of ministries and the leaders behind them. (Acts 6:1-7)
- (3) Trained leaders assist the Church in her particular culture to discern "what of culture can be affirmed and what needs to be changed".¹⁷ Leadership has a prophetic role to play, first in the Church and also in society. (See Phil. 3:20 and Matt. 5:13-16.) Likewise, this is connected directly with the maturing and nurturing of the saints who must come to discern the world in which they live.¹⁸
- (4) Trained leaders lead the church in her worship and ministry. The leading of worship and preaching are generally conducted by designated leaders in most Protestant churches worldwide. The training of expositors and worship leaders who shape the vocabulary of liturgy and praise and the content and the delivery of messages is surely a critical task assigned to leaders. Without vital leadership, new believers will be ". . . infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming" (Eph. 4:14).

4. The Niche of MT3

There are many theological institutions outside of the Western world where the training of nationals needs strengthening. Many are not seeking full faculty from the West yet are open to assistance. The under-girding missiological philosophy of MT3 is that contextual training is generally the most effective for pastors and others. As has been written:

It is particularly important that leaders be trained within their own cultural context in order to most effectively minister in that context. While training in the West is often biblically sound and academically excellent, it cannot effectively address the challenges that are unique

¹⁷ *Overseas Council International*, 2.

¹⁸ See Gerald Bilkes, "The Culture We Need", *The Banner of Sovereign Grace Truth* 17, no. 3 (March 2009): 74-76. Bilkes' article is a helpful summation on this issue.

to non-Western cultures. Contextually trained leaders are essential to the growth of a healthy indigenous church.¹⁹

MT3 recognizes the diversity of callings within the Body and how this applies to locations for theological education. The majority of non-Western national leaders will not gain access to theological education in the West, yet often they can receive training in their nation. But many of these training institutions do not have a full complement of instructors. Thus there is often a need for occasional faculty. It is normally much more cost effective for basic theological education of nationals to be conducted in the national's country or even region of origin. At the same time, it allows for a contextualized training which is closer, if not parallel, to the nationals targeted ministry group. Historically, if nationals leave their country/region in the non-Western world for education in the West, three negatives can occur:

- Sometimes the curriculum is irrelevant to their ministry needs.
- There are relocation or family separation issues.
- A “brain drain” in the loss of leaders who do not return to either the country or region of origin is produced. Statistics show that 75% to 85% of Christian leaders who come to the West to study do not return.

In 1980 an occasional paper was issued by the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization. This has become known as the *Lausanne Occasional Paper 18: Christian Witness to People of African Traditional Religions*. In section seven on Practical Recommendations part “c” we read, “The advantage of training national church leaders at home [i.e. in Africa] cannot be overemphasised” and in “p”, “*Select best people . . . it follows that people whose traditions and background are closest to the unreached people may be best suited to reach them.*” Such statements have tremendous implications, not just for evangelistic strategy but also for theological education and training in the national and indigenous context.²⁰

Stan Guthrie summarizes this phenomenon well in one paragraph:

¹⁹ *Overseas Council International*, 2.

²⁰ *Lausanne Occasional Paper 18: Christian Witness to People of African Traditional Religions, Report of the Consultation on World Evangelization Mini-Consultation on Reaching Traditional Religionists (Africa)* (Pattaya, Thailand, Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, 1980).

One common partnership problem that is little discussed occurs when Westerners bring African or other Christians from the Third World to study in the United States or Europe. The problem is not (always) the theological education received, but that many of the Two-Third World students decide to remain in the West when their schooling is over. The temptation to stay in more comfortable and affluent surroundings is simply too great, even though the primary needs are in their home countries. *The issue is causing some wiser Western agencies to seek ways to provide education and ministry 'on the field'.* [italics mine]²¹

Yet there are many benefits to Western education, particularly today at the post-graduate level. Thus at the outset we need to recognize there are diversities of callings within the Body, and in no way do we imply that the way MT3 does it is the only way it must be done. There continues to be a need for some from the non-West to come to the West to study theology – especially those who are already church leaders in their own country. MT3 desires to train that large segment of students who will not be able to do this for a whole range of reasons. We are philosophically committed to their training in their national context.

Given the rise of short-term missions, combined with the changes in theological education delivery in the last fifty years, the numerical need in the non-Western world and the benefits of contextual training, we see the emergence of MT3 as the timing of the Lord.

5. Four Levels of Training in the Non-Western World

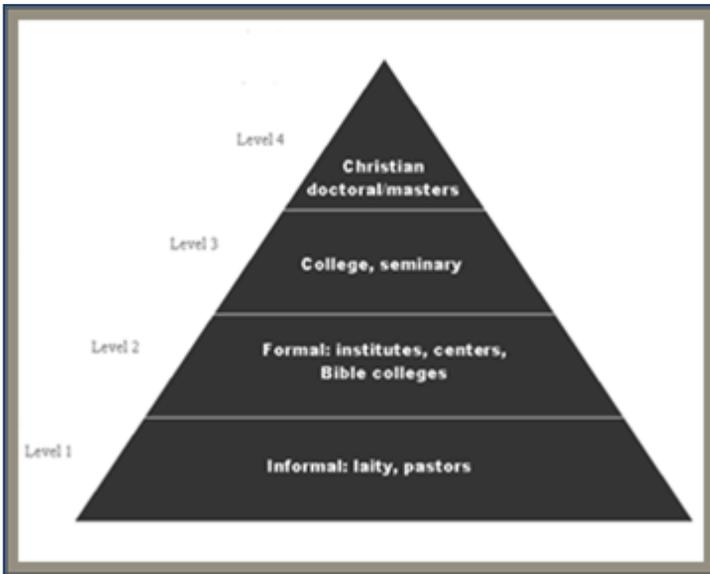
The pyramid below is an effort to show the four levels of theological training common in much of the non-Western world. There are also parallels to the Western world in the late 19th century and throughout the 20th century, but our focus will be the non-Western world.

The pyramid is widest at the bottom where it is representative of the largest numerical group. The top, where the pyramid is narrowest, reflects the smallest number being trained.

Level 1 represents “informal” teaching and training of lay leaders and pastors. The “student body” here may have had some Bible college

²¹ Stan Guthrie, *Missions in the Third Millennium: 21 Key Trends for the 21st Century*, revised and expanded edition (Milton Keynes: Paternoster Press, 2004), 123. See also page 181.

training, but it is likely that a large percentage have had little formal college/seminary²² training. I have heard missiologists say that two million ministers stand to preach every Sunday in the Third World, 90% of whom have had no formal theological education. At this level, MT3 provides training by way of continuing education conferences for pastors and laity. Generally these are two to five days in length, and there is no formal assessment. This level of training is addressing a very legitimate need. There are several benefits well beyond the imparting of knowledge, including fellowship, prayer, the networking



of people and resources, etc. Often level one training takes the form of an annual or bi-annual event and is well attended, sometimes even into the hundreds. The location can vary between church, college, conference site, etc.

Level 2 represents “formal” teaching where there is generally an application process, some form of outcome assessment and a goal to work towards “graduation”. Usually, but not always, teaching is at the institution’s centre of operation, typically a church or its own facility. The nomenclature used here is a Bible school, a learning centre, a Bible/theology institute or even a “Bible college”. Entrance standards

²² For the purposes of this paper, I will use the terms “college” and “seminary” interchangeably. Seminary may not necessarily mean Master’s level as in much of the non-Western world.

vary between elementary and secondary level education. Often these institutions do not have government or external accreditation requirements. However, sometimes such an institution works under an accredited partner institution to provide an academic covering and assistance to the work. A noteworthy example of this would be the Nehemiah Bible Institute in South Africa and its relationship with the University of Pretoria for accredited certificate work. Course delivery modes vary by using a combination of the standard residential system and seminars/modular periods together with distance work. Some may even be completely correspondence based. Typically the words used to describe these programmes are “certificate” or “diploma” level.

Level 3 is the “formal” college/seminary and generally involves external accreditation and both diploma level and degree based curriculum. Usually entrance requires secondary school certification, although students also could move from level two to level three once they have obtained a qualification at a Bible school in level two to prepare them. Again, delivery of theological education can be within a traditional residential term/semester system or in modular/blocks combined with distance work. Some colleges require students to leave home and reside on-site, while others allow students to remain at home and take evening or block courses. There is much more variety of delivery than was the case prior to 1960. Generally instruction for level three would be at the bachelor’s level, although some institutions are starting to add master’s level work. There is a wide range of ways the students’ spiritual life is emphasized.

Level 4, “Christian doctoral/masters”, is the smallest group and strives to achieve accreditation level status for masters and doctoral degrees. Research, theses and/or “projects” are the norm for doctoral work. Here it is hoped that MT3 team members will also become involved as examiners of theses or projects. This will not be found in levels one to three. (Here, having MT3 team members with proper qualifications becomes very important.) There is a variety of systems in place, including residential, distance and combinations of each. Level four courses are offered either at a Christian university, a theological college/seminary or an advanced level “school of theology” (graduate).

The ministry of MT3 is such that on occasion it reaches into all four levels of teaching and training in the non-Western world. Thus we require specific qualifications for team members in order to ensure that they are both acquainted with these levels of training and possess the suitable background to teach at all levels.

6. Team Qualifications

“And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.” (2 Tim. 2:2)

MT3 desires members who possess these chief qualifications:

- We want members who, because of their love for Christ, combine evangelical passion for the world with a passion for nurturing and maturing Christian leaders. We want team members who have large hearts for souls world-wide and for leadership development. Members must have a clear sense of God’s call in their lives for this and a passion to see this accomplished.
- We want members who have had positive pastoral and teaching experience, thus bringing a maturity to the work (ordinarily ten years of such experience to make for seasoned leaders).
- We want members who have been exposed to cross-cultural teaching and possess a disposition that will complement the providential missiological approach in the world today to walk humbly as leaders and professors.²³ Such members will

²³ This qualification issue goes beyond the academic into issues of demeanor and character. I have discussed with many missiologists some of the problems which Western theological professors have stumbled into while doing short-term teaching in the non-Western world. Here are the five chief complaints which are often leveled against Western professors of theology teaching in the non-Western world.

- Many are completely non-incarnational.
- They dress inappropriately in the context.
- They often want to live more as tourists at “five-star” hotels than accepting the local hospitality without complaint.
- There is basically an assumed theological superiority of the Western professor as representative of his denomination or institution in comparison to the non-Western church or institution, an attitude which makes for “turn-off”.
- The goal appears not to be to form a partnership with the national leaders and institutions, but more one of being “over” these leaders and institutions.

In no way does this mean that universally happens, but rather we all need to be clearly aware that just because someone is a professor in the West does not

understand contextualization in theological education and strategic flexibility.²⁴

- We want members who have earned graduate degrees, ordinarily for full-tier members that would be a Ph.D. or Th.D. We want to be able to serve at all levels of theological education as needed, inclusive of level four. Thus team composition or team members must satisfy the requirements of accrediting bodies of certain colleges where MT3 may teach.
- We want team members who desire to work in harmony as a team, complementing one another in ministry. Also, we want team members who will work as team members of the partner institution while they are there.
- We want to consider also the providential circumstances of the individual's life, home and family. Because of the nature of the mode employed by MT3, including extended absences from home, there may be domestic or health matters which will deem it not a suitable fit for all theological educators.

7. Team Composition

A theological institution operates well with a diversity of interests and training specializations. This is also true of MT3, where that same diversity of teaching interests, training specialization and ministry experiences comes together to form a whole team. The goal is not the creation of a team with similar specialities, but one with a balance of diversity yet a unity of passion for training national leaders.

As a team we should work towards the overall composition of having members who together constitute the theological encyclopedia curriculum of biblical theology, systematic theology, church history and practical theology. The goal is a team which complements one

automatically mean that they will have a good fit teaching in a non-Western context.

²⁴ See the "Manifesto on the Renewal of Evangelical Theological Education" and the twelve articles of the Manifesto. This was first adopted in 1983, with a second edition in 1990. *The International Council for Evangelical Theological Education* (ICETE). The twelve articles are:

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Contextualization | 2. Churchward orientation |
| 3. Strategic flexibility | 4. Theological grounding |
| 5. Continuous assessment | 6. Community life |
| 7. Integrated programme | 8. Servant moulding |
| 9. Instructional variety | 10. A Christian mind |
| 11. Equipping for growth | 12. Cooperation |

another in diversity, not duplication, of teaching interests. Thus full-tier members should represent this diversity, and an initial or primary goal would be to develop a four-member team representative of this overall four-fold diversity.

Associate members may then fit within any of these four main departments and may very well represent a very specialized role within one of these four. For example, within the area of practical theology, a partner institution may ask for a specific counselling course. Here we would hope to have one or two associates to draw upon when full-tier members may not have that specific speciality.

This also relates back to the matter of team qualifications, discussed in section six above. Someone teaching a counselling course in a Western seminary or theological college may have a D.Min. but not a Ph.D. in counselling. Accrediting bodies will generally find that acceptable, for this in the practical department. MT3 will strive to follow these overarching principles when expanding the team.

8. The Ministry Focus of MT3

The primary ministry focus of MT3 is to teach nationals. Thus the main venue will be the classroom or continuing education for leaders. However, there are other needs, such as with the faculty of colleges and with administrators and governors or trustees. As partnerships are formed and mature and trust builds on all sides, other avenues of ministry emerge related to national leadership. This will be both informal and formal and may range from private meetings to seminars and full faculty and/or governor/trustee retreats. We see a long-range goal developing whereby we could become facilitators to improve institutional effectiveness, not just for faculty but also for administrators, governors or trustees. This will require wisdom, respect, a servant spirit and missiological awareness of national context and need. This also will lead into both curriculum and library consultation and development. Thus the role of MT3 expands beyond the classroom and once again reinforces the importance of the team qualifications.

In summary, we can say the ministry focus of MT3 includes these five areas:

- To teach modular courses in colleges in the developing world.
- To assist faculty, institutional administrators and governors/trustees in development/training and networking.
- To assist with library consultation and development.

- To assist with curriculum consultation and development.
- To reach national pastors/leaders who may not have had Bible college training by offering leadership conferences alongside the colleges.

Conclusion

In our mission work today as evangelical Christians, we must attempt to grasp the context of realities of the global numerical shifts of the Protestant community and missionary personnel. When doing this, the challenge quickly presents itself of the need for nurturing more Christian leaders. Theological education in all its diverse delivery modes and settings is the key to meeting this need.

The modern contextual phenomenon of short-term missions can be re-tooled as long-term short-term and may be used strategically in the global training of leaders. This needs to be done with clearly defined levels of pedagogical training and with clear direction of missiological philosophy for indigenous training. Theological education is more than imparting knowledge; it is spiritual transformation, modelling and mentoring. Therefore, clear criteria are developed for the right mix of instructors with partner settings and relationships spread over a longer time-frame. Thus this model employs the benefits of short-term missions while setting a stress on the relational aspect over the long-term.

This raises a serious question: Is MT3 really “short-term missions”? MT3 has a stress upon long-term, strategic partnerships. Team members of MT3 function as “permanent” adjunct faculty. Surely this is qualitatively different from short-term, volunteer mission workers. Could this not validly be seen as a new architectural design of one aspect of “career missionary” work? The answer appears to be overwhelmingly “yes”. This concept is in accord with missiologist Ramesh Richard: “Indeed, an entirely new architecture for global missions is needed for the new millennium, beyond the traditional and indigenous missionary paradigms.”²⁵ And thus for Westerners in missions, it will mean a shift in thinking will be needed. “. . . It will be more as partners, trainers, and encouragers, and less as leaders.”²⁶

Developing a network of partners for a mobile theological faculty brings about continuity, trust, a wider impact (beyond just teaching

²⁵ Guthrie, *Missions in the Third Millennium*, 182, quoting RREACH’s chairman, Ramesh Richard.

²⁶ Guthrie, *Missions in the Third Millennium*, 164.

students) and a dynamic synergy in theological education globally. Both Western and non-Western partners are enriched. Teams such as the Mobile Theological Training Team are positioned to offer an impact on the direction and depth of world-wide evangelical theological education and thus bless the Church.

“Everybody is a theologian. We have notions about God, about the world, about human beings, about meaning and fulfilment, about death and what comes after, and so on; and they may come from all sorts of places. The real question is not whether we are theologians or not, but whether we are good theologians or poor ones – or, to be more exact, whether our beliefs – and so our lives – faithfully reflect the truth that has been spoken by the living God, or whether they simply bear the imprint of the societies we live in, and of our own fallible human wisdom and pragmatism. It is a vital matter, for issues of eternal life and death hang on the answers we give to crucial theological questions – like the one Jesus asks, ‘Who do you say I am?’ (Mat 16:15)”

— Africa Inland Mission, OpSheets,
Theological Education
{a ministry of multiplication}

The True Church

J. C. Ryle*

** This article by J. C. Ryle received incredible circulation because it was contained in The Fundamentals: A Testimony to the Truth. I have found in teaching that many have never read or even heard of The Fundamentals. They were first financed by two Presbyterian Christian brothers in a series in which three editors brought together various essays that were published between 1910-1915 as twelve paperback volumes. Literally millions of copies were published and distributed free to pastors, missionaries and theological students throughout the entire English-speaking Protestant world. (Estimates are that over 300,000 Christian workers and readers received these volumes). The goal was to teach the evangelical faith amidst the rising tide of theological liberalism. Later the volumes were reprinted as four hardback books and today as two. They contain fine essays by a wide variety of evangelical authors: B. B. Warfield, James Orr, W. H. Griffith Thomas, William Caven, R. A. Torrey, Thomas Whitelaw and many others, including a reprint essay by Thomas Boston. The Fundamentals were a conservative, evangelical “testimony to the truth” for teaching, defending and applying Christian teaching for evangelism and missions. This work represented a period before the later movement known as fundamentalism.*

The author of this particular essay, John Charles Ryle (1816-1900), is still well-read today. Many of his works remain in print, such as Holiness and Expository Thoughts on the Gospels. He has a majestic simplicity of style combined with a depth of insight. His motto was clear: “Woe to me if I preach not the gospel.” The following essay is vintage Ryle in this regard. Imagine yourself being one of 300,000 Christian workers receiving your free copy of The Fundamentals and discussing it with your colleagues. I hope this one essay will cause many to take time to read more from this most influential and historic series.

Editor

Do you belong to the one true Church: to the Church outside of which there is no salvation? I do not ask where you go on Sunday; I only ask, "Do you belong to the one true Church?"

Where is this one true Church? What is this one true Church like? What are the marks by which this one true Church may be known? You may well ask such questions. Give me your attention, and I will provide you with some answers.

The one true Church is composed of all believers in the Lord Jesus. It is made up of all God's elect – of all converted men and women – of all true Christians. In whomsoever we can discern the election of God the Father, the sprinkling of the blood of God the Son, the sanctifying work of God the Spirit, in that person we see a member of Christ's true Church.

It is a Church of which all the members have the same marks. They are all born of the Spirit; they all possess "repentance towards God, faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ," and holiness of life and conversation. They all hate sin, and they all love Christ. They worship differently and after various fashions; some worship with a form of prayer, and some with none; some worship kneeling, and some standing; but they all worship with one heart. They are all led by one Spirit; they all build upon one foundation; they all draw their religion from one single Book – that is the Bible. They are all joined to one great center – that is Jesus Christ. They all even now can say with one heart, "Hallelujah"; and they can all respond with one heart and voice, "Amen and Amen."

It is a Church which is dependent upon no ministers upon earth, however much it values those who preach the Gospel to its members. The life of its members does not hang upon church-membership, and baptism, and the Lord's Supper – although they highly value these things, when they are to be had. But it has only one great Head – one Shepherd, one chief Bishop – and that is Jesus Christ. He alone, by His Spirit, admits the members of this Church, though ministers may show the door. Till He opens the door no man on earth can open it – neither bishops, nor presbyters, nor convocations, nor synods. Once let a man repent and believe the Gospel, and that moment he becomes a member of this Church. Like the penitent thief, he may have no opportunity of being baptized; but he has that which is far better than any water-baptism – the baptism of the Spirit. He may not be able to receive the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper; but he eats Christ's body and drinks Christ's blood by faith every day he lives, and no minister on earth can prevent him. He may be excommunicated by ordained men,

and cut off from the outward ordinances of the professing Church; but all the ordained men in the world cannot shut him out of the true Church.

It is a Church whose existence does not depend on forms, ceremonies, cathedrals, churches, chapels, pulpits, fonts, vestments, organs, endowments, money, kings, governments, magistrates, or any act of favor whatsoever from the hand of man. It has often lived on and continued when all these things have been taken from it; it has often been driven into the wilderness or into dens and caves of the earth, by those who ought to have been its friends. Its existence depends on nothing but the presence of Christ and His Spirit; and they being ever with it, the Church cannot die.

This is the Church to which the Scriptural titles of present honor and privilege, and the promises of future glory, especially belong; this is the body of Christ; this is the flock of Christ; this is the household of faith and the family of God; this is God's building, God's foundation, and the temple of the Holy Ghost. This is the Church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven; this is the royal priesthood, the chosen generation, the peculiar people, the purchased possession, the habitation of God, the light of the World; the salt and the wheat of the earth; this is the "Holy Catholic Church" of the Apostle's Creed; this is the "One Catholic and Apostolic Church" of the Nicene Creed; this is that Church to which the Lord Jesus promises, "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it", and to which He says, "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 16:18; 28:20).

This is the only Church which truly possess true unity. Its members are entirely agreed on all the weightier matters of religion, for they are all taught by one Spirit. About God, and Christ, and the Spirit, and sin, and their own hearts, and faith, and repentance, and necessity of holiness, and the value of the Bible, and the importance of prayer, and the resurrection, and judgment to come – about all these points they are of one mind. Take three or four of them, strangers to one another, from the remotest corners of the earth; examine them separately on these points; you will find them all of one judgment.

This is the only Church which possesses true sanctity. Its members are all holy. They are not merely holy by profession, holy in name, and holy in the judgment of charity; they are all holy in act, and deed, and reality, and life, and truth. They are all more or less conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. No unholy man belongs to this Church.

This is the only Church which is truly catholic. It is not the Church of any one nation or people; its members are to be found in every part

of the world where the Gospel is received and believed. It is not confined within the limits of any one country, or pent up within the pale of any particular forms or outward government. In it there is no difference between Jew and Greek, black man and white, Episcopalian and Presbyterian – but faith in Christ is all. Its members will be gathered from north, and south, and east, and west, in the last day, and will be of every name and tongue – but all one in Jesus Christ.

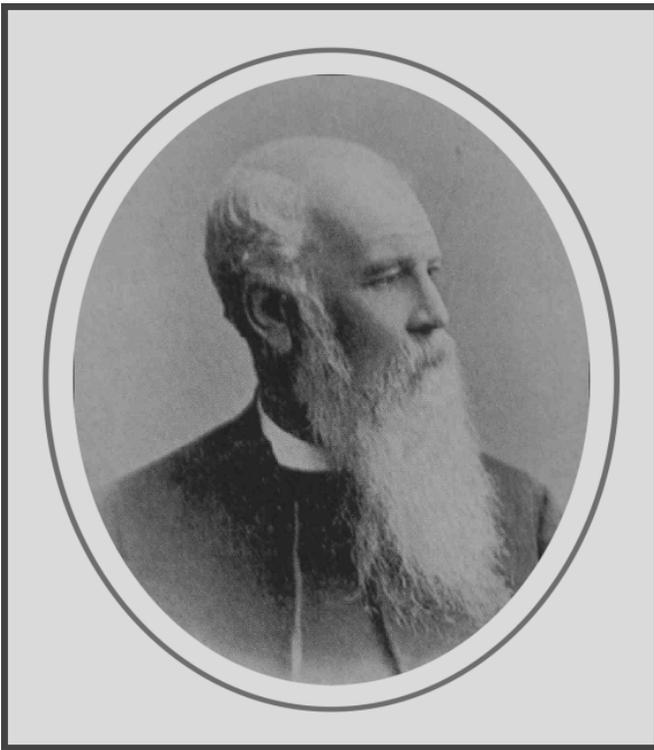
This is the only Church which is truly apostolic. It is built on the foundation laid by the Apostles, and holds the doctrines which they preached. The two grand objects at which its members aim are apostolic faith and apostolic practice; and they consider the man who talks of following the Apostles without possessing these two things to be no better than sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal.

This is the only Church which is certain to endure unto the end. Nothing can altogether overthrow and destroy it. Its members may be persecuted, oppressed, imprisoned, beaten, beheaded, burned; but the true Church is never altogether extinguished; it rises again from its afflictions; it lives on through fire and water. The Pharaohs, the Herods, the Neros, the bloody Marys, have labored in vain to put down this Church; they slay their thousands, and then pass away and go to their own place. The true Church outlives them all and sees them buried each in his turn. It is an anvil that has broken many a hammer in this world, and will break many a hammer still; it is a bush which, often burning, yet is not consumed.

This is the Church which does the work of Christ upon earth. Its members are a little flock, and few in number, compared with the children of the world; one or two here, and two or three there. But these are they who shake the universe; these are they who change the fortunes of kingdoms by their prayers; these are they who are the active workers for spreading the knowledge of pure religion and undefiled; these are the life-blood of a country, the shield, the defense, the stay and the support of any nation to which they belong.

This is the Church which shall be truly glorious at the end. When all earthly glory is passed away then shall this Church be presented without spot before God the Father's throne. Thrones, principalities, and powers upon earth shall come to nothing; but the Church of the first-born shall shine as the stars at the last, and be presented with joy before the Father's throne, in the day of Christ's appearing. When the Lord's jewels are made up, and the manifestation of the sons of God takes place, one Church only will be named, and that is the Church of the elect.

Reader, this is the true Church to which a man must belong, if he would be saved. Till you belong to this, you are nothing better than a lost soul. You may have countless outward privileges; you may enjoy great light, and knowledge – but if you do not belong to the body of Christ, your light, and knowledge, and privileges, will not save your soul. Men fancy if they join this church or that church, and become communicants, and go through certain forms, that all must be right with their souls. All were not Israel who were called Israel, and all are not members of Christ's body who profess themselves Christians. Take notice, you may be a staunch Episcopalian, or Presbyterian, or Independent, or Baptist, or Wesleyan, or Plymouth Brother – and yet not belong to the true Church. And if you do not, it will be better at last if you had never been born.



J. C. Ryle

A Review Article on Books with an African Christian Theme

Jack C. Whytock

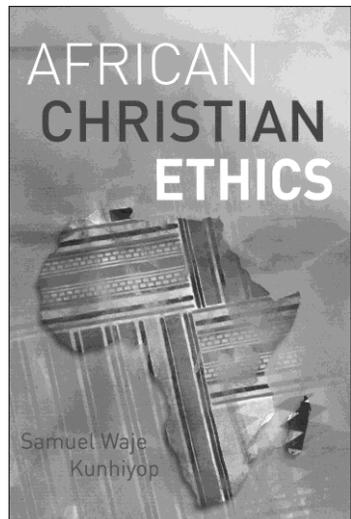
I am convinced that Christian leaders in the West must not ignore Christian books of a theological nature coming from Africa or closely related to that continent. Philip Jenkin's thesis is now well known, and I will not repeat his research other than to say it is time for Western church leaders and theologians to take note of some of the books that I will give brief digests upon in this article. The church of Africa has much to offer the Body of Christ, and this includes the authors and scholars there. College professors in the West must begin to integrate this literature into their class reading lists. It will truly help us to be a global people of God.

I turn first to three books written specifically for the African context.

African Christian Ethics

Here is a major work of four hundred pages by African educator Dr. Samuel W. Kunhiyop which is destined to become standard fare for ethics courses in evangelical African colleges. Yet I believe it will garner a large readership well beyond African colleges. It will serve as an invaluable text for Western institutions in missiology and ethics. Mission boards preparing candidates for Africa will certainly want their candidates to read this book in advance of their going.

This particular edition is a major expansion of the author's original 2004 edition, *African Christian Ethics*. The 2008 edition has a very fine foreword by noted



African theologian and scholar Yusufu Turaki. Turaki is to the point about Kunhiyop's work in writing that it ". . . is deep, thorough, expansive, relevant and persuasive" (p. xi). It is published by HippoBooks, an imprint of WordAlive (Nairobi, Kenya), ACTS (Bukuru, Nigeria), and Zondervan (Grand Rapids, Michigan).

Kunhiyop, now the head of the Postgraduate School of the South African Theological Seminary (SATS), formerly taught theology and ethics at Jos ECWA Theological Seminary, Nigeria. He has divided this book into two parts – Part One: Ethical Foundations and Part Two: Contemporary Ethical Issues. Part one is a "survey" of the study of African Christian ethics and what constitutes the "Foundations of Contemporary African Ethics" (pp. 7-26). This latter chapter is truly foundational to grasping ethics in Africa. He then proceeds to look at "The Foundations of Western Ethics" (pp. 27-44). Other foundational matters are addressed, and then the bulk of the book focuses upon the contemporary ethical issues in Africa. Kunhiyop organizes these into six categories: political issues, financial issues, marriage and family issues, sexual issues, medical issues and religious issues. Western Christians will be struck by some of the chapters here which are generally not standard fare in Western Christian ethics texts; for example, chapters eleven and twelve, "Corruption" and "Fund-Raising".

Generally speaking, I found myself in agreement with the author's conclusions. He writes with a very clear style. It will be most helpful as a class text, and I will certainly promote its use in colleges. The author makes reference to select works both in print and electronic form. I was disappointed that an index was not included, as I think this would add to the book's value for students. Readers may want to compare Kunhiyop's chapter on "Prostitution and Sex Trafficking" (pp. 282-292) with *Escaping the Devil's Bedroom*, reviewed in a book notice elsewhere in this volume of the *Haddington House Journal*. Each chapter ends with "Questions" which could be used for discussion purposes in a seminar or as written student assignments.

God's road map for human sexuality

Last October I had the pleasure of speaking at a marriage enrichment conference with Derrick Mashau and Josh Mack in South Africa. I appreciated listening to Dr. Mashau's insights into Christian marriage in the African context. I also want to say that what Dr. Mashau said, while appropriate to the African context, was much larger than just that – it had universal implications.

This particular book, *God's road map for human sexuality: discipling your child to make sexual choices that honour God* by Dr. Mashau, was a blessing to me, a Western Christian father; and so it should be, as it is based upon biblical principles. The illustration on the front cover of the book intrigued me – a compass laid upon a Bible. That certainly is communicating a clear statement.

The book has nine chapters:

Chapter one – God's beautiful design for human sexuality

Chapter two – The art of Christian parenting, children and human sexuality

Chapter three – Mentoring your child through different stages of life

Chapter four – Spiritual warfare on your doorstep

Chapter five – Perspectives on love, courtship and marriage

Chapter six – Premarital sex and cohabitation among Christian youth in South Africa today

Chapter seven– Homosexuality and same-sex marriage

Chapter eight – HIV and AIDS in the family context

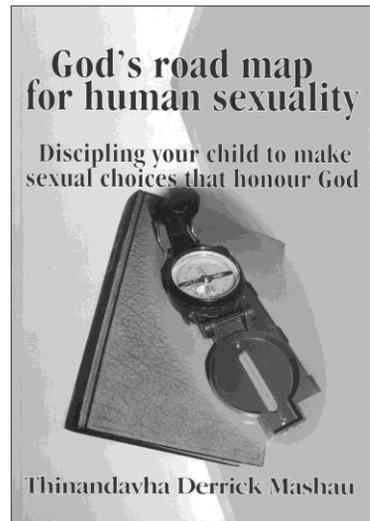
Chapter nine – Divorce and remarriage

This book is only 95 pages, so do not expect it to be exhaustive. It is very much a survey of the subject and as such is most helpful for parents and youth workers.

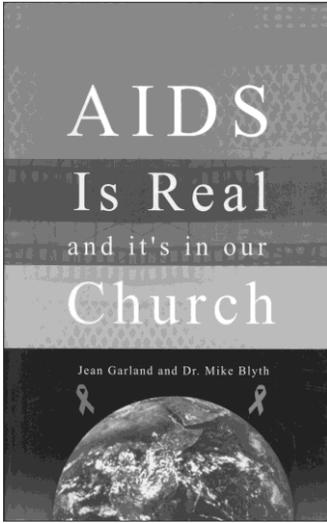
Dr. Mashau serves as the Chair and Professor of Missiology in the Faculty of Theology, North-West University (Potchefstroom Campus), South Africa. He has also written two other books related to the one digested here: *Love, Courtship and Marriage: Biblical Solutions to Problems Confronting African Youths in the 21st Century* and *Unlocking the mystery of marriage: Issues in premarital counseling*.

Aids Is Real and it's in our Church

Aids Is Real and it's in our Church by Garland and Blyth is the best book I have read yet on AIDS. It is not overly technical, not filled with reams of statistics and not just theological niceties and platitudes. It is balanced, realistic, sincere, humble, firm and God-honouring. Yes,



contextually it is rooted in Africa, but one will quickly find out that it does not just set out an agenda for Africans. Its message is both contextual for Africa and universal for all continents. This is often the mark of good, practical theology – contextually relevant yet universal and catholic at the same time – not easy to achieve but what will make for biblical balance.



The book is written by two healthcare professionals who have served long-term in Nigeria. It is published by Oasis International, which “Exists to meet the unique needs of English speaking, Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean”. The book is distributed through Africa Christian Textbooks (ACTS). The subtitle of the book on the inside title page is long yet a perfect description of the book’s content: “Information about AIDS in Africa, how to prevent HIV infection, and encouragement towards a Christian response to the AIDS epidemic”. The book covers seventeen chapters, starting with “What are HIV and AIDS?” to the last chapter, “AIDS and the Church”. The work is a combination of text, narrative and illustrations. These are well-balanced. I found myself coming away with several ponderous quotable quotes, such as:

I often say statistics about AIDS are ‘numbers with the tears washed off’. (111)

Forgiveness, grace and redemption are the wonderful truths of the gospel we preach. (139)

I encourage senior high school and college Christian youth to study this; I encourage mothers and fathers to read this; and I encourage every pastor to read it. It should be standard reading in every Christian college and seminary.

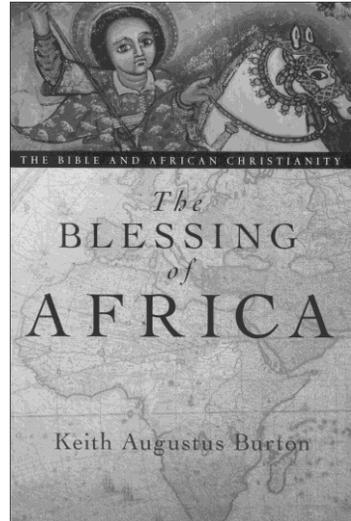
. . . If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land. (2 Chron. 7:14)

The Blessing of Africa

Now we turn to the two last books to review that are related to Africa yet written and published in North America. When *The Blessing of Africa* was sent to the *Haddington House Journal* for review, it immediately intrigued me. The author is an African-American Seventh Day Adventist theologian who had formerly taught at Oakwood University in Huntsville, Alabama. I am familiar with the African-American Baptist writer Thabiti Anyabwile¹, whose views are closer to my own theological convictions, but I must admit I was not familiar with African-American Seventh Day theologians until I started reading Burton's book. I had no idea that there was a significant community of African-Americans in that group. I guess this goes to show how we are all rather insulated in our contacts.

The agenda of the book is to examine the biblical descendents of Noah's son Ham, the father of the Africans. There have been many bizarre theories about Ham and the "curse". This book rejects those and correctly so. Burton begins with "Part One: The Land of Ham: *Defining Biblical Africa*" (17-109). This is a most fascinating section and it helps us to think through contemporary continental geographical concepts from biblically defined constructs. Then Burton logically takes us to "Part Two: Family Reunion: *Africans in the Bible*" (57-109). This reads somewhat like a survey, which is fine and does organize the subject well for the reader.

Having settled what he defines as "Biblical Africa" in part one, Burton then deals with "Part Three: Growing Pains: *The Bible in Emerging African Christianity*" (111-144). The logical flow of the book now is clear, and any reader that misses part one will be somewhat baffled given that there is much contemporary confusion on the overall subject. The author helps us to come to understand with



¹ See two works of note by Anyabwile: *The Faithful Preacher: Recapturing the Vision of Three Pioneering African-American Pastors* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2007), and *The Decline of African American Theology: From Biblical Faith to Cultural Captivity* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2007).

broad strokes the development of Christianity in Palestine, Egypt, North Africa, Arabia and Ethiopia. Much of this is based upon the presuppositions encountered earlier in the book.

Before summarizing the remainder of the book, let me comment on the writer's research style and approach. Secondary sources are by far the greater number of works consulted. Next, one starts to feel some "straw men" have been set up, and then the author strikes them down. Many authors appear to create their "straw men", and so I am not just accusing Burton of this. The problem, however, is when this occurs, nuance of meaning is often missed and a certain shallowness can emerge. Having said this, as one enters into parts four, five and six, there is a very positive aspect I want to highlight. Burton does present an older version of how Christians on occasion did see Islam – was it more a heretical variant emerging out of Christianity than a totally new religion? Burton surveys the subject, and readers will find it a helpful survey but will likely continue on elsewhere to persist in forming their conclusions.

I did find myself somewhat puzzled over some broad, sweeping lines in "Part Six: Free at Last: *The Bible and African Liberation*" (207-224), such as his praise of the Fort Hare University in South Africa and "the illustrious alumni roster includes...", and then we read "Robert Mugabe, president of Zimbabwe", without any further comment (240-241). I really wonder how readers will interpret such a statement. I am not convinced this chapter has adequately considered the presuppositions of "liberation".

There is a new day with authors, publishers and the world from which I think some will retreat because the offerings are outside their camp. Black, Seventh-Day theologians are not part of my immediate circle, yet I am very thankful for having read *The Blessing of Africa*. Yes, I have some reservations; yes, I was edified by many sections; and yes, it has helped me think more about "The Bible and African Christianity".

How Africa Shaped the Christian Mind

Thomas Oden in *How Africa Shaped the Christian Mind* works from a different definition of Africa than Keith Burton. Oden speaks of it geographically as a continent (see 15-17), whereas Burton speaks of "biblical Africa". Both books are from IVP, 2007, and the editors must have concluded that both ways are justified. However, I cannot help but wonder if this is somewhat confusing. It struck me that the publishers wanted a certain consistency in market appeal, because the

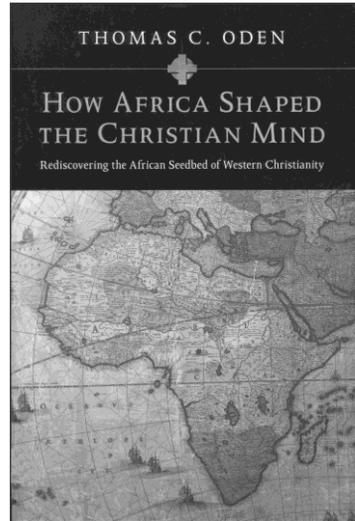
same map image by Joan Blaeu/Getty Images is employed, only with different colouration, on both book cover jackets. I realize Oden and Burton really have different theses – Oden to challenge western thought about the contributions of African theologians to the ancient church and to challenge modern African Christians to discover the apologetic role of ancient Christians; Burton to examine what biblical Africa was, almost as a biblical theology, and then to trace the growth of Islamic religion, colonialism and contemporary achievements and challenges in biblical Africa.

Oden writes with an easy-to-read prose style. I particularly appreciated his outline in chapter two, “Seven Ways Africa Shaped the Christian Mind” (42-61). I felt he was opening the door and then saying, “There, I gave you the idea; now write a book about each of the seven points.” He appears to be setting the agenda for future researchers to follow.

Does Oden’s thesis push the door too far? That is, is his reaction to Harnack (57) so strong that it perhaps swings too far? (Harnack’s thesis being that ancient African Christianity gave itself over to Greek thought as opposed to Oden’s thesis that “the literary richness of the distinctive African Christian [left its] imprint on proto-Europe and the formation of the Christian mind” [57-58].) It strikes me that there is actually more of a middle road here. Ancient African Christians were both contributors and borrowers. Globalization and nationalism are recurrent themes throughout history and are not just modern phenomena. Oden’s work is certainly one of the most significant books on an African theme in the last five years. Scholars worldwide are taking this book up with great interest.

Conclusion

My purpose in this review article was first to acquaint the reader with significant works about Africa or emerging out of Africa. I offer their inclusion as a challenge to the Western church to truly become the global people of God. Likewise, I hope it may lead to greater networking of theologians on the African continent through knowing a “little more” about one another and what is being published. All books



in this article are worthy of being consulted in evangelical theological training institutions in Africa. Clearly, one or two should be standard as textbooks in several institutions.

Books Under Review

Kunhiyop, Samuel Waje. *African Christian Ethics*. Nairobi, Kenya: HippoBooks, 2008, 400 pp., paper. ISBN 978-9966-805-36-2

Mashau, Thinandavha Derrick. *God's road map for human sexuality: Discipling your child to make sexual choices that honour God*. Kempton Park, South Africa: AcadSA Publishing, 2008, 95 pp., paper. ISBN 978-1-92012-30-8

Garland, Jean and Mike Blyth. *Aids is Real and it's in our Church*. Bukuru, Nigeria: Africa Christian Textbooks, 2005, 326 pp., paper. ISBN 1-59452-026-7

Burton, Keith Augustus. *The Blessing of Africa*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2007, 294 pp., paper. ISBN 978-0-8308-2762-6

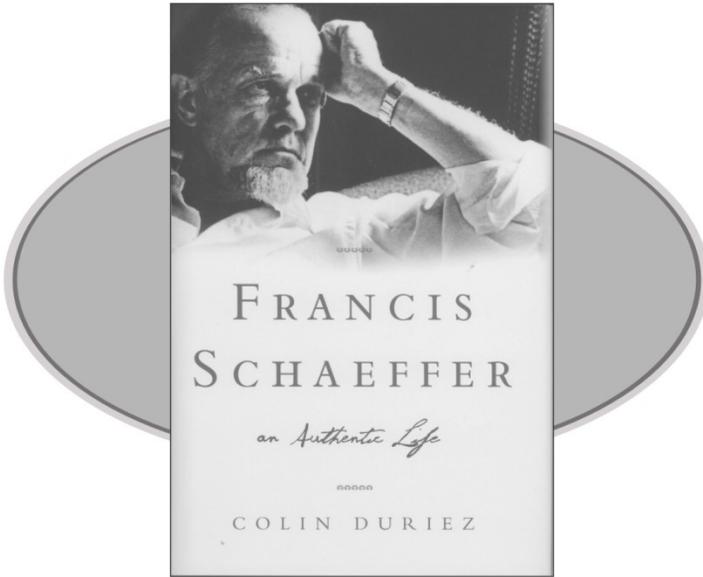
Oden, Thomas C. *How Africa Shaped the Christian Mind: Rediscovering the African Seedbed of Western Christianity*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2007, 204 pp., hc. ISBN 978-0-8308-2875-3

***“[It’s] time for the West to listen to
the voice of the global Church.”***

Christopher J. H. Wright

Book Reviews

***Francis Schaeffer: an Authentic Life.* Colin Duriez. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2008, 240 pp., hc. ISBN 978-1-58134-857-6**



In the mid 1950s a faith mission was established in the mountains of Switzerland. Francis and Edith Schaeffer opened their home to people with questions. Their children invited their friends. Those friends invited other friends, and gradually the word spread that there was a place where people could receive a loving welcome and real, intellectually respectable answers to their questions about the meaning of life. In the 1960s, L'Abri became almost a station on the Hippy trail for many. Schaeffer began to be invited to speak to evangelical groups . . . and to academics, many of them agnostic or atheist, in places such as Harvard. As he travelled, he also chose to visit Hippy encampments and talk with them. He went to performances of rock bands and

enjoyed them. His talks incorporated history and philosophy and modern art and the teachings of Christ in the Bible. By 1970 some of those lectures had begun to be published in book form and Schaeffer's name and influence spread. Before long Schaeffer's message was distributed widely in two film series. By his death in 1984, Schaeffer may well have become the most influential figure in the building of the evangelical church in the western world.

This biography by Colin Duriez gathers these many threads together to give a picture of a man who was ahead of his times, who spoke to the culture that was barely beginning to come into being. Like Brian Follis¹, Duriez proposes that Schaeffer's work is if anything more relevant today than it was when it was written. Schaeffer saw the trends before they became noticeable to most and addressed them effectively.

For those who have read *L'Abri*² and some of Francis Schaeffer's works, the most interesting part of the biography may be the first chapters, which tell of his childhood background, his studies, his conversion and his early ministry. He grew up in a working class household. The assumption was that he would find a job working with his hands. Advanced education was not an expected choice, far less the pastorate. But he loved philosophy; most people would be surprised to learn that he became a Christian because he found in the Bible answers to the questions raised by philosophers. Duriez chronicles Schaeffer's growing sense of God's calling and his academic preparation for ministry. He unfolds Schaeffer's involvement in the formation of the most separatist Presbyterian church of the times and his early ministry in the Bible Presbyterian Church.

From early days Schaeffer had an intense interest in things which were not of common interest in his narrow, separatist circles. One of those was an enthusiasm for art, which came out later when he argued that art is the first place in which cultural change begins to be visible.

Duriez traces Schaeffer's departure from the separatism of his early ministry to a spiritual crisis around 1950. In the orthodox, Schaeffer saw little of the reality of what the Bible says should be the fruit of Christianity, and as well, that there was less of that in himself than had previously been the case. He began to question the reality of Christian faith and spent a considerable time rethinking his reasons for believing

¹ Bryan A. Follis, *Truth with Love: the Apologetics of Francis Schaeffer* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2006). See review in *Haddington House Journal* 10 (2008): 73-76.

² Edith Schaeffer, *L'Abri*, 4th ed. (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1971).

in Christ. “Finally the sun came out. I saw that my early decision to step from agnosticism to Bible-believing Christianity was right”³ But as he re-thought the heart of his faith, he saw the need not only for truth but for a life of love that reflected the teaching of the Bible. He was “convinced of the need for moment-by-moment dependence upon Christ – that is, a truly *existential* dimension to faith Without a present reality, he felt, an orthodox theology does not lead to power and enjoyment of the Lord.”⁴ That conviction was to shape Schaeffer’s ministry in dramatic fashion.

The Schaeffers’ ministry in Europe began as a mission to bring the gospel message to children. They gradually saw the need for an element of personal hospitality that became the focus of their mission in Switzerland after their breach with the Bible Presbyterian Church. Duriez traces here a history that, through Edith Schaeffer’s *L’Abri*, is more familiar. He adds some information about some of the early participants and some of the family problems. With a commitment that they would live by faith, not advertising their need but trusting God to provide, there were times of considerable hardship. But they saw God’s provision, both materially and in people needing spiritual help.

So we see the work grow, first with tapes of Schaeffer’s informal talks, then with books and public speaking engagements, and later with films. At the end, we see Schaeffer still working while he battled cancer for six years. Duriez finishes with a transcript of his personal interview with Schaeffer near the end of his life.

This is a biography that is well worth reading, though a little on the dry side. To my eyes at least, he does not capture the excitement and sparkle of the events he describes. However it is not hard to read. It also gives a capsule picture of some of the key themes of Schaeffer’s thought.

I am left with some questions about how careful Duriez is on the small details. As he talks about the formation of the Bible Presbyterian Church in which Schaeffer began his ministry, he records Machen’s formation of a mission board independent of his denomination’s board . . . but gets the names wrong. “Machen saw that the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions [*sic*, should be ‘Board of Foreign Missions’] was in contravention of the church’s constitution in not upholding the necessity of historic Christian faith. A new Independent Board of Foreign Missions [*sic*, should be ‘Independent

³ Francis A. Schaeffer, “Why and How I Write My Books,” *Eternity* (March 24, 1973): 64; cited in Duriez, 104.

⁴ Duriez, 104.

Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions'] was established in 1933”⁵ The Boards’ names are reversed though “Independent” is incorporated into the supposed new name.

As well, he records from a secondary source, “original source unknown”, Schaeffer’s comment on the costliness of the kind of loving outreach in which he engaged and which he encouraged others to take on: “In about the first three years of L’Abri all our wedding presents were wiped out. Our sheets were torn. Holes were burned in our rugs. Indeed once a whole curtain almost burned up from somebody smoking in our living room. . . . Drugs came to our place. People vomited in our rooms.”⁶ Since it took about three minutes searching the web to find the original source, I have to ask why he did not know it. But these are details.

Though there may be some fuzzy edges, this book presents a record of Schaeffer’s life which should enhance your understanding and encourage you to learn from and grow through the teaching of a man whose insight, backed by his visible life of faith, has had a profound influence not only on many individuals but upon a large section of the Christian Church in our time.

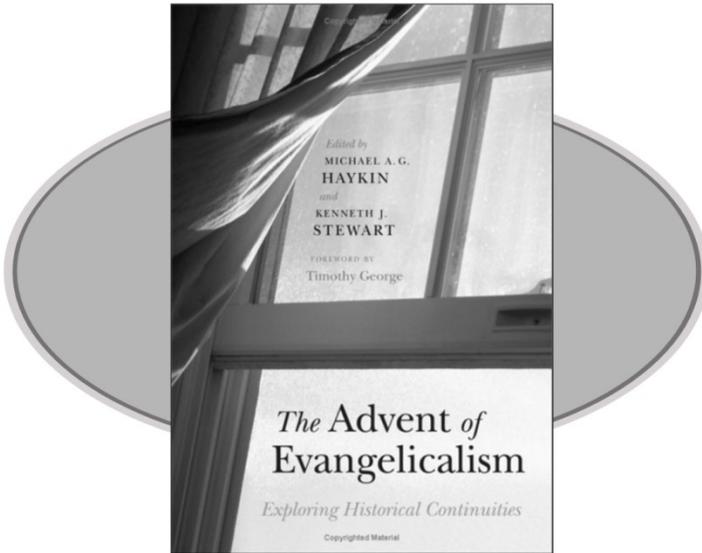
Reviewed by Donald A. Codling. Rev. Codling serves as the minister at Bedford Presbyterian Church, Bedford, Nova Scotia. He is also the Stated Clerk of the Eastern Canada Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in America and the author of Sola Scriptura and the Revelatory Gifts: How Should Christians Deal with Present Day Prophecy?



⁵ Duriez, 34.

⁶ Francis A Schaeffer, *The Church at the End of the 20th Century* (Downers Grove, IL.: InterVarsity Press, 1970), 108. See Duriez, 148 and note 40.

***The Advent of Evangelicalism: Exploring Historical Continuities.* Edited by Michael A. G. Haykin and Kenneth J. Stewart. Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2008, 432 pp., paper. ISBN 978-0-8054-4860-3**



Thank you, editors. This volume does a tremendous service on several fronts, particularly the college teaching front, as it now makes clear the Bebbington thesis, which quite frankly was not always caught in the 1989 book *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*¹. Timothy Larsen's digest of several reviews makes this point in the first chapter of *The Advent of Evangelicalism*, "The receptions given *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain* since its publication in 1989" (pp. 21-36). So this volume will make for clear thinking for a new generation about a highly engaging thesis, namely the origin and developments of evangelicalism. Also on the college front, but I suspect more on the graduate front, it will sharpen the precision by which we build our case(s). This is really what makes for solid historical reflection and exchange. It is a reminder that we write our historical works best when engaging with one another. So, editors, I express my thanks.

¹ David Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s*, orig. 1989 (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992).

It takes a “big man” to allow himself to sit under such scrutiny. David Bebbington is to be commended for his willingness to contribute a “Response” which had much orderliness about it and was very succinct. The writers generally all acted like “gentlemen” (and men they all are). Overall, what an encouragement to see so many worthwhile scholars and authors coming together on this subject. There is hope for the future of the writing of church history/historical theology.

Clearly Bebbington has helped us to see more clearly the vast unity within evangelicalism. We may want to do some tweaking with his quadrilateral, but overall it stands and generally has been of immense benefit in helping us to order our thinking and writing.

After reading much of this book, *The Advent of Evangelicalism*, I still find myself dissatisfied concerning the distinction between “continuity” and “discontinuity”. I would rather use the language “foundational underpinnings” from the Reformational period for evangelicalism and make allowance for some things to change and develop in fuller and different ways. Some of those changes are in the spirit of *semper reformanda*. For example, take the subject of the contribution of the laity and the exercise of their place in the universal priesthood of the saints. There have been shifts within evangelicalism from that of the magisterial Reformation period. Part of the analysis of these shifts I just do not label as “discontinuities” but rather, in some instances, as *semper reformanda*. I realize this is often a cute Latin phrase to throw around, but I do see it as a very helpful term, and it should be used here in our discussion.

I found myself thrilling when I read what John Coffey wrote in “Puritanism, evangelicalism and the evangelical Protestant tradition” that: “At their best, evangelicals (like the Puritans before them) combined the strengths of the Reformers and the Pietists” (p. 277). There is something very honest and very healthy about that statement. It recognizes continuity and it recognizes change. As a Presbyterian, I see evangelicalism as foundationally Reformational yet recognize the leading of the Holy Spirit in subsequent generations. This touches on a contemporary application – some are entrenchment interpreters or they are romantically attached in their interpretation and give little attention to questioning if new insight or emphasis in a certain direction needs to be made. Many of the contributors recognize that “continuity” is there, but what are the degrees of “discontinuity” and can certain of these “discontinuities” be interpreted positively? Conversely, some are to be interpreted negatively. The use of the term *semper reformanda* helps us

to speak both positively and negatively of development, change or “leading”.

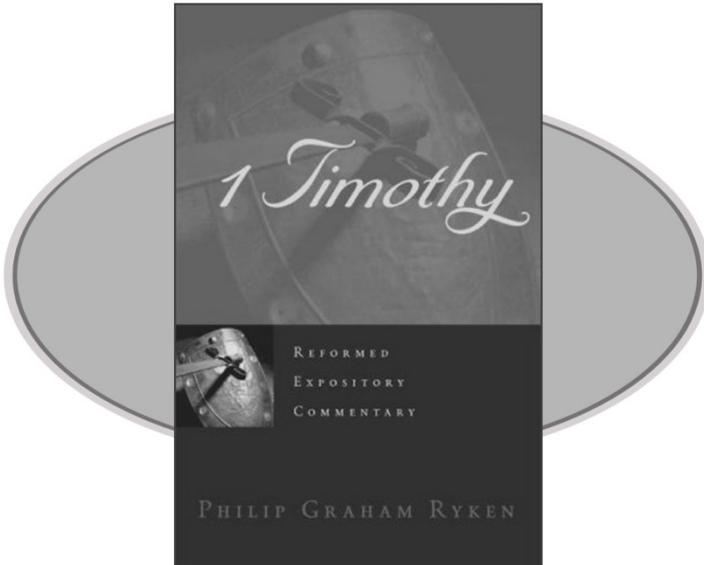
Bebbington himself in his response graciously admits that he may not have seen all the nuances of the picture. So, in the nineteen years which have passed since the publication of *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, work by scholars has been done, and these essays in *Advent of Evangelicalism* represent a helpful advance. However, Bebbington is pressing his point too far. In the last sentence of the book, he writes: “Notwithstanding the weighty legacy from the past, the emergence of evangelicalism did represent a revolutionary development in Protestant history” (p. 432). I would assert that evangelicalism was there before “evangelicalism”, thus I still quibble with the words “emergence of evangelicalism”. Now, I would also quibble with Bebbington’s use of the word “revolutionary” in this last sentence. The discussion is not over.

The range of eighteen scholars is impressive and includes Bruce Hindmarsh, Ian Shaw, Paul Helm, Cameron MacKenzie and Andrew McGowan. Unfortunately, the oft written comment for collections applies here – there is a certain unevenness of quality. Sometimes the sources quoted are disproportionate, sometimes one feels he has read some of this before and a staleness has set in, sometimes one or two sources or examples are cited and they virtually become representative. I was left somewhat puzzled by David Ceri Jones’ article as to whom he was supporting. Bebbington did have a point – the book was weak on Methodism, especially given the title of his book.

Finally, Bebbington forces us into some very humbling waters. When we identify ourselves in a movement or a tradition, it is difficult to assess how cultural movements of the time impact us. Bebbington alerts us (or should we say that he says it with more passion than simply “alerts”) of this with evangelicalism and the Enlightenment. Haykin’s conclusions attempt to be honest here (pp. 48, 59-60). The discussion by the contributors to the book is overall pointing in the right direction, notwithstanding certain qualifications above. The historian must attempt to interpret. I place my interpretation of evangelicalism in the line of *semper reformanda*; to do otherwise is to downplay the leading of the Holy Spirit and to simply become entrenchment interpreters. All students and teachers of church history must interact with Bebbington’s 1989 book and now also this collection, *The Advent of Evangelicalism*.

Reviewed by Jack C. Whytock

1 Timothy: Reformed Expository Commentary. Philip Graham Ryken. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2007, 312 pp., hc. ISBN 978-1-59638-049-3



This commentary on 1 Timothy is one book in the series of Reformed Expository Commentaries edited by Richard Phillips and Philip Graham Ryken. This commentary, authored by Philip Ryken, pastor of the historic Tenth Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, is a valuable resource for both pastors and laymen. The editors want to provide a series of commentaries that brings a fresh approach to exegesis in our day. The goal of Dr. Ryken in this pastoral commentary is to provide a resource that is faithful to sound theology and the teaching of Holy Scripture, provides a redemptive-historical approach, and applies the Scriptures to the generation in which we live. Ryken does not give a verse by verse or word by word exposition of the Scripture but gives a comprehensive exposition while paying careful attention to details of the text. He brings the best and most recent scholarship to this work on 1 Timothy.

I have not read any of the other commentaries in this series, but I really appreciated this commentary and like the style and the practical approach he takes. One thing that is necessary for a faithful pastor in

preaching the Word is not only to exegete the text but to apply it to the contemporary world of his listeners. Ryken uses many great illustrations that bring the text to life. He is not afraid to deal with issues in the commentary that may create controversy. There are several issues that he addresses that I would simply like to highlight. First, in the section on 1 Timothy 2:8-10 he does not gloss over or dismiss Paul's teaching on how women should adorn themselves with modesty. In our feminized culture that has invaded the church, Ryken brings out the meaning of Paul's words "adorned in respectable apparel with modesty and self-control". He does not condemn styles of dress, jewelry, and make-up but brings out the meaning of these words and how they should be applied to Christian women. In public worship women are not to dress or adorn themselves in a manner whereby they draw attention or look indecent or immodest. Philip Ryken quotes from John Calvin to illustrate what he means: "The fault is excessive concern and eagerness about dress. Paul's wish is that their dressing should be regulated by modesty and moderation, for luxury and extravagance come from a desire to make a display, which can spring only from vanity or wantonness. . . . Paul attacks by name certain kinds of immoderation, such as curled hair, jewels and gold rings – not that jewels of gold are completely forbidden but, whenever there is a shining display of them, they tend to bring with them all the evils . . . which spring from self-concern or unchastity."¹ Women are to adorn themselves with holiness and develop inner beauty.

Ryken also deals with the issue that Paul addresses in chapter two verses 11-12 about the role of women in the church. This is an issue that creates much turmoil and dissension in the church. He points out the danger of letting the culture determine the proper role of women instead of allowing the Scripture to be our guide. He lays out several dangers related to this issue; first of all, the danger of allowing history to determine the issue, personal opinion, and the text itself, which presents difficulties. He does a great job of dealing with the difficulties and handling the meaning of Paul's words in verses 11 and 12 on "quietness," "submissiveness," "teaching," and "exercising authority." He also deals with what Paul means by not allowing a woman to teach.

The author skillfully examines the qualifications for the office of elders and deacons. In 1 Timothy 3:11 he shows that the word $\gamma\upsilon\upsilon\alpha\iota\kappa\alpha\varsigma$ can mean either "wives" or "women." Some have

¹ John Calvin, *The Second Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians and The Epistles to Timothy, Titus and Philemon*, trans. T.A. Smail, Calvin's Commentaries (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1964), 216.

interpreted this to mean deaconesses, and he shows how some scholars have arrived at that interpretation. Ryken believes that “wives” is a better translation than the word “women” and gives his reasoning for the argument. He states that Paul does not use the word deaconess in 1 Timothy 3:11 and that this text is not sufficient enough to prove that women should serve in the office of deaconess. He makes the case for the fact that the women being singled out from the deacons indicates that they are not identical with the office of deacons. He believes the better translation of the word *γυναικας* is “women helpers” or “assistants.” He then makes the case for the diaconal ministry of woman elsewhere in Scripture. He shows that Dorcas in Acts 9:36, Lydia in Acts 16:14, or Tryphena and Tryphosa in Romans 16:12, and Phoebe in Romans 16 carried out diaconal ministry in the early church.

This issue came before the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America last summer. I had the privilege of serving on the overtures committee, which received several requests for a study committee to be formed to explore the issue of diaconal ministry for women. One of the overtures came from Philadelphia Presbytery where Philip Ryken is a member. The General Assembly voted down the study committee. A minority report, which I signed, was voted down by the General Assembly. This has been a strong issue within the PCA, but I would hold a similar view to Ryken. The Scriptures clearly show that there were godly women who assisted in the work and ministry of Christ and the Apostles. John Calvin had deaconesses in his ministry in Geneva, and Ryken cites men like John Chrysostom and B.B. Warfield² as strong supporters of deaconesses. We certainly do not want to follow the trend of the culture and dismiss the Scriptural teaching on the role of women, but we do not want to overreact because of feminism and liberalism and dismiss what the Scripture does say about the diaconal role of women. I appreciate this section of Ryken’s commentary and think he gives us some things to think about regarding the role of women in diaconal ministry.

I enjoyed reading this commentary on 1 Timothy and would recommend it to both laymen and pastors. It is not as technical as some, so most readers will have no problem using it as a great resource for their personal study of Scripture or in preparation for a Sabbath School class or Bible Study. As a result of reviewing this commentary

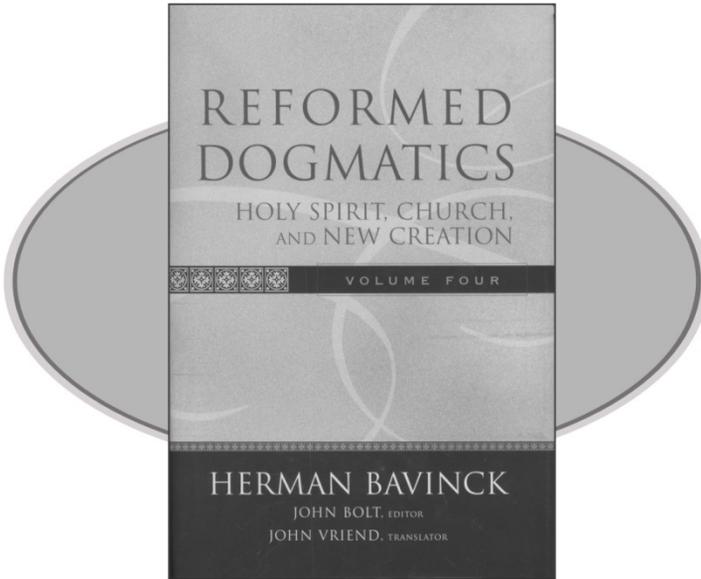
² Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield, “The Deaconess as a Part of the Church,” *Our Church Work* (1903), in Ronald G. Lutzjens, “B.B. Warfield on Women Deacons,” *Presbyterian Journal* (May 15, 1985), 8.

from the Reformed Expository Series, I want to use the others in this series in my own ministry.

Reviewed by Rev. Stephen Welch. Stephen is an ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church in America and serves as the Pastor of Sovereign Grace Presbyterian Church in Antigonish and River Denys, Nova Scotia. He is a graduate of Knox Theological Seminary in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, and served as an assistant minister at Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church. Stephen has pastored congregations in Arkansas and Missouri. He also worked with a new church plant in Glasgow, Scotland.



***Reformed Dogmatics: Volume 4: Holy Spirit, Church, and New Creation.* Herman Bavinck. Gen. ed. John Bolt. Trans. John Vriend. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008, 944 pp., hc. ISBN 978-0-8010-2657-7**



At last English readers have Herman Bavinck's (1854-1921) magnum opus, *Gereformeerde Dogmatiek*, which originally was published between 1895 and 1899 as four volumes, available in English. We are all indebted to Baker Book House and the Dutch Translation Society for furnishing the English speaking world with this complete set as *Reformed Dogmatics*. Prior to this we sensed we were gaining certain glimpses of Bavinck's magisterial work in Louis Berkhof's *Systematic Theology*, as Berkhof certainly was influenced by Bavinck's four volume Dutch work.¹ It also appears that Auguste Lecerf was greatly indebted to Bavinck.² However, now those of us who cannot read Dutch can see for ourselves what Bavinck wrote.

¹ See Louis Berkhof, *Reformed Dogmatics: Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1932), 5, where Berkhof states, "The general plan of the work is based on that of the first volume of Dr. Bavinck's *Gereformeerde Dogmatiek*"

² See Auguste Lecerf, *An Introduction to Reformed Dogmatics*, trans. André Schlemmer. Orig. 1949 (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981), 5.

This current book under review, *Reformed Dogmatics: Holy Spirit, Church, and New Creation*, is the fourth and final volume of Bavinck's *Reformed Dogmatics*. Volume one is the prolegomena and is fairly standard in terms of what we have come to expect in a prolegomena – introductory material on dogmatics, revelation and faith; volume two is on creation and the doctrine of God; volume three is on sin and salvation in Christ; and thus logically volume four concentrates on the Holy Spirit, the Church and eschatology.

This volume begins with a most helpful “Editor’s Introduction” written by John Bolt of Calvin Seminary. He greatly assists the reader in contextually placing Bavinck. There is a perennial tension point in Bavinck, but one that could in reality be found in many. Bavinck’s background in the Secession churches shows his more pietistic Reformed roots. However, by Bavinck’s adulthood this movement had begun to veer towards separatist and sectarian ways. Bavinck began his studies at Kampen for a brief period before switching over to Leiden University, which was much more “modernist” in its approach. Bolt makes the astute point that Bavinck was a man of two worlds and, quoting from one of Bavinck’s contemporaries, “In that duality is found Bavinck’s significance. That duality is also a reflection of the tension – at times crisis – in Bavinck’s life.” (p. 19) Bavinck himself said it this way (I believe it is worth quoting at length):

The antithesis, therefore, is fairly sharp: on the one side, a Christian life that considers the highest goal, now and hereafter, to be the contemplation of God and fellowship with him . . . ; but on the side of Ritschl, a Christian life that considers its highest goal to be the kingdom of God, that is, the moral obligation of mankind, and for that reason (always being more or less adverse to the withdrawal into solitude and quiet communion with God), is in danger of degenerating into a cold Pelagianism and an unfeeling moralism. *Personally, I do not yet see any way of combining the two points of view, but I do know that there is much that is excellent in both, and that both contain undeniable truth.*” (p. 19)

It is very helpful to keep this in view as one enters into reading the writing of the neo-Calvinists and in particular Herman Bavinck.

Volume four consists of eighteen chapters with three parts – Part 1: The Spirit Gives New Life to Believers; Part 2: The Spirit Creates a New Community; and Part 3: The Spirit Makes All Things New. Only

Part 3 was published in English prior to this 2008 publication of volume four of *Reformed Dogmatics*.³ Parts 1, 2 and 3 constitute 700 plus pages, so this is a very in-depth systematic theology text – recall this is only volume four! Presumably most colleges and seminaries will not make this a main class text but rather a reference work because of sheer size and cost. (The whole set costs \$179.00 USD.) Following the seven hundred plus pages of text comes a forty-four page, double-column bibliography and then 167 pages of indices. The only English language systematic theology text I know of that comes close to the sheer volume for indices is the Battles-McNeill edition of Calvin's *Institutes* with 181 pages of indices. The English language Giger-Dennison edition of Turretin's *Institutes* has 111 pages of indices. The conclusion is obvious – this English translation of Bavinck's *Dogmatics* is absolutely impressive, and the apparatus which accompanies it in volume four has very few rivals.

I will make some very general comments on the contents of the actual *Dogmatics*. It is very consistent with Reformed confessional orthodoxy of the continental perspective. This is not novel theology. It covers the various *loci* thoroughly with excellent footnotes for further research. Generally every page contains numerous biblical references allowing one to see the foundation of systematic theology arising from Scripture. Bavinck does engage in many pastoral implications to his theology which often helps to bring a reflective tone. Each new chapter begins with a well-written introduction set out with italic type. These are most useful and are free of footnotes and Scripture references. They frequently provide some historical dogmatic allusions which enhance their usefulness.

Since works on ecclesiology are also reviewed elsewhere in this journal, I will make some limited comments here. Bavinck's section on ecclesiology covers the confessional high-ground well. There are no references to either James or Douglas Bannerman's works. However, the church fathers, Roman Catholic authors and Dutch and German sources are numerous. Prayer as a means of grace is not discussed, and this is not surprising given the author's own background. This is clearly a fine compilation of the author's perspective on Reformed ecclesiology in the late nineteenth century. In one sense, it is time-bound as many more recent ecclesiological concerns are not addressed or are muted. For example, in-depth discussion on the priesthood of all believers, gifts, vocation, prayer, spiritual health and mission is absent.

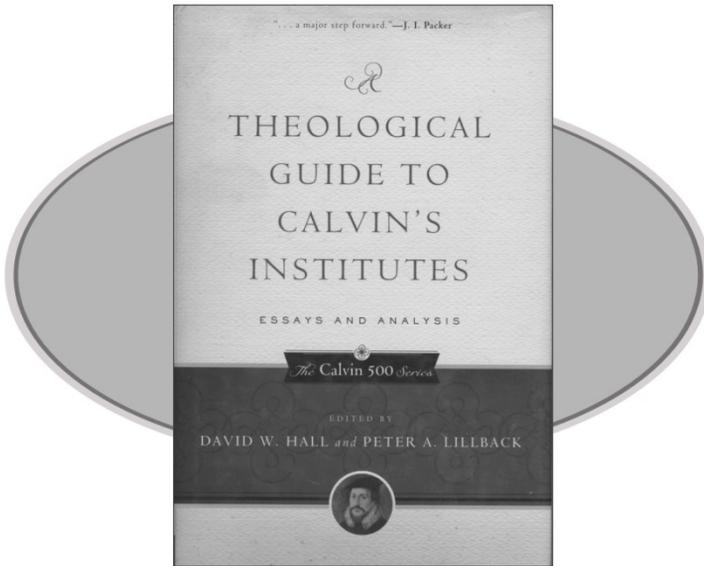
³ Herman Bavinck, *The Last Things: Hope for this World and the Next*, ed. John Bolt, trans. John Vriend (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996).

Thus, the publication of volume four is valuable, but I would also say limiting. All should study it well and have their foundations solid by the study of *Reformed Dogmatics*, but there is the danger of a rigid confessionalism emerging without a contextual expression of theology for today. The classics inform yet also allow us to continue to engage in robust theological discussions today.

Every theological college must purchase *Reformed Dogmatics: Holy Spirit, Church, and New Creation* as here is a wealth of study on pneumatology, ecclesiology and eschatology. In fact, the whole set (four volumes) should be in every theological library. Herman Bavinck surely was encyclopedic in his knowledge, and we are richer for having this before us in English.

Reviewed by Jack C. Whytock

***A Theological Guide to Calvin's Institutes: Essays and Analysis.* David W. Hall and Peter A. Lillback. The Calvin 500 Series. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2008, 506pp., hc. ISBN 978-1-59638-091-2**



We are on the crest of a publishing wave due to the 500th anniversary of the birth of John Calvin in 1509. Some new books were coming out in 2008, and no doubt 2009 and 2010 will see many more. In particular, Calvin conferences this year will eventually lead to published volumes appearing over time. The reality is that there is still a vast interest in the life, writings, contributions and vision of John Calvin. One could arguably say that until one learns something about this towering giant, one has missed an essential figure in the history of Christianity and the intellectual heritage of the west and indeed the world.

A Theological Guide to Calvin's Institutes: Essays and Analysis is a most welcome contribution, and I would agree fully with the two endorsers on the dust-jacket, J. I. Packer and A. T. B. McGowan, that this is a significant book for Calvin studies on the *Institutes*. The one endorser, McGowan, identifies which essays he felt most drawn to and most helpful. The two essays which most impressed me were those by

Derek Thomas, “The Mediator of the Covenant (2.12-15)” (pp. 205-225), and Joel Beeke, “Appropriating Salvation: The Spirit, Faith and Assurance” (pp. 270-300). I recently tested both of these out with students when I was lecturing on the dogmatics of Calvin’s *Institutes* and found them very useful. However, I did wish that Thomas had identified at least in a footnote the primary source for Calvin’s conviction on the perpetual virginity of Mary (p. 212). I have read this before in another secondary analysis but there, too, did not see the primary reference. I suspect readers will want more details.

Some of the essays tended to present more of the authors’ views and modern connections rather than first concentrating upon an actual analysis of the *Institutes* themselves. This, however, did not happen with every writer.

It is fascinating in such collections to observe that the strength of diversity comes through. The writers are all within the Reformed family but by no means represent a complete uniformity of thought. We need to remember this as we read and realize that this has often been the reality within the wider Reformed tradition.

Now a few comments on the overall layout of the book. It begins with Packer’s foreword, which not only gives the accolades one often finds in such compositions but goes well beyond this. It truly gives one a “well-packed” and concise introduction in the way that only Packer is capable of doing. The foreword took me back over twenty-some years to sitting in Dr. Packer’s Calvin course at Regent. The opening essay, “The Historical Context of the *Institutes* as a Work of Theology” (pp. 1-15), by William Barker is not concerned with analysis but rather sets the stage. It is well-written and creates great interest for the reader. I appreciated his quotation by Schaff and his description of the *Institutes* and how it “combines dogmatics and ethics in organic unity” (p. 12). Calvin’s great work never lost sight of the Christian life. The eighteen analytical essays follow this introduction. Generally these adhere to Calvin’s order within the four books of the *Institutes*. However, I strongly disagree with the editor’s decision to go from Douglas Kelly’s essay, “The True and Triune God: Calvin’s Doctrine of the Holy Trinity (1.11-13)”, to Scott Clark’s essay, “Election and Predestination: The Sovereign Expression of God (3.21-24)”. This was not Calvin’s order, and following Calvin’s order would have been best. This happened again in the nineteenth chapter by Cornelis Venema, “Calvin’s Doctrine of the Last Things: The Resurrection of the Body and the Life Everlasting (3.25 et al.)”, which follows chapter eighteen

by David Hall, "Calvin on Human Government and the State (4.20)". Again, keeping Calvin's order would have been preferable.

The writing of Calvin material continues, and it is difficult to keep up with it all. The editors have thus decided to include a select bibliography. They claim it is relevant material of the last ten years in the English speaking world. Generally this is fine, but a few inclusions appeared to fall outside of their stated parameters, and some other works were noticeably absent that perhaps should have been included.

One oversight that is puzzling is the fact that there is no analytical essay included from the *Institutes*, Book Four, chapters one and two on Calvin's doctrine of the church and the distinction between the true and false church. Essays include Calvin on worship, the sacraments, and church and state, yet the foundation of Calvin's ecclesiology is missing.

For those who teach specific courses in dogmatics using the *Institutes*, this is an excellent new book. It greatly enhances previous analytical studies, such as those by François Wendel or A. M. Hunter. The book is sure to become a standard reference work in many conservative colleges and seminaries. Not all of the essays will be attractive to most lay readers; however, some certainly could be, such as David Calhoun's on Calvin's chapter on prayer (pp. 347-367).

There is no doubt that *A Theological Guide to Calvin's Institutes* will be laid beside Charles Partee's *The Theology of John Calvin*¹ in which Partee offers his own exposition of Calvin's *Institutes*. The latter has the advantage of a solo author, thus the single voice is very unifying. In addition, his structure actually follows Calvin's *Institutes* more carefully than the book under review. These two points are to the latter book's advantage and will make the volume a strong contender next to *A Theological Guide to Calvin's Institutes*, even with theological perspectives put aside.

A Theological Guide to Calvin's Institutes is well bound, is presented with an attractive dust-jacket, and includes two indexes (scriptural and topical) and an excellent foreword by J. I. Packer. May sales go well. Colleges will want to make sure that this book gets into their libraries.

Reviewed by Jack C. Whytock

¹ Charles Partee, *The Theology of John Calvin* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008).

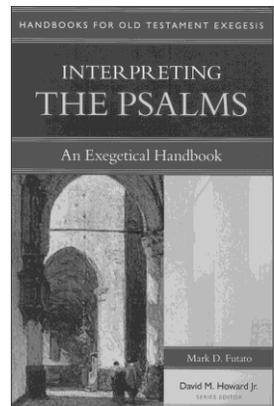
Book Notices

In *Book Notices* we inform readers about works which have been recently added to the Haddington House Library. Most entrants are currently in print, but on occasion we include rare and valuable books we have acquired which students and patrons may want to come and consult. *Book Notices* are made in keeping with our editorial policy; that is, to help our readers in the stewardship of their resources and time. The *Journal* uses the standard abbreviation 'hc' to denote hard cover. The International Standard Book Number (ISBN) has been included with all books when available.

Biblical Theology

***Interpreting the Psalms: An Exegetical Handbook.* Mark D. Futato. Handbooks for Old Testament Exegesis. Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic and Professional Publications, 2007, 234 pp., paper. ISBN 978-0-8254-2765-7**

This useful book is part of the Handbooks for Old Testament Exegesis Series edited by David M. Howard, Jr. The value of the entire series is based on the fundamental importance of the genre category for exegetical methodology. Perspicuous in technical areas and practical in instructional sections, the book lends itself easily to the mind of the graduate level student, the pastor and the well-motivated lay person. A reader's cursory knowledge of Hebrew is helpful yet the lack of such does not at all diminish the book's universal worth. Also, the intention behind this book is not to replace commentaries but to provide supplementation.



The handbook's content is supported by a six-chapter structure: 1. Appreciating the Poetry; 2. Viewing the Whole; 3. Preparing for Interpretation; 4. Interpreting the Categories; 5. Proclaiming the Psalms; 6. Practicing the Principles.

The book begins with an examination of the unique nature and patterns of Hebrew poetry. Futato obviates the complexities of Hebrew grammar and makes it an approachable and manageable candidate for exegetical study. The psalms individually in themselves are significant, yet as Futato asserts in chapter two, they are also meaningful as a cohesive unit. A common purpose and a great deal of thematic repetition constitute their cohesive unity. Futato shows the common purpose to be instruction for holiness and happiness which serves the central message of the Psalms, the kingship of God. All other themes derive from this theological crux. The third chapter reassuringly asserts the value of text criticism for understanding the historical and organic background of the text. Futato gives a list of references at this point to address any arising questions. Chapter four surveys the basic and familiar categories of the Psalms such as the Lament or Songs of Thanksgiving. These categories guide the exegete and provide an added measure of context. The fifth chapter focuses on how to correctly proclaim the message of the Psalms. The unifying purpose of the Psalms, instruction, worked out in four key steps ensures proper proclamation of their message. Application is quite important to Futato. The final chapter, entitled Practicing the Principles, synthesizes the principles presented in the book using the four key steps with Psalm 29 as nice example case.

This handbook draws its usefulness from its ability to posture serious readers for quality exegetical study. It is not an exhaustive guide or training programme by any measure. Yet because of the manner of the handbook's presentation, it exploits its own approachability and should enable a broad spectrum of committed readers to use the tools offered in the training of Scripture study. The ultimate goal is clear, to nurture a deep respect for sacred Scripture in its students and to train them to handle and present its message correctly.

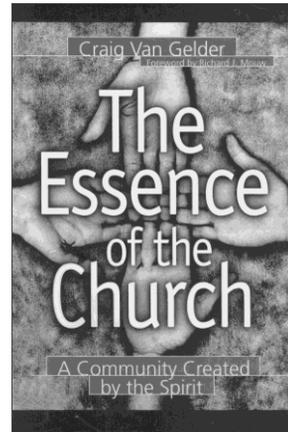
Rev. Frank Z. Kovács, is the tutor for the distance Bible courses at Haddington House and pastor of the Reformed Hungarian Church in Toronto. He has his M.Th. degree from North-West University in South Africa and is a Ph.D. candidate there in Lukan studies.



Systematic Theology

***The Essence of the Church: A Community Created by the Spirit.* Craig Van Gelder. Grand Rapids: Baker, [2000] reprint 2004, 207 pp., paper. ISBN 0-8010-9096-2**

This is a very challenging book. At just 207 pages, it would appear to be a very quick read. Instead I found not only was the reading a challenge, so was the reflection I needed to do after the reading. Properly speaking, *The Essence of the Church: A Community Created by the Spirit* belongs to the theological subject known as ecclesiology or the study of the doctrine of the church. Yet this work is definitely not just a restatement of what Berkhof or Hodge have said in their systematic theologies on ecclesiology. The author, Craig Van Gelder, takes a fresh look at ecclesiology chiefly by way of seeing the church missionally and as governed by the Word and led by the Spirit. He is well informed by historical theological formulations in the Nicene Creed and the four attributes of one, holy, catholic and apostolic church as well as by the Reformed and Lutheran two marks, or in some Reformed statements the three marks of the church. The author understands the other historical views which have brought us to where we are today. His summaries in chapter three, “Historical Views of the Church” (pp. 45-72), are thus highly perceptive. Likewise, his summation of the way the “Kingdom of God” is understood in its various biblical images and perspectives is most helpful and very honest. (See chapter four, “The Church and the Redemptive Reign of God”, pp. 73-100.) These two chapters, chapters three and four, intersect most closely with the



classical issues dealt with in teaching ecclesiology in the Bible college or seminary. Yet they address the realities of today.

The first two chapters of the book offer an introduction to a new way forward in ecclesiology. They are entitled “Rediscovering the Church in the Twenty-First Century” and “A Missional Understanding of the Church”. We can go two ways here. On the one hand, we may hold dogmatically to the old paths and ignore what Van Gelder is saying – at best by dismissing it with “it all fits somewhere else”, that is, in practical theology – and thereby divorce our ecclesiology from practice. On the other hand, we can start to grapple with Van Gelder’s thesis. The latter is certainly the harder way to go, but I think here lies the way of integrity. Van Gelder proposes that a missional ecclesiology is shaped from biblical foundations, historical developments, contextual conditions and the ongoing developmental work of the Spirit.

Moving on to chapter five, “The Nature of the Church”, Van Gelder covers much biblical ground on the Church in the New Testament, in particular its visible aspect and the biblical images. He also returns to the historical descriptions of the Church and concludes that the four attributes need fuller definitions. He formulates these as:

- both holy and human, spiritual and social
- both catholic and local, universal and contextual
- both one and many, unified and diverse
- apostolic: both foundational and missionary, authoritative and sent.

The section I have found most helpful came in chapter six, “The Ministry of the Church”, particularly sub-sections “Marks of the Church: Led and Taught by the Spirit” (pp. 142-146), “Grace-Based and Gift-Shaped Ministry” (pp. 146-147), and “The Church’s Practice of Ministry” (pp. 148-154). Van Gelder very concisely formulates our practice of the sacraments and core biblical ministry functions. These core functions are very clearly articulated and diagrammed and would make for excellent classroom or group discussion.

The final chapter, “The Organizational Life of the Church” (pp. 155-184), may actually shock some readers. Van Gelder is not “throwing the baby out with the bath water”. He is very strong in his expression: “Local congregations need leaders. . . .” (p. 183) I say this here because some will dismiss Van Gelder’s book as “too novel”. I urge you to read it more carefully. This final chapter shows that the author understands organizational dynamics. I appreciated what he

wrote about “mobile missional structures” since I am a missionary with a *Mobile Theological Training Team*.

This book demands a hearing in ecclesiology courses. It needs a place beside many of our traditional systematic texts. I appreciated the way he wove stories from different congregations into his chapters. It was unfortunate that these were all from North America; however, I realize the author is attempting to awaken the North American Church to be a missional Church.

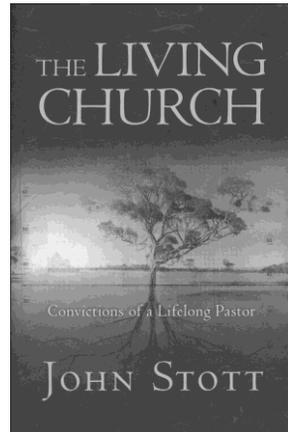
J. C. Whytock

***The Living Church: Convictions of a Lifelong Pastor.*
John Stott. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2007, 180
pp., hc. ISBN: 978-0-8308-3486-0**

Here is a very warm and engaging devotional work on the health of the church today. It is written by that master of clear English evangelical exposition, John Stott, and comes forth as well-seasoned, practical reflections and expositions on the subject. *The Living Church* is a book which one can read as personal devotional material, yet it could also easily be adapted to a group Bible study on life and ministry in the church. I have spent time with it in both venues and found it to be a blessing in each.

Students familiar with Stott works will have encountered many of the themes before. There are reminiscences from his excellent commentary on Acts in The Bible Speaks Today series and also his noteworthy book on the seven churches, *What Christ Thinks of the Church*. However, in saying that there are obvious parallels, there is yet a freshness and a creative spirit to be found here in *The Living Church*.

The book has eight foundational chapters, and each is clearly subdivided for the reader’s ease. These chapters are basically expository messages. Chapter one is “Essentials: God’s Vision for His Church” and follows Acts 2. The other chapters are more topical expositions, culling Scripture to see patterns emerging on such themes as worship, evangelism, ministry, fellowship, preaching, giving and impact. Any



study group going through these will find itself on solid biblical footing with lively and challenging applications.

The book's "Conclusion" is almost a prophetic call entitled "Looking for Timothys in the Twenty-First Century" (143-150). This is followed by "Three Historical Appendixes, Related in Different Ways to the Living Church". Stott prefaces these with a short autobiographical section, followed by "Historical Appendix 1: Why I Am Still a Member of the Church of England" (18 October 1966) (154-165). For students of English evangelical history, the Martyn Lloyd-Jones and Stott confrontation became a defining moment; it remained an ongoing matter of discussion for authors such as Iain Murray and Timothy Dudley-Smith. This appendix is well worth reading to learn first-hand of what Stott himself remains convinced. Then follows "Historical Appendix 2, I Have a Dream of a Living Church" (24 November 1974) (166-169). In one sense this reads almost like Stott's vision statement for All Souls Church, London. The final appendix is "Historical Appendix 3, Reflections of an Octogenarian" (27 April 2001) (170-174). Here are his three priorities: "Q" day – which I will not explain, because every full-time Christian pastor needs to read this; obedience; and humility.

Readers, make sure you balance your reading. If you are prone to only want "strong meat" such as systematic theology, balance it with this book on applied ecclesiology. You may very well find out that strong meat comes under many dust jackets. My one criticism of the book would be that study questions should have been included at the end of each of the eight core chapters. Now I will be a real pragmatist of missions – buy this book, read it and share it; all the royalties from this book go to Langham Literature to help those in the Majority World! What a great deal – personal growth and world Christian leader growth.

J. C. Whytock

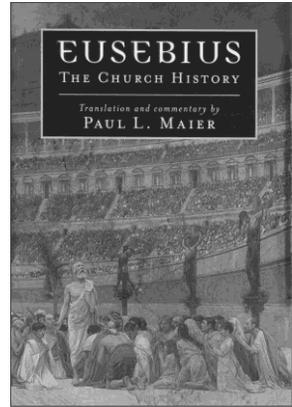
Historical Theology

***Eusebius: The Church History.* Trans. and commentary by Paul L. Maier. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2007, 367 pp., paper. ISBN: 978-0-8254-3307-8**

What a wonderful, user-friendly edition of Eusebius' famous church history! This will make for an economical classroom edition since Kregel has issued *Eusebius: The Church History* in paperback form.

Paul Maier's first sentence in his most helpful introduction is: "If Herodotus is the father of history, then Eusebius of Caesarea (c. A.D. 260-339) is certainly the father of church history" (p. 9). Maier then continues on:

He was the first to undertake the task of tracing the rise of Christianity during its crucial first three centuries from Christ to Constantine. Since no other ancient author tried to cover the same period, Eusebius is our principal primary source for earliest Christianity and his *Church History* is the cornerstone chronicle on which later historians would build. (p. 9)



The translator and commentator for this edition, Paul Maier, is a noteworthy authority in the field of ancient history. His published works include *Josephus: The Essential Works*¹ and many other books. In addition, he teaches at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, is active in the Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod, and has produced some very helpful curriculum for use in classrooms and adult Sunday Schools.

¹ *Josephus: The Essential Works*, trans. ed. Paul L. Maier (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1995), 416 pp. ISBN: 978-0-8254-3260-6.

Maier's introduction gives all kinds of helpful pointers about how to approach Eusebius' work. The footnote alone explaining the whole concept of "books" in Eusebius is the best I have ever read. The potted biography on Eusebius is most helpful, and the illustration of ancient Caesarea really gives readers a sense of the period. Maier goes on to include a brief overview of the writings of Eusebius before proceeding to *The Church History* and introducing it specifically.

Moving to the actual translation, one finds it reads very smoothly. There is nothing wooden about Maier's work. It is certainly much easier to read than that found in *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, volume one, series two, which is an 1890 English translation. Maier tells us about his translation policy (pp. 18-19), especially his effort to make shorter sentences, which appears very sound and wise.

The text is well illustrated and is accompanied by two appendices, a bibliography and four indices. Full marks are given for this excellent edition of Eusebius' *The Church History* by Paul Maier.

J. C. Whytock

***The Life and Thought of David Craig, 1937-2001, Canadian Presbyterian Missionary.* Jason Zuidema. Toronto: Clements Academic, 225 pp., paper. ISBN: 978-1-894667-94-4**

I cannot claim to have been a close friend of David Craig, who is the chief focus of Jason Zuidema's recent book, *The Life and Thought of David Craig, 1937-2001, Canadian Presbyterian Missionary*. Yet our paths did cross a couple of times. I recall the enthusiasm of a congregation where I was a pastor when David and Nancy came for a weekend. Many commented on their delight in having missionaries from Quebec speaking at their church! We exchanged some things for the Farel Library and on polity, and I helped with some press releases on the new Église Réformée du Québec (ERQ). But this book has allowed me the opportunity to put those events more into perspective, and for that I am most appreciative.



This book is in part a biography (“Part I – The Life of David Craig”) and in part a combination of several extracts from his writings, one of his sermons, and an interview with him (together constituting “Part 2, The Thought of David Craig”). David Craig’s life story begins in Ontario, where he was born into a family of eleven children, raised Brethren, and became a student at Waterloo Lutheran University. Then followed studies at Presbyterian College, Montreal, summer work, marriage to Nancy, and ordination for mission work in Nigeria. Following the Biafra War in Nigeria, he returned to Canada to undertake youth work at Fairview Presbyterian, Vancouver (I once was a member of that congregation but did not know David had served there briefly), before leaving Canada once again to serve for almost five years in Neuchâtel, Switzerland. He then returned to Quebec for ministries including pastoring, theological education, church planting and ecclesiastical life in the denominational makeup of Protestantism in Quebec. This is a fascinating story on three continents and centres around one man’s life of serving His Saviour, Jesus Christ.

One of the benefits of reading a biography is to discover the incredible intersections in a person’s life. I was glad to see Zuidema picked up on the Craigs’ relationship with L’Abri and the Schaeffers during the Neuchâtel portion of their lives. The author guides the reader through the complexities of the Biafra war in Nigeria in the 1960s. He also helps trace the ecclesiastical complexities of the emergence of the ERQ in the 1980s. For many reasons this is an essential period to understand in Canadian church history.

This book will be inspirational to all who have an evangelist’s heart. It will also be a sobering reminder of the struggles believers face in serving the Lord. Readers will feel certain pangs of sadness, especially as the story is told of relationships in the Christian evangelical community which underwent many stresses in the 1980s. The author helps us see one man’s theological convictions through the legacy of some of his written material. This is a reminder that every sermon preached is conveying one’s theology.

I am pleased to see this book and have included it on the reading list for the Canadian church history courses I teach. I hesitate to say this, knowing this is the bane of all publishing, but it was unfortunate to see several typographical errors, especially on some proper names and dates (pp. 38, 41, 83). Clearer year identifications would also have been helpful in the actual biographical text. Often I found myself having to search to make sure I knew what year was being discussed.

Otherwise, this is a helpful written record of a most remarkable servant of the Lord.

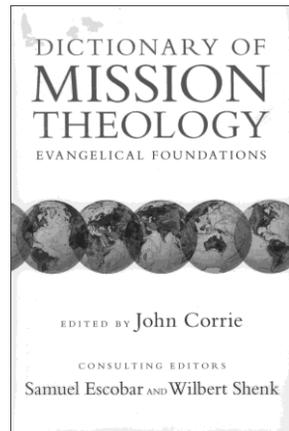
J. C. Whytock

Applied Theology

***Dictionary of Mission Theology: Evangelical Foundations.* Ed. John Corrie. Consulting eds. Samuel Escobar and Wilbert Shenk. Nottingham, England/Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2007, 461 pp., hc. ISBN: 978-0-8308-2453-3**

Ordinarily I would not include a dictionary in the required textbook list for a course on contemporary missiological issues, but I have included *Dictionary of Mission Theology: Evangelical Foundations*. This in itself suggests many things: there is difficulty in finding a comprehensive resource amongst missiological texts, in finding something which is global in perspective, and in finding something which is not just historically accurate but also relevant to issues in mission today. Yet in saying all this, if one is willing to use it as a textbook, perhaps it really is more of a missions theological handbook than a full dictionary; I do wonder if the book title is appropriate. Do not take this initial criticism as a turn-off. The book has many excellent qualities.

This book shows a shift towards writers from the Majority World. Evidently, a “majority” of the contributors are from the Majority World, which certainly creates a global missiological perspective. There are 160 plus articles included in a volume of 461 pages. This immediately says that there is some meat in the articles, which are double-columned, in standard dictionary format, with a bibliography concluding each article before the author’s name. However, 160 plus articles is actually few in number for a dictionary, hence my thought that this is more a handbook – and as such it is an invaluable resource.



The articles cover many of the terms missiologists today are using and therefore will be used in the Christian college/seminary classroom with great freedom. In the list of articles, there are no names of influential missiologists or illustrious missionary statesmen. This was obviously an editorial decision when setting the boundaries of the dictionary. This is likely because the editors knew there were other worthy dictionaries which fill some of the biographical gaps, such as Gerald H. Anderson's *Biographical Dictionary of Christian Missions*¹. However, although I understand the editorial decision, I must admit some entries here could have been helpful. Some of the survey articles do compensate for this; for example, the excellent survey article "Mission theology in the twentieth century" (pp. 237-244). Since there is an index of names, one can look up individuals and be directed to articles referencing them. (The names index, however, is not exhaustive.)

The most relevant articles for classroom use will likely be: Accommodation, African traditional religion, Black consciousness, Church planting, Colonialism/postcolonialism, Contextualization, Culture, Ethnicity/ethnocentrism, Globalization, Holistic mission, Homogeneous unit, Incarnation, Inculturation, Indigenous peoples, Kingdom of God, Liberation, Managerial missiology, Muslim relations, New Testament and Old Testament perspectives on mission, Partnership, Pentecostalism, Persecution, Poor/poverty, Praxis/orthopraxis, Prosperity theology, Refugees, Short-term mission, Spiritual warfare/territorial spirits/demons, Syncretism, Tribalism, Two-Thirds World missionary movement, Universalism, and World-view.

Any teacher of missions going through my "select list" will immediately see the strength of having such a comprehensive work. The articles are generally accessible and well-written. This book is a fine contribution for teaching today.

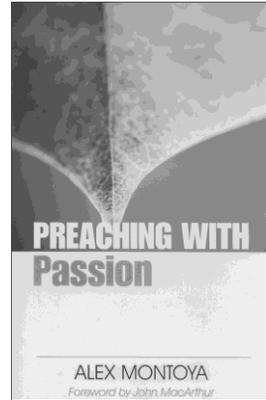
J. C. Whytock

¹ Gerald H. Anderson, *Biographical Dictionary of Christian Missions*, orig. 1998 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999).

***Preaching With Passion.* Alex Montoya. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2000, 160 pp., paper. ISBN: 978-0-8254-33665**

Certainly when it comes to preaching there are more manuals on how to preach than one has time to read. In this book Alex Montoya offers a refreshing and helpful approach to preaching that I have not found in many of the books I have read. He is a minister and teaches pastoral ministries at the Master's Seminary in Sun Valley, California. Montoya's book is easy to read and is filled with some wonderful information that will help to equip the pastor for preaching the Word of God.

Montoya says that much preaching today has strong doctrinal content and contains good exegesis but lacks passion. The great need in preaching today is for greater passion. He illustrates this point by quoting from Dr. Martin Lloyd Jones, "This element of pathos and of emotion is, to me, a very vital one. It is what has been so seriously lacking in the present century, and perhaps especially among Reformed people. We tend to lose our balance and to become over-intellectual, indeed almost to despise the element of feeling and emotion. We are such learned men, we have a grasp of the Truth, that we tend to despise feeling. The common herd, we feel, are emotional and sentimental, but they have no understanding!"¹ A sermon is not simply a lecture or an address but a message delivered by the power and authority of the Holy Spirit. In the introduction he tells the funny story about a man who fell asleep during a preacher's sermon. The minister asks a little boy who is sitting next to the man, "Little fellow would you mind waking your grandfather?" The boy replied, "Why don't you do it? You put him to sleep!" We all have heard stories about dull and boring sermons, but these kinds of sermons are preached because the minister lacks zeal and holy fervor. As my seminary professor would often say, it is a sin for a minister to preach a dull sermon. The author states that a dull preacher is a



¹ D. Martin Lloyd-Jones, *Preaching and Preachers* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1971), 93.

contradiction in terms. He lays out a number of causes for passionless preaching and shows his readers how to avoid them.

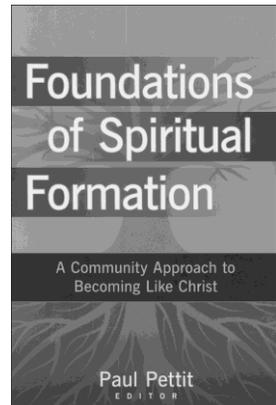
The book presents eight steps for the preacher to use in order to preach with passion. A minister must preach with spiritual power, conviction, compassion, authority, urgency, brokenness, body language and gestures, and imagination. Perhaps our congregations are not transformed because ministers do not preach with conviction. God's ordained means for the salvation of His elect and the edification of believers is the preaching of the Word. I would encourage those of you who are pastors or are preparing for ministry to read this great book and ask the Lord to give you passion as you preach. This is one book on preaching that you will benefit from and will want to have as a resource.

Stephen Welch

***Foundations of Spiritual Formation: A Community Approach to Becoming Like Christ.* Ed. Paul Pettit. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2008, 318 pp., paper. ISBN 978-0-8254-3469-3**

Spirituality and spiritual formation are currently running a wave of popularity for Christian studies. In many respects this is very helpful; from my perspective it may help to return us to discussions again on Christian piety. This could bring some balance to the other crest on the wave, namely, the popular study of Christian worldview.

This collection of essays edited by Paul Pettit, the director of the spiritual formation programme at Dallas Theological Seminary, is specifically addressing one missing component of Christian spirituality, namely *koinonia*, or the fellowship of the Christian community. The first time I saw the book I was encouraged by the balanced title and also by the graphic image on the front cover – done in green – of a growing tree above ground and the extensive root system below ground. Whoever the graphics designer was (I could find no name), I commend you! A picture, after all, can be worth a thousand words.



This collection has thirteen different authors including one name well know to Bible students today, Darrell L. Bock. Many of the writers have Dallas connections but are not necessarily teaching there. Some minister in Prague, the Czech Republic, Tennessee, Wisconsin, and Oregon.

The book builds on the structure of a commitment to evangelical theology and then proceeds to stress the “context of authentic, Christian community” in part 1. Part 2 then covers more the various elements of the practice of spiritual formation. The book helps one to come to grips with some of the definitions and meaning of such terms as “spiritual formation”. Everyone making explorations into this field must work their way through the terminology as there are many definitions floating about! Pettit aids us here in his introduction (pp. 17-26).

One essay I especially found helpful was Gordon Johnston’s “Old Testament Community and Spiritual Formation” (pp. 77-101). I personally think he ranged much beyond his title, which was fine. There are several matters in Johnston’s essay worthy of reflection. Here is one which I have quoted several times recently:

Christian community is based not on what its members have in common in the world, but on what they share in Christ. The community shares a mutual faith . . . , enjoys a common salvation . . . , and drinks from the same Spirit Believers participate with one another in Christ’s life. . . . (p. 80)

Readers may also be amazed by Johnston’s honesty in dealing with the reality of what often happens in theological education – competition. He offers his insights for an antidote on the subject.

Klaus Issler explores the matter of the heart in his “The Soul and Spiritual Formation” (pp. 121-141). Take time to read the footnotes here and in many of the other essays. These are very helpful in building your bibliographical framework on various aspects of spirituality and in seeing who is writing what. Reid Kisling’s “Character and Spiritual Formation” (pp. 143-161) is a good survey. Some of the essays will not appeal to all readers but are specifically oriented towards preachers and Christian leaders (chapters eight and eleven); however, this does not detract from the appeal of the book as a whole to a general Christian audience.

Overall this collection of essays in *Foundations of Spiritual Formation: A Community Approach to Becoming Like Christ* is a

worthy contribution to the subject of spiritual formation. Instructors in Christian colleges will want to list it as a helpful resource and use select essays for class work.

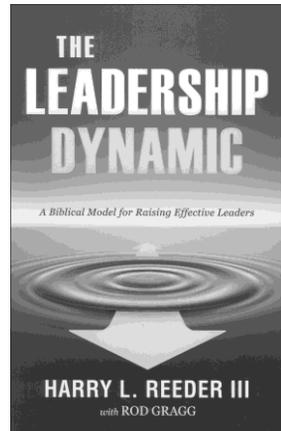
J. C. Whytock

***The Leadership Dynamic: A Biblical Model for Raising Effective Leaders.* Harry L. Reeder III with Rod Gragg. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2008, 189 pp., paper. ISBN 978-1-58134-943-6**

Many readers will be familiar by now with Harry Reeder's book *From Embers to a Flame*² or with the conferences also by this name. *The Leadership Dynamic: A Biblical Model for Raising Effective Leaders* really follows up on this first book and flows out of it with the thesis that one of the critical aspects of church health is healthy leadership.

The book is composed of fifteen short chapters and commences with the goal of leadership being learned from the Word of God. The author uses Acts 17:6 as his theme text for this foundational chapter. The remaining chapters pursue certain aspects of biblical examples or calls for leadership. Chapter five, "The Marks of an Effective Christian Leader" (53-62), centres around 1 Timothy 3:2: "Therefore an overseer must be above reproach . . .". Reeder does not present a full expositional commentary here on the whole pericope of Scripture concerning the qualifications and duties of leaders. Rather, he selects key themes or ideas and highlights these: four leadership requirements and three traps to avoid. This chapter alone would make for an excellent leaders' retreat discussion series in two sessions – and plan to use it as such.

The author's style is not that of a Bible commentary. He integrates stories and illustrations, crisp phrases and structured thoughts into a practical teaching style in each chapter. Readers will quickly learn that



² Harry L. Reeder III with David Swavely, *From Embers to a Flame: How God Can Revitalize Your Church* (Phillipsburg: P&R Publishing, 2004).

the author enjoys telling about southern Civil War heroes. He has that wonderful ability of arranging material in a way that will allow one to teach it to others. For example, see his excellent organizational ability in chapter eight, “Learning, Living, Leading” (pp. 93-102), with its divisions “learn from the past, live in the present, and lead to the future”. When reading this book, observe the good communication/teaching skills of the author.

Some of the other chapters address leadership priorities and styles. These are not long sections, such as the three leadership styles which he highlights – authoritative, participatory and delegated (pp. 124-127).

The Leadership Dynamic will make for a helpful resource on Christian leadership. It is something which Christian leaders will find privately, personally edifying but will also be good for leadership courses or retreats. Reeder’s new book together with Hans Finzel’s *The Top Ten Mistakes Leaders Make* and J. Oswald Sanders’ *Spiritual Leadership* make for three excellent works which compliment each other and will be helpful guides, with Christian leadership and healthy church life as the overarching goal.³

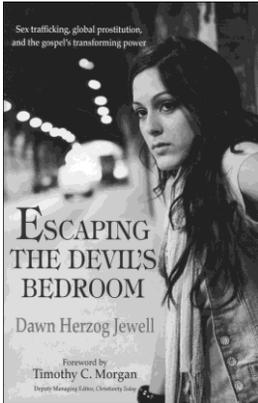
J. C. Whytock

***Escaping the Devil’s Bedroom: Sex trafficking, global prostitution and the gospel’s transforming power.* Dawn Herzog Jewell. Oxford, UK: Monarch Books, 2008, 224 pp., paper. ISBN 978-0-8254-6165-1**

This book, though disturbing to read, presents a powerful challenge to the Church around the world concerning the desperate need for the gospel to be taken to those caught in sex trafficking and global prostitution. (Readers of the 2008 *Haddington House Journal* will remember that this topic was highlighted last year in the review of *Confronting Kingdom Challenges* edited by Samuel Logan, Jr. in the article by Diane Langberg, “Sharing the Burden of Global Sex

³ Another helpful book on leadership more for the context of cross-cultural leadership is Sherwood G. Lingenfelter’s *Leading Cross-Culturally: Covenant Relationships for Effective Christian Leadership* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008). This is not a theme which Reeder addresses in *The Leadership Dynamic*. See also Dan Sheffield, *The Multicultural Leader: Developing a Catholic Personality* (Toronto: Clements Publishing, 2005).

Trafficking”.⁴) The author of *Escaping the Devil’s Bedroom*, Dawn Herzog Jewell, is a writer for Media Associates International and was only made aware of the sexually exploited a few years ago by hearing



Thelma Nambu describe the founding of her ministry, Samaritana, in the Philippines. Jewell began to do her own research and was so moved and disturbed that she ended up writing this book to share information, and the resulting challenge that it presents, with others.

The book is divided into three sections: Stories of Darkness, Stories of Hope and Your Part in the Story. The first section is particularly difficult to read because Jewell does not try to spare us any details as she introduces us to real people in various countries who have endured unthinkable exploitation through the global sex trade. I commend Jewell for showing that the situation is in fact global. It would be easy to point to Asia, which she does, or Africa, which she also does, but omit Europe and North America, which she does not. Her chapters on “The Sexualization of American Culture” and “On Line Porn and Sexual Addictions” show very clearly that these evils exist in every culture.

The second section of Jewell’s account is so welcome after the first. Here she introduces us to some of the Christian ministries currently being undertaken to reach out to those involved in sex trafficking and global prostitution. Obviously, not every ministry can be discussed, but Jewell tries, as she did in the first section, to give us real places and faces so that we are not merely left with statistics. The courage of these Christian workers and the wonderful stories of rescue and redemption are powerful testimonies to the love and grace of God.

The final section is a challenge to the Church around the world to expand on the existing ministries and outreach to those involved in the sex trade. Jewell begins by insisting that, as in all of life, “the battle over the devil’s bedroom is in prayer”. Specific prayer requests are given. She then elaborates on the kind of challenges that will be faced.

The layout of the book is helpful as there is a glossary of terms, a list of resources, and pictures of some of those who have come to Christ. There are also Scripture readings, questions and prayer items following each chapter.

⁴ Samuel T. Logan, Jr., *Confronting Kingdom Challenges: A Call to Global Christians to Carry the Burden Together* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007).

The needs presented in this book are so great that it would be easy to come away with the feeling that it is perhaps too late to ever make a difference. Jewell insists it is not.

Nancy Whytock

Academic Articles

Rhetoric and the Art of Preaching

Al Breitzkreuz*

*Rev. Al Breitzkreuz is currently doing post-graduate studies with St. Andrews University, Scotland, and lives in Fall River, Nova Scotia. He was the former minister at Faith Presbyterian Church, Vancouver, BC, and is a graduate of Northwest College and Regent College. The following article was part of the August 2008 Haddington House Seminar on “The Craft of Preaching”.



In 1857 Antony Trollope of the Barchester Towers quipped with an ironic semblance of both gravity and levity: “There is, perhaps, no greater hardship at present inflicted on mankind in civilized and free countries, than the necessity of listening to sermons.”¹ In a letter to his son J. R. R. Tolkien once exclaimed, “But as for sermons, they are bad, aren’t they!”² In *Preaching to Programmed People*, Timothy Turner asserts that the same people who channel surf all week, probably channel surf in their mind while the minister waxes prosaically on a subject that seems irrelevant based on a text that sounds convoluted.³ Although these sentiments may be somewhat hyperbolic, similar feelings are shared across denominational boundaries.

A great deal of preaching in the postmodern ecclesiastical landscape has become either amusing and trivial or dry and prosaic. It is either driven by a contemporary standard of entertainment rather than the Word of God or a parochial understanding of what it means to be a Reformed pastor rather than a Pauline desire to be all things to all people. Andre Resner, Jr., dialectically articulates the options facing

¹ In Henri Nouwen, *Creative Ministry* (New York: Doubleday, 1991), 23.

² In Richard Viladesau, *Theology and the Arts: Encountering God through Music, Art and Rhetoric* (New York: Paulist Press, 2000), 176.

³ Timothy Turner, *Preaching to Programmed People* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Resources, 1995), 14.

the postmodern preacher: “Either we have a rhetorical homiletic which is theologically suspect or a theological homiletic which bypasses the otherwise necessary rhetorical scaffolding.”⁴ The preacher who strives to be relevant with little concern for theological accuracy is in danger of having nothing substantial to say. Conversely, the preacher who is concerned with being theologically correct with little concern for cultural relevance is in danger of having no one to say it to. Christ’s exemplary parabolic method of communication exhibits a concern for penetrating theological analysis and pertinent psycho-spiritual application. Jesus was relentlessly right and relevant.

In this article I will combine the rhetorical theory of Aristotle and Augustine with the aesthetics of Aquinas and Edwards, in order to demonstrate that an aesthetic foundation to biblical preaching is intrinsic to our understanding of homiletics ontologically and an expression of it practically. This foundation enables the modern minister to be relevant in the content and style of his preaching while maintaining theological integrity.

I. Principles of Rhetoric

In his seminal work on oratorical communication, Aristotle defines rhetoric as the “faculty of observing in any given case, the available means of persuasion.” He then delineates three modes of persuasion which are furnished by the spoken word. “The first kind depends on the personal character of the speaker; the second on putting the audience into a certain frame of mind; the third on the proof or apparent proof, provided by the words of the speech itself.”⁵ He uses the following categories in order to explain the three essential components of persuasive speech:

1. *Logos* refers to the persuasion caused by the speech itself when we have demonstrated a claim by means of convincing arguments suitable to the case in question.
2. *Pathos* refers to the passion and feeling that the speaker conveys and the listeners’ experience as they hear the *logos*.⁶

⁴ Andre Resner, Jr., *Preacher and Cross* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 70.

⁵ Aristotle, “Rhetoric”, in *Great Books of the Western World*, ed. Mortimer Adler, vol. 9, Encyclopedia Britannica Inc. (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1952), I.ii. 595.

⁶ In this article I will include communication styles as part of the pathos of the preacher which impacts the hearer due to the diversity of genre’s used in the communication event.

3. *Ethos* refers to how persuasion is assisted by the speaker's personal character regarding both moral goodness and intellectual credibility.⁷

However, when considering the preaching of the Christian message of the gospel, we are compelled to ask whether or not it is appropriate to homologate the principles of extra-biblical sources into our theory of homiletics? Paul asserts that when he preached the gospel he did not preach "with words of human wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power."⁸ This caused Tertullian to pose an incisive question centuries ago: "What has Athens to do with Jerusalem? What concord be there between the academy and the church? What between heretics and Christians?"⁹ In this article I will demonstrate that ignoring truth wherever it may be found is not only unnecessary, it is undesirable. While many of the early fathers such as Cyprian and Tertullian were critical of utilizing the rhetorical arts, they opposed the use of Aristotelian rhetoric in rhetorically impressive ways.¹⁰ Moreover, Tertullian's critique of the philosophy and poetry and the erudite insights of the Academy betrays a secret attraction for the refinements of rhetoric and philosophy.

The merit of Aristotle's theory of rhetoric is substantiated both by Paul's rhetorical skill and by principles of rhetoric which may be distilled from his writings.¹¹ Most obviously we find a close expression of Aristotle's rhetoric in 1 Thessalonians 1:4-6. "For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, because our gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake."

Rereading Paul with an awareness of Aristotelian rhetoric, we find these three principles restated: 1. "Our gospel did not come to you simply with words . . ." - the *logos* of gospel preaching. 2. ". . .but also with power and deep conviction . . ." - the *pathos* of gospel preaching. 2. "You know how we lived among you for your own sake . . ." - the *ethos* of the preacher of the gospel.

⁷ Aristotle, 595.

⁸ 1 Cor. 1:17.

⁹ Resner, Jr., 42.

¹⁰ Resner, Jr., 44.

¹¹ Charles Wanamaker, *The Epistle to the Thessalonians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 49.

II. Beauty and the Art of Persuasion

The symmetry inherent in a homiletic that accounts for this threefold rhetoric assumes a creative God of whom we are speaking and from whom we derive our oratorical principles. As we explore the *logos* of rhetoric, we will see how the beauty of God informs and shapes both the form and the content of the sermon.

1. *The Logos of Preaching: The Beauty of Words*

The Church's first homiletic was Augustine's *On Christian Doctrine*, where he borrowed Ciceronian rhetorical principles and fused them into a Christian homiletic.¹² He argued that the aim of preaching is to "teach, to delight and to move".¹³ Therefore, when we preach we do not merely provide hearers with information, rather we craft the sermon carefully and garnish it with beauty. Richard Viladesau, in his excellent exploration of theology and the arts, opines, "If Christian faith is to move people to action, it must be able to present a concrete and attractive vision of the good: it must move the heart and stir the imagination. In this sense, theology itself must become aesthetic."¹⁴ In order for theology to become aesthetic within the homiletic discipline, Christian communicators must understand the already present aesthetic dimension of the preaching craft.

Jonathan Edwards argues that the beauty of God consists in the unity and diversity within the Godhead and the harmony and proportion of his attributes.¹⁵ This unity in diversity and harmony and proportion, integral to our understanding of the character of God, is expressed in the creative act and reflected in creation. Therefore, our understanding of beauty and its human impact emerges from our understanding of the beauty of God.

Thomas Aquinas' aesthetic theology is effectively outlined in James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, where the protagonist

¹² Resner, Jr., 45.

¹³ Augustine, "On Christian Doctrine", in *Great Books of the Western World*, ed. Mortimer Adler, vol. 9, Encyclopedia Britannica Inc. (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1952), 686.

¹⁴ Richard Viladesau, *Theology and the Arts: Encountering God through Music, Art and Rhetoric* (New York: Paulist Press, 2000), 156.

¹⁵ Jonathan Edwards, "The Nature of True Virtue", in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, vol. 1 (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1987), 127-129. See also Jonathan Edwards, "An Essay on the Trinity," in *Treatise on Grace and Other Posthumously Published Writings*, ed. Paul Helm (Cambridge: James Clarke and Company, 1971), 102.

Stephen Dedalus explains the Thomistic theory of aesthetics to his friend Lynch. He argues that there are three essential elements to beauty: wholeness, harmony and radiance. First you see a piece of art in space or hear a piece of art in time, apprehending its self-contained wholeness. This is *integritas*. Having first felt it as a unified thing, you now apprehend its complexity, divisibility and the sum of its parts in harmony. This is *consonantia*. Lastly, radiance or *claritas* refers to the instant wherein that supreme quality of beauty is apprehended by the mind which has been arrested by its wholeness and captivated by its harmony.¹⁶

Similar to Aquinas' *claritas*, Jonathan Edwards' aesthetic theory further encompasses our experiential apprehension of beauty. He argues that there is a twofold knowledge of goodness and beauty of which God has made the mind capable. The first is that which is merely notional and speculative and the second is the feeling of pleasure or sense of the heart at that which is perceived to be beautiful.¹⁷ Therefore, beauty that is creatively communicated through the evocation of ideas and feelings reaches beyond the merely conceptual level and touches the core of the person. Hence, the beauty of God corresponds to our deepest creaturely desires, necessitating the pursuit of beauty in all that we do. If this aesthetic theory has merit and beauty is the unifying factor which is essential to the very character of God, then it follows that the beauty of the message and of its media is not merely incidental to what is understood and communicated, rather "beauty is intrinsic to its meaning."¹⁸

This means that preachers of the gospel must be intentional craftsmen with their words and artisans with the form and content of their sermons. The beauty of God compels us to preach in a manner that coheres with His beauty. Rhetorical principles, rooted in our understanding of the beauty of God, infer a sermon's unity, symmetry and proportion in its exegesis, exposition and illustration. Consequently, like the teacher in Ecclesiastes, we must "search to find just the right words"¹⁹ and preach with a perception of the beauty of God and an eloquent expression of that splendour in the form and content of the message. Therefore,

¹⁶ James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (New York: Penguin Books, 1993), 230-231.

¹⁷ Jonathan Edwards, "A Divine and Supernatural Light", in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, vol.2 (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1987), 14.

¹⁸ Viladesau, 146.

¹⁹ Ecclesiastes 12:10, NIV.

Although they do not talk of it at school -
 . . . we must labour to be beautiful.²⁰

All of this, however, begs a further question: does eloquent language and persuasive speech mitigate the power of the gospel that we are preaching? If Paul did not preach “with eloquence or superior wisdom”, should we seek to be craftsmen with our words?²¹ An awareness of the Corinthian context in which Paul spoke these words and the addressee to whom he spoke enables us to unpack his meaning. Paul was contrasting the wisdom of God with the wisdom of the Greeks, who believed in the seductive power of rhetoric. The Greek Sophists, in particular, were effective rhetors who saw truth as negotiable, contingent upon rhetorical skill and trickery. Words were merely tools used by rhetoricians to convince someone of an argument regardless of its veracity.²² Since the Corinthians were easily seduced by falsely ornamented rhetoric, Paul’s intention was to dissuade them from trusting in eloquence, asserting that he did not rely on rhetorical trickery or oratorical cunning. What is annulled in Paul’s thinking is not rhetoric *per se*, but rhetoric that is *kata sarka* (according to the flesh). Indeed, Paul shows an awareness of classical rhetoric in his letters as he employs rhetorical principles even as he sublimates it in his theological critique of it.²³ For example, it is not simply the content of 1 Corinthians 13 that compels young couples to have it read at their weddings, but the beauty and cadence of the poetry and the eloquence of the language. Although Paul did not entice his hearers, he did seek to persuade with carefully chosen words.²⁴ The fluent and articulate John Calvin contends that it is “quite unreasonable to suppose that Paul would utterly condemn those arts, which are excellent gifts of God, and which serve as instruments, to assist men in the accomplishments of important purposes.”²⁵

²⁰ William Butler Yeats, “Adam’s Curse”, in Harold Bloom, *The Best Poems of the English Language* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2004), 768. This is a broad application of Yeats’ meaning. It nevertheless makes the point, that creativity is hard work.

²¹ 2 Cor. 2:1, NIV.

²² Resner, Jr., 10.

²³ Resner, Jr., 83.

²⁴ Charles Hodge, *A Commentary on 1 & 2 Corinthians* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1988), 31.

²⁵ John Calvin, *Calvin’s Commentaries Vol. XX* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1984), 75.

A sermon must not only be rooted in a theological aesthetic, but it must also be garnished with illustrative beauty which corroborates biblical truth claims, thereby facilitating a connection between the preacher and the hearer. In a speech addressed to the English Parliament on June 14, 1643, the philosopher/poet John Milton addressed the question of censorship in publishing. Milton opposed a censorship which excluded everything but Christian material. He argued that Moses, Daniel and Paul were all familiar with the literature of their culture and were therefore able to communicate effectively within these cultures. Moses was familiar with Egyptian culture and learning. With his knowledge and understanding of all kinds of Chaldean literature, Daniel would have been immersed in the mythology of the Babylonian Empire.²⁶ Regarding Paul's awareness of literary art, Milton explains: "Paul . . . thought it no defilement to insert in Holy Scripture the sentences of three Greek poets, and one of them a tragedian . . ." ²⁷ He is referring to the Areopagus in Acts 17 where Paul quotes Epimenides, a Cretan poet from 600 BC, and a Hellenistic Stoic named Aratus from the third century BC. Epimenides in the fourth line of a quatrain of his work *Cretica* says,

They fashioned a tomb for thee, O holy and high one –
The Cretans, always liars, evil bests, idle bellies!
But thou art not dead; thou livest and abidest for ever,
For in thee we live and move and have our being.²⁸

The words of Epimenides, referring to Zeus, the Greek god of the sky, are borrowed by Paul in order to relevantly illustrate the truth of how God is the foundation and sustenance of our lives. Paul then quotes Aratus from his poem *Phaenomena*:

Zeus begin with Zeus. Never, O men, let us have him
Unmentioned. All the ways are full of Zeus,
. . . the sea is full
Of him; so are the harbours, In every way we have all to do
with Zeus,
For we are truly his offspring.²⁹

²⁶ Dan. 1:17.

²⁷ John Milton, "Areopagitica", in *The Great Books of the Western World*, vol. 32 (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1952), 388.

²⁸ Quoted in F.F. Bruce, *The Book of Acts* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 339.

In both verses Zeus is presented as the supreme being of Greek mythology and Stoic philosophy.³⁰ Using the *Phaenomena* Paul declares that Yahweh has created mankind and we, therefore, must worship him. Like Paul, an effective use of the literary arts may garnish our sermons with illustrative beauty and provide an appealing association with the unbelieving world. For “[a]ll truth is from God; and consequently if wicked men have said anything that is true and just, we ought to not reject it; for it has come from God.”³¹ Therefore, to ignore the wisdom of the unbeliever is a rejection of the image in which she or he has been created. A worldview that recognizes the creating act of a Trinitarian God encompasses dissenting voices who may unwittingly speak God’s truth. For as Gene Veith reasons, “Standards of beauty, the psychology of literary form, and the requirements of language itself, will tend to draw authors even against their natural inclinations into literary expression that coheres with the logos of God in whose image we have been created.”³²

Moreover, engaging in literary art as an expression of the beauty of God in order to garnish a sermon provides insight into the human soul. John Killinger correctly maintains that “[w]hen the church fails to listen to contemporary art, it usually misses the temper and mood of humanity and loses its opportunity to deal with the needs of man at the point where it might most readily have entered into them.”³³ Moses, Daniel and Paul were effective in addressing their respective cultural contexts, in part because they were men who knew their culture’s literature.

However, I am not simply advocating the notion of plundering the Egyptians as if we were to go about pilfering ideas from the kingdom of darkness and smuggling them into the kingdom of light. Rather, recognizing literary beauty wherever it may be found, we employ it organically as God’s truth taken from one who has been created in God’s image.

²⁹ In Bruce, 339.

³⁰ Jerome Neyrey, “Acts 17, Epicureans and Theodicy: A Study in Stereotypes”, in *Greeks, Romans, and Christians: Essays in Honor of Abraham J. Malherbe* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990), 122.

³¹ John Calvin, *Calvin’s Commentaries Vol. XXII* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1984), 300-301.

³² Gene E. Veith, *Reading Between the Lines* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1990), 74.

³³ Killinger, 15.

2. *The Pathos of Preaching*

Having argued for the beauty of God as the foundation of both the form and content of the sermon, I will now discuss the need for the minister's *pathos* which includes the preacher's passion and style.

Preaching with Passion

Andre Resner suggests that "[p]reaching's problem . . . is not a matter of what is said but how it is said."³⁴ Augustine argued that in preaching there ought to be various speech styles. "You will be eloquent when you can say little things in a subdued manner, moderate things in a temperate style, and great things in a majestic style."³⁵ Furthermore, if the aim of oratory is to teach, delight and move; then teaching depends upon what we say and delighting and moving the hearer in the way we say it.³⁶

In *The Religious Affections*, Jonathan Edwards correctly addresses the need for emotion to accompany theological understanding in the experience of one's faith: "He that has doctrinal knowledge and speculation only, without affection, never is engaged in the business of true religion."³⁷ Therefore, in his study of revival he asserts that "[o]ur people do not so much need to have their heads stored, as to have their hearts touched, and they stand in greatest need of that sort of preaching, which has the greatest tendency to do this."³⁸ Moreover, ministers, he avers, are not to be blamed for raising the affections of their hearers too high if that which they are affected with be worthy of affection.

However, one's passion should not diminish the authenticity of one's vocal expression. In J. D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*, the main character, Holden Caulfield, is very cynical toward everything in life, particularly phonies. In one scene he ponders the preacher's ostentatious voice which is used for effect. "If you want to know the truth, I can't . . . stand ministers. They all have these Holy Joe voices when they start giving their sermons. I hate that. I don't see why the hell they can't talk in their natural voice. They sound so phony when

³⁴ Resner, Jr., 76.

³⁵ Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, Book IV, 686.

³⁶ Augustine, Book IV, 683.

³⁷ Jonathan Edwards, *The Religious Affections*, in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, vol. 1 (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1987), 30.

³⁸ Jonathan Edwards, *On Revival*, in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, vol. 1 (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1987), 391.

they talk.”³⁹ In preaching there will be inflection, crescendo, animation as well as conversational tones. However, *pathos* does not mean that we preach with a Holy Joe voice that sounds conjured and inauthentic.

Preaching with Style

Pathos does not simply refer to one’s enthusiasm and fervor, but the diversity of communication styles within any given preaching event. These styles are commensurate with the various genres of literature found in Scripture. God has creatively communicated through engaging narrative, poetry, parables, the metaphorical language of apocalyptic literature as well as propositional language. We, however, tend to ignore the imaginative nature of Biblical communication in favour of propositional language. Louis Markos suggests that this is because “we are heirs of the enlightenment with its emphasis of fact over fiction, logic over intuition, history over myth. We ascribe far more validity to scientific rational discourse than we do to the ambiguous, irony rich language of the arts.”⁴⁰

Within the Reformed tradition, a catechetical systematic approach to theology has weakened our ability to communicate artistically. In an attempt to avoid the increasingly common abuse of Scripture due to textual isolation, the Reformers rightly emphasized an exegetical reading of Scripture whereby one text is understood in light of another. From this emphasis there emerged a pedagogical method of instruction that focused on rote memorization. This catechetical approach inculcated truth through a systematic understanding of Scripture. While this method has great instructional value, it is important to recognize that the logical principles of hermeneutics, so integral to the Reformed tradition, had not been formulated when the gospels were written.⁴¹ Therefore, we must be careful when we hold Scripture to a system of taxonomical delineation and classification that did not exist when it was written.⁴² I maintain that if a systematic presentation of theology

³⁹ J. D. Salinger, *The Catcher in the Rye* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1991) 100.

⁴⁰ Louis Markos, *Lewis Agonistes* (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 2003), 120.

⁴¹ R.W.L. Moberly, “Proclaiming Christ Crucified: Some Reflections on the Use and Abuse of the Gospels”, *Anvil: An Evangelical Journal for Theology and Mission* 5 (1988): 101.

⁴² The Greek word *katechizo* simply means to teach by word of mouth. It is difficult to maintain that when the word was used Paul had some variant of the Socratic method in mind, when this method of instruction is almost entirely

was the most effective way to communicate truth, then that is how God would have presented it to us.

Moreover, a subscription to a catechetical method of pedagogy, which does not reflect Biblical style although it reflects Biblical truth, may create a prosaic theological milieu that has learned to read Scripture in order to extract doctrine, rather than reading Scripture with respect to the way Scripture was primarily written: as an expression of artistic styles to be holistically engaged for the purpose of transformation, rather than as catechetical instruction imbibed through rote memorization. Recent scholarship in narrative theology has helpfully shown us that in reading Scripture we are not simply concerned with what the Bible says but also how God says it. This does not necessarily mean that our preaching must be slick and urbane, but at the very least, it ought to reflect the styles of Scripture rather than become a mere propositional expression of truth.

How do we develop both style and substance, the pathos and logos of the sermon? One way is by being careful of what we read. The beauty of the logos will, to some degree, correspond to the literary beauty to which you subject yourself. Jonathan Edwards, of all theological writers, is one of the most stylistic and enjoyable to read. Yet he wishes that he would have studied the novels of the Victorian author Samuel Richardson in order to improve his own style of writing.⁴³ If your desk is piled high with dull leadership books full of statistical information and dry theology tomes replete with systematic reasoning, then not only will this shape what you say, but also how you are saying it. I am not suggesting that we put away our theology texts but that we learn to recognize literary beauty by subjecting ourselves to it. Read the classics, Dante, Shakespeare and Milton. Read Dafoe, Austin, Dickens, Dostoevsky, Steinbeck, Chekhov and Faulkner. Identify literary craftsmanship and subject yourself to it. This will assist you in your labour as a wordsmith and rhetorical artisan.

3. *The Ethos of the Preacher*

Lastly we will discuss the *ethos* of the minister of the gospel. John Wesley once said, "Give me one hundred preachers who fear nothing but sin and desire nothing but God . . . such alone will shake the gates

foreign to Scripture. Moreover, when it is used in Galatians 6:6, it refers to being catechized by the word of God.

⁴³ Killinger, 11.

of hell and set up the kingdom of God.”⁴⁴ These kinds of lofty sounding assertions are unhelpful to the development of the *ethos* of the minster and if taken literally, are ultimately discouraging. I look forward to that day when I will fear nothing but sin and desire nothing but God. However, until then I am a minster of the gospel which saves from the sin I still succumb to. I make mistakes, repent and may prudently use my own shortcomings as examples of how my hearers may struggle with sin and learn to repent.

Nehemiah, the great leader who orchestrated the rebuilding of the wall of Jerusalem, once prayed, “O LORD, God of heaven, the great and awesome God . . . I confess the sins we Israelites, including myself and my father's house, have committed against you.”⁴⁵ Nehemiah demonstrates the leader's *ethos* when he uses the pronoun “we” and emphasizes his own sin when he adds, “including myself.” A minister of the gospel is not someone who simply exhorts his listeners to repentance; rather, he stands before you and shows you how through his own. The preacher's *ethos* is observed in his authenticity, which inevitably means that he is not afraid to reveal weakness. There is something engaging about people who admit their weaknesses. They are unimposing and welcoming. Weakness is relationally appealing.

However, we do not like to admit that we are weak and flawed. Fyodor Dostoevsky reveals why in his description of the incompetent father of the three brothers in *The Brothers Karamazov*. He describes the old buffoon with these words: “he is a man who knew his weaknesses and was afraid of them.”⁴⁶ Our fear of the exposure of weaknesses causes us to impound the truth about ourselves rather than live without pretense. We conceal our defects and deficiencies because we are afraid of them. Our strengths make us feel superior and our weakness frighten us because they make us feel inferior. Therefore, perhaps without even knowing why, people find us to be aloof and unapproachable. In Steinbeck's *East of Eden*, the Irish matriarch, Liz, is described as a woman who “frightened her grandchildren because she had no weakness.”⁴⁷ If you are afraid of your own weaknesses, others will be afraid of you; for you would rather intimidate people than welcome them into the life of your flawed self. Most of us,

⁴⁴ In Adrian Burdon, *Authority and Order, John Wesley and His Preachers* (Brookfield, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2005), 25.

⁴⁵ Neh. 1:5-7.

⁴⁶ Fyodor Dostoevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*, trans Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2002), 93.

⁴⁷ John Steinbeck, *East of Eden* (New York: Penguin Books, 1992), 12.

however, prefer the kind of company that allows us to be real for they do not think less of us when we disclose weaknesses.

The moments of the church's greatest influence have not been those when the church reached for worldly power or when it adapted to its culture, but when it sought to be authentic. "The church", David Wells asserts, "has been its most influential in those moments when its contrition reached down deeply into its soul . . . At such moments it has soared and out of its own weakness found extraordinary strength and power."⁴⁸ By embracing the cruciform paradigm, the weakness of the minister of the gospel becomes the locus of the power of God functioning through his preaching.

The prosaic promulgation of pure information, even God information, is dull, unappealing and uninspiring. Therefore, contemporary preaching must be concerned with the aesthetic categories of beauty in order to maintain theological integrity as well cultural significance. Using the Aristotelian categories of rhetoric, we have explored the notion of preaching as a creative expression, rooted inherently in the beauty of God as the foundation of both the form and content of the sermon. We have discussed the *pathos* of the sermon revealed in the variety of communication styles. Finally, the authentic *ethos* of the minister was discussed as that which grants credibility to the *logos* and *pathos* of the preached gospel.

⁴⁸ David Wells, *Above All Earthly Powers* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 315-316.

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Saving the Strawy Epistle: The Recovery of James after Martin Luther

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Introduction

Although he never wrote a formal commentary on the letter, Martin Luther's notorious comments about the Epistle of James – chiefly, that it was an “epistle of straw”¹ – became a byword in the exegetical tradition by the mid-sixteenth century.² In fact, nearly every commentator who wrote on the letter after the time of Luther, whether Catholic or Protestant, did so in full awareness of Luther's comments and responded accordingly – and almost always negatively. When the English divine Thomas Manton, for instance, wrote his commentary on James in the 1640s, he reserved his most bitter remarks for Luther. He

¹ Martin Luther, LW 35:362; WABi 6:11, 29-35.

² See, for instance, Philip Mencil, a German lawyer, who wrote a Latin poem about Luther's famous comments on James entitled “Poem on the canonical Epistle of St. James, which Luther called a straw epistle.” It was apparently appended to a commentary on James by a Catholic professor at Ingolstadt, Petrus Stevartius (1549-1624), *In canonicam B. Iacobi Epistolam brevis commentarius* (Ingolstadt, 1591). See Martin Dibelius, *James: A Commentary on the Epistle of James*, rev. Heinrich Greeven (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976), 56 n. 233.

regarded the reformer's comments, a century past, as "rude," "uncivil," and even "blasphemous."³

Dissatisfaction with and disapproval of Luther's appraisal of James was widespread and immediate, and the subsequent recovery of the letter's significance within the canon occurred over the course of several decades, of which Manton's commentary served as the culmination of this lengthy process. Protestant interpreters during the second half of the sixteenth century and first half of the seventeenth century particularly illustrated this process as they variously commented on James subsequent to Martin Luther. After first discussing Luther's own comments about James, this article will then focus on how individual commentators among the three most dominant Protestant traditions at this time (Reformed, Lutheran, and Anglican) responded to Luther's comments. Specifically, this article illustrates how John Calvin, Niels Hemmingsen, and Thomas Manton collectively and completely distanced themselves from Luther's (perceived) negative comments about the Letter of James.

Martin Luther (1484-1546)

Martin Luther first publicly questioned the integrity of the Letter of James within the context of his famous discussion of the sacraments in *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church* in the fall of 1520.⁴ Specifically, in reference to the so-called sacrament of extreme unction, Luther attacked the doctrine's biblical basis by suggesting, as did Erasmus just before him and Cajetan soon afterward, that "this epistle is not by James the apostle, and that it is not worthy of an apostolic spirit."⁵ However, in his argument against extreme unction, Luther left the question of authorship aside and argued instead that extreme unction was not a sacrament on other grounds, namely, because it lacked dominical institution.

It was not until two years later, in 1522, that Luther published his most famous comments on James. These remarks, which emerged in the context of Luther's translation of the New Testament into German,

³ Thomas Manton, *The Works of Thomas Manton* (London: Nisbet, 1870), 4:10-11.

⁴ This was not Luther's earliest public questioning of James, but it was probably the most decisive one given the wide circulation of *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*. In fact, as Ronald Sider, *Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt: The Development of His Thought 1517-1525* (Leiden: Brill, 1974), 96, points out, Luther questioned the letter as early as 1519.

⁵ Luther, LW 36:118; WA 6:567, 33-568, 19.

have been notoriously intertwined with the reformer ever since. In the conclusion to his prefaces to the New Testament, where he commented on various books and explained his method of biblical interpretation, Luther offered these final remarks:

In a word, St. John's Gospel and his first epistle, St. Paul's epistles, especially Romans, Galatians, and Ephesians, and St. Peter's first epistle are the books that show you Christ and teach you all that is necessary and salvific for you to know, even if you were never to see or hear any other book of doctrine. Therefore, St. James' epistle is really an epistle of straw [*stramineam epistolam*; German: *ein rechte stroern Epistel*], compared to these others, for it has nothing of the nature of the gospel about it.⁶

Although Luther later removed these comments from the 1534 preface in the complete Bible and, in 1539, from printings of the New Testament (most importantly, his comment about James being "an epistle of straw"), they generated widespread discussion and opprobrium among subsequent interpreters, and they have since then become a byword in the exegetical tradition.

Luther's comments on James, up to this point, largely (but not completely) reflected the views of his Catholic contemporaries Erasmus and Cajetan. Luther, however, differed considerably from these two theologians in at least one important way. Whereas Erasmus and Cajetan questioned the authorship of James based on linguistic and historical grounds (from a tradition stretching all the way back to Eusebius and Jerome), Luther, in addition to these two reasons, questioned the letter's apostolicity and canonicity on the basis of its theology. As Luke Timothy Johnson explains, "Luther pushed the principle of [*S*]achkritik ('content criticism') to the extreme of rejecting James entirely because of its (perceived) contradiction to Luther's fundamental principle of *sola fide*."⁷ Indeed, as Luther himself states in his preface to the Epistles of James and Jude in 1522, "I do not regard [James] as the writing of an apostle."⁸

Luther offered three main reasons why he questioned James. First, the epistle "is flatly against St. Paul and all the rest of Scripture in

⁶ Luther, LW 35:362; WABi 6:11, 29-35.

⁷ Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Letter of James* (New York: Doubleday, 1995), 141.

⁸ Luther, LW 35:396; WABi 7:385, 3-8.

ascribing justification to works.” Second, although “its purpose is to teach Christians...in all [its] long teaching it does not mention the Passion, the resurrection, or the Spirit of Christ.” Finally, “James does nothing more than drive to the law and to its works.” For these reasons, Luther concludes, “I cannot include him among the chief books, though I would not thereby prevent anyone from including or extolling him as he pleases, for there are otherwise many good sayings in him.”⁹

Although Luther referred to James on numerous occasions throughout the remainder of his career, these comments from *The Babylonian Captivity to the Church* in 1520 and, especially, the prefaces to the New Testament and the Letter of James in 1522 encapsulate well Luther’s (complex) view of James. As David Lotz explains: Because Luther “uses the principle ‘what preaches Christ’ to determine the boundaries of the biblical canon,”¹⁰ he concludes that James is not apostolic. However, contrary to popular thinking, Luther does not reject James completely or even partially; on the contrary, he considers it a fine letter and includes it in the canon; but it is inferior to the “the right and precious books [*die rechten und edlisten bucher*]”¹¹ of the New Testament, namely, Paul’s letters and the Gospels. Indeed, the very fact that Luther calls James an epistle “of straw,” which language he adopts from Paul in 1 Corinthians 3:10-15, indicates that he does not reject it. Just as Paul’s metaphor about a building that is constructed by gold or silver is better than one constructed by hay or straw, so books of the New Testament like Romans and John (gold) are superior to books like James or Jude (straw).

Despite his intentions, however, and his otherwise favorable or, at least, neutral statements about the letter, those who interpreted James after Luther gravitated toward those comments he made that questioned the integrity of James. It is for this reason, perhaps, why so few Lutheran exegetes wrote commentaries on the letter.¹² Aside from Luther’s former German theological ally Andreas von Karlstadt, who

⁹ Luther, LW 35:396-397; WABi 7:385, 3-8.

¹⁰ David Lotz, “Sola Scriptura: Luther on Biblical Authority,” *Interpretation* 35 (1981): 273.

¹¹ LW 35:396; WABi 7:385, 3-8.

¹² Johnson, *The Letter of James*, 142, states it thus: “Luther’s position, indeed, was to be of greater influence on later scholars in the German Lutheran tradition than it was on his fellow reformers.” This is certainly accurate, but it is incomplete. Luther’s influence surpasses that of his fellow German Lutherans. His influence, though largely negative when it comes to the Epistle of James, is clearly discernible among the Reformed tradition.

disagreed with Luther about the status and importance of James and who even attacked his view,¹³ German Lutherans after Luther did not generally write commentaries on the letter.¹⁴

John Calvin (1509-1564)

In the Protestant exegetical tradition, the writing of commentaries on James fell to the Reformed.¹⁵ Chief among the Reformed commentators was John Calvin, who wrote commentaries on all of the New Testament, excluding Revelation and 2 and 3 John. Calvin published his Latin commentary on the Catholic Epistles¹⁶ in 1551 and, although he dedicated it to Edward VI and it appears to have been well received in England, it was not translated into English during the sixteenth century. Although Calvin had less of an aversion than Luther did to books like Hebrews, James, and Jude, Calvin did position 1 Peter and 1 John before James among the Catholic Epistles and he did not even deign to include 2 and 3 John in his commentary. Calvin's decision to give canonical prominence to 1 Peter and 1 John in terms of positioning was not atypical; the Vulgate had done this. However, his decision not to write on 2 and 3 John doubtlessly reflects the elasticity of the canon in the first half of the sixteenth century. As Richard

¹³ As Ronald Sider, *Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt*, 96-97, writes, "Karlstadt reported that when he undertook lectures on James in 1520, a certain presbyter (Luther's name was never mentioned) rejected the epistle on the grounds that its authorship was uncertain. This good priest's satirical opposition to the book apparently decreased Karlstadt's audience, and seriously threatened their old friendship... Without engaging in any detailed discussion of the theological problem, Karlstadt declared in regard to the content that the epistle contained nothing which contradicted other books such as Paul's epistles. Karlstadt sharply attacked the subjectivism of Luther's position."

¹⁴ The one early (pre-1550) exception to this rule is Andreas Althamer (1500-1539), reformer in Ansbach, who wrote a (forgotten) German commentary, *Die Epistel S. Jacobs mit newer Auslegung* (Wittenberg, 1533).

¹⁵ In contrast to the Lutherans as well as Anabaptists (who generally did not write commentaries in the sixteenth century), several Reformed theologians commented on James: Conrad Pellican (1478-1556), Ulrich Zwingli (1484-1531), Rudolph Gualther (1519-1586), Heinrich Bullinger (1504-1575), Augustine Marlorat (1506-1562), John Calvin (1509-1564), and Daniel Tossanus (1541-1602).

¹⁶ John Calvin, "Commentarius in Epistolas Catholicas," in *Ioannis Calvini Opera Quae Supersunt Omnia*, vol. 55 (Brunsvigae: C. A. Schwetschke et Filium, 1896), 199-516.

Muller explains in relation to Luther, so too is the case for Calvin and his contemporaries:

Luther's famous and highly hyperbolic dismissal of the Epistle of James as an epistle of "straw" can easily be set into an early Reformation context in which the patristic distinction between *homologoumena* and *antilegomena* in the New Testament still functioned. This sense of the relative fluidity of canon rapidly gave way in the sixteenth century to a stricter sense of the equally normative value of all the books of the New Testament, indeed, of the Bible as a whole.¹⁷

Harry Gamble confirms this: "[N]o ecumenical authority of the ancient church ever rendered a formal decision for the church at large as to the exact contents of the Christian scripture."¹⁸

Even though Calvin worked during a time in which the canon was more fluid, the "stricter sense" of the "equally normative value of all the books of the New Testament" emerges in the thought of Calvin in a way that it does not in Luther. In his *argumentum* for the Epistle of James, for instance, Calvin writes:

It appears from the writings of Jerome and Eusebius, that this Epistle was not formerly received by many Churches without opposition. There are also at this day some [namely, Luther¹⁹] who do not think it entitled to authority. I am

¹⁷ Richard Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics: The Rise and Development of Reformed Orthodoxy, ca. 1520 to ca. 1725*, 4 vols. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003), 2:374.

¹⁸ Harry Gamble, *The New Testament Canon: Its Making and Meaning* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 56.

¹⁹ As for why Calvin cites Eusebius and Jerome but not Luther, John Thompson, "Calvin as a Biblical Commentator," in *The Cambridge Companion to John Calvin* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), ed., Donald McKim, 65, offers the following comments: "Calvin does follow a general pattern in citing his sources: it is the church fathers above all whom he will name in his writings, as a mark of respect for their authority (second, of course, to Scripture), whereas scholastic and contemporary writers will normally not be mentioned by name because they are not seen as authorities." Later, Thompson adds that Calvin also quotes the Fathers in order to enter into debate or disagreement – as is the case here.

happy, however, to receive it without controversy, because I see no just cause for rejecting it.²⁰

Whereas Luther rejected the apostolicity of the Letter of James as a result of its reticence about the passion of Christ – indeed, hardly any mention of Jesus at all – and its fondness for law rather than gospel, Calvin accepted the letter. Interestingly, the reasons Calvin gives for accepting the letter – namely, that James and Paul are reconcilable, and that James’ reserve in speaking about Christ is consonant with Scripture – appeal not to the church’s authority but to Calvin’s individual hermeneutic.²¹ It also reveals how closely he had read Luther’s arguments and, by rejecting them, honored them as worthy of reply.

For Calvin, the deciding factor for determining the authority of James is not that it must preach Christ. The criterion is “that it contains nothing unworthy of an Apostle of Christ.”²² Moreover, in contrast to Luther (who additionally disfavored James for its stress on law and practical instruction),²³ Calvin favors it.²⁴ In the words of Calvin, “It is indeed full of instruction on various subjects, the benefit of which extends to every part of the Christian life.”²⁵ For Calvin, in other words, the problem with James is not internal; it is a perfectly useful

²⁰ Calvin, *Commentaries on the Catholic Epistles*, 276; CO 55:381.

²¹ Calvin, *Commentaries on the Catholic Epistles*, 276; CO 55:381. As was the case with 1 Peter and 1 John, Calvin makes yet another allusion to Luther’s general preface to the New Testament (1522) when he isolates the Gospel of John as tacitly superior to the other Gospels: “...among the evangelists themselves there is so much difference in setting forth the power of Christ, that the other three, compared with John, have hardly sparks of that full brightness which appears so conspicuous in him.” Calvin’s “stricter sense” distinguishes him from Luther as he finishes this statement: “...and yet we commend them all alike.”

²² Calvin, *Commentaries on the Catholic Epistles*, 276; CO 55:381.

²³ As he writes in his preface to James, LW 35:397, “...thus James does nothing more than drive to the law and to its work...He calls the law a ‘law of liberty’ though Paul calls it a law of slavery, of wrath, of death, and of sin.” Two paragraphs below, however, Luther speaks well of the letter for its “otherwise many good sayings.”

²⁴ As Guenther Haas writes in “Calvin’s Ethics,” in *The Cambridge Companion to John Calvin*, 97, “Calvin gives the concept of law a major role in his ethics...Because the law reveals the eternal will of God, it is, for Calvin, the ultimate moral norm.”

²⁵ Calvin, *Commentaries on the Catholic Epistles*, 276; CO 55:381.

and “Christian” book. The problem is more external: Who is the author of this epistle?

This last component to Calvin’s *argumentum* raises the important historical question of authorship. Calvin writes, “...as to the author, there is...more reason for doubting [the authority of the letter].”²⁶ Historically, the exegetical tradition had concluded that there were three potential Jameses: James of Zebedee and James of Alphaeus, who were among the twelve apostles, and James the Just, the brother of the Lord.²⁷ As Calvin confirms, “The ancients are nearly unanimous in thinking that [the author of James] was one of the disciples named [Just] and a relative [note: not brother] of Christ, who was set over the Church at Jerusalem.”²⁸ This was the James, Calvin further explains, whom the ancients believed Paul referred to in Galatians.

However, Calvin disagreed with the tradition. As he explains: “...[the notion] that one of the disciples was mentioned as one of the three pillars, and thus exalted above the other Apostles, does not seem to me probable.”²⁹ Calvin suggests that Paul refers to “the son of Alphaeus” rather than James the Just, the Bishop of Jerusalem. This is because Calvin does not understand how a non-apostle (that is, one of the twelve) such as James the Just could be cited in Scripture as somehow superior to the other two Jameses, who were apostles. For this reason, Calvin concludes his *argumentum* indecisively: “...[which] of the two [James of Alphaeus or James the Just] was the writer of this Epistle, it is not for me to say [*assesere meum non est*].”³⁰ In the end, however, the identity of the author matters little to Calvin. What is

²⁶ Calvin, *Commentaries on the Catholic Epistles*, 277; CO 55:382.

²⁷ There are important variations in this numbering, however. The exegetical tradition collectively rejects that James of Zebedee wrote this letter, leaving only James of Alphaeus and James the Just (as Bishop of Jerusalem). Some commentators distinguish between the two, some view them synonymously, and others leave this question unanswered (whether intentionally or not).

²⁸ Calvin, *Commentaries on the Catholic Epistles*, 277; CO 55:382.

²⁹ Calvin, *Commentaries on the Catholic Epistles*, 277; CO 55:382.

³⁰ Calvin, *Commentaries on the Catholic Epistles*, 277; CO 55:382. In his comments on Jude 1, Calvin’s indecisiveness regarding the authorship of James is less prominent: “...the authority of James is not here brought forward as that of a private individual, but because he was counted by all the Church as one of the chief apostles of Christ. He was the son of Alphaeus, as I have said elsewhere. No, this very passage is a sufficient proof to me against Eusebius and others, who say, that he was a disciple, named [Just]...But there is no doubt but that Jude mentions here his own brother, because he was eminent among the apostles,” 428-429.

important is the content of the letter, which he interprets as full of “remarkable passages” on various significant issues in “the Christian life.”³¹

Niels Hemmingsen (1513-1600)

Although he was not the first Reformed theologian to write a formal commentary on James, John Calvin’s work was incorporated into the Protestant exegetical tradition by the sixteenth century in a way that other Reformed commentaries were not. This is not exactly the case with Niels Hemmingsen. Hemmingsen, a bishop, scholar, and influential Lutheran preacher in his native Denmark, is certainly not as recognized today as his Protestant contemporary John Calvin, but he was an important figure. Indeed, as Kenneth Hagen explains:

Hemmingsen (1513-1600) was not unknown in sixteenth-century Europe. He was at the center of university and church life in Denmark. The *praeceptor universalis Daniae* was also the leader in the Philipist period of power. The “brilliant young Dane” was with Melanchthon in Wittenberg, 1537-1542; then in Copenhagen (1542) as professor of Greek (1543), dialectic (1545), and theology (1553), until his dismissal in 1579 on grounds of Crypto-Calvinism regarding the Lord’s Supper. Tyrgve Skarsten says that “his fame and reputation throughout the learned circles of Europe brought renown and glory to the University of Copenhagen. His Latin and Danish works were to be found in the leading libraries in multiple editions and often in Dutch, English, and German translation.”³²

It is surely noteworthy that Hemmingsen’s commentary on James was translated into English and Calvin’s was not. It appeared in

³¹ Calvin, *Commentaries on the Catholic Epistles*, 277; CO 55:382. Calvin’s appraisal of James parallels his view of 2 Peter, since he doubts Petrine authorship but nevertheless argues for the canonicity of the letter, 362-363. As for the equally dubious letter of Jude, Calvin accepts it as canonical but does not enter into discussion as regards authorship. In each of these letters (James, 2 Peter, Jude), Calvin’s conclusion regarding canon and authority is the same: they are authoritative since they contain “nothing inconsistent with the purity of apostolic doctrine,” not because they are written by apostles, CO 55:503.

³² Kenneth Hagen, “‘*De Exegetica Methodo*’: Niels Hemmingsen’s *De Methodis* (1555),” in *The Bible in the Sixteenth Century*, ed. David Steinmetz (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990), 182.

English in 1577,³³ with the Latin original preceding it by five years.³⁴ Hemmingsen's commentary begins with an *argumentum*, which had been standard practice since the patristic period. In it the Dane alludes to the controversy surrounding the issue of authorship and apostolicity within the exegetical tradition. Throughout his commentary he assumes, as did the majority of the tradition, that James the Just, Jesus' brother, was the author: "The author of this Epistle was James the Apostle, who is called the brother of the Lord."³⁵ As Calvin summarized in his *argumentum* on James, the collective tradition agreed that James the Just was the author, who may also have been James of Alpheus, but who was clearly not James of Zebedee (whom Herod killed in the early 40s). In contrast to Calvin, however, Hemmingsen agreed with the tradition; and just as the tradition used the standard view of authorship to affirm the authority of the letter against those who questioned it, so Hemmingsen argued forcefully for its apostility and authority.

Hemmingsen proceeds to defend the apostleship of James the author by explaining that on the day of Pentecost he was "again by a visible sign authorized and confirmed in his apostleship."³⁶ More pointedly, he argues: "Here it appears what is to be judged of this Epistle, namely, that we must give no less credit to it than to the voice of God."³⁷ The two decades that separated Calvin's commentary from Hemmingsen's were significant ones, as the previous "fluidity of the canon" had solidified even more in Protestant doctrine. Whereas Calvin remained somewhat intransigent to the view that James was not apostolic, Hemmingsen was noticeably opposed to this. This explains his defensive posture toward the view that this letter does not come from "the voice of God."³⁸ Hemmingsen made this statement to affirm

³³ Niels Hemmingsen, *A learned and fruitefull commentarie upon the Epistle of James the Apostle wherein are diligently and profitably entreated all such matters and chiefe commonplaces of religion as are touched in the same epistle* (London, 1577). The language has been standardized.

³⁴ Niels Hemmingsen, *Commentaria in omnes epistolas apostolorum* (Leipzig, 1572).

³⁵ Hemmingsen, *A learned and fruitefull commentarie upon the Epistle of James the Apostle*, 1.

³⁶ Hemmingsen, *A learned and fruitefull commentarie upon the Epistle of James the Apostle*, 1.

³⁷ Hemmingsen, *A learned and fruitefull commentarie upon the Epistle of James the Apostle*, 1.

³⁸ By the second half of the sixteenth century, however, this form of language was common.

the letter's authority against those who were giving "less credit to it."³⁹ It is not possible to identify unmistakably to whom Hemmingsen was reacting, but Luther is the most likely candidate. Having studied in Wittenberg the same time Luther taught there, and being so connected with Luther's faithful colleague and supporter, Philip Melancthon, Hemmingsen was surely familiar with Luther's view of James.

Hemmingsen concludes his *argumentum* with a traditional discussion on the meaning of the term "Catholic Epistles." Of significance in this closing section is his discussion of canon. In the context of distinguishing the letters of Paul from the other New Testament writings, Hemmingsen writes that "whatsoever we read in the Epistles of the Apostles, we ought to embrace it as a canon or rule of the truth."⁴⁰ In other words, he concludes, the Epistle of James (as well as the rest of the Catholic Epistles) remains canonical and authoritative – regardless of doubts in regard to authorship and historical circumstance.

Thomas Manton (1620-1677)

In contrast to several commentaries that Continental Reformed theologians wrote on James, and less occasional ones that Lutherans composed, very few English divines published commentaries on James during the sixteenth century. However, by the time of the mid-seventeenth century, several interpreters had written commentaries on the letter, the most detailed of which was written by the famous London preacher Thomas Manton, rector at St. Paul's, Covent Garden, until his dismissal in 1662 due to the Act of Uniformity. Manton, recipient of the Doctor of Divinity from Wadham College, Oxford, in 1660, wrote a homiletical commentary on James during the English Civil Wars in the 1640s and published it exactly 100 years after Calvin's in 1651.⁴¹

As Manton began writing on James in the mid 1640s, the comments that various writers made within the exegetical tradition were more than relevant. In his prolegomena to James, he engages each of the most influential commentators on the letter throughout the tradition:

³⁹ Hemmingsen, *A learned and fruitfull commentarie upon the Epistle of James the Apostle*, 1.

⁴⁰ Hemmingsen, *A learned and fruitfull commentarie upon the Epistle of James the Apostle*, 2.

⁴¹ The full title of Manton's commentary is *A Practical Commentary, or an Exposition, with Notes, upon the Epistle of James* (London, 1651). There were three printings of the commentary: 1651, 1652, and 1657.

Eusebius, Jerome, Bede, Erasmus, Cajetan, Calvin, Grotius, and especially Luther. Methodologically, Manton stands in direct line with Hemmingsen in terms of style and posture. Overall, Manton's commentary could be characterized as defensive. He responds decisively to the tradition, stretching back from the time of Eusebius and Jerome to, most recently and, in his view, most scandalously, the time of Luther. In fact, Luther's comments about the Letter of James – a century past – are as provocative as the decade he wrote them. Manton goes to great lengths to prove that James is authoritative, that an apostle did write it, and that it is eminently relevant to the times in which he lives.

Manton's defensive posture characterizes in part the way he handles his prolegomena and James 1:1. Manton organizes his introductory discussion about the letter around six questions:

- 1) Whether this epistle be of divine authority?
- 2) Concerning the subordinate author or instrument, James, what James was this?
- 3) What was the time of writing it?
- 4) The persons to whom it was written?
- 5) What is the occasion, matter, and scope of it?
- 6) The reason of that term in the title, *catholic* or *general*.⁴²

The first question, arguably the most important, indicates Manton's defensive posture – questioning whether the letter is of “divine authority.” The remaining questions, of less importance than the first, need not be discussed here, since the first question adequately sets the tone for much of Manton's aggressive exposition as well as his close engagement with the overall tradition on James – particularly with Luther.

“Concerning the divine authority of this epistle,” Manton begins in relation to the first question, “I desire to discuss it with reverence and trembling.”⁴³ He explains that he would have rather omitted this question but, since “to conceal known adversaries is an argument of fear and distrust,” it is a question of extreme importance. He answers this question by first including the standard comments within the exegetical tradition and then by reproving those (principally Eusebius and Jerome) who had endeavored “to jostle James out of the canon.” Although Eusebius and Jerome made these comments specifically about James (and the other Catholic Epistles), Manton reasons

⁴² Manton, *Works*, 4:9.

⁴³ Manton, *Works*, 4:9.

generally that they infringe upon the authority of the rest of Scripture. Unlike Calvin, however, who responds to these doubts about James by examining the letter internally (which Manton will eventually do), Manton first appeals to the church councils in the patristic and early medieval periods for proof that James is rightly considered canonical.⁴⁴ This is important to note, as it explains how Manton is able to disagree so strongly with Luther and other influential figures: His authority resides in the collective tradition rather than individual figures like Luther or Calvin.

Aside from Eusebius and Jerome, the remainder of Manton's resolution to the issue of authority focuses on Luther: "Of late, I confess, [James] hath found harder measure. Cajetan and Erasmus show little respect to it; Luther plainly rejecteth it; and for the incivility and rudeness of his expression in calling it *stramineam epistolam*, as it cannot be denied, so it is not to be excused."⁴⁵ Manton then cites Luther's Latin preface to James (originally published in German in 1522), which ultimately denies the apostolicity of the letter. To this quotation Manton then adds: "which was the error and failing of this holy and eminent servant of God; and therein he is followed by others of his own profession: Osiander, Camerarius, Bugenhag[en], &c., and Althamerus." Fortunately, Manton concludes, the "blasphemies" of Luther's successors are not perpetuated by the "modern Lutherans, who allow this epistle in the canon."⁴⁶

Manton certainly answers the question of the epistle's divine authority affirmatively. He explains that he will deal with those "reasons which moved Luther to reject this epistle...in their proper places," that is, James 2:14-26.⁴⁷ Meanwhile, Manton offers the standard responses to the reasons given for questioning the authority of the epistle as found in Calvin and Hemmingsen. Manton specifically follows the defensive posture of Hemmingsen and those after him, though in a more heightened fashion, when it comes to claiming the

⁴⁴ Manton, *Works*, 4:10.

⁴⁵ Manton, *Works*, 4:10.

⁴⁶ According to Manton, *Works*, 4:10, the "modern Lutherans" are the following: "Hunnius, Montrer, Gerhard, Walther, [and] Brochmand." It remains difficult to determine if Manton read these works directly; in the case at hand, he is citing Grotius. Whether or not he was directly familiar with the others, he was certainly familiar with and favorable to Danish Philippist Jesper Brochmand, who wrote his commentary on James in the early 1640s.

⁴⁷ Manton, *Works*, 4:11.

inspiration of the Scriptures.⁴⁸ By the time he writes his commentary in the 1640s, the fluidity of the canon had solidified to such an extent that those who recognized the disputed history of letters like James – even those as authoritative as Martin Luther – were questioning not just the status of the biblical canon but also God, who inspired the writers of the canon in the first place.

Conclusion

Beginning with John Calvin, it is clear that the Genevan reformer was less interested and less confident about determining the question of authorship. He was equally less concerned about the question of authority, though he clearly – if not altogether quietly – disagreed with Luther. For Calvin, James of Alpheus is most likely the author; but it does not ultimately matter. For Niels Hemmingsen and Thomas Manton, by way of contrast, the issue of authorship became extremely important. They were apologetic. James must be an apostle or the authority or canonicity⁴⁹ of the letter is jeopardized. This illustrates the differences between Calvin the reformer and Hemmingsen and Manton the post-reformers.⁵⁰ The fluidity of the canon functioned during Calvin's era in a way that it did not at the time of Protestant orthodoxy – at which time the canon was fairly complete.⁵¹

⁴⁸ Manton's views here parallel the recently written Westminster Confession of Faith.

⁴⁹ As Muller notes, *PRRD*, 2:375: "Absolute closure of the canon and its integral perfection were issues that came to be of doctrinal importance only when the bounds of the canon and its relation to the authoritative tradition and *magisterium* of the church became a matter of faith – a confessional or creedal issue."

⁵⁰ Hemmingsen and Turnbull parallel their Protestant orthodox contemporary Girolamo Zanchi, whose *The Whole Body of Christian Religion* (London, 1659 [1608]), 2-5, reads thus in relation to canon: "We do not doubt; but those are the writings of the Prophets and Apostles, which the Church of God is therefore wont to call by the name of *Canonicall* books, because knowing assuredly that they were *given by inspiration of God*, she hath alwayes acknowledged for the *canon* and rule." Zanchi then concedes that "in former times there hath been some question concerning" some of the New Testament letters (Hebrews, Catholic Epistles [save 1 John], and Revelation), but he concludes: "...yet afterwards in processe of time they have been acknowledged for Apostolicall as well as the rest."

⁵¹ See Westcott's dated yet important study of the canon through the course of the history of the church, *A General Survey of the History of the Canon of the New Testament* (London: Macmillan, 1896), 485. For the sixteenth century he

In this respect, the two decades that elapsed between the publication of Calvin's commentary in 1551 and Hemmingsen's in 1572 were extremely significant ones. As the fluidity of the New Testament canon solidified, those books that Luther had relegated to a secondary status – in this case, the Epistle of James – became equal participants of the biblical canon. By the time Manton published his commentary on James exactly 100 years after Calvin, he had settled the question of authorship definitively: Not only was James (of Alpheus) one of the twelve apostles but he was also Bishop of Jerusalem (thus James the Just) and cousin to Christ. His letter is therefore apostolic – a clear refutation of the views that Manton perceived Luther to hold. Nevertheless, the combined and combative efforts of interpreters commonly classified within the era of Protestant orthodoxy who attempted to correct Luther, though decisive in regards to the inclusion of the Letter of James as canonical within the subsequent Protestant tradition, did little to remove the stigma of James within the exegetical tradition. Luther's comments about the letter are as enduring today as they were half a millennium ago.

notes the importance of the Tridentine Council, which effectively settled the biblical canon in 1546, and made it “an absolute article of faith” to hold within the Roman Catholic Church. The early Reformed confessions, for instance, the Belgic and Second Helvetic Confessions confirm the closure of the canon (which includes the Letter of James); so, too, does the Westminster Confession of Faith. The parallelism between Protestant and Catholic thought in relation to the canonicity of James is striking.

Twin Sons of Different Mothers: The Remarkable Theological Convergence of John W. Nevin and Thomas F. Torrance

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This article explores some remarkable yet overlooked theological similarities between nineteenth-century American Reformed theologian John Williamson Nevin and twentieth-century Scottish theologian Thomas F. Torrance. There are striking parallels between the two with respect to both theological method and theological content, to the point where one might reasonably suspect a direct genetic influence. There is little evidence beyond these parallels, however, that Torrance ever read a word of Nevin, which makes the question of convergence that much more interesting.¹ I will suggest that the common threads here are due to the fact that here are two remarkably capable theologians with similar backgrounds wrestling with persistent questions that emerge out of the Reformed and evangelical experience. As such, this exploratory exercise may well have implications for contemporary evangelical theology.

¹While my survey of Torrance's voluminous writings is not complete, I have thus far found no references to Nevin. Likewise, two extensive secondary treatments of Torrance's theology (McGrath and Colyer) do not mention any influence by Nevin upon Torrance.

I. Biographical Considerations

John Williamson Nevin (1803-1886) was raised in the bosom of the older Presbyterian tradition, with its emphasis upon the ordinary means of grace, catechetical training, and the Westminster Standards. At Union College, however, Nevin encountered New England Evangelical Calvinism with its revivalism, moralism, and reformist impulse.² Nevin then enrolled at Princeton Theological Seminary, where he was trained in the tradition of Reformed federal theology. After a brief stint of teaching at Princeton in which he filled in for Charles Hodge while the latter studied in Europe, Nevin was called to Western Theological Seminary near Pittsburgh where he taught Biblical literature. While at Western, Nevin began to explore German theological literature, and was particularly impressed with the work of the church historian J. A. G. Neander, whose organic and developmental approach captivated Nevin. Then in 1840 Nevin was called to teach at the German Reformed Seminary at Mercersburg, Pennsylvania. There Nevin and Phillip Schaff spearheaded the “Mercersburg Theology,” a mid-nineteenth century movement in the German Reformed Church that sought to provide a churchly alternative in the American context to the individualistic revivalism and moralism of the New England theology and to the federal theology of Old Princeton.³

Thomas F. Torrance (1913-2007) was born to British missionary parents in China. His father was a Church of Scotland minister from the evangelical wing of the church, and his mother an evangelical Anglican. After studying classics, philosophy, and divinity at the University of Edinburgh, Torrance completed a doctorate at the University of Basel where he studied under Karl Barth. Following several years in the pastorate, Torrance was called to teach at Edinburgh, where he taught Church History and then Christian Dogmatics from 1952 until his retirement in 1979.⁴ In addition to his

²On Nevin, see John W. Nevin, *My Own Life: The Earlier Years* (Lancaster, PA: Historical Society of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, 1964); Theodore Appel, *The Life and Work of John Williamson Nevin* (Philadelphia: Reformed Church Publication House, 1889); D. G. Hart, *John Williamson Nevin: High Church Calvinist* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 2005).

³On the Mercersburg Theology, see especially James Hastings Nichols, *Romanticism in American Theology: Nevin and Schaff at Mercersburg* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961).

⁴See Alister E. McGrath, *T. F. Torrance: An Intellectual Biography* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1999); Elmer M. Colyer, *How to Read T. F.*

own myriad of publications, Torrance is also known for his work as a translator and editor of Barth's *Church Dogmatics*, and in his own theology we frequently find Barthian themes filtered through the Scottish heritage of churchly Calvinism and Torrance's own engagement with the philosophy of science.

What are the common threads here? Both men were exposed, by family background and by educational training, to Reformed theology and to the emotional warmth of pietistic evangelicalism. Both head and heart were engaged, and both were to demonstrate a deep concern for the integration of the Christian's experience of grace. By virtue of their backgrounds, they were both also aware of certain difficulties in the received heritage. We will look at some examples of this, first in the area of theological method, and then in the area of theological content.

II. Theological Method

As we survey the work of both, we immediately notice a heavy historical component. Nevin read widely in the history of doctrine from the Apostolic Fathers until his own time. In debates Nevin showed himself to be a formidable historical apologist, as Charles Hodge and others discovered to their dismay.⁵ Torrance's Basel dissertation explored the eclipse of grace in the Apostolic Fathers,⁶ and his later writings have copious references to a wide range of figures – eastern and western patristic, medieval, Reformation, and modern. Clearly, both men have taken the tradition with deadly seriousness – not in slavish dependence upon the letter of earlier formulations, but with profound respect for those who have gone before.

Torrance: Understanding His Trinitarian and Scientific Theology (Downers Grove: IVP, 2001).

⁵Nevin and Hodge had a well-known debate over the nature of the Reformed doctrine of the Lord's Supper. In the opinion of many, Nevin got the better of the argument. Nevin critiqued the prevailing Zwinglianism of his day in his *The Mystical Presence: A Vindication of the Reformed or Calvinistic Doctrine of the Holy Eucharist* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippencott, 1846). Hodge responded with a scathing book review, "Doctrine of the Reformed Church on the Lord's Supper," *Biblical Repertory and Princeton Review* 20 (1848): 227-278. Nevin's most complete response to Hodge is found in his "Doctrine of the Reformed Church on the Lord's Supper," *Mercersburg Review* 2 (1850): 421-548. For insightful accounts of this interchange, see Nichols, *Romanticism*, 84-106; Hart, *John Williamson Nevin*, 114-137.

⁶ Thomas F. Torrance, *The Doctrine of Grace in the Apostolic Fathers* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959 [orig. ed. 1948]).

Second, both are philosophical realists who consistently oppose dualistic and disjunctive modes of thought. Nevin was powerfully influenced by the idealist currents coming out of Germany, and particularly by the organic idealism of Schelling.⁷ This is especially evident in Nevin's nearly constant polemic against what he terms the "outward" or "extrinsic," the "mechanical," and the "abstract," and his turn toward the "inward," the "organic," and the "concrete." We see in Nevin a vigorous impulse toward unity and integration rather than disjunction, toward the *a priori* and ideal over against the *a posteriori* and empirical, and toward the general over the particular. In the critical realism of Torrance as well we find a powerful drive for integration. Repeatedly we detect a philosophical stance in which there is a refusal to pit act and function against being and ontology (in contrast to much twentieth-century philosophy and theology). This realism is further evident in Torrance's polemic against "dualism." The causal and ontological categories inherited from Aristotelian and Newtonian science, Torrance argues, tend to separate God from the world and to cause one to see disjunction where essential unity and continuity exist. In place of "dualism," Torrance invokes the findings of contemporary theoretical physics, and he calls for an "onto-relational" mode of thought in which matter and energy, time and space are viewed in relational rather than absolute terms.⁸

Finally, both Nevin and Torrance emphasize Christology and the Incarnation as foundational for theology. Nevin regards the Incarnation as the central event of history and the theanthropic person of Christ as the essential content of the Christian faith. He writes in his 1849 article on the Apostles' Creed: "The Incarnation is the deepest and most comprehensive fact, in the economy of the world. Jesus Christ authenticates himself, and all truth and reality besides; or rather all

⁷The philosophical influences on Nevin are treated in Bruce Kuklick, *Churchmen and Philosophers: From Jonathan Edwards to John Dewey* (New Haven: Yale, 1985), 171-183; and William DiPuccio, "Nevin's Idealistic Philosophy," in *Reformed Confessionalism in Nineteenth-Century America*, ed. Sam Hamstra, Jr. and Arie J. Griffioen (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow, 1995), 43-67.

⁸See Thomas F. Torrance, *Space, Time and Resurrection* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), 186-188; *The Mediation of Christ* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1983), 58-62; *Theology in Reconciliation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), 8-14. The critical realism of Torrance is explored in McGrath, *T. F. Torrance*, 211-232; Colyer, *How to Read*, 322-355; and P. Mark Achtemeier, "The Truth of Tradition: Critical Realism in the Thought of Alasdair Macintyre and T. F. Torrance," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 47 (1994): 355-374.

truth and reality are such, only by the relation in which they stand to him, as their great centre and last ground.”⁹ The Incarnation is just as central for Torrance. A staunch defender of the Nicene *homoousion*, he regards the Incarnation as foundational to God’s revelation of himself, to the accomplishing of salvation by the God-Man, to the application of that redemption and reconciliation to human beings through participation in the Savior’s person, *and* to the human response to divine grace.¹⁰ As such, the Incarnation is determinative of the method as well as the content of theology. Torrance writes: “It is the incarnation of the Word which prescribes to dogmatic theology both its matter and its method, so that whether in its activity as a whole or in the formulation of a doctrine in any part, it is the Christological pattern that will be made to appear.”¹¹

III. Theological Content

We will examine convergence of theological content in two distinct but related areas – the incarnate humanity of Christ and the stress on solidarity/participation/union with Christ as the means of receiving salvation.

A. *The Incarnate Humanity of Christ*

Both Nevin and Torrance affirm the classic two natures doctrine of the Creeds. More interesting, however, is how they both treat the nature and significance of the humanity of Christ. Several points of crucial importance must be noted at the outset. Both theologians accord enormous soteriological significance to the incarnate humanity of Christ. Both affirm that the Logos assumed a “fallen humanity,” and that the humanity of Christ is in some sense general or universal in its significance.

⁹John W. Nevin, “The Apostles’ Creed,” *Mercersburg Review* I (1849): 315. The logic of this position implies, and Nevin at times suggests, that the Incarnation would have occurred even apart from sin. For example, Nevin suggests that “the Messianic idea” of the God-Man “has its necessity in the constitution of humanity.” William H. Erb, *Dr. Nevin’s Theology: Based on Manuscript Class-Room Lectures* (Reading, PA: I. M. Beaver, 1913), 236. For other discussions of this matter see Nevin, “Liebner’s Christology,” *Mercersburg Review* 3 (1851): 55-73; and “Cur Deus Homo,” *Mercersburg Review* 3 (1851): 220-238.

¹⁰See Torrance, *Mediation*, 83-108.

¹¹Thomas F. Torrance, *Theology in Reconstruction* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), 128.

According to Nevin, in the Incarnation humanity is united with the eternal Logos so as to introduce a new principle of existence into the world. Moreover, Nevin insists, the Logos has been united with a “fallen” human nature, has sanctified it, and thus has raised humanity to a new level of existence Nevin terms the “New Creation.” In speaking of Christ’s “fallen” human nature, Nevin did not deny the sinlessness of Christ. Rather, he emphasizes the solidarity of Christ with those he came to save.

In taking our nature upon him, he was made in all respects like as we are, only without sin. (Heb. iv. 15. v. 2, 7). He appeared “in the likeness of sinful flesh” (Rom. viii. 3); “made of a woman, made under the law” (Gal. iv. 4). The humanity which he assumed was fallen, subject to infirmity, and liable to death. . . . Under all this low estate however, the power of a divine life was always actively present, wrestling as it were with the law of death it was called to conquer, and sure of its proper victory at the last. This victory was displayed in the resurrection.¹²

And so, as the bearer of this new principle of existence, Christ is the “second Adam,” the root and source of a new humanity made up of those in mystical union with him.¹³

In explaining how this incarnate humanity of Christ can serve as the medium of the New Creation, Nevin introduces a crucial distinction between individual and generic humanity, between “the simple man and the universal man.”¹⁴ Both the first and second Adams serve as generic heads of their respective communities. The first Adam has to do with humanity as originally created, the second with humanity as recreated and elevated through union with the Logos.¹⁵ This distinction between individual and generic humanity, Nevin believes, enables one to affirm a real and meaningful union without effacing personal distinctions.¹⁶

¹²John W. Nevin, *The Mystical Presence: A Vindication of the Reformed or Calvinistic Doctrine of the Holy Eucharist* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1846), 223.

¹³See Nevin, *Mystical Presence*, 165-166.

¹⁴Nevin, *Mystical Presence*, 173.

¹⁵See John W. Nevin, “Catholic Unity,” in James Hastings Nichols, ed., *The Mercersburg Theology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), 40; *Mystical Presence*, 173.

¹⁶See Nevin, *Mystical Presence*, 165, 173.

Torrance travels a similar path as he treats the significance of the Incarnation. His writings are replete with references to the “mediatorial humanity” and the “vicarious humanity” of Christ. This humanity of Christ has a corporate dimension: “His being was not only individual but also corporate, recapitulating in himself the chosen people and the messianic seed, and embodying in himself also the new humanity of the future.”¹⁷

Torrance also repeatedly insists (even more strongly than Nevin) that the humanity assumed by the Logos in the Incarnation was a fallen humanity. He writes: “[T]he Incarnation is to be understood as the coming of God to take upon himself our fallen human nature, our actual human existence laden with sin and guilt, our humanity diseased in mind and soul in its estrangement or alienation from the Creator.”¹⁸ In its assumption by the Logos, this fallen humanity was then sanctified, humanized, and brought into a proper relationship of responsiveness to God.¹⁹ This process of elevation reached its climax in the resurrection and ascension of Christ. Christ’s humanity has become “spiritual,” for “by the Spirit physical existence is redeemed from all that corrupts and undermines it, and from all or any privation of being.”²⁰

Two comments must be made at this juncture. First, the coherence of these notions of the corporate or generic significance of the humanity of Christ depends upon philosophical presuppositions that may be broadly designated as Platonic in tendency. For Nevin, this impulse was mediated by and filtered through the organic idealism of Schelling and German mediating theologians such as Neander and Ullmann. While the philosophical background of Torrance is certainly different, on this key point he too looks suspiciously Platonic. George Hunsinger insightfully remarks that for Torrance the sanctified humanity of Christ has “the status of a ‘concrete universal.’”²¹

Second, their view of the “fallen humanity” of Christ requires comment. Although Nevin asserts the notion in various contexts, he

¹⁷Torrance, *Theology in Reconstruction*, 200.

¹⁸Torrance, *Mediation*, 48-49; see also T. F. Torrance trans. and ed., *The School of Faith: The Catechisms of the Reformed Church* (New York: Harper, 1959), lxxxv.

¹⁹See Torrance, *Mediation*, 81-82.

²⁰Torrance, *Space, Time, and Resurrection*, 141. See also 139-142.

²¹George Hunsinger, “The Dimension of Depth: Thomas F. Torrance on the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper,” *Scottish Journal of Theology* 54/2 (2001): 162.

does not list his influences. Nevin was doubtless aware of the ideas of the deposed Scottish minister Edward Irving (1792-1834), but for obvious reasons does not cite him approvingly.²² Torrance is more concerned to establish a “meaningful past” for this position. He claims that this teaching was “found everywhere in the early church in the first five centuries,” and he appeals explicitly to the patristic dictum “that the unassumed is unhealed.”²³ This doctrine was, Torrance maintains, later suppressed in the Latin West in favor of the view that humanity in its pre-Fall condition was assumed by the Logos. This Torrance terms the “Latin heresy” and he views this as leading to an extrinsic conception of the relationship between Christ and the Christian, and to an undue preoccupation with the forensic at the expense of the realistic.²⁴ Then, according to Torrance, this earlier and more robust incarnational perspective re-emerges in the better Scottish theologians.²⁵

What are we to make of this historical case? Torrance is perhaps on firmer ground when dealing with the Greek fathers – the patristic dictum “what is not assumed is not saved” would seem to support his thinking, although a careful reading of Athanasius (a church father often cited by Torrance), for example, suggests that the problem of “corruption” in view is a metaphysical tendency toward non-being rather than moral fallenness.²⁶ His assertions regarding the Reformation and post-Reformation period, however, are open to

²² Edward Irving’s views on this matter were published in his *The Orthodox and Catholic Doctrine of Our Lord’s Human Nature* (London: Baldwin and Cradock, 1830). On the influence of Irving, see F. F. Bruce, “The Humanity of Jesus Christ,” in *A Mind for What Matters: Collected Essays of F. F. Bruce* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 248-258.

²³Torrance, *Mediation*, 49.

²⁴See, e.g., Thomas F. Torrance, “Karl Barth and the Latin Heresy,” *Scottish Journal of Theology* 39/4 (1986): 461-482. See also Colyer, *How to Read T. F. Torrance*, 86-89.

²⁵Torrance, *School of Faith*, lxxxiv-lxxxv; *Scottish Theology: From John Knox to John McLeod Campbell* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1996), 56-57, 78, 208-211.

²⁶See, e.g., Athanasius, *On the Incarnation in Christology of the Later Fathers*, ed. Edward R. Hardy (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1954), 62-63. Also of interest is the early but sophisticated discussion of this issue in Tertullian, “On the Flesh of Christ,” 16 in Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, eds., *Ante-Nicene Fathers* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986 reprint), III:535-536.

question.²⁷ But, of course, the coherence of the position does not stand or fall with the historical argument. It hinges not only on the exegesis on passages such as Romans 8:3 and 2 Corinthians 5:21, but also on the soteriological framework that is held, and it is to that soteriological framework that we now turn.

B. Salvation as Participation/Union with Christ

Christology generally stands in close relation to soteriology, and these theologians are no exception. Both stress the reception of salvation through the believer's union and solidarity with Christ. Both contend that it is through participation with the person of Christ that the Christian receives the benefits of Christ's work. But in order to understand the significance of this theme, some historical context is necessary.

We may distinguish two broad approaches to soteriology – the “appropriation” and “participation” models.²⁸ Much early and medieval soteriology was participationist. That is to say, the Christian is brought into union with Christ through sacramental incorporation into Christ himself and into his church as the body of Christ, and through this union with or participation in the person of Christ, the benefits of salvation are conveyed. Often the humanity of Christ is seen as the point of contact, mediating the power of the divine to the believer. As we move into the Reformation period, the initial impulse continues to be participationist. Here we recall, for example, of John Calvin's famous statement at the beginning of Book III of the *Institutes* that the benefits of salvation remain unavailable to us as long as “Christ remains outside of us.”²⁹ Also to be noted is Calvin's insistence that it

²⁷ See Bruce L. McCormack, “For Us and Our Salvation: Incarnation and Atonement in the Reformed Tradition,” *Studies in Reformed Theology and History* 1:2 (1993): 17-22. McCormack argues that the Reformed tradition generally has held that while the Logos assumed a humanity like ours in every respect, at the moment of conception the humanity derived from Mary was immediately sanctified by the power of the Holy Spirit (and not progressively through the hypostatic union). See also Donald Macleod, “Dr. T. F. Torrance and Scottish Theology: a Review Article,” *Evangelical Quarterly* 72:1 (2000):67-71.

²⁸I am indebted to Roger Newell for this terminology. See his “Participation and Atonement,” in *Christ in Our Place: The Humanity of God in Christ for the Reconciliation of the World*, ed. Trevor A Hart and Daniel P. Thimell (Exeter: Paternoster, 1989), 92-101.

²⁹John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1960), III.1.1: “How do we

is through union and participation with the “substance” of Christ’s incarnate humanity that both the power of his deity and the forensic benefits of salvation (e.g., justification) are conveyed to the Christian.³⁰ But Calvin’s view of union with Christ and soteriology in general involved a matrix of realistic, personal, and forensic categories which is never fully developed and explained. Categories such as “substance” and “participation” are ontological, while “imputation” and synthetic justification are forensic, and the Reformer never fully explained how the forensic dimension is related to Christ’s person such that to receive the latter is to receive the former.

Some initial headway on this problem was made by some of Calvin’s successors, who began to explore the notion of Christ’s resurrection as a forensic act – a divine declaration of the righteousness of the God-Man, which applies first to Christ himself, and then to those united with him. But this potentially promising trajectory was soon overwhelmed by the rise of the Federal Theology with its notions of immediate imputation and federal or legal solidarity.³¹ The tendency in mature federal theology from the late seventeenth century onward is to speak of at least two forms of union with Christ – an extrinsic legal union whereby the Christian appropriates the forensic benefits of salvation by faith, and a vital or spiritual union whereby the Christian experiences the transforming power of God.³² The effect of this

receive those benefits which the Father bestowed on his only begotten Son—not for Christ’s own private use, but that he might enrich poor and needy men? First, we must understand that as long as Christ remains outside of us, and we are separated from him, all that he has suffered and done for the salvation of the human race remains useless and of no value for us.”

³⁰See, e.g., John Calvin, *Theological Treatises*, ed. and trans. J. K. S. Reid (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1954), 308; *Commentary on John 6:51*; *Commentary on Ephesians 5:30*; *Institutes* III.11.9. See also R. S. Wallace, *Calvin’s Doctrine of Word and Sacrament* (Grand Rapids; Eerdmans, 1957), 146-149.

³¹ Regarding this notion of the resurrection justification of Christ, R. B. Gaffin, Jr. remarks, “Apparently, this point was better grasped by the earlier Reformed theologians than subsequently.” Richard B. Gaffin, Jr., *Resurrection and Redemption: A Study in Paul’s Soteriology* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1987), 123, n. 147.

³² It is worth noting that the Westminster Standards were written prior to the point when the language of an extrinsic “legal union” emerges in Reformed thought. Today, however, notions of covenantal/federal/legal solidarity and participation are often pitted against one another. See, e.g., Michael S. Horton, “Participation and Covenant,” in *Radical Orthodoxy and the Reformed*

bifurcation was to safeguard the forensic from works righteousness, but at the expense of making the forensic rather abstract. That is, the doctrine of justification was abstracted from the ongoing life of faith. Compounding the problem of abstraction, the unity of salvation (the link binding the forensic and the transformatory together) was no longer to be found in Christology (as in Calvin), but in the eternal decrees of God. And so, in this move to extrinsic categories we see a shift from a participationist soteriology to an appropriationist model in which salvation is no longer “in Christ” but on the basis of what Christ has done.³³ In addition, the humanity of Christ begins to be eclipsed as a theological factor – Christ’s incarnate humanity becomes little more than a prerequisite for the Atonement.

This extrinsic appropriationist trend accelerates in the New England Calvinist trajectory from the Edwardseans to Nathaniel William Taylor. Convinced that traditional federal theology did not comport with the emerging revivalism (because the notion of a definite substitutionary atonement seemed to undercut gospel proclamation) and that it was implicitly antinomian (because *ordo salutis* conceptions of a punctiliar, once-for-all forensic decree of justification upon the exercise of faith were thought to undercut the need for ongoing obedience and holiness of life), the New England Calvinists adopted the Grotian or Governmental view of the atonement, jettisoned all notions of imputation (in both hamartiology and soteriology), and spoke only of a “moral union” of shared sentiment between Christ and the believer.³⁴ One result of all this was that the theme of union with Christ largely dropped out of New England Calvinist discourse by the mid-nineteenth century, which prompted Charles Hodge to quip, “[T]he Christian feels disposed to say with Mary, They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.”³⁵

Tradition: Creation, Covenant, and Participation, ed. James K. A. Smith and James H. Olthuis (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005), 107-132.

³³On these developments, see William B. Evans, *Imputation and Impartation: Union with Christ in American Reformed Theology* (Milton Keynes, UK: Paternoster, 2008), 43-83.

³⁴See Evans, “Imputation and Impartation,” 228-267. The continuity of the Edwardsean trajectory from Jonathan Edwards to N. W. Taylor is ably explored by Douglas A. Sweeney, *Nathaniel Taylor, New Haven Theology, and the Legacy of Jonathan Edwards* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003).

³⁵Charles Hodge, “Beman on the Atonement,” *Biblical Repertory and Princeton Review* 17 (1845):115.

John Nevin opposed both of these appropriationist options. Against the federal theology bifurcation of union, Nevin contended that both the legal and the spiritual unions are ultimately extrinsic and abstract.

The relation of believers to Christ, then, is more again than that of a simply *legal* union. His is indeed the representative of his people, and what he has done and suffered on their behalf is counted to their benefit, as though it had been done by themselves. They have an interest in his merits, a title to all the advantages secured by his life and death. But this external imputation rests at last on an inward, real unity of life, without which it could have no reason or force. . . . Of course, once more, the communion in question is not simply with Christ in his *divine nature* separately taken, or with the *Holy Ghost* as the representative of his presence in the world. It does not hold in the influences of the Spirit merely, enlightening the soul and moving it to holy affections and purposes.³⁶

He also insightfully suggests that this approach constitutes an unstable synthesis, tilting toward a theoretical antinomianism but with the potential to fall into a practical legalism at the same time.³⁷ An examination of the history of Reformed federal soteriology reveals a tendency to oscillate between the antinomian and the neonomian poles, and federal theology has been persistently accused of both problems.³⁸

³⁶Nevin, *Mystical Presence*, 57.

³⁷John W. Nevin, "The Sect System," in *Catholic and Reformed: Selected Theological Writings of John Williamson Nevin*, ed. Charles Yrigoyen, Jr. and George H. Bricker (Pittsburgh: Pickwick Press, 1978), 160-161, writes: "It is well to note how generally the sect system adheres to the article of *justification by faith*, and how prone it is to run this side of Christianity out to a false extreme, either in the way of dead antinomianism or wild fanaticism. . . . They . . . turn justification by faith into a complete abstraction, and so nullify the law in one form, only to come too generally under the yoke of it in another."

³⁸During the 18th and 19th centuries, the accusation of antinomianism predominated (especially among the New England successors of Jonathan Edwards); during the twentieth century charges of legalism were more prominent (here we think especially of the Torrance brothers and their students, as well as historians such as Perry Miller). Most recently concerns about antinomianism have surfaced once again among Reformed advocates of the New Perspective on Paul and the so-called Federal Vision movement.

Likewise, Nevin also opposed the New England Calvinist notion of a moral union as extrinsic, as issuing in a flat moralism, and as ultimately sub-Christian.

In this view, the relation is more again than a simply *moral* union. Such a union we have, where two or more persons are bound together by inward agreement, sympathy, and correspondence. Every common friendship is of this sort. It is the relation of the disciple to the master, whom he loves and reveres. It is the relation of the devout Jew to Moses, his venerated lawgiver and prophet. It holds also undoubtedly between the believer and Christ. . . . But Christianity includes more than such a moral union, separately considered. This union itself is only the result here of a relation more inward and deep.³⁹

Against these “appropriationist” options, Nevin insists that salvation is to be found in Christ, not simply on the basis of what Christ has done. As Nevin himself puts it, “It is a new creation *in Jesus Christ*, not by him in the way of mere outward power.”⁴⁰ Yet how is this new creation, this new life in Christ carried over from the person of Christ to the church and to the individual Christian? A variety of metaphors and expressions are used, including infusion and participation.⁴¹ Nevin also contends with Calvin that this union or solidarity or participation takes place by faith and by the power of the Holy Spirit. Crucial here is the close relationship between the Holy Spirit and the incarnate humanity of Christ – the Spirit is not a proxy for an absent Christ; rather, the Spirit mediates the presence of Christ to the believer in that the Spirit is the sphere of the mystical union, the

Such instability is especially evident in the contemporary context, as the advocates of traditional federal theology have difficulty explaining how the ongoing life of faith is relevant to one’s eternal destiny if one is declared righteous once and for all upon the exercise of faith (sanctification/obedience are often seen as but a *conditio sine qua non* of salvation). Others have responded to this problem by expanding the category of faith to include obedience or by placing great emphasis upon the conditionality of the covenant of grace.

³⁹Nevin, *Mystical Presence*, 55-56, writes: See also Nevin, “The New Creation in Christ,” *Mercersburg Review* 2 (1850): 1-11.

⁴⁰Nevin, *Mystical Presence*, 228.

⁴¹See, e.g., Nevin, “New Creation,” 2-5; *Mystical Presence*, 55, 176.

mode of Christ's presence with the Christian.⁴² For Nevin, the fallen (albeit sinless) humanity of Christ has been elevated by virtue of its union with the Logos into the realm of Spirit, and thus it is accessible to the believer.⁴³

Given that the Christian receives the benefits of salvation through participation in the person of Christ, how does Nevin understand these benefits? Sanctification is rooted in union with Christ and is viewed as a lifelong process that is furthered by the means of grace (especially the sacraments) as the very life of Christ is infused into the Christian.⁴⁴ Nevin's view of justification requires more comment. To some extent, Nevin echoes traditional Reformed themes – justification is an objective work of God which takes place as the believer is united with Christ by faith. It involves not merely the forgiveness of sins but also the imputation of the righteousness of Christ. But Nevin diverges markedly from previous Reformed thought in his view of imputation and the atonement. Rejecting the federal notion of “immediate imputation” as an abstract fiction, Nevin instead argues for a form of mediate forensic imputation in which the sin of Adam and the righteousness of Christ are both imputed on the basis of participation in their moral character.

The moral relations of Adam, and his moral character too, are made over to us at the same time. Our participation in the actual unrighteousness of his life, forms the ground of our participation in his guilt and liability to punishment. And in no other way, we affirm, can the idea of imputation be satisfactorily sustained in the case of the second Adam. The scriptures make the two cases, in this respect, fully parallel.⁴⁵

⁴²See Nevin, *Mystical Presence*, 229.

⁴³Nevin, *Mystical Presence*, 176: “His whole humanity has been taken up into the sphere of the Spirit, and appears transfigured into the same life. And why then should it not extend itself, in the way of strict organic continuity, as a *whole* humanity also, by the active presence of Christ's Spirit, over into the persons of his people?”

⁴⁴Nevin, *Mystical Presence*, 168: “The new life lodges itself, as an efflux from Christ, in the inmost core of our personality. Here it becomes the principle or seed of our sanctification; which is simply the gradual transfusion of the same exalted spiritual quality or potence through our whole persons. The process terminates with the resurrection.”

⁴⁵Nevin, *Mystical Presence*, 190-191.

In the same context, Nevin suggests that justification may be ascribed proleptically to the believer because the life of Christ communicated in mystical union includes potentially all that belongs to Christ. The justification of the Christian is not the synthetic justification of the ungodly, but rather the analytic justification of the at least partly (and potentially fully) righteous.

The judgment of God must ever be according to truth. He cannot reckon to anyone an attribute or quality, which does not belong to him in fact. He cannot declare him to be in a relation or state, which is not actually his own, but the position merely of another. . . . The law in this view would be itself a fiction only, and not the expression of a fact. But no such fiction, whether under the name of law or without it, can lie at the ground of a judgment entertained or pronounced by God.⁴⁶

Here we see that the forensic is consistently subordinated to the realistic, to the point that an important Reformation insight (the synthetic justification of the ungodly) is rejected.⁴⁷

Once again, Torrance moves in similar channels. He insists that it “is through partaking of Christ Himself that we partake of His benefits and blessings.”⁴⁸ While there is an incarnational union of Christ with all humanity, this union also must be “subjectively actualized in us

⁴⁶Nevin, *Mystical Presence*, 189.

⁴⁷The distinction between “analytic” and “synthetic” justification, a commonplace of Ritschlian neo-Kantianism, harks back to Kant’s distinction between analytic (the negations of which are self-contradictory) and synthetic (the negations of which are not self-contradictory) judgments. See Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Norman Kemp Smith (New York: St. Martin’s, 1965), 48-51; Stephen Körner, *Kant* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1955), 18-19. On the distinction between analytic and synthetic justification, see G. C. Berkouwer, *Faith and Justification*, trans. Lewis B. Smedes (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1954), 15-16.

⁴⁸Torrance, *School of Faith*, cx. Torrance’s emphasis upon union with Christ is identified by McGrath as one of a number of key points where he diverges from his teacher Barth. McGrath goes on to cite the powerful influence of Torrance’s Edinburgh dogmatics professor H. R. Mackintosh and his views on union with Christ. See McGrath, *T. F. Torrance*, 140, 197. On Mackintosh, see Robert R. Redman, Jr., “*Participatio Christi*: H. R. Mackintosh’s Theology of the Unio Mystica,” *Scottish Journal of Theology* 49 (1996): 201-222.

through his indwelling Spirit.”⁴⁹ As in Nevin, the sacraments are viewed as an important means whereby this appropriation of Christ takes place. Like Nevin, Torrance inveighs against views of the relationship between Christ and the Christian as external and here he takes both federal Calvinism and moralistic Protestant liberalism to task.⁵⁰ The term *participation* is frequently used to describe the relationship between the Christian and the incarnate Christ through the work of the Holy Spirit.⁵¹

Turning to the benefits of salvation, we immediately notice that the forensic aspect is eclipsed. The category of imputation is largely absent,⁵² and there is a persistent tendency to conflate what have been traditionally called “justification” and “sanctification.”⁵³ For example, he maintains that “Justification is not only a declaratory act, but an actualization of what is declared.”⁵⁴ Both are appropriated through union with Christ as the believer participates in Christ’s own justification and sanctification. Thus Torrance declares that “justification is a continuing act in Christ, in whom we are

⁴⁹Torrance, *Mediation of Christ*, 77.

⁵⁰See Torrance, *School of Faith*, cvi-cxxvi; *Mediation of Christ*, 72.

⁵¹Torrance, *Theology in Reconstruction*, 243-244: “in the Spirit we are made to participate in saving acts that are abruptly and absolutely divine, election, adoption, regeneration or sanctification and we participate in them by grace alone. . . . through the coming of the Spirit the Church in its earthly and historical pilgrimage is made to participate in a perfected reality so that it lives out of a fulness above and beyond itself.”

⁵²When Torrance speaks of “imputation” it is the objective side of the subjective reception by participation and union with Christ. Thus he can speak of both justification and sanctification as imputed. See *Theology in Reconstruction*, 160. Behind this is his conception of the “vicarious humanity” of Christ whereby Christ mediates not only God’s grace to us but also our human response of faith and obedience to that grace.

⁵³Torrance distinguishes “objective justification” (the objective act of God in Christ which includes the active and passive obedience of Christ as well as the assumption of fallen humanity and which culminates in the resurrection of Christ as the decisive declaration that Christ is indeed the righteous one) and “subjective justification” (which includes Christ’s own sanctification of estranged human existence). See *Theology in Reconstruction*, 153-156; *Space, Time & Resurrection*, 61-66. And so, Torrance, *Theology in Reconstruction*, 157, maintains, “Justification as objective act of the redeeming God and justification as subjective actualization of it in our estranged humanity have once and for all taken place—in Jesus.”

⁵⁴Torrance, *Space, Time & Resurrection*, 62.

continuously being cleansed, forgiven, sanctified, renewed, and made righteous.”⁵⁵

Several comments must be made regarding this notion of salvation by participation. First, this participationist trajectory has had some difficulty maintaining the robustly Reformational emphasis on the forensic justification of the ungodly. If both justification and sanctification are received in the same way – through union and participation in Christ – then the danger of conflation exists. This participationist trajectory is strong on the unity of justification and sanctification in Christ, but it risks confusion of the forensic and the transformatory. This should not surprise, since the notion of participation originally functioned in Platonism to describe the relationship between the ideal forms and particular existents (i.e., it describes an ontological relationship). When it is used to describe the appropriation of salvation comprehensively, it seems at best awkward in dealing with the forensic dimension.

Second, the notion of soteriological participation suffers from problems of definition. The concept is used quite broadly – for participation in the person of Christ (in whom the benefits of salvation reside), for involvement in events and acts (crucifixion and resurrection with Christ), for participation in moral character, and for the reception of forensic benefits (justification). Some rigorous effort at clarification is clearly needed.⁵⁶

Third, there is the problem of philosophical dependence. The coherence of Nevin’s formulations depends, at least in part, on philosophical presuppositions imported from German idealism. Torrance’s “onto-relational” thinking arises out of his own exploration of the relationship between theology and science. Does a participationist soteriology stand or fall with a particular philosophy, or at least with a broadly Platonizing philosophical tendency? Clearly those who would press a participationist soteriology have more work to do here.⁵⁷

⁵⁵Torrance, *Space, Time & Resurrection*, 64.

⁵⁶For a helpful exploration of the range of diversity present in participatory soteriologies in the Patristic and Eastern Church contexts, see Donald Fairbairn, “Patristic Soteriology: Three Trajectories,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 50:2 (June 2007): 289-310. The picture becomes more complex still when Calvin and early Reformed theology are brought into the discussion.

⁵⁷In Torrance, for example, “onto-relational” thinking does not explain the realism in question, for when all is said and done Torrance must still appeal to

IV. Implications for Contemporary Evangelical Thought

Other examples of this remarkable convergence can be cited (e.g., similar ecclesiologies, their defense of the *filioque*, their views on the Atonement, their rejection of predestinarian Calvinism, and so forth), but we have seen enough to sense that we are indeed dealing with twin sons of different mothers. And so we return to the question that was posed at the outset – what *aporias* in Reformed and evangelical theology are exposed here, and what lessons may be gleaned?

There is, first of all, the problem of forgetfulness. Has there not been a forgetfulness of portions of the Scriptural witness in evangelical circles? There is much in Scripture that historically has been plausibly interpreted as pointing in a participationist direction – Jesus’ teaching regarding the vine and the branches in John 15:1-8, the Pauline “union with Christ” language that pervades his epistles. The theme of union with Christ itself largely disappeared from evangelical theology for many generations, a fact which prompted A. H. Strong to complain around the turn of the last century that “it receives little of formal recognition, either in dogmatic treatises or in common religious experience.”⁵⁸ Those who pride themselves on their Biblicism should seek to do justice to grand and pervasive biblical themes.

There is also a forgetfulness of the Incarnation. Evangelical theology tends to be Atonement-centered, finding more theological significance in Good Friday than in Easter Sunday, and spending more time on the work of Christ than the person. Particularly evident is the eclipse of the humanity of Christ as a theological factor. But surely the humanity of Christ is more than just a precondition of the Atonement.

the mysterious work of the Holy Spirit, and he also recognizes an eschatological dimension. While believers still live in the context of the “old structures” of the present age, they nevertheless “participate in the time of the new creation through the Spirit of the risen Christ.” *Space, Time & Resurrection*, 103.

This writer has contended that the answer “may lie not so much in ‘philosophy’ as in the language and imagery of the New Testament, which calls our attention to the identity and work of Christ as the second Adam and root of the new humanity (Rom. 5:12-21; 1 Cor. 15:45, 49; Col. 1:18) . . . and to the believer’s participation in the new creation through union with Christ (2 Cor. 5:17). . . . In the resurrection, one encounters the nexus of the old and new creations, and it is precisely here that all ‘philosophy’ fails.” Evans, *Imputation and Impartation*, 263.

⁵⁸Augustus H. Strong, *Systematic Theology: A Compendium* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1907), 795.

Nevin and Torrance remind us that there is a richness of theological content to be explored.

Finally, there is the problem of disjunction. Methodologically, evangelical textbook theology is still firmly wedded to the *locus* method. Materially, evangelical theology often has difficulty integrating the experience of salvation and discerning its unity in Christ Jesus. Evangelicals in the Reformed tradition have had persistent difficulty relating the forensic and the transformatory without lapsing into antinomianism or neo-nomianism. Even if we may disagree (as this writer certainly does) with the details of how they integrate soteriology, Nevin and Torrance remind us that such integration is needed if a satisfying account of the Christian life is to be given.

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