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CONTENTS

DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

BOOK REVIEWS

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THE REVISIONARY POTENTIAL OF "ABBA! FATHER!" IN THE LETTERS OF PAUL

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Introduction

The term "Abba! Father!" is used three times in the NT, two instances of which are Pauline (Mark 14:36; Rom 8:15; Gal 4:6). In Mark, the phrase belongs to Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane, but in Galatians and Romans it communicates the transformed outlook of the newfound faith experience. It is the aim of the present inquiry to show that the expression "Abba! Father!" holds untapped potential for revising the contemporary perception of the theology of Paul, and, perhaps more importantly, maps an easier route toward the appropriation of Paul's message on the part of "ordinary" readers.

In Galatians, the *NRSV* uses the wording, "And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!'" (Gal 4:6). In Romans, choosing the *NKJV* for ease of comparison, Paul writes that "you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, 'Abba, Father'" (Rom 8:15). These exclamations connote a comprehensive scope, a representative character, and an experiential quality that together constitute potent revisionary material in both letters. While the present inquiry prioritizes Galatians over Romans, this should not be taken to mean that the expression "Abba! Father!" is less important in Romans or that a more thorough analysis of its function in Romans would yield a different result.

"Abba! Father!" in Context

The Structure of Galatians

Attempts to elucidate the structure of Galatians have failed to yield a consensus, but no one can ignore the seminal proposal of Hans Dieter Betz to read the letter as meticulously structured rhetoric belonging to the "apologetic letter" genre.[1] Betz's structural analysis has run into opposition as to the type of rhetoric employed,[2] as well as on the proposed structural divisions,[3] but what

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[1]H. D. Betz, "The Literary Composition and Function of Paul's Letter to the Galatians," *NTS* 21 (1975): 354.

[2]Joop Smit argues against Betz that the rhetoric of Galatians is deliberative rather than judicial ("The Letter of Paul to the Galatians: A Deliberative Speech," *NTS* 35 [1989], 1-26), whereas J. Louis Martyn, while admitting that elements in the letter that are judicial (1:17-24; 2:17-21) and deliberative (5:13-6:10), holds that "the body of the

is probably his most significant observation does not depend on agreement on these points. According to Betz, "the most important argument, which runs through the entire letter, is the argument from *experience*."[4] Experience, billed by rhetoricians as the element least susceptible to rhetorical subversion,[5] figures prominently at the beginning (3:1-4) and the closing (4:6) of the "proof" section of the letter.[6] With the exclamation "Abba! Father!" Paul not only refers to experience, but succeeds in drawing his most powerful argument from the mouth of those whom he seeks to persuade. Indeed, if J. Louis Martyn is correct that Paul's rhetoric in Galatians is "more revelatory and performative than hortatory and persuasive,"[7] the recipients of the letter are enlisted as codeclarers and coannouncers of the new reality. Their participation in this task is nowhere more evident than in their cry, "Abba! Father!"

The Allusive Quality of "Abba! Father!"

The dialogical nature of Galatians suggests that we are privy to a conversation in progress, and reminders of previous stages in the ongoing conversation are evident in phrases and ideas sprinkled throughout the letter in the form of telling allusions. Richard B. Hays has done readers of Paul a great service by pointing out the underlying narrative assumption of the letters that form the basis for these allusions.[8] For instance, when Paul reminds his readers that "it was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly exhibited as crucified!" (Gal 3:1), he is referring to the narrative he had related in person concerning the

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letter as a whole is a rhetorical genre without true analogy in the ancient rhetorical handbooks of Quintilian and others" (*Galatians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB [New York: Doubleday, 1997], 23). He prefers to regard Galatians as "a highly situational sermon."

[3]Betz, 368-375, argues that the *probatio*, the decisive proof section of Paul's argument, encompasses 3:1–4:21. In Smit's structuration,13-16, this section falls in the category of *confirmatio*, and the closing cut-off point is 4:11 rather than at 4:21. Richard N. Longenecker designates 1:6–4:11 as the *rebuke section*, but his view is notable in that he too sees the terminal cut-off point of this section at 4:11 (*Galatians*, WBC [Dallas: Word, 1990], cix).

[4]Hans Dieter Betz, *Galatians: A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979), 30.

[5]Betz, *Galatians*, 30.

[6]Smit, 4, seems justified in his preference for 4:11 as the cut-off point of the confirmatory section, corresponding to Betz's proof division.

[7]Martyn, 23.

[8]Richard B. Hays, *The Faith of Jesus Christ: An Investigation of the Narrative Substructure of Galatians 3:1–4:11*, SBLDS 56 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001). See also Douglas A. Campbell, "The Story of Jesus in Romans and Galatians," in *Narrative Dynamics in Paul*, ed. Bruce W. Longenecker (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002), 97-124; and, in the same volume, Graham N. Stanton, "'I Think, When I Read That Sweet Story of Old,'" 125-132.

suffering and death of Jesus. This prior narrative provides a storehouse of meaning on which Paul draws liberally in his letters. Hays suggests that the *dianoia* or theme of the gospel message in Galatians is embodied in the phrase "Jesus Christ crucified." This expression is said to comprise the essence of the intended recollection of the story of Jesus Christ, a phrase that "stands for the whole story and distills its meaning."[9]

But "Jesus Christ crucified" is not the only allusion that evokes the prior narrative. "Abba! Father!" belongs in this category too,[10] and its significance in the overall argument of the letter may be as great as the phrase referring to the crucifixion of Christ. To assign pride of place to one or the other is not necessary; at this point, it is sufficient to accept the force of the underlying narrative assumption and to concur that "Paul's Christian instruction to gentile converts included some synopsis of Jesus' own life of obedient sonship to God, a synopsis complete with Aramaic soundbites."[11] The Aramaic sound bite, of course, is *Abba* in the phrase "Abba! Father!"

Either in connection with his preaching or on some other occasion, the cry "Abba! Father!" had been heard in the Galatian churches (Gal 4:6). With the Roman community, Paul could not fall back on shared memories, but he nevertheless assumes broad common ground, taking for granted that "Abba! Father!" was an important and meaningful expression to them as well. This is one reason to suppose that the phrase had a life independent of Paul, an integral part of the initiating gospel narrative, not only in *his* preaching. Granting this makes its use no less remarkable, whether the expression is examined from the point of view of its use in the churches or in the context of Paul's letters.

The Occasion for the Letter

The vehement and frequently exclamatory tone of the letter to the Galatians reflects Paul's perception of a crisis in the making. The Galatians are in the process of "deserting the one who called you" and "turning to a different gospel" (Gal 1:6). Opponents have arrived on the scene with a message that has led to confusion as to the grounds for inclusion of Gentiles in the fellowship of faith (1:7). In Paul's eyes, the subversive ambassadors are selling flawed merchandise, a message so defective, in fact, that it has failed even those who were in the best position to make it succeed (2:15-16). Where the opponents seem to be speaking as though the issue is how to include new members in the "old" group, leaving the terms of the old group reasonably intact, Paul answers that "the truth of the gospel" requires a new set of terms (2:5), or at least a new understanding of the terms. The ongoing discussion is mirrored in Paul's

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[9]Hays, 197.

[10]Cf. Richard B. Hays, "Crucified with Christ: A Synthesis of 1 and 2 Thessalonians, Philemon, Philippians, and Galatians," *SBL Seminar Papers 1988*, ed. David Lull, 324.

[11]Bruce W. Longenecker, *The Triumph of Abraham's God: The Transformation of Identity in Galatians* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1998), 62.

answer: "Did you receive the Spirit by doing the works of the law or by believing what you heard?" (3:2). Circumcision, the opponents' sign of authenticity, clearly played no part in the Galatians' reception of the Spirit. Irreconcilable perceptions and incommensurable notions are clashing on this point, quite possibly justifying the translation, "Having started in the Spirit, are you now ending with a piece of severed human foreskin?" instead of the more dignified "ending with the flesh" (3:3).[12]

Paul counters his opponents in Galatia by a series of arguments that are probably less systematic than Betz makes it appear, arguing his case on the basis of the Galatians' prior experience (3:1-5), Scripture (3:6-14),[13] human practice (3:15-18), the temporary function of the law (3:19-26),[14] baptism (3:27-29), and their own exclamation, "Abba! Father!" (4:6). If there is a conscious design in Paul's logic, it might be that he draws ever larger circles as he proceeds, moving from the complex to the simple, from the rare to the familiar, and from the argumentative to the experiential. To the extent that inclusion of the Gentiles is the overriding concern, the cry "Abba! Father!" in the mouth of the Gentile believer pulls the rug from under any attempt to preserve the line of demarcation between the elect and those left on the fringes in the old paradigm. On this point, too, "Abba! Father!" is organic to the issue at hand and to Paul's theological and pastoral concern, and it is legitimate to read the phrase as the climax of his argument.[15]

The Meaning of "Abba! Father!"

Why would Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, a man who by his own admission would rather speak five words with his mind than "ten thousand words in a

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[12]The plausibility of such a wording depends on what kind of rhetoric is thought to be at work, including a rather sarcastic connotation of "flesh"; cf. Martyn, 290-292.

[13]Martyn, 249-250, argues persuasively that the juristic language commonly attributed to Paul in Western translations should be adjusted in the direction of more relational usage. Thus, where the NRSV has "no one is justified before God by the law" (3:11), Martyn, 6, prefers "before God no one is rectified by the Law." The crucial point at issue, he, 250, suggests, "is that of God's *making right what has gone wrong.*"

[14]Having noted Martyn's proposed attenuation of Paul's "justification" language, one's reading of Paul's argument in Galatians cannot ignore the calls for a similar revision in the perception of Paul's "faith" language away from the objective genitive reading of *pistis Christou* ("faith *in* Christ") to a subjective genitive reading "the faith *of* Christ," or "the faithfulness of Christ." In Galatians, this revision affects the translation of 2:16; 2:20; 3:22, yielding the possible wording "in order that the promise might by given by the faithfulness of Jesus Christ to those who believe" (3:22b); cf. Morna D. Hooker, "ΠΙΣΤΙΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ," *NTS* 35 (1989): 321-342; Martyn, 251; Sigve Tonstad, "πίστις Χριστοῦ: Reading Paul in A New Paradigm," *AUSS* 40 (2002): 37-59.

[15]Paul's letters do not necessarily follow a linear trajectory in which the conclusion comes at the end. He has theological, pastoral, and practical concerns in most of his letter. But the "Abba Father" expression in Galatians and Romans comes where the strands of theological exposition and practical exhortation meet.

tongue" (1 Cor 14:19), resort to the Aramaic word *Abba* in these letters?[16] Why would he do so knowing that the majority of his readers were mostly of Gentile extraction? And what would be his reason for using this word in what by many criteria appears to be the end-point of his message? That the expression "Abba! Father!" is not an accident is clear from the fact that we find it in two of his most substantial letters and in parallel contexts in both instances. Moreover, the expression has the ring of familiarity, indicating that Paul is conjuring up an image, the significance of which would not be missed by his readers.

The evidence supports Joachim Jeremias's contention that the early Christian communities "used the cry '*Abba, ho patêr*' (Abba, Father) and considered this an utterance brought forth by the Holy Spirit."[17] As noted, this phrase was current in the Pauline (Galatians) and the non-Pauline (Romans) communities alike, and, according to Jeremias, "there can be no doubt at all that this primitive Christian cry is an echo of Jesus' own praying."[18] Some of Jeremias's other claims on behalf of this expression are less certain, but Ernest De Witt Burton also considered it likely that the Aramaic word originated with Jesus and became part of the early Christian experience through the telling of the passion story. These witnesses, writes Burton, "used this word with a sort of affectionate fondness for the term that Jesus had used to express an idea of capital importance in his teaching."[19]

The suggestion that "Abba! Father!" represents a vital idea to Jesus indicates that this view also carried over into the teaching of Paul and the experience of the Christian community. But what is the nature of this idea?

Its Use by Jesus

On the assumption that the use of this expression in Paul's letters overlaps with its use in the Gospel of Mark, as noted by Burton and others,[20] the search for

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[16]In the absence of a deeper rationale, leaving "Abba" untranslated "is not very different from a devout Roman Catholic saying *Paternoster*, but Paul will not allow even one word of prayer in a foreign tongue without adding an instant translation" (J. Moulton, *A Grammar of the New Testament Greek*, vol. 1, *Prolegomena* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1908), 10.

[17]Joachim Jeremias, *The Central Message of the New Testament* (New York: Scribner's, 1965), 18.

[18]Jeremias, 18. Some commentators, notably Ernst Käsemann (*Commentary on Romans* [Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1980], 228), disagree that Paul's use of the expression should be related to the one in Mark 14:36. Käsemann says that "naturally Jesus did not address God in two languages," a fact that is readily granted, but if Mark attempts to give the most authentic rendition of Jesus' prayer, then Αββα would be the word and not the Greek, ὁ πατήρ."

[19]Ernest De Witt Burton, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*, ICC (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1959), 224. According to Burton, a direct link to Jesus is "more probable than that it was taken over into the Christian vocabulary from that of the Jewish synagogue in which the idea of God as Father had so much less prominent place than in the thought and teaching of Jesus" (*Galatians*, 224).

[20]Cf. William Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary*

this motif must pay attention to Mark. In the Markan version, reflecting the tradition that likely gave rise to the expression, the trail leads to the prayer of Jesus in Gethsemane. In his hour of supreme distress, Jesus exclaims: "Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me; yet, not what I want, but what you want!" (Mark 14:36). Even though Jesus used the expression "Father" on many occasions in his prayers and discourses, this is the only instance where the Aramaic address is preserved. In the Markan context, Jesus is seen to be in a state of intense mental agony, and this connotation gives the phrase "Abba, Father" an intensifying quality. Noting that the setting is the preliminary stage to Jesus' crucifixion; "Abba, Father" is the phrase that recalls and distills the meaning of Jesus' Gethsemane experience, to use Hays's terminology. Most likely this background catapulted the expression into common usage among the early Christians. The allusive force of "Jesus Christ crucified" parallels that of "Abba! Father!" These terms are historically related in the early Christian narrative of Jesus and contextually intertwined in the letter to the Galatians.

Old Testament Background

As with many other terms in the Pauline correspondence, it is likely that this expression has an OT antecedent beyond the designation of God as Father in OT prayer language (Isa 63:16; Jer 3:4.19). Any search for such a corollary should take linguistic as well as thematic parallels into consideration. On these grounds, at least one scholar has found suggestive evidence for an allusion to the *Akedah*, the story of the binding of Isaac in Gen 22. According to Joseph Grassi,

> there are indications to suggest that the meaning of *Abba* in Mark 14:36 is to be found in the light of its whole context and Gen 22. Jesus' final trial in Gethsemane appears to be modelled on the supreme trial of Abraham and Isaac. Despite the horror and anguish before the prospect of an imminent sacrificial death, Isaac calls Abraham his *Abba* and, as a faithful son, obeys the voice of God speaking through his father. Parallel to this, Jesus says *Abba* to God in the same way that Isaac does to Abraham. In this context, *Abba* has the meaning of "father" in the sense of a relationship to a devoted and obedient son.[21]

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on the Epistle to the Romans, ICC (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1992), 203. E. A. Obeng finds it quite plausible that "Abba" "was a distinctive characteristic of Jesus' own prayer; for it will be difficult to explain how the disciples and the early Christians would have dared to address God so. intimately if Jesus had not used it and encouraged his disciples to use it as well" ("Abba, Father: The Prayer of the Sons of God," *ExpT* 99 [1988]: 364).

[21]Joseph A. Grassi, "'*Abba*, Father' (Mark 14:36): Another Approach," *JAAR* 50 (1982): 455. The subject of God as Father continues till the end of chap. 8 in Romans. In Paul's highly allusive language, Rom 8:32 also echoes Gen 22 and the *Akedah*. Speaking of God, Paul writes ὅς γε τοῦ ἰδίου υἱοῦ οὐκ ἐφείσατο. Speaking of Abraham, the LXX says, καὶ οὐκ ἐφείσω τοῦ υἱοῦ σου τοῦ ἀγαπητοῦ δι' ἐμὲ (Gen

Grassi's focus is primarily on the trust and obedience of the Son, but the trust of the son, whether Isaac or Jesus is in view, is predicated on the trustworthiness of the father in the respective narratives. It is important not to leave out the father's trustworthiness because it goes to the heart of the expression and because it is often left out. The force of the phrase in Paul's letters has little to do with a quality in the believer and everything to do with the quality of the person to whom it refers. Neither in Galatians nor in Romans is there any hint of distress on the part of the believer, aligning the phrase with the affective tenor of Isaac's unqualified confidence in his father. When Paul tells the Galatians that "God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts," the cry of "the Spirit of his Son" is intended to convey a relation between the believer and the Father that is identical to the relation between the Father and the Son. As Douglas J. Moo notes perceptively, "in crying out 'Abba, Father,' the believer not only gives voice to his or her consciousness of belonging to God as his child but also to having a status comparable to that of Jesus himself."[22] Not only has the believer become the adopted and obedient son of the Father, but he has also adopted Jesus' *view* of the Father.

Experiential Quality

While we cannot pinpoint with certainty how the expression "Abba! Father!" was used among the early Christians, the weight of evidence favors baptism.[23] In the context of baptism, the past experience of coming to faith in response to Paul's preaching (Galatians), the figurative dying and rising with Christ in the waters of baptism, and the indwelling of the Spirit all would come together in the sharply focused and deeply etched memory of the baptismal experience. On this basis, we are looking at a phrase that was familiar to Jewish and Gentile churches alike, and "Paul would only have had to allude to it, as he does in Galatians and Romans, and its full and profound significance would have registered immediately in the hearts of his readers, or hearers. They had all uttered it at their Baptisms, and had witnessed it frequently at the Baptism of others."[24] But even if the expression did not primarily belong in the context of

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22:12.16). The verbal parallel seems intentional, especially the use of φείδομαι in both instances.

[22]Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 502.

[23]Cf. Betz, *Galatians*, 210; Obeng, 365; Martyn, 391. John A. T. Robinson sees the baptismal connection substantiated by a series of themes coming together, where "Abba! Father!" is invoked by Paul. This applies to the relationship between baptism and the Spirit and also to the notion of sonship. "In Gal 4:6 the correct translation should in all probability run: 'And to declare that ye are sons of God, God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father.' Christian Baptism simply reproduces in the life of the Christian the one Baptism of Jesus begun in Jordan and completed in the Resurrection" ("The One Baptism," *SJT* 6 [1953]: 262-263).

[24]T. M. Taylor, "'Abba, Father' and Baptism," *SJT* 11 (1958): 70.

baptism,[25] its vividness and exclamatory nature would still furnish a treasure of shared experience that Paul uses to his advantage.

Theological Significance

"Abba! Father!" has a comprehensive scope in the theological vision of Galatians. Paul invokes the phrase as a representative metaphor for the relationship between God and the new Gentile believer, assuming that the Spirit-inspired cry has the ring of ultimacy and that inclusion of the Gentiles is a foregone conclusion. This view accords well with the immediate and remote context in Galatians and Romans alike. In both letters, Paul argues for the inclusion of the Gentiles on the basis of God's faithfulness (Gal 3:1-14; Rom 4:9-17). "Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also?" Paul asks rhetorically at one point, cognizant of the only possible answer within a theological outlook that is grounded in the conviction that God is truly "Abba, Father" for both groups (Rom 3:29). Favoritism and preferential treatment are explicitly repudiated because the God who is addressed as "Abba! Father!" shows no partiality (Rom 2:11). In Galatians and Romans, the theme of baptism is explicit, and the baptismal metaphor is part and parcel of the larger theme of dying and rising with Christ (Gal 3:27; Rom 6:3-11).[26] As Paul moves closer to the phrase under consideration here, the legal language of "righteousness by faith," as it has been understood traditionally, gives way to terminology that belongs in the category of "participation" (Gal 3:28-29; Rom 8:9-11). Along this route of mental travel, hallowed bastions of discrimination, distinction, and subservience must fall: "there is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus" (Gal 3:28). Moving to the more immediate context, there is another striking change of metaphor as the participation theme finds expression in father-child language (Gal 4:1-7; Rom 8:14-17). "Abba! Father!" is the concluding statement in this sequence and the most sharply focused metaphor for the new relation.

The Revisionary Potential of "Abba! Father!"

On the basis of the foregoing, I suggest that the expression "Abba! Father!" has at least four potential consequences for the reading of Paul, each of which

[25]Käsemann, 228, does not deny a connection to baptism, but considers it an acclamation with a confessional character that was not specifically baptismal. The element of exclamation is clear from the use of κράζειν, but neither the present active participle κρᾶζον in Galatians nor the present active indicative κράζομεν in Romans is distinctive enough to decide whether "Abba Father" was used only on the specific occasion of baptism or in other connections as well. Joseph Fitzmyer concurs with interpreters who regard the *Abba* as an instance of *ipsissima vox Iesu*. He makes the point that although the phrase "could reflect *some* liturgical usage," Paul is not speaking of "a *mere* liturgical usage" (*Romans*, AB [New York: Doubleday, 1992], 498).

[26]Cf. Martyn, 391.

wields significant revisionary power. The first of these is to acknowledge that with the expression "Abba! Father!" Paul's emphasis is theocentric. This theocentric affirmation is not a peripheral issue, and its present recognition calls for a reassessment of the perceived theological priorities in Paul's letters. E. P. Sanders's assertion that from Paul "we learn nothing new or remarkable about God" overlooks important evidence to the contrary—as does the remark that "Paul did not spend his time reflecting on the nature of the deity."[27] Competing claims as to whether Paul's thrust is anthropological,[28] christocentric,[29] or soteriological in one direction or another[30] are likely to continue, but whatever the outcome of such debates the evidence suggests that Paul did, in fact, reflect on the nature of the Unseen, and his teaching has much to say about God that is new and highly remarkable. J. Christiaan Beker, who argues persuasively that Paul should be seen as "an apocalyptic theologian with a theocentric outlook,"[31] makes an exception with respect to Galatians. This exception is unwarranted because Galatians too has a theocentric core.[32] The prominent role of the phrase "Abba! Father!" in Galatians indicates that Paul sends his message on the same wavelength as in Romans, and the question of whether Paul is more christocentric than theocentric posits an unnecessary and misleading polarity.[33]

[27]E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1997), 509. In fairness to Sanders, it must be admitted that he not only welcomed the testing of his assertion in the preparatory stages of this essay, but also predicted unsentimentally that his own assertion would fail.

[28]Rudolf Bultmann, attempting to revitalize the Lutheran doctrine of justification in existentialist terms, put anthropology at the center of Paul's theology (*Theology of the New Testament* [New York: Scribner's, 1951], 1: 191). This once-so-daring proposition hardly represents a viable theological undertaking today.

[29]Oscar Cullmann, though not commenting specifically on Paul, claims that "early Christian theology is almost exclusively Christology" (*The Christology of the New Testament* [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1959], 2-3).

[30]Sanders, 502, has returned to Albert Schweitzer's emphasis that participation and dying with Christ stand at the center of Paul's thinking. Sanders concludes that "there should . . . be no doubt as to where the heart of Paul's theology lies. He is not primarily concerned with the juristic categories, although he works with them. The real bite of his theology lies in the participatory categories, *even though he himself did not distinguish them this way.*"

[31]J. Christiaan Beker, *Paul the Apostle. The Triumph of God in Life and Thought* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), 362.

[32]What Beker, 58, wishes to deprive Galatians of is normative status in Pauline studies on the assumption that its Christocentric focus "pushes Paul's theocentric apocalyptic theme to the periphery." If this conclusion is deemed necessary because of the dearth of theocentric material in Galatians, a proper appreciation of the *Abba* perspective negates this need.

[33]In Romans, the case for a theocentric reading has been argued by Sam K. Williams ("The 'Righteousness of God' in Romans," *JBL* 99 [1980]: 241-290). In Rom 8:32, Paul takes the message of "justification" to the ultimate source, θεὸς ὁ δικαιῶν.

The OT background of Habakkuk in Paul's message regarding the righteousness of God (Gal 3:11; Rom 1:17; 3:21-26), along with the matter of equal treatment of Jews and Gentiles (Gal 3:28; Rom 4:11-12), show that the unabashed God-centeredness of the expression "Abba! Father!" does not stand alone in these letters. It does, however, bring this emphasis to a pointed and emphatic climax.

The second revisionary element of the expression "Abba! Father!" is existential. In their prefaith state, the Galatians were in a state of enslavement "to the elemental spirits of the world" (τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου, Gal 4:3). A precise definition of these "elemental powers of the cosmos" has proved elusive, but the flavor is one of forces beyond the control of their subjects, a state of unpredictability and subservience from which human beings are unable to extricate themselves.[34] In view of the vagueness of the phrase, it is expedient to draw on the emotional and experiential corollary of the prefaith state described in Romans. There Paul says that "you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear" (Rom 8:15), highlighting fear as the most striking feature of their past experience. While it is likely that Paul is bending his terminology to fit the conceptual framework of his audience, the common denominator pictures people groping in the darkness of superstition and misapprehension of God. In fact, whatever the shape of the resultant enslavement in each cultural or individual instance, it converges broadly with the biblical narrative of the fall that ultimately conditions Paul's thinking. In the biblical perspective, *fear* describes the human condition historically, anthropologically, and existentially. As stated in the Genesis narrative, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, *and I was afraid*" (Gen 3:10). Paul's description of the prefaith state pictures human beings in a state of distress, subservient to capricious forces and deities (Gal 4:8). It is on the strength of the contrast between the prefaith state of subservience and fear and the present privilege of sonship that the full force of the exclamation "Abba! Father!" is best appreciated.[35]

This may be seen as referring to God's agency, that is, "God is the one who sets things right," but it may be even more appropriate to read it in a qualitative sense, a testimony to the *kind* of Person God is. The flavor of the statement is then that "he is the kind of Person who makes things right." The emphasis is theocentric, and it is thematically related to the expression "Abba! Father!" in Rom 8:15. In the closing part of the letter, Paul refers to himself as a servant ὑπὲρ ἀληθείας θεοῦ (Rom 15:8), indicating once again that God is more than a peripheral concern in his message.

[34]Martyn, 394-395, drawing on Bauer and other sources, lists four alternatives with regard to the meaning of τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου: "elements (of learning), fundamental principles"; "elemental substances, the basic elements from which everything in the natural world is made and of which it is composed"; "elementary spirits which the syncretistic religious tendencies of later antiquity associated with the physical elements"; and "heavenly bodies." He expresses preference for the second alternative. Whatever alternative is chosen, it should have the connotation of capriciousness, people living in a cosmos of powers that were beyond their comprehension or control.

[35]S. Vernon McCasland suggests that Αββα ὁ πατήρ should simply be translated

This point deserves a further note because the fear that marks the beginning of human alienation from God is itself the result of a false picture of God. If fear in the Gentile experience relates to capricious deities and threatening cosmic forces, the existential crisis of Gentiles in Paul's day has not strayed far from the initiating encounter with evil in the biblical narrative. In an essay on Paul's narrative world, Edward Adams demonstrates that Paul in Rom 7 echoes the Genesis narrative of the fall.[36] According to Adams, "sin/the serpent found its opportunity in the commandment, exploiting God's decree to the primal pair to further its malicious ambitions."[37] The account in Genesis is generalized and made existential for a specific purpose in Romans, but it preserves a causal relationship that operates as much in the experience of the human condition in Paul's day as in the Genesis narrative. The capricious nature of the Unseen in the prefaith perception of reality is the corollary of the primal pair's acceptance of the charge that the Creator is an arbitrary and unreasonable despot (Gen 3:1). The Gentiles, "enslaved to beings that by nature are not gods" (Gal 4:8), are in this respect no worse off than human beings who take a distorted view of the Being who by nature *is* God. If capriciousness is the common attribute, there is little advantage to the God who is over the gods that are not. Fear would be the consequence of such misapprehension even of the true God. The privilege of the believer in Paul's Galatian narrative, having "come to know God" (Gal 4:9), is deliverance from subservience to a capricious deity, beginning with the elemental forces of the cosmos that are specified in Paul's letter.

"Abba! Father!" embodies a third revisionary potential that owes to its simplicity and clarity. In the Galatian context, the believers were initially stirred by Paul's preaching, entering into the believing fellowship through baptism. Subsequent to that a disturbance arose with the arrival of the "teachers" and their insistence that the new believers needed to be circumcised. Paul's effort to set the record straight in Galatians is a complex and tangled argument, perhaps making Galatians the best place to look for the roots of his reputation of "things hard to understand" in his letters (2 Pet 3:16).[38] Even if we grant that the Galatians were exceptionally interested and adept in matters relating to their faith, sitting at the edge of their chairs when Paul's letter was read, it is not

"O God, my Father" or "O God, our Father," holding that "Abba was a loan-word which no longer meant 'the Father' or 'my Father' in this idiom, but simply God. This made it possible to write 'Abba, Father' without being conscious of tautology" ("Abba, Father," *JBL* 72 [1953]: 90). Even a "minimalist" reading such as this one, however, preserves the essential element, that is, the believer's experience of God.

[36]Edward Adams, "Paul's Story of God and Creation," in *Narrative Dynamics in Paul*, ed. Bruce W. Longenecker (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002), 19-43.

[37]Adams, 28. ἡ γὰρ ἁμαρτία ἀφορμὴν λαβοῦσα διὰ τῆς ἐντολῆς ἐξηπάτησέν με in Rom 7:11 echoes ὁ ὄφις ἠπάτησέν με in Gen 3:13 (LXX).

[38]Scholarly support for this early and "canonical" assessment of Paul is not hard to find.

likely that all the listeners grasped his arguments in every particular.[39] Perhaps not a few, tired from the day's hard work, found their thoughts drifting to more mundane subjects or struggled to stay awake when the messenger read the analogy about Abraham and of Paul's complex view of the law (Gal 3:6-14). If such people were among the initial hearers of Galatians and Romans—and there are clearly such hearers in our enlightened times—it is conceivable that they could only be needled back to the apostle's message by something relating to their experience, a word that had unmistakable recognition value because they had been there and because it was as unambiguous as anything was likely to get.

The expression "Abba, Father," charged with an exclamatory and experiential connotation,[40] answers to such a need. This phrase was familiar not just as a favorite theme of Paul, but also as a word from their experience. Moreover, even if nuances of the phrase eluded some, be they echoes from the OT or allusions to the prayer life of Jesus, it was for them and still is an expression that carries a reassuring and liberating connotation quite apart from any theological conditioning. In the context of the Galatian controversy, it is fair to claim that no element in their mental picture was more comprehensible than this one. Not unlike the many people who have climbed and are climbing the Pauline mountains and never make it to the top, there are believers who can only reach the top on the wings of a simpler metaphor. If such people were present in the Galatian or Roman congregations, this would be the solution for them. Indeed, if such readers of Paul exist today, one owes it to them to point out this option and work to restore to it its simplifying revisionary force theologically and experientially. Moreover, such a view is not a cop-out from tackling difficulties in Paul's letters. It is likely that Paul chose this metaphor chiefly because it was the most representative and adequate among the options available to him. Those who make it to the top of the mountain by this method are not cheating. "Abba! Father!" is the view from the top of the mountain, even for people who make it there by the more strenuous path of Paul's complex arguments and logic.[41]

[39]In connection with the growing interest in Paul's use of the OT, Christopher D. Stanley asks how much new believers understood of Paul's theology ("'Pearls Before Swine': Did Paul's Audiences Understand His Biblical Quotations?" *NovT* 41 [1999]: 124-144). The literacy rate was low, books as we know them today did not exist, and knowledge of the OT was probably quite limited. Did people understand Paul's OT quotations? Did they grasp the more subtle allusions and echoes? Stanley believes that modern expositors are too sanguine with regard to the literary sophistication of the Gentile converts, a possibility that raises the significance of "Abba! Father!" as an element of an appropriated faith to an even higher level.

[40]James D. G. Dunn, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, BNTC (London: A. & C. Black, 1993), 221.

[41]To Burton, 223, the full significance of Paul's view, exchanging legal language for the language of family relations, belonged to this metaphor "precisely in the fact that . . . a truly filial relation and attitude of man to God shall displace the legal relation that

The fourth revisionary element in this phrase depends on maintaining its cognitive valence. Jeremias's widely accepted contention that the word *Abba* "surely originated from the idiom of the small child"[42] and thus might be read as an equivalent of the English *"Daddy"* has not held up under closer scrutiny. On his review of the evidence, James Barr counters that there is no linguistic basis for this argument, and that Jeremias based his view on mostly assumptive evidence. To Barr, "the nuance of 'Abba' was not at all the nuance of childish prattle, but the nuance of solemn and responsible adult speech."[43] This cognitive valence has gone unrecognized and unappreciated and may be one of the main reasons why "Abba! Father!" has not received the attention it deserves. It is neither the emotional aspect nor the element of primitive speech that should serve as one's point of reference. The Gentiles' enslavement to "the elemental forces of the cosmos" should be seen as ignorance of the truth, not only as a state of powerlessness relative to an otherwise clear view of reality. In his discussion of the Jewish predicament, Paul chose to characterize it also as "ignorance" (Rom 10:3). Against this background, it is easier to appreciate why it matters to preserve the understanding of "Abba! Father!" as mature, intelligent speech. Readings that emphasize the primitive or the intimate at the expense of the cognitive are distortions, whether considered in the light of the expression itself or in the wider context of Paul's thought.[44] Antecedents to the

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law creates, that instead of looking upon God as lawgiver in the spirit of bondage and fear (Rom 8:15) he becomes to us Father with whom we live in fellowship as his sons." C. E. B. Cranfield is no less expansive as to the meaning of this expression: "The implication of this verse understood in its context is that it is in the believers' calling God 'Father' that God's holy law is established and its 'righteous requirement' (v. 4) fulfilled, and that the whole of Christian obedience is included in this calling God 'Father'" (*Romans* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985], 184). Longenecker, 174, writes that "the content of the cry or acclamation epitomizes the believer's new relationship with God: 'Father.'"

[42]Jeremias, 21.

[43]James Barr, "'Abba, Father' and the Familiarity of Jesus' Speech," *Theology* 91 (1988): 179. In a related and more in-depth article ("'Abba' Isn't 'Daddy,'" *JTS* 39 [1988], 28-47), Barr questions a series of Jeremias's most popular assumptions. As to the origin of the form *"abba,"* Barr lists the options that have been suggested: that the word is Aramaic in the "emphatic state," i.e., that the –a ending corresponds to the definite article in Hebrew, and that this form gradually came to take the meaning of the first person singular "my father"; a "vocative" explanation, meaning that the word is derived from children's speech; and the "babbling sound" explanation, a *Lallwort*, from the most primitive speech of infants. Barr shows that the word *"abba"* was used by adults in adult speech, that there is no evidence that it was derived from the speech of small children, and thus the "Daddy" connotation is invalid, and finally, that its origin could be Hebrew rather than Aramaic.

[44]Intimacy was also possible in the Jewish religious experience. According to Sanders, 222, "it thus appears that at the very heart of the Rabbis' supposed legalism is the feeling of intimate contact with God."

use of *Abba* in Paul's letters are replete with cognitive overtones; the binding of Isaac or the surrender of Jesus to the Father's will in Gethsemane become caricatures unless they are seen as examples of trust that is based on insight and confidence in the person in whom one's trust is placed. Such insight also goes to the heart of the experience of the believer and is reflected in the utterance, disclosing the core value of his or her faith. If, in an adapted version of the language categories of Wittgenstein, in which language I is the language of relationships, language II the language of information, and language III the language of motivation, then "Abba! Father!" clearly belongs in the category of First Language, the language of intimacy, relationships, and prayer.[45] But its notion of intimacy is, in this context, predicated on understanding.

Conclusion

I conclude that the expression "Abba! Father!" holds a reserve of revisionary power with respect to the theological priorities in Paul's letters. This applies to the center of Paul's theology, to his understanding of the ultimate basis for the inclusion of the Gentiles, and to his conviction that the God who is addressed as *Abba* is a Being who "shows no partiality" (Rom 2:11). Above all, this expression speaks to the challenge of appropriating Paul's message, offering welcome relief to readers who find in his letters "things hard to understand" (2 Pet 3:16). Something along these lines must have been the view of Alfred Loisy, who long ago wrote that Paul "succeeded in drawing out of the invocation 'O Father', his entire theory of salvation."[46]

[45]Eugene H. Peterson, "First Language," *Theology Today* 42 (1985): 211-214. A comparative-religions' evaluation of the expression "Abba Father" has not been attempted here. Sanders, 549, has hinted at its direction, but anticipates limitations and results that most likely would be quite different if his view that Paul has "nothing new to say about God" turns out to be exaggerated.

[46]Alfred Loisy, *L'Épître aux Galates* (Paris: Nourry, 1916), 166.

VIRGINITY UNVEILED: TERTULLIAN'S *VEILING OF VIRGINS* AND HISTORICAL WOMEN IN THE FIRST THREE CENTURIES A.D.

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"They who have heard Him [the Holy Spirit] prophesying even to the present time . . . bid virgins be wholly covered," concluded the second-century church father Tertullian in his sharply critical treatise *On the Veiling of Virgins*.[1] For those interested in examining historical women in the early church, Tertullian's treatise invites investigation. Questions emerge concerning whether Tertullian is adequately describing his social setting, creating a fictional type, or furthering an engendered trope intended to defame his opponents. Does Tertullian provide evidence of real virgins unveiled in local churches?

A simple surface reading of the text no longer satisfies, for we have become aware of the gender constructions underpinning much of the discussion about women in this time. An example from Celsus illustrates this point. Celsus declared that primarily women and children were attracted to Christianity. Earlier scholars took such claims at face value without considering the statement's rhetorical force.[2] Celsus writes: "[Christian teachers] get hold of children in private and some stupid women with them, and they let out some astounding statements, as for example, that they must not pay any attention to their father or school teacher but must obey them."[3] He asserts that Christian teachers are subverting social authority structures, and he uses women and children as *typoi* for those people, men included, who listened to what Celsus considered an absurd superstition. Celsus's rhetoric might include demographic information, but his main goal was to impugn Christians by associating them with negative gendered social stereotypes.

My preliminary conclusions to the question of whether Tertullian's work *On the Veiling of Virgins* offers us a window into real women's lives are tentative, but hopeful. I suggest that behind his censorious rhetoric there lies a group

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[1]Tertullian, *On the Veiling of Virgins*, Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. 4, trans. S. Thelwall, The Ante-Nicene Fathers: Translations of the Fathers down to A.D. 325, American ed., Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987). Unless otherwise noted, all references to the church fathers will be taken from the American edition. See also the translation by Geoffrey D. Dunn, *Tertullian*, The Early Church Fathers, ed. Carol Harrison (New York: Routledge, 2004).

[2]William H. C. Frend, "Blandina and Perpetua: Two Early Christian Heroines," 87-97, taken from *Les Martyrs de Lyon* (177): Lyon 20-23 Septembre 1977 (Paris: Editions du Centre Mational de la Recherche Scientifique): 167-177.

[3]Origen, *Contra Celsum* III.55.

whose behavior he finds threatening to his understanding of the Christian way of life and social world. This group represents not so much heretical thinking, but specific practices that Tertullian finds dangerous or improper. It is a second and more difficult step to show that Tertullian is justly charging this group with a false practice that includes women, because ancient male authors often used gendered arguments against other men with whom they disagreed. Moreover, because Tertullian's dilemma is so similar to Paul's discussion in 1 Cor 11 and 14, the reader cannot discount the possibility that Tertullian is creating a straw man to aid in his exegesis of Paul's passage. In that case, Tertullian would not reflect any specific historical situation, but actually would be constructing a setting as a literary maneuver to further his argument.

The first step in our inquiry is to examine broadly the questions of gendered arguments and *typoi* within the literary evidence of the ancient church. A second step highlights the dilemma faced by the church in self-identifying as the Bride of Christ. Kate Cooper's work will serve as a springboard for further discussion. A final step examines Tertullian's call for the veiling of virgins. At this point, we are faced with the question of whether Tertullian knows or has good reason to believe that certain Christian virgins are actually participating in their communities without a veil. By this point, I hope to show that it is at least possible that such a situation did exist historically.[4]

Gendered Society

Cooper in *The Virgin and the Bride* notes that "in a society premised on honor and shame [as were the Hellenistic and Roman cultures] rhetoric was reality."[5] She suggests that the ancient conventions by which gender-specific characteristics were assigned to men and women provide a window into male-female relationships, but, even more importantly, into the power relationships between men competing for social honor and prestige. Her conclusions follow a now standard understanding of the role of gender in creating social reality, developed in large part through the work of Sheri Ortner. In a ground-breaking article,[6] Ortner postulated that society in general connects men with rational thought and culture and labels women as irrational thinkers connected with nature.[7]

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[4]In examining this aspect of women's history, I am not drawing any prescriptive conclusions for our modern/postmodern world.

[5]Kate Cooper, *The Virgin and the Bride: Idealized Womanhood in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996), 4.

[6]Sheri Ortner, "Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture?" in *Women, Culture, and Society*, ed. Michelle Rosaldo and Louise Lamphere (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1974), 67-88.

[7]Karen Jo Torjesen suggests that the public/private split has its roots in the earliest democracy. In this system, political power was removed from the monarch and his or her family and placed in the hands of a few elite men. These men developed a new identity in the *polis*, distinguishing themselves from women and women's realm, the home ("In Praise of

Not only were women and men separated into different spheres in Tertullian's day, with men's public realm more highly valued, but also women were seen as the Other by men. Male authors exploited these perceptions, attacking their opponents as Other and giving them feminine traits. The opponent/enemy was depicted as irrational, unstable, lacking in courage, and self-control—he was, in short, a "woman." These charges were broadly accepted stock accusations, often delivered with no regard to actual circumstances. Ross Kraemer detects this phenomenon across pagan, Jewish, and Christian writings,[8] citing Chrysostom as a clear example of such practice. In his sermons *Against Judaizing Christians* (2.3.4-6), Chrystostom attacks husbands for their failure to control their wives' behaviors: "Now that the devil summons your wives to the Feast of Trumpets and they turn a ready ear to his call, you do not restrain them." Not only are they unable to control "their" women, these inadequate husbands display feminine traits. He declares that those Christian men who attend the synagogue are effeminate (*malakoi*) and resemble the softness characterized by women.[9]

For the church fathers such rhetoric could result in a special dilemma because the church portrayed itself as the virgin Bride of Christ.[10] Male members of the church negotiated between the gendered female image of submission in relation to God and the masculine ideal of their world. These concerns, however, focus specifically on how the category of "virgin" was used to explain real and ideal Christian women in the ancient world.

Images of Bride and Virgin

The church fathers and their audiences did not create the categories of "bride" and "virgin," nor did they employ these categories in a vacuum. We should suppose that what they said was understandable to their audience, even if they were reconfiguring or redefining those social roles. The larger cultural picture of marriage must come into focus in order to properly appreciate how the church fathers manipulated the categories of "virgin" and "bride" for their own purposes.

Noble Women: Gender and Honor in Ascetic Texts," *Semeia* 57/1 [1992]: 42-43).

[8]Ross Kraemer, "The Other as Woman: An Aspect of Polemic among Pagans, Jews and Christians in the Greco-Roman World," in *The Other in Jewish Thought and History*, ed. Laurence J. Silberstein and Robert L. Cohn (New York: New York University Press, 1994), 122-144.

[9]See Kraemer, 135-137, for a full discussion.

[10]Virginia Burrus explores the development of the Christian male's self-image as reflected in the masculine/male portrait of the Trinity: "If the horizon of human becoming is named in terms of Father, Son, and Spirit, this does not in itself make of God a male idol—but it does, as a matter of fact, construct both an idealized masculinity and a masculinized transcendence. For the Fathers, femaleness is allied with the stubborn particularity of created matter, against which the unlimited realm of supposedly ungendered divinity may be defined by theologians who have risen above their gender as well" (*Begotten, Not Made: Conceiving Manhood in Late Antiquity* [Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000], 185).

Cooper suggests that the discussion of marriage in Plutarch[11] and in Hellenistic romance novels[12] demonstrates a strong concern for the stabilizing influence of marriage within the life of the city. In Plutarch, the man's self-mastery (*sophrosyne*) is the most prominent and honorable virtue, and that which makes him a great citizen. But in each man there exists a tension between personal pleasure, such as that enjoyed between a man and a woman, and the good of the community achieved through self-discipline and restraint.[13] Marc Antony's lust/love for Cleopatra offers a classic example of failing to moderate these desires.

A man's honor could be attacked through charges, real or trumped-up, of his susceptibility to lust. To combat or prevent such accusations, a man might reinforce verbally his love for his wife and highlight her chaste lifestyle, therein demonstrating his (not her) trustworthiness. In this sense, the private life of the home became public, generating social honor for the patriarch. Cooper concludes that these public comments would have signaled to the community the family's attempt to restore honor or maintain its social standing.

Cooper identifies two implications for the study of women. First, it reduces the already meager sources on historical women because description of their behavior "is shaped rhetorically to suit a judgment of male character, [and] this means that their reflection of reality is distorted."[14] Supporting her claims from both the Hellenistic romance novels[15] and the closely related *Apocryphal Acts*, Cooper alleges that the woman becomes a rhetorical device, part of the narrative motif which pits two groups of men against each other for social control of the city. Cooper concludes: "If we assume for the sake of argument that whenever a woman is mentioned a man's character is being judged,—and along with it what he stands for—we can begin to see the rhetorical possibilities afforded by a female point of identification in a literature aimed at defending, or undermining, such sanctified Greco-Roman institutions as marriage, the family and even the city itself."[16]

[11]Plutarch, Ἐρωτικός 769B-C; *Life of Pompey* 1.4.

[12]Cooper looks at Chaereas and Callirhoe by Chariton, and Leukippe and Kleitophon by Tatius, and Daphnis and Chloe by Longus.

[13]Cooper, 5, comments that Plutarch's writings on marriage reflect a "rhetorical motif in the politics of self-representation and as a narrative resolution for the philosophical problem of pleasure and instability."

[14]Cooper, 13.

[15]Virginia Burrus suggests that issues of colonization should play a role in interpreting the ancient Romances ("Mimicking Virgins: Colonial Ambivalence and the Ancient Romance," *Arethusa* 38 [2005]: 49-88). She, 85, writes: "The romance is thus revealed as a field of ambivalent play, a literary 'contact zone' in which the interwoven discourses of empire and city, marriage and love, Greekness and nativity, are exposed as no more or less than the effect of mimicry—an exposure that calls into question any claims of 'original' authority. The result . . . is not an unambiguous political 'message.'"

[16]Cooper, 19.

Second, and somewhat ironically, Cooper adds that the social dynamic underpinning this rhetoric actually served to empower women. Discounting as anachronistic the Enlightenment's fixation on both individual autonomy and the public/private social dichotomy, Cooper argues that as the domus was the center of community life, and as women were at the center of the home, they therefore had tremendous, albeit informal, power[17] to shape the family's honor socially, politically, and economically. She notes that concentrating "on these distortions, . . . will afford a more accurate picture of how ancient women understood themselves."[18]

Cooper's discussion of the *Apocryphal Acts* raises important questions,[19] and her analysis is not without its critics. I am not convinced that we can discern these ancient women's self-understanding as mediated through a male author. Moreover, Shelly Matthews warns that Cooper's methodology, in fact, reduces women to mere signs or metaphors serving male rhetorical purposes in the texts.[20] Cooper's focus on textual representation of women, influenced by poststructuralist claims, relegates historical women to the margins. Matthews counters with Claude Lévi-Strauss's conclusion that women are both signs and producers of signs. She maintains that women are not only acted upon, but also are actors affecting their environment.[21]

In addition, Cooper fails to address adequately Tertullian's claim that "those women" read the *Acts of Thecla* as supporting the position that women could function as preachers and baptizers. Tertullian disagrees that women are eligible for teaching and baptizing positions in the church and he attempts to discredit the *Acts of Thecla* by asserting it was a later work written by a presbyter to honor Paul the Apostle (*De baptismo* 1.17, CC 1.291). Yet the phrase "those women" is not textually secure. Even if we could establish this reading, it is entirely possible that

[17]Margaret Y. MacDonald, *Early Christian Women and Pagan Opinion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 41-47. Karen Jo Torjesen ("In Praise of Noble Women,"*Semia* 57 [1992]: 50-51), points to Elizabeth Clark, who builds on Weber's theory of three types of power. Women were assigned that power based on their personal status, wealth, and family, not on their office or function. Weber called this traditional authority, which does not distinguish between public and private roles, and which works well in the ancient patronage system. See Elizabeth Clark, "Authority and Humility: A Conflict of Values in Fourth Century Femail Monasticism," in *Ascetic Piety and Women's Faith*, Studies in Women and Religion, 3 (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen, 1986), 214.

[18]Cooper, 13.

[19]Virginia Burrus uses folklore techniques as a methodological entrance into the historicity of *Apocryphal Acts* (*Chastity as Autonomy: Women in the Stories of the Apocryphal Acts* [Lewiston: Mellon, 1987]). Most recently, she has explored identity construction from a postcolonial perspective in her "Mimicking Virgins," 49-88.

[20]Shelly Matthews, "Thinking of *Thecla*: Issues in Feminist Historiography," *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 17/2 (2001): 50.

[21]Ibid., 51. She quotes Lévi-Strauss: "For words do not speak, while women do; as producers of signs, women can never be reduced to the status of symbols or tokens" (Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology* [New York: Basic Books, 1963], 61).

Tertullian used "those women" metaphorically to discredit his male opponents. Again, Cooper declares that these women to whom Tertullian refers misunderstood the *Acts of Thecla*; they failed to perceive the political debate buttressing the narrative.[22] But how can she be sure that she has captured the author's intent? Her methodological approach, reinforced by poststructuralist perspectives, challenges the prospect of recovering authorial intent.[23] Also, why should Cooper's reading be privileged over a group of ancient Christian women? Finally, Cooper's analysis does not preclude the possibility that the text reflects historical content. Ironically, Cooper accepts as historical the group of women who read the *Acts of Thecla* "incorrectly" and the presbyter who is said to have composed the work. Matthews concludes that "not only is the *Thecla* text about 'authority and the social order,' as Cooper recognizes, but also, at least in its reception history, it had quite a lot to do with women."[24]

Tertullian takes seriously the ramifications of using the *Acts of Thecla* to formulate policy for women's participation in church leadership. He does not hesitate to present his own views on appropriate behavior for women in the church, as in his homily *On the Veiling of Virgins*, written in the first or early part of the second decade of the third century.[25] Just as the *Acts* genre presents problems of interpretation, so too the historian must filter Tertullian's rhetoric to discover traces of real women's lives and activities.

Tertullian's On the Veiling of Virgins

Issues of honor and shame factor extensively in Tertullian's homily, and we must not ignore this social construct or its ramifications within society. Tertullian also develops his argument in conversation with custom, to which he assigns a secondary status compared to both his interpretation of the "discipline of God" and his reading of Scripture, especially Paul. Tertullian combats the custom of unveiled virgins with several arguments that address both the practice itself and his underlying convictions concerning gender. He disputes the tradition of unveiled virgins as resting on the unstable foundation

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[22]Cooper, 114-115, notes that "whereas the battle of the romantic heroine recorded in the *Apocryphal Acts* was waged for rhetorical purposes—to vivify the opposition between Christian otherworldliness and the networks of reproduction, kinship, and alliance of the *saeculum*—we have little evidence that the authors of the *Apocryphal Acts* considered the effect their heroines might have on the self-understanding and behavior of actual women."

[23]For this critique, I am indebted to Ross Kraemer's private communications with me concerning Cooper's work. Cooper, 65, recognizes the thin ice she is skating on when she comments that "to suggest that certain female readers discovered in the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* a meaning incongruous with what was intended by the author may seem incautious . . . but that is just what Tertullian says."

[24]Matthews, 53.

[25]Geoffrey D. Dunn, *Tertullian*, in *The Early Church Fathers*, ed. Carol Harrison (New York: Routledge, 2004), 135.

of social custom. Tertullian is reflecting the standard Roman practice of adult women donning the matron's head covering to reflect their social status.[26] He asserts that the unveiled virgin is at odds with the fundamental reality of the female's subservient position *a propos* the male as established in creation. Thus he insists emphatically that a virgin is first and foremost a woman.[27] But at the end of the day, Tertullian is concerned with controlling women's status as it secures men's superior social status. His real disquiet is with the male leaders who are emasculated by their unveiled virgins.

Historical Women in Tertullian's *On the Veiling of Virgins*

Tertullian is forthright about the ambiguity surrounding the practice of veiling virgins. I have no reason to doubt that he is setting forth a fairly accurate assessment of the situation because he admits that those who differ with him on this custom are in agreement with him on matters of doctrine. His defensive tone suggests he represents a minority position. Moreover, it does not profit him to admit that the practice of unveiled virgins has a sizable following. It would suit his argument better to say that only a few permit the unveiled virgin, thereby lessening the impact of their numbers, and, by extension, their position.

From comments scattered throughout the treatise,[28] Tertullian presents a picture wherein veiled or covered virgins walk to church through their towns, but upon entering the church they remove their veils. Apparently, virgins followed the wider social custom of covering their heads, but not their faces as they mingled in public venues. Thus Christian virgins would look no different than other adult women in the marketplace. Like matrons, they too would be covered as the social custom dictated. In other words, no one would identify a virgin based on her attire.

Tertullian resists the practice of unveiling virgins in the church, and as part of his argument points to certain groups of women who veil both face and

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[26]Bruce Winter writes: "The veil was the most symbolic feature of the bride's dress in Roman culture" (*Roman Wives, Roman Widows* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003], 78).

[27]Tertullian writes: "Proceed we, then, to the word itself. The word (expressing the) natural (distinction) is female. Of the natural word, the general word is woman. Of the general, again, the special is virgin, or wife, or widow, or whatever other names, even of the successive stages of life, are added hereto. Subject, therefore, the special is to the general" (*On the Veiling of Virgins*, chap. 4). See also Tertullian, *On Prayer*, chap. 22.

[28]See, e.g., *On the Veiling of Virgins*, chap. 13: "If on account of men they [virgins] adopt a false garb, let them carry out that garb fully even for that end; and as they veil their head in presence of heathens, let them at all events in the church conceal their virginity, which they do veil outside the church. They fear strangers: let them stand in awe of the brethren too; or else let them have the consistent hardihood to appear as virgins in the streets as well, as they have the hardihood to do in the churches. I will praise their vigour, if they succeed in selling aught of virginity among the heathens withal. Identity of nature abroad as at home, identity of custom in the presence of men as of the Lord, consists in identity of liberty. To what purpose, then, do they thrust their glory out of sight abroad, but expose it in the church?" See also ibid., chap. 2.

head. He claims that his call to veil the virgin's face has precedence in the Arab woman's veiling of her face and is found among other people groups, including those found "beneath this (African) sky" (chap. 2). His vagueness increases the suspicion that Tertullian is promoting a minority position.[29]

Tertullian's program encourages the virgin to cover her head and part of the face. He speaks about covering the virgin's forehead (chap. 3) and describes her hair as "being massed together upon the crown, it wholly covers the very citadel of the head with an encirclement of hair" (chap. 7). He maintains that when a girl comes of age and is a virgin, she must veil herself, that is, cover her head and face (chaps. 3, 7, 15, 17).

He puts forward that for some virgins his suggested type of covering matches their preference. He speaks about women having choices in marriage, and proposes that virgins might have the same choice in their attire. He writes that "the matter has been left to choice, for each virgin to veil herself or expose herself [or prostitute herself],[30] as she might have chosen, just as (she has equal liberty) as to marrying, which itself withal is neither enforced nor prohibited" (chap. 2). But female autonomy is far from his mind; rather Tertullian is at pains to demonstrate female subordination to men. This sentiment is clear from his language vilifying the woman as a prostitute who makes a choice contrary to Tertullian's ideal. Nor would Tertullian have been dissuaded from his position if no virgin veiled herself; their acceptance of his position does not ultimately affect its truth, as far as Tertullian is concerned.

It is difficult to tell from Tertullian's work whether the virgin has any special functions within the church, but he does speak about a widow's functions in his denunciation of a bishop's "promotion" of a young virgin to the office of widow (chap. 9).[31] He describes a widow as an older woman (at least sixty years old), who was previously married and probably with children. He remarks that they are qualified to counsel and comfort other women in that they too have "traveled down the whole course of probation whereby a female can be tested" (chap. 9). For Tertullian, a virgin is not qualified to give this counsel and comfort, and he concludes "nothing in the way of public honour is permitted to a virgin" (chap. 9).

In his condemnation of the bishop's decision to advance a virgin to the

[29]Dunn, 141, concludes that Tertullian is not speaking about a covering similar to the modern burka worn by some Muslim women. Instead, he is referring to the Roman shawl, which could be pulled up over the wearer's head but left the face exposed. I agree that Tertullian in places seems to reference only the Roman shawl or *palla*, but he also speaks about the face needing covering.

[30]Dunn, 181 n. 27, remarks that "this verb more commonly meant 'to be exposed to prostitution' or simply 'to prostitute oneself.' Tertullian's choice of words is very revealing."

[31]Tertullian hints that the bishop was searching for a way to offer relief for the woman. Tertullian also does not remark directly on the theological irony of declaring a virgin, wed to Christ, a widow!

office of widow, Tertullian is probably reflecting a historical event. His censure reflects the fluid lines between categories of women that the church fathers sought desperately to solidify. How distinct were the boundaries between virgin and chaste widow? From a symbolic framework, they are worlds apart, because the virgin is complete, whole, and unused, while the widow is secondhand, even damaged goods.[32] But in the social world, both are without men, and so perhaps lived similar lives or had similar needs.

Why did some (most?) churches allow virgins to attend church without the veil? Tertullian's answers—that both the men and the women who favor this practice are filled with impiety and lust—drip with rhetorical venom and so should be accorded little verisimilitude. We could postulate that these virgins wanted to distinguish their lifestyle from matrons and widows, both who engaged in sexual activity with their husbands. Or perhaps the vow of virginity offered a woman lower down on the social ladder a chance to rise above her station, as it were. Cooper reminds us that autonomy and freedom, treasured values today, were not benefits sought out in the ancient world. Instead, people looked for moral authority. She asks: "[W]ere women converting to asceticism for the sake of virtue or for the sake of being seen as virtuous?"[33] Asceticism was a wild card in the game of social rank and standing because it gave moral authority to those whose social rank would not otherwise allow for such prestige. Anne Hickey counters that social advancement was not the reason for asceticism's appeal, but rather its resolution of social and cultural ambiguities for women's roles in society.[34] Curiously, Tertullian speaks of the "virgins of men" as rivals (*aemulae*) of the "virgins of God" (chap. 3). If Tertullian is representing a historical situation, the language of "rival" supports Cooper, that women were vying for social power and prestige. Yet Tertullian implies that in many churches little attention was paid to whether or not a virgin would wear a veil, which might indicate that women were not competing against each other for honor.

In the specific case noted above about which Tertullian provides some detail, it seems that the financial need of the woman was paramount in the bishop's response. Tertullian censures the bishop for sponsoring the young virgin to the status of widow, "whereas if the bishop had been bound to accord her any relief, he might, of course, have done it in some other way without detriment to the respect due to discipline" (chap. 9). For this church at least, the office of virgin did not carry the same social provisions as did the office of widow, and so the bishop moved the woman to the category of widow. Tertullian charges that some

[32]Kathleen Norris offers a penetrating analysis of virginity and martyrdom in *The Cloister Walk* (New York: Riverhead Books, 1996), 186-205.

[33]Cooper, 84.

[34]Anne Ewing Hickey writes: "At least within the monastic context, the expectational structure for the woman was clearly defined with respect to the foci of our analysis of cultural expectations." Hickey examined family/maternity, beauty, and education (*Women of the Roman Aristocracy as Christian Monastics* [Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1987], 110-111).

women choose to be virgins "because the brotherhood readily undertakes the maintenance of virgins" (chap. 14). This suggests that at least in some areas, the decision to pursue a life of virginity might be based in part on one's financial situation. Perhaps women needing economic assistance chose the path of virginity because they believed the church would find a way to care for their financial needs. It may also reveal that most of the virgins in the church were sufficiently wealthy to support themselves, and few needed the help offered by the "misguided" bishop noted above.

Can we draw any historical picture based on the opponent's voice in this homily? Tertullian declares that "the virgins of men" say 'We are scandalized . . . because others walk otherwise (than we do)'" (chap. 3). Tertullian lashes out at such logic, declaring it could lead to the incontinent demanding that the continent engage in sexual behavior! Instead, he asks why they do not decry as scandalizing the "petulance, the impudence, of ostentatious virginity." In this barb, he reveals his strongly negative opinion, and his sharp rhetoric raises questions whether he is reflecting accurately an actual debate or his opponents' position. However, he does address this same question in his earlier work *On Prayer*, where he points out the presence of unveiled virgins in the congregation (chap. 21). Attending to the same situation twice within a short time span presumably indicates the historical presence of unveiled and veiled virgins within the church.

Tertullian's Gendered Argument for Male Superiority

It may not be far off the mark to say that Tertullian is more concerned with how male leaders are directing their churches, rather than the actual apparel of virgins.[35] He is fundamentally disturbed that the choice for veiling is left to the women. He declares that as the power to discern grew within the church, the decisions about this issue became a litmus test for honor among leaders. To those leaders who left the decision up to the women in the church, Tertullian asserts that "the great adversary of good things" set to work among them. Tertullian denounces those male leaders who fail to lead "their" virgins in the ways of God (chap. 3). In fact, he goes so far as to indict them as rapists: "Every public exposure of an honorable virgin is (to her) a suffering of rape. . . . O sacrilegious hands, which have had the hardihood to drag off a dress dedicated to God!" (chap. 3).

He speaks about the veil for the married women as their "yoke," yet for the virgin, it is a symbol of her humility and passivity as a woman. The veil's purpose

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[35]L. Raditsa analyzes Tertullian's discussion about apparel through the psychoanalytical model ("The Appearance of Women and Contact: Tertullian's *De habitu Feminarum*," *Athenaeum* 63 [1985]: 297-326). Raditsa, 297, writes: "Tertullian concentrates on appearance because he senses it implies contact, not only social contact between men and women, but also contact with nature and God, and past, present, and future." The open appearance advocated by Tertullian identifies Christians publicly, which could lead to persecution (ibid., 308).

differs depending on a woman's social status. For a virgin, the veil hides her from the world of men and all the temptations therein, protecting the glory of her husband, Christ. Tertullian is especially concerned over the role the sense of sight plays in male lust. If the virgin covers her face, then the man cannot lust after her. Tertullian adds that the covered virgin is also prevented from the sensual sin of enjoying being looked at! The veil also prevents the sin of ostentatious behavior. For wives, it preserves their vows and modesty, reinforcing the fact that they are in submission to their husbands, their "head" or "power."

Tertullian makes the audacious claim that physical rape would not be as bad as the removal of the veil for a virgin, as the former comes of "natural office" (chap. 3). But removing the veil violates the spirit of her virginity, for "she has learnt to lose what she used to keep" (chap. 3). He claims that the virgin will feel exposed as she stands unveiled; this belief that she has already been sexually compromised by her uncovering will set her on the path to wantonness and impiety.[36] Church writings down through the centuries, however, have praised women who protected their purity/virginity on pain of death,[37] so I wonder whether Tertullian's female audience might have accepted his cavalier posture toward physical rape.

Tertullian further alleges that many unveiled virgins are in fact sexually active.[38] He spills much ink on their pregnancy, delivery, and the numerous healthy children they produce. He laments: "God knows how many infants He has helped to perfection and through gestation till they were born sound and whole, after being long fought against by their mothers! Such virgins ever conceive with the readiest facility, and have the happiest deliveries, and children indeed most like to their fathers!" (chap. 14). His concern is that by not mandating the veil, no one can tell if the woman is faithful to her virginity vow.

[36]Is Tertullian describing a female's orgasm when he writes in *On the Veiling of Virgins*, chap. 14, "she is tickled by pointing fingers, while she is too well loved, while she feels a warmth creep over her amid assiduous embraces and kisses. Thus the forehead hardens; thus the sense of shame wears away; thus it relaxes; thus is learned the desire of pleasing in another way!"? Is Tertullian revealing a commonly held understanding of female sexuality in which a woman's head represented her genitals, or was even a part of her genitals? Did the covering of the hair on her head symbolize the covering of her pubic hair? For a discussion on this issue, see Troy W. Martin, "Paul's Argument from Nature for the Veil in 1 Corinthians 11:13-15: A Testicle Instead of a Head Covering," *JBL* 123 (2004): 75-84. See also Dale B. Martin, *The Corinthian Body* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995).

[37]Norris, 186-205.

[38]Tertullian indirectly makes this charge in *On the Veiling of Virgins*, chap. 3 when he describes the "virgins of men" as going about with their "front quite bare" that is, with their forehead exposed. Even more, these so-called virgins have the power to ask men "something," and this may have to do with requesting sex, if the mention of "forehead" parallels this vague statement. These "virgins of men" are apparently requesting that other virgins be restricted from wearing the veil, as it offends those who do not don it.

If the virgin broke her vow, Tertullian is convinced she would avoid at all costs revealing her lapse by taking up the matron's covering.

Tertullian plays on the gender stereotypes accepted in his world, that women have uncontrollable sexual appetites and cannot be trusted to maintain sexual purity. However, his main fear with unveiled virgins is that status boundaries are crossed without public evidence of the change. He wants matrons to look like matrons, and virgins like virgins, thus both groups must be veiled. The implicit charge to his opponents is that they permit a custom which allows "their" women to be sexually promiscuous without penalty. At bottom, Tertullian is not merely (or even primarily) attacking women, but the men who create and perpetuate dangerous social custom. By shaming their women, Tertullian is bringing dishonor on their leadership.

Would such accusations stick? Would an ancient audience be convinced that Tertullian's opponents are part of an "immoral" congregation? Given that image is reality, and that gendered social constructs assumed that women were promiscuous, it is entirely possible that his audience would be moved by his rhetoric against his opponents. Let me add, however, the possibility that Tertullian was writing to his own group and that his opponents never saw or heard his argument. Tertullian might be practicing a bit of self-identity building, wherein he is distinguishing himself from other "orthodox" communities, which, nevertheless, do things differently and are therefore suspect.

Furthermore, Tertullian is inconsistent in his attitude toward and rhetorical use of custom. He first admits that those churches "with whom we share the law of peace and the name of brotherhood" (chap. 2) differ on this issue of veiling virgins. Then he decries the custom as not based on Truth. But he goes on to defend his position by pointing to apostolic custom, and by noting that pagan social custom insists on at least covering the head, if not veiling the face. So he is selective in choosing among the various customs. He validates his interpretation of custom from his reading of 1 Cor 11 primarily (chaps. 4, 7, 8), from his claim of apostolic authority for his custom (chap. 2), and from a vision sent by the Holy Spirit (chap. 17).

In a treatise written probably just a few years before *On the Veiling of Virgins*, Tertullian uses an argument from custom to defend the behavior of a Christian soldier—but this time he applauds custom as pointing to Truth.[39] In *On the Military Crown*, he defends a local Christian soldier's refusal to don the victor's wreath as supported by Christian custom. Equally as interesting, in the work he cites the practice of biblical Israelite women veiling themselves as proof that custom is a guide for true practice. He highlights both Rebecca and Susanna as proper models of women covering their heads.[40] The examples of Rebecca and Susanna make it "sufficiently plain that you can vindicate the keeping of even unwritten tradition established by custom; the proper witness

[39]Dunn, 135.

[40]Tertullian, *On the Military Crown*, 4.

for tradition when demonstrated by long-continued observance."[41]

His inconsistency in the use of custom weakens his argument, while the similar hermeneutics used by both Tertullian and his opponents makes the former's task much more difficult. Tertullian is at pains to insist that virgins belong first and foremost to the genus "woman" by using a grammatical-historical method stressing word study and vocabulary. His opponents apparently apply the same method, but arrive at diametrically opposite conclusions; this hints at an underlying difference in presuppositions. Do Tertullian's opponents understand that in the vow of virginity the female becomes male in some sense? Tertullian does not allude to it, but evidence from sources as diverse as Philo and the *Martyrdom of Perpetua* indicates that, for some writers, in specific situations women might fit male categories. Philo describes the *Therapeutrides* ("most of them aged virgins") as postmenopausal and thus male in some sense,[42] and Perpetua's vision ("My clothes were stripped off, and suddenly I was a man," chap. 10), illustrates the possibility of women ascending beyond their limited femaleness. Does Tertullian's argument reflect indirectly the early church's conversation about the precise category into which virgins might fall?

Tertullian insists that virgins do not lose their female character when they devote themselves as virgins to Christ, even though they have renounced the most characteristic qualities of their gender, namely, their lustfulness and openness to sex. But they remain women, according to Tertullian, because they still retain the quality of passivity that defines the female gender (chap.16). The veil was an important sign of that humility.[43] Tertullian's position on the submissive woman was shared by later church fathers. Augustine condemns the married woman Ecdicia for disposing of her wealth without the permission of her husband.[44] Both Ecdicia and her husband had taken vows of chastity, but her flagrant disregard for his leadership in all other areas of her life led him to break his vow and take a lover. Joyce Salisbury concludes that both Ecdicia's husband and Augustine "believed that her renunciation of sexuality did not mean that she was freed from other feminine obligations, primarily that of subservience."[45]

In some churches, it seems that the role of virgin was set apart and marked as distinct from that played by other adult women, the widow, and the wife. Much to Tertullian's chagrin, the unveiled virgin was applauded publicly and highly honored. Such praise, pouts Tertullian, belongs to men, for they are

[41]Ibid.

[42]Ross Kraemer offers an excellent summary of Philo's description of these women ("Monastic Jewish Women in Greco-Roman Egypt: Philo Judaeus on the *Therapeutrides*," *Signs* 14/2 [1989]: 342-370).

[43]Joyce E. Salisbury, *Church Fathers, Independent Virgins* (New York: Verso, 1991), 27-28.

[44]Augustine, Letter No. 262, in *Saint Augustine: Letters* vol. V, trans. W. Parsons (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1956), 261.

[45]Salisbury, 2.

superior to women: "Sure we are that the Holy Spirit could rather have made some such concession to males, if He had made it to females; forasmuch as, besides the authority of sex, it would have been more becoming that males should have been honoured on the ground of continency itself likewise" (chap. 10). Tertullian's biting rhetoric that male celibacy is more honorable than female virginity intimates his fear of social dislocation or reversal of proper gender roles latent in the practice of honoring virgins. Tertullian *a priori* accepts that God will give more honor to the man than to the woman. Since God did not give the male celibate a public sign or token indicating this honor, God would certainly not think to bestow upon women such a sign, in this case, the permission to go about in church without the customary veil. He shores up his claim with what is, in his mind, irrefutable evidence. He proclaims that continence for men is much harder to maintain than virginity for women: "The more their sex is eager and warm toward females, so much the more toil does the continence of (this) greater ardour involve; and therefore the worthier is it of all ostentation, if ostentation of virginity is dignity" (chap. 10). Apparently, men have a harder time resisting women and sex, but virgins who have never known sex's sweetness do not desire after it. Thus for Tertullian, "constancy of virginity is maintained by grace; of continence by virtue" (chap. 10).

At first blush, it may seem as though Tertullian is contradicting himself—stating that men have a harder time resisting sex, and in the same breath decrying the woman's propensity for promiscuity. Both are true, and are related to virtue and gender. For him, women are weak by nature, lacking the inclination toward virtue and rarely able to resist temptation. But men can aspire to virtue as they battle against their passions.

Conclusion

To conclude, I suggest that Tertullian opposes the practice of virgins unveiling themselves in the church for several reasons. First, he faults the practice as being inconsistent since the virgins veil themselves in public, but are unveiled at church. Second, he is offended by the potential for immorality he sees stemming from this practice. His concern is twofold, focusing on women's attire as being a reflection of their characters as women, and on men's threatened honor. He judges unveiled virgins to be contrary to God's discipline in that women are taking the lead in establishing practice. He insists on clear gender demarcation within the church; to step outside these heavily drawn lines is to invite sin and decadence. Third, Tertullian takes the opportunity afforded by the situation to promote his understanding of "male" and "female." He clarifies that all men are above all women by applying the categories of "glory" and "humility." He declares it discourteous (*inhumanum*)[46] that a woman would be given a special honor denied to men, and that men would "carry their glory in secret, carrying no token to make *them*, too, illustrious (chap. 10).

・ [46]Loeb translates *inhumanum* "sufficiently discourteous," while Dunn, 155, has "extremely rude."

Unveiled virgins provide Tertullian with the opportunity to address broader concerns, including his definition of "widow" and his interest in presenting the church as a political body rather than as a household.[47] Tertullian's effort to reinforce gender distinctions and reify status among groups of women might be due to an inherited confusion within the church over the definition of "widow."[48] It seems that some women claimed widowhood who, in fact, had never married. In the first quarter of the second century, Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, writes to the Smyrneans: "I salute the households of my brethren with their wives and children, and the virgins who are called widows."[49] If Ignatius was referring to women who were chaste like virgins, one would expect him to write "widows who are like virgins." Taking his words at face value, however, they indicate a group of young unmarried women who are functioning within the church in a manner similar to widows.[50]

First Timothy 5:9-14 may reflect a comparable situation. In 5:9, a widow is defined as being sixty years old and the wife of one husband. Most understand this passage as insisting on *univira* ("one husband in one's lifetime"), but the later charge in 5:14 for young "widows" to marry again presumably goes against the sentiments of 5:9. If, however, this passage signals a fluid definition of widow that included young unmarried women, then the apparent discontinuity goes away. In this reading, 1 Tim 5:14 encourages young women who are identified as widows (but who would be called virgins today) to marry for the first time and have children. Tertullian's disagreement with the bishop who enrolled the virgin as a widow could reflect the unstable category of "widow/virgin" in the early church. With a rhetorical flourish, he declares the virgin-widow is hardly a miracle (*miraculum*); she is a monster (*monstrum*, chap. 9).

Writing at the turn of the third century, Tertullian's arguments may reflect at least two transitions within the church. First, there is a shift from private house churches to a more public presence. Tertullian views the church as occupying public space. Thus women must apply rules of public comportment and dress instead of using those that were acceptable in private homes. Veils that are worn on the public walk across town are required in the public space of the church.[51] Second, his argument may reflect the emerging ascendance of virginity over chastity as the spiritual ideal. During the third century, the church elevated the status of virgin over the offices of widow. Those women who, through daily

[47]Karen Torjesen writes: "From Tertullian's perspective the church was a legal body (*corpus* or *societas*) unified by a common law (*lex fidei*) and a common discipline (*disciplina*) ("Tertullian's 'Political Ecclesiology' and Women's Leadership," *Studia Patristica* 21 [1989]: 277-282).

[48]E.g., Tertullian speaks of a group of pagan women who serve the African Ceres and who leave their husbands to identify themselves as widows (*Ad uxorem* 1.6.4).

[49]Ignatius, *Smyrna* 13.

[50]Charlotte Metheun, "The 'Virgin Widow': A Problematic Social Role for the Early Church?" *HRT* 90/3 (1997): 289.

[51]Torjesen, 281.

devotion to husband and children, earned their reputation as spiritual guides were replaced by those who had never married, raised children, or cared for families. Charlotte Methuen notes that "as the orthodox church became more established . . . the spiritual authority of senior members of a congregation who had proved their faith over a number of years was assumed by those who had gained stature through the successful pursuit of the ascetic life."[52] Tertullian insists gender hierarchy must be maintained; a woman must not be awarded a high status simply because she is a woman, i.e., virgin. Only "real" widows may earn the privilege of high status.

Tertullian argues against male leaders of churches who fail to follow his rigorous agenda. But he also pleads with his female audience to listen to his words for the sake of the men in their lives because, he notes, "you are a danger for every age group" (chap. 16).[53] Thus Tertullian awards women tremendous (albeit informal) power even as he strips them of honor. Kathleen Norris recognizes this in the tales of virgin martyrs and remarks: "Once again (or, as ususal), a virgin martyr gives witness to a wild power in women that disrupts the power of male authority, of business as usual."[54] Tertullian sensed this disruption and sought to cover it up, literally.

[52]Methuen, 297.

[53]Dunn's translation, 160.

[54]Kathleen Norris, *The Cloister Walk* (New York: Riverhead, 1996), 200.

THE BEGINNINGS OF A PEACE CHURCH: ESCHATOLOGY, ETHICS, AND EXPEDIENCE IN SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST RESPONSES TO THE CIVIL WAR

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Despite the church's long tradition of "noncombatancy," the terms "pacifism" and "peace church" have never gained prominence in descriptions of Seventh-day Adventist identity.[1] The distinction that made a good Adventist a noncombatant but not a pacifist, a distinction that did not take place until the twentieth century, became associated with "the faith once delivered to the saints." When we look closely at the church's founding era, however, the distinction looks more like an innovation than a legacy of the founders, for there is much evidence to support the idea that Seventh-day Adventism, in fact, began as a peace church.

It was during the middle decades of the twentieth century that church publications began issuing sharp denials that Adventists were pacifists or antimilitarists or anything of that ilk. While wishing to sustain the long-standing norm that Adventists as individuals could not in good conscience bear arms, American church leaders wanted the sharpest possible distinction drawn between their "noncombatant" position and that of liberals and radicals who advocated disarmament and peace between nations, and often denounced the actions of ruling authorities while they were at it.[2]

During this same era (ca. 1930-1950), the Church of the Brethren, the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), and the Mennonite Churches faced similar pressures. Conscientious objection to military combat had been a defining feature of these movements since their inception—a commitment by now sustained over a span of centuries. However, many in these churches also wanted to clarify the difference between their nonresistant discipleship and political pacifism or disloyalty to the nation. Toward that end, in 1935, representatives of these denominations adopted the term "historic peace churches" to designate their shared "official witness that peace is an essential aspect of the gospel" and their rejection of "the use of force and violence." With regard to the military draft, the historic peace churches worked with the

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[1]Church policy recognizes pacifism as one way that conscientious Adventists might work out the implications of their faith, but it is not widely regarded as normative ("Recommendations of General Interest from the Autumn Council, 1972—1,"*Review and Herald*, November 30, 1972, 20).

[2]Carlyle B. Haynes, a leader for several years of the denomination's agencies for handling matters pertaining to military service, seemed particularly adamant on this point. See, e.g., "Conscription and Noncombatancy," *Review and Herald*, October 10, 1940, 10.

government in establishing civilian alternative service programs.[3]

Seventh-day Adventists, meanwhile, gravitated toward the term "conscientious cooperator" to designate eagerness to do their part as patriotic Americans during wartime. If drafted, they would enter the armed services as medics or serve in other roles that would not involve carrying or using weapons.[4]

Was it something at the core of their tradition that predisposed, even predetermined, Seventh-day Adventists to take this turn, that set them on a course now demarcated much more clearly than before from that of the historic peace churches? That question is the impetus for this historical exploration of the 1860s. ˙

It was, of course, during the 1860s that the great national crisis of civil war confronted Adventists with the question of what their radical faith meant for the moral dilemma of war. The first state Conference (Michigan) organized in October 1861, six months after the war began. The first General Conference session met in May 1863, two weeks after the stunning Confederate victory at Chancellorsville and six weeks before the great turning point marked by Union victories at Gettysburg and Vicksburg.

The Civil War and its challenges comprise a relatively familiar topic in Adventist history. Yet the historical narratives to which we are indebted for that familiarity have also obscured crucial dimensions of the story.

Let us begin our analysis of the Seventh-day Adventist response to the Civil War by examining three decisive resolutions the church made toward the end of the war:[5]

May 17, 1865, a month after the Confederate sur nder at Appomattox, the third annual General Conference session passed a resolution that concludes:

> While we thus cheerfully render to Caesar the things which the Scriptures show to be his, we are compelled to decline all participation in acts of war and bloodshed as being inconsistent with the duties enjoined upon us by our divine Master toward our enemies and toward all mankind.

May 1867, the fifth General Conference resolved

> that the bearing of arms, or engaging in war, is a direct violation of the teachings of our Saviour and the spirit and letter of the law of God. Yet we deem it our duty to yield respect to civil rulers, and obedience to all such

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[3]Sara Speicher and Donald Durnbaugh, "Historic Peace Churches," *World Council of Churches Ecumenical Dictionary* <www.wcc-coe.org/wcc/who/dictionary-article8.html>; see also John Howard Yoder, *Nevertheless: The Varieties and Shortcomings of Religious Pacifism*, rev. and expanded ed. (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1992), 107-114.

[4]The Medical Cadet Corps was formed to prepare Adventist young people for more effective military service and positive witness for their faith if drafted. Cf. Everett N. Dick, "The Adventist Medical Corps as Seen by Its Founder," *Adventist Heritage* 1 (July 1974): 19-27; Douglas Morgan, *Adventism and the American Republic* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2001), 89-96.

[5]The resolutions quoted below may be found in the "General Conference Session Minutes, 1863-1888" (Online Document Archive, Seventh-day Adventist General Conference Office of Archives and Statistics, <www.adventistarchives.org>).

laws as do not conflict with the word of God. In the carrying out of this principle we render tribute, customs, reverence, etc.

May 1868, the sixth General Conference declared

That we feel called upon to renew our request to our brethren to abstain from worldly strife of every nature, believing that war was never justifiable except under the immediate direction of God, who of right holds the lives of all creatures in his hand; and that no such circumstance now appearing, we cannot believe it to be right for the servants of Christ to take up arms to destroy the lives of their fellow-men.

Some works of Adventist history[6] do make mention—usually of the first—of these resolutions. They do not, however, seem to see much significance in the fact that the church made definitive and repeated declarations of pacifism[7] during its first decade of organized existence. I propose that the resolutions of 1865-1868 support the generalization that Seventh-day Adventism began as a peace church.[8]

The two contemporary Adventist historians who have written with the greatest skill and acumen on this topic, Ronald Graybill and George Knight, conclude that beneath the unequivocal resolutions of the 1865-1868 General Conferences, Adventists remained quite unsettled about questions of war and military service. In their accounts, expedience seems much more prominent than ethical conviction in prompting Adventists to go on record with their emphatic, sweeping statements against participation in war.

[6]The historical treatments by Adventist writers that I have most utilized for this study are: W. C. White, D. E. Robinson, and A. L. White, "The Spirit of Prophecy and Military Service" (Ellen G. White Estate [hereafter EGWE] document, June 15, 1956, DF 320); Arthur Whitefield Spalding, *Origin and History of Seventh-day Adventists* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1961), 1: 312-33; Ron Graybill, "This Perplexing War: Why Adventists Avoided Military Service in the Civil War" (manuscript in EGWE DF 320, incorporating minor corrections and additions made to an article of the same title published in *Insight*, October 10, 1978, 4-8); idem, "Thoughts on Seventh-day Adventists and the American Civil War" (manuscript in EGWE DF 320); Richard W. Schwarz and Floyd Greenleaf, *Light Bearers: A History of the Seventh-day Adventist Church* (Silver Spring, MD: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Department of Education, 2000), 95-99; George R. Knight, "Adventism and Military Service: Individual Conscience in Ethical Tension," in *Proclaim Peace: Christian Pacifism From Unexpected Quarters*, ed. Theron F. Schlabach and Richard T. Hughes (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 157-171.

[7]Peter Brock includes Adventism in the category of "separational pacifism," in which renunciation of violence is one of the features that distinguish their community from the general society (*Freedom From Violence: Sectarian Nonresistance from the Middle Ages to the Great War* [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991], 270-272). In an analysis that identifies at least twenty-five different types of religious pacifism, Yoder, 96-98, cites Seventh-day Adventists as the foremost example of the "pacifism of cultic law"—absolute, unquestioning adherence to the letter of divine law. I hope to show that this categorization does not do justice to the Adventists of the Civil War era, at least.

[8]That is, they did bear "official witness that peace is an essential aspect of the gospel" and explicitly renounced "the use of force and violence."

Graybill points to a shift of emphasis in the statements of church leaders, from hostility to the "nonresistant position" early in the Civil War to espousal of it toward the end of the war, and concludes:

> Early on, Adventists were suspected of being Southern sympathizers, so James White insisted on the church's support of the Union, and condemned those who resisted the draft. By the end of the war, however, Adventists were struggling to prove that they were really eligible for the privileges accorded those who were conscientiously opposed to war and the bearing of arms. Consequently, they gave full play to their nonresistant sentiments.[9]

James White's statement of his position early in the war (August 1862) triggered an extended debate in the *Review*, in which participants advocated a wide range of actions—from taking an armed, Sabbath-observing regiment into the righteous crusade against slavery to uncompromising nonviolence, whatever the penalty. While this debate was animating the church paper in 1862-1863, it still remained possible to purchase exemptions from military service without gaining official governmental recognition as a conscientious objector.[10]

When changes in the draft law during the summer of 1864 left no other means for avoiding regular combat duty, Adventist leaders, as described by both Graybill and Knight, rushed to declare, for public consumption, a unanimity in their church that did not actually exist. They did this, it appears, not so much out of dedication to peace, but principally to serve an interest of much greater importance to them: avoiding conflict with the authorities over Sabbath observance.

In presenting documents for that purpose to government officials, denominational spokesmen indulged in "a great deal of exaggeration," says Knight, with the claim that their movement had always been unanimous in conscientious opposition to bearing arms. Had not considerable disagreement just been publicly aired in the *Review* only months before?[11] As for the resolution adopted by the General Conference of 1868, Knight judges that while it gives appearance of unanimity on the "military question," in reality opinions in the church remained quite divided.[12]

Thus, the central point one draws from these historians' portrayal of the "Adventists and the Civil War" episode is that during these years, no clear, well-grounded position was formulated from which the church could take orientation when military conscription again became a major problem in the twentieth century. The conflicts and changing trends with regard to military

[9]Graybill, "This Perplexing War," 3.

[10]"Articles From the *Review and Herald* Pertaining to the Seventh-day Adventist Stand on Non-Combatancy During the Civil War" (EGWE DF 320) compiles 83 pages of the critical material published in the *Review*. For the full text of the pertinent issues of the *Review* (and the large majority of all *Review* issues from 1850 through 1982) see GCA Online Document Archive <www.adventistarchives.org>.

[11]Knight, 164.

[12]Ibid., 166.

service in twentieth-century Adventism thus emerged out of widely diverse views that had been there from the beginning, but had been officially papered over in order to get through the crisis of the Civil War.[13]

My reading of the evidence requires a quite different portrayal. First, the documentation that the Adventists compiled to prove the legitimacy of their claim to be principled noncombatants is so abundant, and their insistence that these documents indeed represented the movement's united stance so vigorous and solemn, that it requires much greater weight than Graybill and Knight give it. Early in 1865, Adventists published a pamphlet *Compilation or Extracts, from the Publications of Seventh-day Adventists Setting Forth Their Views of the Sinfulness of War, Referred to in the Annexed Affidavits*.[14] Knight makes no mention of this pamphlet. Graybill accurately observes that only a handful of articles and excerpts written by Adventists themselves could be found from their fifteen years of publications to include in the anthology. By no stretch of the imagination does the compilation show peace and nonresistance to be central themes for Adventists in the 1850s, any more than was health reform. But the presence of a few original articles, along with reprinted material, is at least as striking as the absence of more. It provides clear evidence of a widespread assumption or disposition favorable toward nonviolence as a feature of authentic Christianity at a time when Adventists were indeed preoccupied with other matters.[15]

A second pamphlet, *The Views of Seventh-day Adventists Relative to Bearing Arms, as Brought Before the Governors of Several States, and the Provost Marshall, with a Portion of the Enrollment Law*, contains letters of endorsement from prominent citizens, which the Adventists included in the materials submitted to state governors and the U.S. Provost Marshal to document their religious convictions against engaging in war. One of the letters, addressed to Illinois Governor Richard Gates, affirms

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[13]My perspective owes much to the work of Brock, esp. pp. 230-258.

[14]*Compilation or Extracts, from the Publications of Seventh-day Adventists Setting Forth Their Views of the Sinfulness of War, Referred to in the Annexed Affidavits* (EGWE DF 320).

[15] The support for the New England Non-Resistance Society and other radical reforms among the Millerite Adventists suggests a deeply held pacifism that carried over to the early Sabbatarian Adventists. Graybill discusses Millerite pacifism in "The Abolitionist-Millerite Connection," in *The Disappointed: Millerism and Millenarianism in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Ronald L. Numbers and Jonathan M. Butler (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 139-152. The pacifism of non-Sabbatarian Adventists during the Civil War yields further evidence of its pervasiveness in the roots of the Advent movement; see Peter Brock, ed., *Liberty and Conscience: A Documentary History of Experiences of Conscientious Objectors in America through the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 185-187. Brock describes a strong inclination toward nonresistance from the beginning in the Seventh-day Adventist fellowship as "a legacy of the Garrisonian era" (ibid., 232). In "Radical Witness: The Political Stance of the Earliest Seventh-day Adventists," an unpublished paper presented at Association of Seventh-day Adventist Historians Conference, Andrews University, 13 April 2001, I pursue this point, drawing particularly on the insights of Henry Mayer, *All On Fire: William Lloyd Garrison and the Abolition of Slavery* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998).

the Adventists to be "as truly non-combatant as the Society of Friends."[16] Historian Peter Brock points out that in the legislation enacted during the Civil War period, the term "non-combatant" designated all religious conscientious objectors. Use of the term "noncombatancy" for service in the military in roles not requiring the bearing of arms, in contrast to "pacifist" refusal of military service, is a product of the twentieth century.[17]

The affidavits "annexed" to the pamphlet offer even more striking evidence, particularly for the definitiveness with which Adventist leaders, "duly sworn," declare participation in warfare and bloodshed to be violations of their core beliefs. Uriah Smith's statement refers to the "Church Covenant" adopted by the Michigan Conference in 1861 as indication that Seventh-day Adventists had always "taken as their articles of faith and practice, 'The Commandments of God and the Faith of Jesus Christ.'" Smith elaborated that Adventists explain "the commandments of God to mean the ten commandments of the moral law, and the faith of Jesus Christ to be the teachings of Christ in the New Testament." White stated that he had been a minister of the "denomination" since 1847 and "that during all of that time, the teachings of that church have been that war is sinful and wrong, and not in accordance with the teachings of the Holy Scripture."

Second, I question whether the flurry of articles responding to James White's controversial *Review* editorial of August 1862 ("The Nation") demonstrates the existence of the spectrum of positions that Knight suggests[18] with something such as "just war" on one hand and thoroughgoing pacifism on the other. Most of this interchange assumed that taking human life was incompatible with the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus Christ. Within that framework, the *Review* polemicists thrashed out how rigorous and prescriptive in advance it was necessary to be on the specific course of action to be taken in a complex, pressured situation. Advocacy of armed participation by Adventists in a "just" war made no more than an ephemeral appearance.[19]

Finally, I interpret a letter G. I. Butler wrote to J. N. Andrews[20] in March 1868 in a much different light than have others. The General Conference session of May 1866 had voted to request Andrews "to prepare an article setting forth the teachings of the Scripture on the subject of war." When called to account at the following year's session, Andrews reported that the project was "in an unfinished condition" due to a "want of time." Still not off the hook a year later, the scrupulous scholar reported his finding that the subject required

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[16]*The View of Seventh-day Adventists Relative to Bearing Arms*, 10 (EGWE DF 320).

[17]Brock, *Freedom From Violence*, 301.

[18]Knight, 160-162.

[19]I base this on a reading of the comprehensive collection of relevant Review articles from August 1862 to May 1865 compiled in EGWE DF 320.

[20]George I. Butler to J. N. Andrews, March 24, 1868 (EGWE DF 320).

"much research and study" and thus still was not done.[21]

The fact that the project was not complete was not due to a lack of effort on Andrews's part. Earlier in the year he had sent a letter asking Butler for his views on the subject. Butler's reply makes a case from the Bible for war as necessary and proper in some instances as an instrument of the divinely ordained institution of government. Graybill and Knight both lean heavily on the Butler letter as evidence for a much-divided state of Adventist belief on the issue at the end of the 1860s, the resolutions adopted at the General Conferences notwithstanding.

The letter does show that the subject was not closed and that desire existed for a fuller and deeper biblical exposition on which to ground the church's position. Indeed, the fact that it seemed necessary to reaffirm the church's position on the sinfulness of war at the 1867 conference and yet again in 1868 must mean that questions continued to be raised.

I do not believe, however, that Butler's letter sustains Knight's conclusion that the Seventh-day Adventist community came out of the Civil War era in a fragmented and uncertain state with regard to war. Rather, it provides valuable evidence for the genuine prevalence of a consensus at this point.

In the first place, Butler regarded his own theories to be on the margins of Adventist thought, recognizing "that the mass of our people are leaning rather to the non-resistant side of this subject." He opened his lengthy epistle with a teasing affectation of surprise that Andrews would request light from *him*—a known skeptic about the prevailing view. "I wish I could have seen whether there was not a roguish twinkle in your eye when you penned that sentence," he wrote.

The future General Conference president congratulates himself for having succeeded in urging that Andrews be appointed to write the article on war rather than someone such as Roswell F. Cottrell, who would have "treated" readers "to a rehash of non-resistance theories with no consideration of the other side." It is here that Knight sees conclusive evidence that unanimity did not exist.

Unanimity was indeed lacking, particularly on how to work out the biblical rationale for the refusal to bear arms. However, Butler's letter takes as a starting point that a *consensus*—a basic position agreed upon by delegates duly elected as representatives of the church body—had been established. He does not expect—I doubt even hoped—that Andrews's research would show that Adventists had gotten it all wrong three years before in declaring themselves noncombatants or that the Bible actually does approve participation by the remnant in warfare for a just cause, so they need not have worried so much about the draft after all.

Rather, Butler dissents from the general acceptance of the "non-resistance theories" that had been set forth as a definitive basis for the Adventist position. He wanted Andrews commissioned to write on the subject because he was confident that Andrews would give thorough and fair consideration to all sides of the issue, and was the one best positioned to formulate a convincing case

[21]GC Session Minutes, May 16, 1866; May 14, 1867; and May 12, 1868.

that does justice to the full range of scriptural testimony.

Thus Butler did not want "more of the same" from Cottrell. He had already heard Cottrell's argument and found it unconvincing. He wanted more solid ground—"*rock bottom*, not shifting sand"—on which to stand when faced with "the test on this subject" in the future. He wanted truth so deeply convincing as to enable him to "go to prison or anywhere else, with firmness and resignation."[22] After making his ponderous case against biblical nonresistance, Butler, in the end, declared that he was nevertheless already firm in his own commitment never to participate in war. How can this be?

Butler's contention was not that the sixth commandment is an eternal prohibition against Christians engaging in war under any circumstances in any historical context. Rather, prohibition was because a new and final epoch in God's saving plan for history had begun. Butler could, therefore, "justify war" in some cases during past ages where liberty was at stake.

> But now the circumstances are changed. A mighty, special truth to accomplish a special work, a preparation for the captain of our first allegiance who is coming to put out of the way these secondary institutions which have so sadly abused the privileges and responsibilities which He has committed to their hands, and which are becoming more rotten every day, and of whom there can be no rational hope of reforming, to put in their place His own just and beneficient government—is being preached.

Butler could not enlist in the United States military because he was already under commission for the "truly *mighty* work" of uplifting to the world the supremacy of God's government and law. Engaging in war, he reasoned, would compel Adventists to violate the Sabbath of that law, and thus directly contradict their own distinct message by "giving honor to the creature earthly governments, which in this of all ages we should give to the Creator."[23]

Thus, though a self-described lonely voice on the far right wing of early Adventist thought regarding war, Butler found himself driven to pacifism by the logic of the movement's eschatological proclamation.[24] The priority he

[22]Roswell F. Cottrell set forth his position in a three-part series, "Should Christians Fight?" *Review and Herald* May 9, 23, and 30, 1865, 180, 198, 204.

[23]Butlerian pacifism comes close to that later developed by the Jehovah's Witnesses, which Yoder, 115-116, labels the "pacifism of eschatological parenthesis," except that Butler gives no hint of expecting the saints to join in the violent overthrow of earthly governments at the last day, as the Witnesses anticipate.

[24]In a response to Knight's essay, Mennonite scholar William E. Juhnke suggests further study of the extent to which the "apocalyptic outlook open[ed] the door for Adventists' pacifist position" ("Prophetic Pacifism in the American Experience: A Response to Grant Underwood and George R. Knight," *Proclaim Peace*, 172-181). Butler's letter contributes evidence supporting the importance of Juhnke's question, as does Ellen White's *Testimony* No. 9 on "The Rebellion." The explosive significance of living in accordance with a kingdom that is on the way and that will overthrow the powers of the present age is more than fealty to eternal, abstract principles. This coming-kingdom orientation impels the nonconformity to which White challenges believers: "We are waiting for our Lord from heaven to come to earth to put down all

placed on Sabbath observance as a signifier of loyalty to the imminent reign of God absolutizes his resolve never to make war on behalf of the earthly governments that were plunging irreversibly into rebellion against God.

Andrews was never able to complete the study on war assigned to him in 1866. Without it, Knight observes, Adventists did little to develop a stronger ideological foundation that might have upheld a more consistent response to war and military service in the twentieth century.[25] I do not believe, however, that the church lacked definite historical moorings from its founding decade.

When the American Seventh-day Adventist Church next faced military conscription in 1917, the North American Division Executive Committee found the precedent from the Civil War era of Adventist history clear enough. The church's public statement affirmed that "We have been noncombatants throughout our history," and then quoted the General Conference resolution adopted in 1865.[26]

In summary, the Seventh-day Adventist Church, during its formative era, understood the "remnant" vocation as a call to utter seriousness about the biblical mandates against taking human life and for loving one's enemies. They believed that the prophetic witness to "the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus Christ," for which their movement came into being, required their doing so when the overwhelming majority of Americans in the era of the Protestant empire would not.

What their stand means for us is, of course, another matter. In any case, the Seventh-day Adventist Church began as a peace church.

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authority and power, and set up His everlasting kingdom. Earthly powers are shaken. . . . Our position in the image of Nebuchadnezzar is represented by the toes, in a divided state, and of crumbling material, that will not hold together" (now in E.G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 9 vols. [Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1948], 1:360-361). At the same time, she cautioned against premature provocation of governing authorities, as seen in her rebuke of the Iowans, whose overzealous posturing about nonresistance had endangered the movement without the benefit of a positive witness. It would be a victory for Satan, she had written in a letter to a friend, if the fledgling Adventist cause was "shot down so cheaply" (Arthur L. White, *Ellen G. White: The Progressive Years* [Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1986], 2: 43-44). The reference point for the challenges and cautions White issued was the vocation of being a nonconformist prophetic minority, bearing witness to the soon-coming kingdom of Christ.

[25]Knight, 166.

[26]Cited in Francis M. Wilcox, *Seventh-day Adventists in Time of War* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1936), 112-113.

POPES AND PRESIDENTS: THE RELATIONSHIP OF DOMESTIC POLITICS AND RELIGION IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

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Introduction

Today's political scene is marked by Muslims in pursuit of Islamic-ruled states, Hasidic Jews' appeals for restoration of a spiritually led Israel, and the Dalai Lama's personal campaign for reinstatement as both ruler and high priest of Tibet. These political aspirations, arising from religious segments of society, prompt one to consider the effect of ecclesiastical systems on politics.

This article presents one such case study, relating the various forms that U.S. diplomatic ties have historically taken with the Vatican. Specifically, it examines how internal issues of political and religious diversity are played out in national affairs, and subsequently in the international arena. The research draws primarily on original source material from U.S. presidential libraries.

The discussion appropriately begins with the formation of the Vatican City-State.

A Shrinking Temporal State—A Growing Ecclesiastical Rome

Popes ruled the Papal States for eleven centuries, beginning in 756 A.D. Thus the resistance of Italian nationalists, in an effort to unify Italy as a political power, was not unexpected. The September 20, 1870, invasion of Rome eventually resulted in the 1929 Lateran Treaty that delineated new ecclesiastical and political roles for both the Vatican and Italy.

In this Treaty, the Pope renounced all claims to the former Papal States in exchange for Italy's recognition of the newly created, independent Vatican City. It declared the position of the pope to be sacred and inviolable, assured absolute and visible independence in his ecclesiastical role, and guaranteed the Holy See's indisputable sovereignty in international matters. In return, the Holy See guaranteed that the Roman Catholic system would abstain from politics, pledging to remain apart from competition for the acquisition of other states and from international congresses for peace, unless a unanimous appeal was made for its involvement.[1]

Correspondingly, Italy recognized the right of the Holy See to diplomatic missions or legations, according to the general rules of International Law.[2] Yet

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[1] Richard A. Taum, *Glossary of Church History* <http://tatumweb.com/churchrodent>.

[2] Joseph Sadow and Thomas Sarro Jr., *The Coins and Medals of the Vatican* (New York:

the practice of the Papacy of sending representatives to civil governments, such as the Imperial Court at Constantinople, was a long-established practice, beginning in the fifth century. Permanent ambassador appointments (nunciatures) were established by Pope Gregory XIII in the sixteenth century.[3]

Since these early beginnings, the Vatican's role in international affairs has continued to expand. At the time of the First World War, more than thirty-four nations held diplomatic ties with the Vatican; that figure nearly doubled by the Second World War. Today, the Papacy maintains formal diplomatic relations with 166 nations. Thus the Holy See, possessing no airplanes, tanks, or warships, holds the status of an organized geopolitical unit equal to the greatest of military powers.[4] The Vatican defines its diplomatic role as one of

> creating or deepening an atmosphere of friendly collaboration with different nations; inspiring social and educational legislation based on Christian principles; snuffing out the early beginnings of hostility or persecution; making it easier for all citizens to work together toward their heavenly goal and serving as a voice of conscience before a government.[5]

In order to carry out this stated purpose and to broaden its global influence, the Holy See participates with numerous international organizations. It holds permanent observer status at the United Nations in both New York and Geneva, the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization in Rome, and the U.N. Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization in Paris. It has a member delegate at the International Atomic Energy Agency and at the U.N. Industrial Development Organization in Vienna, maintains permanent observers at the Council of Europe and the Organization of American States in Washington, D.C., has diplomatic relations with the European Union in Brussels, and is also a participating state in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. In 1971, it announced its decision to adhere to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, and, in 1997, Vatican City-State became a member of the World Trade Organization.[6]

Supplementing the Vatican's official diplomatic corps are the extensive ecclesiastical connections throughout the vast majority of nations. From cardinals to archbishops to bishops, down to the local clerics, the Holy See is continually receiving information worldwide regarding local economic, social,

Sandord Durst, 1997), 106-114. Full text of the 1929 Lateran Treaty can also be found at <www.aloha.net/~mikesch/treaty.htm>.

[3]James A. Corden, Thomas J. Gree, and Donald E. Heintschel, eds., *The Code of Canon Law: A Text and Commentary* (New York: Paulist, 1985), 301.

[4]Avro Manhattan, *The Vatican in World Politics* (New York: Gaer, 1949), 26.

[5]Waldemar Gurian and M. A. Fitzsimons, eds., *The Catholic Church in World Affairs* (South Bend: University of Notre Dame Press, 1954), 40.

[6]U.S. Embassy at the Vatican Website: <www.usis.it/usembvat/Files/background.htm>.

political, and spiritual conditions.[7] The 2001 Catholic Almanac reported nearly a half-million priests worldwide: 211,827 in Europe, 79,542 in North America, 40,755 in South America, 41,456 in Asia, 26,026 in Africa, and 5,000 in Oceania.[8] Thus the Vatican's intelligence-gathering capacity compares with that of the most sophisticated world power.

World membership of Catholics is equally far-reaching. Despite the fact that Vatican City consists of an area slightly more than one-sixth of a square mile, with fewer than one thousand residents, managing a budget the size of a small-to-medium-size company,[9] worldwide membership of the Catholic Church far exceeds that of the population of the United States and Russia combined. This vast international community ensures an elevated level of recognition by political leaders.

Yet the substantial political influence wielded by the Holy See is derived, in large part, from its efficient structure of governance. The Vatican's constitution, as promulgated in February 2001, an update of the 1929 Basic Law, Article I, states that "the Supreme Pontiff, Sovereign of Vatican City-State, possesses the fullness of legislative, executive, and judicial powers."[10] Not a government of populist voice, nor of parliament, the Pontiff speaks and acts as sovereign, with sole and supreme powers to command, decide, rule, and judge. As Pope Leo XIII wrote: "The spiritual and eternal interests of man are surely more important than their material and temporal interests. . . . Emphatically, then, the church is not inferior to the civil power."[11]

United States and Vatican Relations: The Early Years

When, in 1783, Pope Pius VI sent good wishes to the United State of America[12] upon its newly gained independence, the nation was firmly committed to separation of church and state. One of the earliest expressions of this belief came from John Adams, then America's Commissioner to France. In his report to the 1779 Continental Congress on the matter of recognizing sister nations, Adams wrote: "Congress will probably never send a minister to His Holiness, who can do them no service. Upon condition of receiving a Catholic legate or nuncio in return, or in other words, an ecclesiastical tyrant, it is to be hoped the

[7]Manhattan, 26.

[8]Greg Erlandson, ed., *2001 Catholic Almanac* (Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor, Inc.), 343.

[9]David Willey, *God's Politician: John Paul at the Vatican* (London: Faber & Faber, 1992), ix.

[10]EWTN, "Vatican City-State Has a New Constitution," *Vatican Information Service*, February 1, 2001.

[11]John A. Ryan and Francis J. Boland, *Catholic Principles of Politics* (New York: MacMillan, 1940), 321.

[12]William J. Schmidt, "Roswell P. Barnes, Religious Freedom and an Ambassador at the Vatican," *American Presbyterians* 65/4 (1987): 259-273.

United States will be too wise ever to admit into their territories."[13]

Yet, in 1797, less than two decades later, the U.S. government designated a consul to the Vatican. Giovanni Sartori, an Italian citizen, offered his services to help direct commerce between the United States and the Papal States, and to assist American tourists in Rome. He was the first of eleven consuls to serve in this position.[14] As such, consuls lacked official government recognition and financial support; rather, their fees were paid by those for whom services were rendered.

The first documented proposal exploring official diplomatic relations between the United States and Vatican City is contained in a dispatch to the U.S. Secretary of State, June 1847. This correspondence reveals that high officials of the Papal hierarchy, including the Pope, had expressed interest in formalizing ties. By November, the *New York Herald* caught wind of these trans-Atlantic discussions and printed its editorial support, claiming the idea to be "the fittest manifestation of American sympathy and admiration."[15] Likewise, the Louisiana legislature expressed that it "would take keen pleasure should America open diplomatic relations with Rome." And in his message to the Thirtieth Congress, President James Polk (1845-1849) remarked: "The interesting political events now in progress in these [Papal] States, as well as a just regard to our commercial interests, in my opinion, renders such a measure [i.e., closer ties with Rome] highly expedient."[16]

Congress resisted Polk's proposal to establish diplomatic relations with the Vatican on the grounds that, under the U.S. Constitution, the government could have nothing to do with ecclesiastical matters and, furthermore, argued legislators, America had no commercial interests to protect in the Roman States. Yet surprisingly, a majority in both the House and Senate voted to finance the placement of a chargé d'affaires in Rome.[17] With this act, the U.S. government abandoned its original position, according some level of official status, by appointing a paid envoy to the Vatican.

However, Secretary of State James Buchanan's April 1848 note of instructions to the United States' first diplomat to Rome, Jacob Martin, reflected the caution of the hour:

> There is one consideration which you ought always to keep in view in your
> intercourse with the Papal authorities. Most, if not all the Governments
> which have Diplomatic Representatives at Rome are connected with the Pope

[13]Charles Francis Adams, ed., *Works of John Adams* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1852), 4: 109-110.

[14]Reuben G. Johnson, "A Survey of the United States' Diplomatic Relationship with the Vatican" (M.A. thesis: Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, 1952), 13.

[15]Editorial. *New York Herald*, November 1847.

[16]James D. Richardson, *Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents, 1789-1897* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1896-1899), 5:2401.

[17]Schmidt, 259-273.

as the head of the Catholic Church. In this respect the Government of the United States occupies an entirely different position. It possesses no power whatever over the question of religion. All denominations of Christians stand on the same footing in this country, and every man enjoys the inestimable right of worshiping his God according to the dictates of his own conscience. Your efforts, therefore, will be devoted exclusively to the cultivation of the most friendly civil relations with the Papal Government, and to the extension of the commerce between the two countries. You will carefully avoid even the appearances of interfering in ecclesiastical questions, whether these relate to the United States or any other portion of the world. It might be proper, should you deem it advisable, to make these views known, on some suitable occasion, to the Papal Government, so that there may be no mistake or misunderstanding on this subject.[18]

Buchanan's caution to "avoid all appearance of entanglement with religious powers" properly reflected the American public's reservations about forming an alliance with Rome.

Two Papal pronouncements, in particular, had excited anti-Catholic sentiment: the first, the 1864 *Syllabus of Errors*, condemning the position held by some that the Holy See had no temporal power, and the second pronouncement of 1870, declaring Papal infallibility.[19] Ultimately, however, it was rumors about Scottish Presbyterian diplomats being prohibited from worshiping within Vatican City proper that caused a cessation in diplomatic relations between the United States and the Holy See in 1867,[20] the mission of American consuls coming to an end in 1870.[21]

Congress was up in arms over the perceived lack of religious tolerance by the Pope, although the rumors turned out to be exaggerated. Others argued that relations between the U.S. and the Papacy might well be terminated, as there was no demonstrable need for assistance with commerce. The Honorable Thomas Williams argued:

I never could understand the reason for this mission. There might have been some ground for it when the Pope exercised temporal jurisdiction over all the Roman States, but he has not any such jurisdiction now, being "sealed up" as I believe he is, in the city of Rome, by the Kingdom of Italy, and if he is confined to the City of Rome our relations there now are purely spiritual and not diplomatic; not political; unless for the benefit of a particular church and a particular party.[22]

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[18]Anson P. Stokes and Leo Pfeffer, *Church and State in the United States* (Westport, CN: Greenwood, 1964), 274.

[19]Ibid., 328-329.

[20]Dragan R. Zivojinovic, *The United States and the Vatican Policies, 1914-1918* (Boulder: Colorado Associated University Press, 1978), 1.

[21]Michael Williams, *The Catholic Church in Action* (New York: MacMillan, 1934), 172.

[22]Michael Williams, *The Congressional Globe*, 39th Congress, Second Session, December 03-March 02, 1866-67 (Washington, DC: Congressional Globe Office, 1967), 885.

U.S. and Vatican Relations: From World
War I to World War II

Over the succeeding years, popes strongly advocated for an American representative to the Vatican. But President Woodrow Wilson's attitude (1913-1921) was that alliances with the Vatican should be avoided whenever possible. This he based, in part, on his clashes with the American Catholic hierarchy over the administration's Mexican policy. Likewise, there was concern that a U.S. appointment to the Holy See might be seen as supporting the Vatican's position in its political claims against Italy.[23] However, Wilson's administration was most dissuaded from forming an alliance with the Vatican with mounting evidence, during World War I, that its sympathies lay with the German Kaiser.[24]

Wilson was willing to recognize the Vatican's humanitarian aid and its work with nations to exchange prisoners of war,[25] but Papal leaders' concern extended beyond relief efforts. The Pope believed that Roman Catholic parishioners' loyalty to the church was weakening due to the war, being replaced with feelings of nationalism.[26] In fact, the inaugural encyclical of every pope from Pius VI to Pius XII (1791-1939) was devoted to the inherent capacity of the state to destroy the universality of the Catholic Church.[27]

Unlike Wilson's aloofness, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1933-1945) sought connection with the Vatican. He argued that the Holy See could be used as "the listening ear" for what was transpiring in Eastern Europe during this time of global conflict. Second, Pope Pius XII and Roosevelt were united in their efforts to keep Italy out of the war. The President offered yet a third reason for establishing close ties with the Holy See. He hoped to engage the Vatican's international voice to speak out against expanding anti-Semitic feelings. After all, its centralization made for a powerful platform in communicating with twenty-one million American Catholics, and a total of 300 million Catholics worldwide. Concluding his argument in favor of ties with the Vatican, Roosevelt pointed out that the U.S. had expressed no reservation in naming an ambassador to England or Japan, where the head of state also served as head of the church, "so why particular concern over His Holiness?"[28]

Convinced by his own arguments, Roosevelt selected Myron Taylor to

[23]Zivojinovic, 142.

[24]Ibid., 4.

[25]Ibid., 182.

[26]Papal Encyclicals: *Pascendi Dominici Gregis* (On the Doctrine of the Modernists), September 8, 1907; *Praestantia Scripturae* (On the Bible Against the Modernists), November 18, 1907; and *The Oath Against Modernism*, September 1, 1910. All documents are found at the website of papal encyclicals <www.geocities.com/papalencyclicals>.

[27]Russell Hittinger, "The Future of the Papacy: A Symposium," *First Things: The Journal of Religion and Public Life* (March 2001): 28-36.

[28]George Q. Flynn, *Roosevelt and Romanism: Catholics and American Diplomacy, 1937-1945* (Westport, CN: Greenwood, 1976), 112, 113, 117.

serve as his "personal representative" to the Vatican. Without designating Taylor an ambassador, Congress would not be called upon to confirm the appointment and thus could not thwart the President's designs. And, as Chairman of the U.S. Steel Corporation, Taylor could well afford to personally finance his trips to, activities in, and stay at the Vatican, again circumventing required Congressional approval for allocation of federal expenditures.[29]

Although cognizant of the public's nonsupport of U.S.-Vatican relations, Roosevelt was not prepared for the strong and immediate opposition to his appointment. To some, the naming of a representative to the Vatican, however unofficial it was intended to be, implied U.S. support of the pope's claim of being Christ's representative on earth; some saw the move as prophetic, aligning America with the "beast power"; many declared this alliance as having total disregard for the separation of church and state, while still others argued that a temporal power engaging a religious power to be contrary to tradition.[30]

Opposition to formalizing U.S.-Vatican relations became somewhat muffled by World War II efforts. But, by 1946, during a July meeting with President Harry S. Truman (1945-1953), a sizeable number of Protestant clergy emphatically reaffirmed their displeasure over the continuance of Roosevelt's personal representative to the Vatican. They held that since the war had ended, there was no longer need of a relationship with the Vatican. Yet Truman's position on the Vatican harmonized with that of his predecessor. He would discontinue the post "only when peace reigns all over the world."[31]

In a letter to his wife, Bess, dated October 2, 1947, Truman wrote that he had "sought to talk to the Archbishop of Canterbury, the head of the Lutheran Church, the Metropolitan of the Greek Church at Istanbul, and the Pope. I may send him [Myron Taylor] to see the top Buddhist and the Grand Lama of Tibet. If I can mobilize the people who believe in a moral world . . . we can win this fight."[32] By this fight, he meant halting the proliferation of nuclear weapons, caring for the growing number of refugees, addressing human rights, global warming, and growing concern over the illegal drug trade.[33]

Truman's July 15, 1950, correspondence with Taylor reiterated the unofficial status of his diplomatic relationship with the Vatican. It reads in part:

> So I invite you again to go to Europe. I ask you to resume with such leaders as are free to talk with you, the possibility of a common peace effort among free people. Your mission will be personal and quite informal. You will go without rank or any official commission, as an American citizen of goodwill

[29]Ibid., 105-107.

[30]Ibid., 112-113.

[31]Manhattan, 390.

[32]Letter, Harry S. Truman to wife Bess Truman, October 2, 1947 (Personal papers, Harry S. Truman Library).

[33]Abigail McCarthy, "Active Duty: L. Boggs, Envoy to the Vatican," *Commonwealth* 125, January 16, 1998, 8-9.

seeking to enlist leaders in religion of various and varying allegiances in a
quest for peace. We have no other objective. . . . It is my earnest hope that
you will continue to discuss with men of open minds—wherever you find
them—whether leaders in church or state or civic affairs generally, the
possibility of a meeting here in our Capital City to lay the groundwork for
peace and to promote good will among men.[34]

Repeatedly, Truman called for "men of good will" to renew their resolve to
reset the foundation toward an "enduring peace organized and maintained in
a moral world order."[35]

The President thought to underscore his commitment toward world peace
by making permanent and official America's relations with the Vatican. On
October 20, 1951, Truman sent the name of Mark W. Clark to the Senate for
confirmation as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United
State to the State of Vatican City. Yet Congress adjourned that same day,
having taken no action on the appointment. An informal survey of the Senate
revealed that only nine of the ninety-six members would have supported
confirmation[36] and, more likely, the nomination would have died in the Foreign
Relations Committee.[37] The Senate held apprehension over the position,
disdain for the person having been nominated, and, accordingly, never did act
on the nomination.

Truman keenly felt what he described as "sectarian rebuffs" and
Congressional controversy over the idea. Moreover, the nomination of a U.S.
ambassador to the Vatican haunted his 1952 presidential race,[38] just as it had
in the election of 1884 between candidates Grover Cleveland and James
Blaine,[39] and would become a central, overriding issue when Roman Catholic
candidate John F. Kennedy bid on the presidency.

United States and Vatican Relations: The Cold War Era

Opposition to formal ties with the Vatican persisted throughout subsequent
administrations. The Southern Baptist Convention sent word to the newly
elected Dwight D. Eisenhower (1953-1961) that its seven million Baptists in
twenty-two states and the District of Columbia "unanimously join in the

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[34]Letter, Harry S. Truman to Myron C. Taylor, July 15, 1950 (Folder Confidential
Files, Box 83, Myron C. Taylor Papers [1], Dwight D. Eisenhower Library).

[35]Letter, Myron C. Taylor to Pope Pius XII, December 13, 1949 (Folder
Confidential Files, Box 83, Myron C. Taylor Papers [1], Dwight D. Eisenhower Library).

[36]George J. Gill, "The Truman Administration and Vatican Relations," *Catholic
Historical Review* 73 (1987): 408-423.

[37]Gerald Fogarty, *The Vatican and the American Hierarchy from 1870-1965* (Germany:
Anton Hiersemann, 1985), 330.

[38]Roland Flamini, *Pope, Premier, President: The Cold War Summit That Never Was* (New
York: MacMillan, 1980), 32.

[39]Stokes and Pfeffer, 330.

earnest hope, based on the conviction that religious liberty and the separation of church and state are the foundation stones of our democratic way of life, that the new Administration will not renew any form of diplomatic relations with the Vatican or any other ecclesiastical body."[40]

Despite these sentiments, there were a few who voiced support for the initiative. David Beck was one who urged Eisenhower to appoint a United States diplomatic representative to the Vatican. Although a non-Catholic, this Teamster's Union President stated, in an August 11, 1954, meeting with the President, that America was failing to take advantage of the Vatican's remarkable intelligence system. Eisenhower agreed that "the United States has more to gain from Vatican recognition than did the Vatican itself" yet, he concluded, "the political problems associated with such an action are too great."[41]

The international community was confronting countless challenges, and with these crises, the need for closer collaboration. There was the U.S. engagement in the Vietnam War beginning in 1955, Fidel Castro's 1959 takeover in Cuba, and Cold War tensions building in Europe, eventually leading to the 1961 construction of the Berlin Wall.

Eisenhower's position was concretized in a March 26, 1954, letter from his Special Counsel, Bernard Shanley, to William Lipphard of the Associated Church Press. "You will be interested to know," wrote Shanley, "that at present there are no plans to establish representation at the Vatican."[42] And throughout his administration, Eisenhower held firm to his position, never engaging the Vatican in discussions beyond perfunctory ceremonial duties, such as the October 1958 funeral of Pope Pius XII and the subsequent enthronement of Pope John XXIII.

It was one thing to contemplate U.S. relations with the Vatican and quite another to accept the idea of a Catholic moving into the White House. John F. Kennedy's pursuit of America's highest political office framed religion as a tough and persistent theme throughout the whole presidential campaign. A group known as Protestants and Other Americans United for the Separation of Church and State demanded that each of the candidates declare their positions on the diplomatic recognition of the Holy See.

In a statement in *LOOK* magazine in early 1959, John F. Kennedy articulated his views. He saw diplomatic relations with the Holy See as counterproductive because of the divisiveness that would result from the nomination of an ambassador. Further, Kennedy expressed the belief that present methods of

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[40]Letter and Resolution, Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention to Dwight D. Eisenhower, December 18, 1952 (White House Central Files, OF144-B-2-A, Box 736, Dwight D. Eisenhower Library).

[41]Papers of Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1952-1961 (Ann Whitman Diary Series, Box 3, Folder: ACW Diary, August 16, 1954 [2]).

[42]Letter, Bernard M. Shanley, Special Counsel to President Dwight D. Eisenhower, to William B. Lipphard, Executive Secretary, The Associated Church Press, March 26, 1954 (White House Central Files, OF 144-B-2-A, Box 736, Dwight D. Eisenhower Library).

communicating through the Embassy in Italy would serve him well.[43] These oft-sought and repeated assurances throughout the campaign proved sufficient to win Kennedy the election (1961-1963), and he struck one as remaining seemingly committed to his campaign position on U.S.-Vatican relations.

But, as Kennedy made his way to his first audience with the newly elected Pope, Ralph Dungan, a veteran of Kennedy's presidential campaign, proposed the return of Roosevelt's personal representative to the Vatican. "You know, Mr. President," chimed in Secretary of State Dean Rusk, "I think the time has come when we should certainly think about establishing diplomatic relations with the Holy See. It would be beneficial." Kennedy made the rather terse reply: "Maybe the time has come for someone else, but it isn't right for me, the first Catholic president. If Harry Truman, a Baptist, didn't feel he could do it, I certainly don't."[44] The Pope had hoped otherwise. As Roland Flamini describes it,

> Pope Paul VI summoned the archbishop of Boston to the Vatican Palace to ask him what topics President Kennedy would want to discuss at his papal audience. . . . The Pope was full of praise for Kennedy and expressed great pleasure that his first official visit should be with the President of the United States. He said he wanted to discuss world peace with the President, and to make a statement on racial discrimination. He also wanted to transmit words of encouragement to [Catholic] Church schools in the United States which were then in the throes of a congressional battle to win federal funding. . . . Well, Cushing replied, such subjects . . . carried strong political implications. "I strongly recommend that any problem of national significance be avoided."[45]

Following Cardinal Cushing's advice, Pope Paul VI only hinted in conversation with Kennedy about the idea of reestablishing diplomatic ties, but it was Diulio Andreotti, the Vatican's Minister of Defense, who unhesitatingly pursued the subject. While accompanying Kennedy to place a wreath at Italy's Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, Andreotti questioned: "You feel you cannot take the step [to establish diplomatic ties] because you are a Catholic, a Protestant president would have little interest in doing so because he is not Catholic, so who will?" To this Kennedy rejoined, "If I'm re-elected in 1964, I'll do it in my second term."[46]

United States and Vatican Relations: The Vietnam War

An assassin's bullet prematurely ended Kennedy's chance at a second term and Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson assumed the presidency. The Johnson administration (1963-1969) was particularly sensitive to the Pope's open criticism of U.S. fighting in Southeast Asia. Papal encyclicals had frequently spoken out against global military aggression. Thus, in the spring of 1965,

[43]Flamini, 24.

[44]Ibid., 194.

[45]Ibid., 189-190.

[46]Ibid., 197-198.

Johnson sought an audience with Pope Paul in an effort to gain the Pontiff's support of America's position in the Vietnam War or, at least, to gain his aid in easing international tensions. Unbeknown to the President, the Pope had already begun activating prelates in Cambodia, the United Nations, and elsewhere in an effort to bring about a cease-fire.[47]

Neither Johnson nor his staff underestimated the key role that the Vatican played in international affairs and, as such, the issue of diplomatic ties with the Vatican resurfaced. The National Security Council's declassified memos provide Nathaniel Davis's arguments in favor of establishing relations based on the facts that:

> (1) Increasingly the Vatican is an active force, pressing for peace negotiations in Vietnam. . . . (2) Relations with the Vatican would strengthen America's worldwide peace image. It would be a demonstration of America's concern for the moral opinion of mankind. (3) Relations would remove the anomaly of the United States, along with the Soviet Union and Red China, being among the very few powers which fail to maintain relations [with the Vatican]. (4) With the increasing ecumenical spirit in American Protestantism, relations with the Vatican would have considerable support among the Protestant churches associated with the National Council, although *not* with the Southern Baptists and fundamentalists. (5) Recognition would be welcomed by the American Catholics as an important step, taken by a Protestant President, and the removal of a long-standing and senseless indignity. (6) Relations with the Vatican would facilitate cooperation in matters like the Cardinal Mindzenty case. There is no doubt that the Vatican is involved in political situations throughout the world where United States interests are deeply affected. (7) The Vatican would be a source of information about conditions in Eastern Europe and elsewhere. We would have access to one of the important diplomatic capitals of the world. (8) The President's decision would be historic, a landmark among the overall accomplishments of this Administration.[48]

According to Davis, "the Holy See is prepared to become fully engaged in world affairs."[49] Reasons against establishing full diplomatic ties with the Vatican, he claimed, were few. They included:

> the anticipated opposition from Baptist stronghold states: channels of discreet communication with the Vatican already exist by way of Ambassador Rhinehart in Rome; it might compromise the Vatican's neutrality in the Cold War; the American Catholic hierarchy might see the proposed formalization of diplomacy as a downgrading of their intermediary work between the U.S. and the Vatican; and a U.S. diplomatic office at the Vatican would need to assume the arranging of approximately 65,000 Papal audiences each year.[50]

[47]Ibid., 216-218.

[48]Memo, Nathaniel Davis to W. W. Rostow, October 13, 1966 (National Security File, Country File, Vatican, Volume 1, Box 231, Lyndon Baines Johnson Library).

[49]Memo, Nathaniel Davis for the President, December 27, 1966 (National Security File, Country File, Vatican, Volume 1, Box 231, Lyndon Baines Johnson Library).

[50]Memo, Nathaniel Davis to W. W. Rostow, October 13, 1966 (National Security

Although the facts seemed to support a move toward formalizing ties with the Vatican, Johnson never took any such action, relying rather on personal visits and communiques.

The Vietnam War persisted and three months into his presidency, Richard Nixon (1969-1974) visited the Vatican. Like Johnson, he hoped to gain support for further intensification of America's military engagement in the war. However, on that occasion, the Pope blamed the lack of a regular and official channel with Washington as a reason for his failed attempts at resolving the Vietnam conflict. But Nixon was keenly aware of persistent public sentiment at home against formal engagement with the Holy See.

Nixon's audience with the Pope generated a bevy of correspondence from religious groups, among them, the Baptists. With measured forethought, they transmitted their dissent of U.S. representation to the Vatican via "the President's personal friend, Billy Graham."[51] Both the American Lutheran Church[52] and Seventh-day Adventists[53] spoke out in opposition. President Frank Gigliotti, National Vice-Chairman of the National Association of Evangelicals, representing forty-four Protestant denominations, weighed in as well against the appointing of a U.S. representative to the Vatican.[54] The United Church of Christ's *Mayflower Church Bulletin* questioned, "Why doesn't the President send an envoy to the World Council of Churches' headquarters in Geneva?"[55]

Other voices of dissent from the religious community included Henry Van Dusen, President Emeritus of Union Theological Seminary, New York. During a speech at Princeton, Van Dusen claimed: [W]e thought that the matter [of an envoy to the Vatican] had been settled once and for all in 1951 when, you will recall, President Truman nominated General Mark Clark for such an appointment but withdrew the nomination before congressional consideration

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File, Country File, Vatican, Volume 1, Box 231, Lyndon Baines Johnson Library).

[51]Letter T. W. Wilson, Associate to Billy Graham to Dwight L. Chapin, Special Assistant in Charge of White House Appointments, June 23, 1970 (White House Central Files FG 1-2, Country File, Vatican, Richard M. Nixon Library).

[52]Telegram, Fredrik A. Schiotz, President of the American Lutheran Church, to President Richard M. Nixon, March 3, 1969 (White House Central Files FG 1-2, Country File, Vatican, Richard M. Nixon Library).

[53]Letter, Kenneth H. Wood, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and Editor, *Review and Herald Magazine* to President Richard M. Nixon, June 10, 1970 (White House Central Files FG 1-2, Country File, Vatican, Richard M. Nixon Library).

[54]Letter, Rev. Frank B. Gigliotti, Vice-Chairman, National Association of Evangelicals, to President Richard M. Nixon, June 15, 1970 (White House Central Files FG 1-2, Country File, Vatican, Richard M. Nixon Library).

[55]Letter along with church bulletin from Pastor Philip W. Sarles of the United Church of Christ, to President Richard M. Nixon, July 8, 1970 (White House Central Files FG 1-2, Country File, Vatican, Richard M. Nixon Library).

in response to strong representations from church and religious leaders."[56]

Besides the Protestant religious community, opposition came from private businesses, such as Leslie Brooks & Associates of Oklahoma. They held that the United State should "establish ambassadorships with political entity."[57] These and like businessmen urged continued use of the Italian Embassy, "just a few blocks away [from the Vatican]" should there be any communication to be had with the Pope.[58] Likewise, protests were received from representatives of Masonic temples,[59] county judges,[60] and from Congressmen, such as H. R. Gross of Iowa, whose brief comment on the President's proposal to nominate a United States Ambassador to the Vatican was summed up in three words, "Don't do it."[61]

Opposition to U.S. political appointments to the Vatican similarly arose from a most unexpected source, the American Catholic hierarchy. While newly appointed Papal Apostolic Delegate to the United States, Archbishop Jean Jadot, declared that "there is real community only when there is a deep will for communion,"[62] the U.S. Catholic Conference made clear its differing position. Its members held that presidential communication with the Vatican should go through them, not around them, as would be the case with a U.S. Ambassadorship to the Holy See.[63]

The alternative devised by Nixon was to ask that "a series of Cabinet officers call on the Holy Father, and that where possible return visits be made to this country." The Pope accepted this proposal when Nixon's staffer, Peter Flanigan, put it forward in July. Thus, between July and mid-December 1969, six calls were

[56]Letter, Henry P. Van Dusen, President Emeritus, Union Theological Seminary, Princeton, New Jersey, to President Richard M. Nixon, March 13, 1969 (White House Central Files FG 1-2, Country File, Vatican, Richard M. Nixon Library).

[57]Letter, Leslie Brooks to President Richard M. Nixon, March 19, 1969 (White House Central Files FG 1-2, Country File, Vatican, Richard M. Nixon Library).

[58]Ibid.

[59]Letter, Floyd R. Kea, Secretary of the Masonic Temple Norview Lodge No. 113, to President Richard M. Nixon, June 18, 1970 (White House Central Files FG 1-2, Country File, Vatican, Richard M. Nixon Library).

[60]Letter, G. F. Middlebrook Jr., County Judge of Nacogdoches, Texas, to President Richard M. Nixon, June 25, 1970 (White House Central Files FG 1-2, Country File, Vatican, Richard M. Nixon Library).

[61]Letter, The Honorable H. R. Gross of Iowa, to President Richard M. Nixon, March 19, 1969 (White House Central Files FG 1-2, Country File, Vatican, Richard M. Nixon Library).

[62]Speech, Most Reverend Jean Jadot, Apostolic Delegate to the United States of America, upon his arrival in Washington DC, July 12, 1973 (White House Central Files FG 1-2, Country File, Vatican, Richard M. Nixon Library).

[63]Memo, Patrick J. Buchanan to President Richard M. Nixon, March 21, 1969 (White House Central Files FG 1-2, Country File, Vatican, Richard M. Nixon Library).

paid to the Pope by Nixon's cabinet members.[64] But this system proved ineffective, which might explain why the President ultimately requested Henry Cabot Lodge "to undertake periodic visits to Rome in order to maintain some continuing of our contacts with the Vatican. This will enable us to obtain its views on important international and humanitarian questions and to explain ours."[65]

Henry Cabot Lodge was thought to be an ideal choice for the time. As Nixon's running mate against Kennedy and Johnson in 1960, Lodge could properly represent the President's position on issues. He was also serving as U.S. ambassador to South Vietnam, and thus was the best informed regarding the current conflicts in Vietnam. As with Taylor, Roosevelt's personal representative, Lodge agreed to receive no salary for his services, nor have any title or rank conferred upon him, and to maintain no permanent office nor residence in Rome.[66]

Two years into the association, at a June 26, 1972, White House Press Conference, Lodge acclaimed the Pope as being "a definite factor" in helping make possible an increase in the amount of mail that U.S. prisoners sent and received in Vietnam. He further recognized the Vatican as being of "utmost help" in curbing worldwide drug trafficking.[67] Other U.S.-Vatican deliberations at that time included the problems of Biafra and the attempts to alleviate starvation in that country;[68] the mutual concern with regard to political assassinations in developing and advanced societies;[69] the political trend toward communism in Italy's 1970 regional, provincial, and communal elections;[70] and Middle East pressures between Israel and Lebanon as noted in appeals from Egyptian President Nasser to the U.S. funneled through the Vatican.[71]

[64]Memo, Peter M. Flanigan to President Richard M. Nixon, December 12, 1969 (White House Central Files FG 1-2, Country File, Vatican, Richard M. Nixon Library).

[65]Letter, William E. Timmons, Assistant to President Nixon, to the Honorable William H. Ayres, House of Representatives, July 7, 1970 (White House Central Files FG 1-2, Country File, Vatican, Richard M. Nixon Library).

[66]Letter, Henry A. Kissinger to Reverend Frank B. Gigliotti of the National Association of Evangelicals, July 3, 1970 (White House Central Files FG 1-2, Country File, Vatican, Richard M. Nixon Library).

[67]White House Press Conference of Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge, Special Representative of President Nixon to the Vatican, June 26, 1972 (National Security Briefing Book [4], Ron Nessen Papers, Box 63, Gerald R. Ford Library).

[68]Memo, Peter M. Flanigan to President Richard M. Nixon, January 16, 1970 (Country File, Vatican, Richard M. Nixon Libary).

[69]Ibid.

[70]Memo, Peter Flanigan to Henry Kissinger, March 19, 1970 (White Central Files FG 1-2, Country File, Vatican, Richard M. Nixon Library).

[71]Memo, Conversation of Archbishop Agostino Casaroli, Secretary of Public Affairs at the Vatican, Peter Flanigan, Special Assistant to President Nixon, Richard D. Christiansen, Second Secretary at the American Embassy, and Monsignor Luigi Dossena of the Council for Public Affairs at the Vatican, May 15, 1970 (White House Central

U.S. and Vatican Relations: Seeking National
and International Healings

Having served as part of Nixon's White House years, President Gerald Ford (1974-1977) was naturally inclined to continue the unofficial services of Henry Cabot Lodge to the Holy See. The Vatican's ever-expanding involvement in world politics was the topic of discussion at a Monday morning White House meeting, April 21, 1975. Discussants included Henry Cabot Lodge, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, and President Ford. As the recorded conversation addressed:

> The Vatican is particularly concerned about humanitarian problems and the future of the Church in Vietnam in the event that the Communists are victorious. ... In Portugal, Church bishops—reflecting Vatican unease about Portugal's "fatal slide" toward Communist control—have begun . . . supporting the moderate parties at the expense of the Communists. In the Middle East, the Pope has publically stated his desire that Jerusalem be protected by an international agreement guaranteeing equality of rights for the three religions with interests in the city. . . . Since the beginning of the current crisis on Cyprus last July, the Pope has indicated concern over events there and . . . over the problem of displacing refugees as a result of the war.[72]

Church leaders, such as Associate Secretary of the Baptist World Alliance Carol W. Tiller, hurried off a note to the Office of the President, May 21, 1975, when learning that Ford's proposed European itinerary included a stop at the Vatican, an outcome of the earlier reported White House meeting. Tiller wrote:

> I note with interest that President Ford plans to see His Holiness, the Pope, on his next European visit. May I respectfully suggest that the President find time in his schedule to confer, either individually or in a group experience, with the heads of other world religious bodies, such as Lutheran World Federation, Baptist World Alliance, Anglican Consultative Council, Heads of Eastern Orthodox Churches, World Methodist Council, World Alliance of Reformed Churches, and World Council of Synagogues. The heads of these bodies are in positions similar in many respects to the position of the Pope.[73]

The President's response was cordial, but Tiller's proposal went unheeded.

In 1977, when self-professed Christian fundamentalist Jimmy Carter won favor with the American electorate, the Protestant community confidently assumed that their opposition to U.S. diplomatic ties with the Vatican would no longer fall on deaf ears. But, to their complete surprise, it was this Southern

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Files FG 1-2, Country File, Vatican, Richard M. Nixon Library).

[72]Meeting, Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge, Personal Representative of the President to the Vatican, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, and President Gerald R. Ford, April 21, 1975 (White House Central Files, Country File, Vatican, Box 14, Gerald R. Ford Library).

[73]Letter, Carol W. Tiller to Ralph L. Elliott, Special Assistant to the President, May 21, 1975 (White House Central Files, Subject Files, Box 56, Folder TR 33-5, Vatican City, Gerald R. Ford Library).

Baptist President who appointed David Walters, the first Catholic, as his personal representative to the Holy See. Up to this time, U.S. presidential couriers to the Vatican had been Protestants. Then another Catholic and former mayor of New York, Robert Wagner, succeeded Walters in 1978. Further dismay was uttered by some, given the unlikely sight of the President shaking hands with Pope John Paul II on the South Lawn of the White House in October 1979. While the Protestant clerics found this expression of familiarity with the Pope unconscionable, the news media claimed this openness to have been "nothing short of a miracle."[74]

Despite all these expressions of solidarity and friendship, there still was little indication that the President was ready to establish formal diplomatic ties with the Vatican. Thus, at a time when the Vatican held diplomatic ties with 107 nations, including all the Western nations, the United States remained virtually alone. Even Great Britain had reestablished ties with the Vatican in 1980 after a lapse of 448 years.[75]

United States and Vatican Relations Become a Reality

By the time of Ronald Reagan's presidency (1981-1989), the issue of U.S. relations with the Vatican had ceased to be a nationally divisive issue, or so it seemed to America's newest leader, as well as to the Congress. The *Congressional Quarterly* identifies Senator Richard Lugar, a Methodist, as sponsoring the amendment that repealed the 1867 law barring U.S.-Vatican diplomatic relations. The amendment was added to legislation authorizing State Department funding for the fiscal year 1984-1985 and President Reagan signed the measure into law on November 22, 1983.[76]

For Reagan, the U.S. government required some measure of cooperation from the Vatican in relation to the threat posed by grass-roots Catholic liberationists in Latin America. Here the nation's political discussions turned from ideological issues about church-state separation to more pragmatic questions such as how to deal with turbulent Catholic-majority states found in America's backyard.

Beyond this, more favorable public response to U.S. representation at the Vatican might have been attributable to the popular and martyred Kennedy, the rising spirit of ecumenical tolerance among mainline Protestants, the growing ethical solidarity of Roman Catholics with evangelicals, particularly over issues such as abortion, homosexuality, and growing secularizing tendencies in Western society. Of equal importance were the positive statements promulgated in canons

[74]Fogarty, 400.

[75]Gerald Fogarty, "Congress Repeals 1867 Ban," *Congressional Quarterly* (December 17, 1983), 2678.

[76]Gerald Fogarty, "Religious Organizations Urge Administration Not to Name Ambassador to the Vatican," *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report* (December 17, 1983), 2677-2678.

of Vatican Council II, referring to Protestants as "separated brethren," not heretics, and the personal magnetism of both John XXIII and John Paul II.

Thus it was that, on January 10, 1984, the U.S. State Department and the Holy See announced full and formal diplomatic relations. On March 7, the Senate confirmed William A. Wilson, a wealthy Catholic associate of Reagan, and a veteran diplomat and intelligence officer, as the first U.S. ambassador to the Holy See. At the Senate Foreign Relation Committee's confirmation hearings on Reagan's nomination, Senator Pete Wilson remarked that "The establishment of diplomatic relations with the Vatican simply took into account the reality that the Holy See is in many respects a world power with great influence upon the opinions and the lives of a great many people throughout the world and, in particular, in areas where vital American interests are at stake."[77] Religious groups challenged the action in the U.S. Court of Appeals, pressing their case to the Supreme Court in autumn 1986, but the High Court refused to hear the case.[78]

Conclusion

The American public shared long-standing concerns about national alliances with Papal powers. This uneasiness arose, for some, from a perceived comingling of church and state issues; others were put off by Papal claims to be Christ's representative on earth and to infallibility. Some individuals reacted based on biblical references to "the little horn power," while others' thoughts turned to the Papacy's religious intolerance in Europe in centuries past.

Despite the public's reservations, U.S. presidents seemed intent on aligning with the Vatican. The latter occupied a key geographic position close to Europe's and Asia's rogue nations, of no small consequence in America's attempts at intelligence-gathering during World Wars I and II and the Cold War. Furthermore, the Catholic Church contributed vital humanitarian relief on behalf of refugees and war criminals. Consequently, U.S. presidents often found their foreign-policy interests to be better achieved in diplomatic cooperation with the Vatican.

The United States maintained a consular post with the Papal States from 1797 to 1870. But, from 1870 to 1984, the United States was without official diplomatic ties to the Holy See. As a way around public opposition and Congressional disputation, presidents dispatched personal representatives and cabinet members, supplemented by personal visits with the various pontiffs, regarding international affairs. But, on January 10, 1984, for the first time in U.S. history, President Ronald Reagan announced the establishment of full and official diplomatic relations with the Holy See.

This case study provides one example of how the interplay between a nation's religions and its internal politics can affect its involvement in international affairs.

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[77]Letter, Jim Nicholson, U.S. Ambassador the Holy See, to the author, December 18, 2001.

[78]Schmidt, 259-273.

GENESIS 1:14—TRANSLATION NOTES

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The purpose of these notes is twofold: first, to evaluate John H. Sailhamer's argument that Gen 1:14 does not place the creation of the heavenly lights on the fourth day of Creation; and second, to determine whether the term מועדים ("appointed times") in Gen 1:14 is used to designate annual sacred times or particular rhythms of the natural cycle.

Genesis 1:14 and the Creation of the Lights

According to Sailhamer:

> When the syntax of [Gen 1] v. 14 is compared to that of the creation of the expanse in v. 6, the two verses have quite a different sense. The syntax of v. 6 suggests that when God said, "Let there be an expanse," he was, in fact, creating an expanse where there was none previously ("creation out of nothing"). So clearly the author intended to say that God created the expanse on the first day. In v. 14, however, the syntax is different, though the translations are often similar in English. In v. 14 God does not say, "Let there be lights . . . to separate," as if there were no lights before this command and afterward the lights were created. Rather the Hebrew text reads, "And God said, 'Let the lights in the expanse of the sky separate.'" In other words, unlike the syntax of v. 6, in v. 14 God's command assumes that the lights were already in the expanse and that in response to his command they were given a purpose, "to separate the day from the night" and "to mark seasons and days and years." If the difference between the syntax of v. 6 (the use of *hāyāh* alone) and v. 14 (the use of *hāyāh* + ל infinitive; cf. GKC, 114h) is significant, then it suggests that the author did not understand his account of the fourth day as an account of the creation of the lights; but, on the contrary, the narrative assumes that the heavenly lights have been created already "in the beginning."[1]

Sailhamer here makes three unstated assumptions. First, he assumes that the noun מאורת is definite (*"the* lights"), even though it has no article. Second, he assumes that the relationship between the locative phrase ברקיע השמים ("in the expanse of the sky") and the noun מארת is attributive rather predicative. Third, he assumes that the infinitive להבדיל ("to divide") primarily qualifies the copula jussive of היה rather the noun מאורת.[2]

As for the first assumption, nouns with unique referents are often definite

[1] John H. Sailhamer, *Genesis*, Expositor's Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990), 2:34, ellipsis and parenthetical text original; see also idem, *The Pentateuch as Narrative: A Biblical-Theological Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 93.

[2] For an example of a list of infinitives qualifying nouns rather than verbs, see Eccl 3:1-9.

in meaning, even when they don't have an article.[3] Sailhamer may thus be correct, but his case remains unproved. Likewise with the second and third assumptions, the best that can be said is that Sailhamer has raised some interesting possibilities, but has not established them with any degree of certainty.

The position taken in these notes is that Sailhamer is correct, although for two reasons he does not consider. First, the sentence under discussion introduces a semipoetic pattern that continues throughout Gen 1:14-15, with' the next two sentences continuing the discussion of the lights, each beginning with the copula היה[4] and containing at least one *lamed* prepositional phrase. In both of these subsequent sentences, the first *lamed* used clearly introduces the complement of the subject. The burden of proof is thus upon those who want to argue that the case should be any different in Gen 1:14a. Second, the *lamed* is used before the noun אתת ("signs") in Gen 1:14b and before the expression מאורת ברקיע השמים ("lights in the expanse of the sky") in Gen 1:15a as a "*lamed* of purpose," which usually includes the idea of a changed status or form.[5] The idea would thus be that of "the lights in the expanse of the sky" *becoming* "signs" and *becoming* "lights in the expanse of the sky *to light up the earth*," rather than coming into existence on the fourth day.[6]

The מועדים ("Appointed Times") of Genesis 1:14

The noun מועד is a cognate accusative of the verb יעד, of which one definition is to "appoint a time, a place."[7] Thus, it is not surprising that מועד should be variously defined as an "appointed time, place, [or] meeting,"[8] although in Gen 1:14 the word מועדים clearly signifies "appointed times."

The term מועד is frequently used as a technical term for an annual festival (e.g., Lev 23; Num 28–29). Accordingly, it is no surprise that a number of scholars have interpreted the word מועדים in Gen 1:14 as a reference to annual sacred times.[9] However, the term is frequently used as a designation for other

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[3]Bruce K. Waltke and M. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 250.

[4]Both these clauses begin with *waw* consecutive perfect forms of היה, but this form frequently continues the sense of an initial imperative, cohortative, or jussive (Waltke and O'Connor, 530); see also E. Kautsch, ed., *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, trans. A. E. Cowley, 2d ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 333.

[5]Waltke and O'Connor, 209.

[6]Indeed, if the latter were the idea meant, one wouldn't even expect the preposition *lamed* to appear before these nouns.

[7]Ludwig H. Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, *Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros* (Leiden: Brill, 1985), 388, citing 2 Sam 20:5; Isa 47:7.

[8]Jay P. Green, ed., *The New Brown-Driver-Briggs-Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon with an Appendix Containing the Biblical Aramaic* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1979), 417.

[9]For instance, Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative*, 30, 31; Solomon Gdanz, "The Calendar of Ancient Israel," in *Homenaje a Millás-Vallicrosa* (Barcelona: Consejo Superiore

specified times,[10] including cyclical rhythms of nature, such as the migration of birds.[11] The question thus arises whether the context of Gen 1:14 indicates the same exact nuance.

James B. Jordan defines מועדים (Gen 1:14) in terms of his understanding of the preceding term, אתת ("signs"). He argues that the use of אתת points to "the primary Spiritual light of God's glory," and concludes that "we are led ... to take the next term, 'seasons,' in context as related to the special signs, and as referring primarily to appointed times of worship."[12] Obviously, he assumes that "the primary Spiritual light of God's glory" can be seen far more clearly in the appointment of special times of worship than in the appointment of the cycles of nature. However, this assumption betrays a non-Hebraic dichotomy between nature and grace, one which he himself decries.[13] The "signs" of Gen 1:14 can also be understood as ordering principles and guides for the cosmos rather than as signs of God's glory per se.[14]

In his comments on Gen 1:14, E. A. Speiser notes that "the sun and the moon cannot be said to determine the seasons proper; moreover, the order would then be unbalanced (one would expect: days, seasons, years)."[15] He therefore argues that the phrases לאתת ("for signs") and למועדים ("for appointed times") form a hendiadys, that the copulative between למועדים and לימים ("for days") is explicative, and that the copulative between לימים and שנים ("years") is connective,[16] as reflected in his translation of Gen 1:14b: "Let them [the lights]

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de Investigaciones Científicas, 1954), 1:645; Paul Beauchamp, *Création et séparation: Étude exégétique du chapitre premier de la Genèse*, Bibliothèque de sciences religieuses (Aubier Montaigne: Éditions du Cerf, 1969), 114; Robert Davidson, *Genesis 1-11* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 21; G. J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15* (Waco: Word, 1987), 23; David J. Rudolph, "Festivals in Gen 1:14," *TynBul* 54/2 (2003): 23-40. Koehler and Baumgartner, 504, also classify the use of מועדים in Gen 1:14 under the heading *"festgesetze Zeiten, Festzeiten*, appointed dates, seasons of feast."

[10]E.g., the word מועד is used of the designated time for a plague to fall (Exod 9:5; 2 Sam 24:15) and the designated time for offering sacrifices, including the daily sacrifice (Num 28:2-8). It is also used of prearranged meeting times (1 Sam 13:8, 11; 20:35), the times allocated for the completion of a task (2 Sam 20:5), an extended period of danger (Jer 46:17), and the designated time for the fulfillment of a prophetic vision (Hab 2:13); see George V. Wigram, *The New Englishman's Hebrew Concordance: Coded to Strong's Concordance Numbering System*, rev. ed., ed. Jay P. Green (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1984), 672, 673.

[11]E.g., in Jer 8:7. See C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *The Pentateuch*, trans. James Martin, Biblical Commentary (Grand Rapids: Ecrdmans, 1949), 1:57.

[12]James B. Jordan, *Christianity and the Calendar: A Syllabus* (Niceville, FL: Biblical Horizons, 1988), 81.

[13]Ibid., 79.

[14]E.g., see Shimon Bakon, "Sign—אות," *Dor ledor* 18 (1990): 241.

[15]E. A. Speiser, *Genesis*, AB 1 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1969), 6.

[16]Ibid. That the copulative between "days" and the "years" is connective is

mark the fixed times, the days and the years."[17]

Speiser does not address the question of whether the word מועדים in Gen 1:14 refers to annual sacred times. It might be argued that the sun and the moon do determine the time of their observance. However, the order would remain as unbalanced (one would still expect days, מועדים, years). Accordingly, this possibility does nothing to negate his suggestion that the relationships between signs, מועדים, days, and years be respectively understood in terms of hendiadys, explication, and connection.

There seems to be good reason for adopting Speiser's view of the relationships between the different parts of Gen 1:14b. It is significant for our discussion that, in this case, the מועדים in Gen 1:14 are defined as "days and years" rather than as מקראי קדש ("holy convocations/ proclamations of holiness"), as in Lev 23:37.[18] In context, these days are the successive 24-hour days of the natural cycle, each one ruled in part by the "lesser light," the moon, and in part ruled by the "greater light," the sun, just as each of the six days of Gen 1 is comprised of an evening and a morning. It is appropriate that the מועדים should also be defined as "years," since the circadian and annual cycles are the dominant rhythms of the natural world. On the other hand, the year-long sacred times of the Sabbatical Year and the Jubilee are never designated as מועדים in the OT. In support of this conclusion, it should be noted that the LXX translates מועדים as καιρούς ("times") in Gen 1:14 and as καιρὸν ("time") in Jer 8:7, rather than as ἑορταί ("festivals") as in Lev 23:37.

Conclusion

Sailhamer contends that according to Gen 1:14, "the lights in the expanse of the sky" exist before the fourth day of Creation week, but assume a new purpose at this time. Substantial evidence for this position exists in two facts. First, the pattern of the use of the copula and the *lamed* preposition in Gen 1:14a, 15, suggests that the *lamed* infinitive phrase להבדיל ("to divide") in Gen 1:14a should be taken as directly qualifying the copula rather than the subject of the sentence. Second, the *lamed* is used before the noun אתת ("signs") in Gen 1:14b and before the expression מאורת ברקיע השמים ("lights in the expanse of the sky") in Gen 1:15a as a "*lamed* of purpose," suggesting that the lights are simply becoming something new, rather than coming into existence for the first time.

The מועדים of Gen 1:14 have often been identified as the annual sacred times rather than as the cyclical rhythms of nature. Semantically, the position is ambiguous. However, syntactically, a strong case exists for defining the מועדים

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supported by the absence of the preposition *lamed* before שנים. Contra Rudolph, 33, the four nouns here should not simply be seen as an undifferentiated "string of pearls."

[17]Ibid., 3, 4. Patrick Wilton, "More Cases of Waw Explicativum," *VT* 44 (1994): 125-128.

[18]In favor of translating מקראי קדש as "proclamations of holiness" rather than "holy convocations," see Ernst Kutsch, "א," *ZAW* 65 (1953): 247-253.

as the days and years of the natural cycle, rather than as special times of worship.

The translation of Gen 1:14 here proposed would be as follows: "And God said, 'Let the lights in the expanse of the sky be for dividing the day and the night and let them be signs of appointed times, (that is) of days and years.'"

IS JEREMIAH 39:15-18 OUT OF ORDER?

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Jeremiah 39:15-18 is generally regarded as problematic. The passage appears to be chronologically out of order since it points to Jeremiah's imprisonment, but follows the actual capitulation of the city and the freeing of the prophet by the Babylonians (39:1-14). How could Jeremiah be free and imprisoned at the same time? This has led some commentators to relocate the passage. For instance, J. A. Thompson replaces it after 38:7-14, where Ebed-Melech rescued Jeremiah from the pit.[1] Roland K. Harrison places it after 38:28 when Jeremiah was returned to prison, following his private audience with King Zedekiah.[2] W. L. Holladay, following Gunther Wanke,[3] contends that the emphatic וְאֶל־יִרְמְיָהוּ ("but to Jeremiah"), suggests that "the clause immediately preceding 39:15-18 (in its original position) has another subject than Jeremiah."[4] He, therefore, opts for a position after 38:27, believing that the "nice play on דָּבָר between 38:27 and 39:15" recommends this.[5] I argue, however, that the pericope is deliberately placed here for a significant theological reason.

The focal character in this pericope is Ebed-Melech the Cushite, who had earlier risked his life to rescue Jeremiah from the miry pit into which he was thrown on charges of treason (38:1-13). The message of salvation directed to Ebed-Melech in 39:15-18 is what gives it a special character. Couched in remnant language (מלט),[6] this passage envelops both judgment and salvation, as portrayed structurally:[7] historical dateline (v. 15); a message of judgment to

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[1]J. A. Thompson, *The Book of Jeremiah*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 649.

[2]Roland K. Harrison, *Jeremiah and Lamentations*, TOTC (Downer's Grove: InterVarsity, 1973), 158-159.

[3]Gunther Wanke, *Untersuchengen zur sogenannten Baruchschift*, BZAW 122 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1971), 111.

[4]W. L. Holladay, *Jeremiah 2*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989), 268.

[5]Ibid.

[6]Verse 18 reads, "'Because I will certainly rescue (כִּי מַלֵּט אֲמַלֶּטְךָ) you, and you shall not fall by the sword; and your life shall be a prize of war to you, because you trusted in me,' says the Lord." See the demonstration of the use of מלט as an important remnant term in the book of Jeremiah in Kenneth D. Mulzac, "The Remnant Motif in the Context of Judgment and Salvation in the Book of Jeremiah" (Ph.D. dissertation, Andrews University Theological Seminary, 1995), 192-205; 256-280.

[7]The translated passage is provided here to aid the reader in seeing its structure: "The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah while he was shut up in the court of the guard, saying: Go and say to Ebed-Melech the Ethiopian, 'Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Behold I am about to bring my words upon this city for evil and not for good. And they shall be (fulfilled) before you on that day. But I will save you on that

be fulfilled בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא ("on that day") (v. 16); and a message of salvation, also to be fulfilled בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא ("on that day") (vv. 17-18). Attention is also due to the AB:B'A' structure of v. 18:

A	B
because I will certainly rescue/save you	you will not fall

B'	A'
your life will be a prize	because you trusted in me

Located as it is in the MT, the pericope links the fate of both Jeremiah and Ebed-Melech. Significantly, both men were survivors of the fall of Jerusalem precisely because of their faith. Jeremiah's purchase of a field in Anathoth in the face of impending judgment (32:1-15) demonstrates his faith and strong confidence that YHWH will effect rejuvenation. Indeed, "houses and fields and vineyards will be possessed again in the land" (32:15). As such, he functions as a *proleptic representative* of the remnant who will be revived because of their faithfulness.[8]

The message for Ebed-Melech is that God will fulfill his purposes to destroy Jerusalem. The word of judgment was fulfilled precisely "on that day" (בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא). This expression functions to show that at the time of the delivery of the message, its fulfillment was yet future. Nevertheless, the location of the pericope in the MT functions to show that the message was indeed fulfilled: judgment had come upon Jerusalem.

But judgment is not the last word; salvation is. The promise of salvation is also fulfilled precisely "on that day" (בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא) and provides for Ebed-Melech's protection. He is preserved from both the courtiers, who may have intended his demise since he dared to rescue the prophet, as well as from the Babylonian invaders. In this way, he is just like Jeremiah, who escaped from the same two entities. What stands out clearly in this passage, however, is that this salvation is for the Cushite because he trusts God, in stark contrast to the Judeans who did not trust him.

Verse 18 forcefully demonstrates the divine intervention to ensure Ebed-Melech's safety. This is expressed by the emphatic כִּי מַלֵּט אֲמַלֶּטְךָ ("because I will certainly rescue/save you"). This promise is assured כִּי־בָטַחְתָּ בִּי ("because you trusted in me"). Ebed-Melech will be a survivor of the imminent judgment because of his trust in YHWH. Robert Carroll rightly comments:

> *Not his attitude towards Jeremiah but his trust in Yahweh underwrites Ebed-melech's fate.*
> In the fall of Jerusalem the Ethiopian will survive (i.e., have his life as a spoil

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day,' says the Lord. 'And you shall not be given into the hand of the men of whom you are afraid because I will certainly rescue/save you (כִּי מַלֵּט אֲמַלֶּטְךָ) and you shall not fall by the sword; and your life shall be a prize of war to you, because you trusted in me,' says the Lord."

[8]See Mulzac, 217-219.

of war) because of his trust. Thus is the man who trusts in Yahweh blessed (17:7), and Ebed-melech becomes an example of the pious whose survival in whatever circumstances *depends only upon their trust in Yahweh*. Gone is the option of 38:2, and now only trust in Yahweh is required.[9]

Safety is secured only because of trust in YHWH. The verb בָּטַח is employed here to strongly recommend security that is based on reliance on God alone. Used in this sense, the verb denotes that in times of distress the only way to secure survival and safety is to take refuge in God and place confidence in him. Such was the nature of Ebed-Melech's faith over against the faithlessness of the Judeans.

The example of this non-Judean is placed here in stark contrast to the lack of faith, and hence the hopeless fate, of the "elect people." They trusted in foreign political entities (2:17); in fortified cities and walls (5:17); in human beings (17:5); and especially in the temple, which the false prophets deemed inviolable (7:4, 8; 26:1-15). Hence, they trusted in empty lies (13:25; 28:15; 29:31). They adhered to a false security that resulted in their disappointment and ultimate destruction.

Ebed-Melech's faith demonstrates that "being secure in God is the only certain support for human life."[10] Indeed, "blessed is the person who trusts in the Lord, and whose hope is the Lord."[11] As such, his faith became the *criterium distinctionis* between destruction and the hope of survival.[12] Therefore, as with Jeremiah, he may well be regarded as a *proleptic representative* of the remnant whose faith becomes an active factor in salvation.

This pericope demonstrates the dual polarity of doom and salvation. The threat of judgment is directed to those who do not trust in YHWH. However, there is a promise of survival for trusting in YHWH.[13] Therefore, although the oracle seems to be out of place, its present position "emphasizes the fulfillment of the divine word and the relation between deliverance and trust in Yahweh."[14] And in all this, the Cushite's role is not to be forgotten or underestimated.

[9]Robert Carroll, *Jeremiah*, OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986), 697, emphasis added.

[10]Alfred Jepsen, בָּטַח, *TDOT* (1974), 2:93.

[11]Jer 17:7. This is in direct contrast to the curse pronounced on the person who trusts in humankind (Jer 17:5).

[12]Gerhard F. Hasel, *The Remnant: The History and Theology of the Remnant Idea from Genesis to Isaiah*, 3d ed., Andrews University Monographs 5 (Berrien Springs: Andrews University Press, 1980), 396. He says: "Faith, as a matter of fact, is the *criterium distinctionis* between the masses that will perish and the remnant that will survive."

[13]See Sheldon H. Blank, who indicates that in a few special and personal words, the book of Jeremiah promised survival to a faithful few: to the Rechabites for their constancy (chap. 35); to Baruch, who shared the prophet's lot (chap. 45); and to Ebed-Melech, who rescued him from the pit ("Traces of Prophetic Agony in Isaiah," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 27 [1956]: 90).

[14]Carroll, 696.

Indeed, "At a time when Judah was being judged because of disobedience and covenant violation, a black Cushite was delivered because of his faith."[15] On the one hand, the faith*less*ness of Zedekiah and Judah determined their fate: judgment and death;[16] on the other hand, the faith*ful*ness of Ebed-Melech the Cushite determined his fate: salvation and life.

[15]Daniel J. Hays, "The Cushites: A Black Nation in the Bible," *BSac* 153 (October-December 1996): 406.

[16]What a horrible fate it was for Zedekiah that the last thing he saw before being blinded was the execution of his own children, in part because of his own disobedience! That scene was to haunt him for the rest of his life. The stinging irony must not be overlooked either: the same king, who had earlier chosen to "look the other way" and allow his courtiers to try to kill Jeremiah, is now forced to look as the Babylonians killed his own flesh and blood.

PRELIMINARY REPORT OF THE 2000, 2004, AND 2005 SEASONS AT TALL JALUL, JORDAN (MADABA PLAINS PROJECT)

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Since the last full season of excavation in 1999, the Institute of Archaeology at Andrews University has undertaken three additional expeditions to Tall Jalul as part of the Madaba Plains Project. The first expedition was a brief two-week season, undertaken in 2000, in which a new field of four squares, designated as Field E, was opened immediately north of Field B on the east side of the tall (Figure 1). However, this was primarily intended as a field-training exercise for a small number of graduate students from Andrews University and did not penetrate below the first few centimeters of surface debris. Although only surface debris was removed and no significant stratigraphic layers were exposed, two ancient seals were, nevertheless, found in the debris that we will report on here. A second field excursion was conducted in the spring of 2004, but again the work in this season did not involve any significant excavation. Rather, the goal was to remap both the topography of Jalul, as well as its architectural features, using a new geographical positioning system known as Z-Max. Our third excursion was undertaken between May 4 and June 16, 2005, the first regular excavation season since the 1999 season. In this report, therefore, while we will report on the results of all three of these expeditions, since there were no significant excavations in 2000 and 2004, we will focus primarily on the results of the 2005 season.

The 2000 Season

The 2000 season lasted from April 24 to May 6, and involved a small number of students from Andrews University, who were participating in an archaeological tour led by Jiří Moskala (Figure 2).[1] In order to give the students

[1]Staff for the 2000 season included Randall W. Younker and David Merling (co-directors), Paul Ray (field supervisor), and Efrain Velazquez, Patrick Mazani, Robert Bates, and Elias Brasil de Souza (square supervisors). Jiří Moskala was in charge of field

field experience, it was decided to open up a planned new field north of Field B. The new field, designated as Field E, was selected because it included a very large mound, the highest point of Jalul's "lower city," which showed promise of concealing a major architectural feature, perhaps a tower along Jalul's northeastern wall. Four squares were laid out in a straight line along the east-west axis of Jalul's excavation grid (Figure 1). Because excavation lasted only two weeks, none of the squares penetrated much below surface debris. In the eastern-most squares, Bedouin graves were exposed just below the surface (as was the case in Fields A and B in previous seasons). The remains were reinterred by local workers on the acropolis of Jalul, where a modern cemetery has been maintained by the local village.

The ceramics found in the surface debris were unsurprisingly mixed, coming from different periods, although the vast majority of sherds were from the late Iron II Age—apparently close to the last period of major occupation on the tell. Although no architectural features were exposed this close to the surface, a number of small finds were recovered. The thirty-one recovered objects included iron arrowheads, stone ballista, fragments of various basalt vessels, stone beads, a ceramic pendant, a ceramic button or "buzz," a metal fibula, a metal pin, a metal needle, a number of stone blades, a ceramic figurine head, spindle whorls, and two seals.

Of the two seals, one was light blue (faience) with a geometric design. The second seal was found just below the surface in Square 4 in an area that had been heavily disturbed by nineteenth-century Bedouin graves (Figure 3). It is of a whitish stone and is inscribed with Egyptian hieroglyphics. One of the square supervisors, Robert Bates, provided a preliminary reading as follows: "Amun-Re, Re of the Two Lands." It dates to the time of either Ramesses III or Ramesses IV of the 20th Dynasty.

The 2004 Season

The goal of the May 10-22, 2004 season at Tall Jalul (5 km east of Madaba) was to test a new Geographical Positioning System (GPS) known as "Z-Max" (Figure 4). The Z-Max surveying system, produced by Thales Navigation, is a precision GPS system originally designed for topographic and construction survey. Z-Max is superior to other GPS systems because of ADAPT-RTK (Automatic Decor Relation and Parameter Tuning for Real Time Kinematic). This new system, which has the capability of locating three dimensional points (latitude, longitude, and elevation) on the surface of the planet within an accuracy of centimeters, had previously been shown to be extremely accurate and reliable in plotting the specific location of individual bones of dinosaurs in a paleontological excavation conducted in northeast Wyoming, U.S.A. by Art Chadwick and Larry Turner of Southwestern Adventist University, Keene,

Texas. One of the characteristics that makes this new system so attractive for archaeological field work is that it is extremely fast. A given locational point can be recorded literally by a click of a button, and the locational point is immediately recorded. By way of illustration, Chadwick and Turner were able to record thousands of locational data points at Tall Jalul in just two days to create an accurate topographical map of the site at 1 m intervals (Figure 6). These data points can be read on a small screen that is attached to the receiver and are immediately recorded by the unit's computer.

When the locational data from ZMax are downloaded into a computer software program called ARCGIS, the recorded data can be combined with digital images of various archaeological features (e.g., bones, rocks) to create three-dimensional images of those features. The software has the capability to compensate for any distortion created by the digital image and maintains the precise spatial relationships of those features. Thus, for example, when several locational datum points (length, width, depth) for each of several individual paving stones in a street are combined with a digital image of those same stones, it is possible to create a three-dimensional model of those stones that are in precise spatial relationship to each other. The software can then be manipulated to provide a view of those stones from any desired angle. Images of architectural features and other objects generated by this software can be viewed on a computer from any desired angle, greatly enhancing the ability to analyze and understand any given feature. Such images can also be used in publication.

The application of this new technology to archaeology is immediately obvious. With ZMax and ARCGIS, any locus point on an archaeological site can be quickly and accurately plotted—including the parameters of individual loci or features, such as a wall or street, as well as the precise location of any find spot of a given artifact.

Results of the 2004 Season

In preparation for the replotting and mapping of Jalul, a dozen students and teachers from Andrews University (Figure 5),[2] along with four workers from Jalul, cleaned the debris from all the previously excavated fields that had accumulated since the last excavation seasons in 1999 and 2000. During the cleaning process, they also removed a dangerously eroded balk in Field B so that no visitors to the site would be endangered. The removal of the balk exposed a few additional pavement stones from the eighth-century-B.C.E. pavement that had been discovered in previous seasons. These new stones were

[2]The staff for the 2004 mapping project included Randall Younker, David Merling, Paul Ray and Robert Bates of Andrews University, Art Chadwick and Lawrence Turner of Southwestern Adventist University, Mark Ziese of Cincinnati Christian University. Also from Andrews University were Michael Younker, Matt Grey, Matthew Meyer, Ralph Hawkins, and Ron Wakeman. Kyle Jensen served as a volunteer. Reem Shqour, curator of the Madaba Archaeology Museum was the representative for the Department of Antiquities of Jordan.

photographed and mapped with the new ZMax system.

Meanwhile, Chadwick and Turner were able to replot and map all the architectural features in Fields A, B, C, D, and E (Figure 6). From these points, they were able to successfully create a three-dimensional view of these architectural features. While aerial photos of Jalul were not yet available (we have since acquired such images), photos of various features were taken from ground level and successful combined with ZMax data to create three-dimensional digital images in ARCGIS—the results were excellent, but preliminary. Further work will be undertaken to refine these images for final publication. Finally, Chadwick and Turner made a new and more accurate topographical map of Jalul (Figure 6), recording several thousand precise location data points. The results were successful and will enhance the results of the final publication.

The 2005 Season[3]

This season our international team consisted of approximately sixty archaeologists, students, and volunteers, and more than twenty Jordanian specialists and workers (Figure 7).[4] The Tall Jalul Excavations continue to be

[4]The codirectors for the project this season were Randall W. Younker and David Merling. The Department of Antiquities of Jordan representatives was Mr. Bassam (from the Madaba office). Andrews University faculty and staff who participated this season included Randall Younker, David Merling, Constance Gane, Roy Gane, John McVay, Paul Ray, Jiri Moskala, Jennifer Groves, and Robert Bates.

Pottery registrars were Janet Bernal, Celeste Voigt, and Trisha Ellison. The Objects Registrar, David Merling, assisted by Paul Ray and Darrel Rohl, processed the small finds. Preliminary faunal analysis was done by Katherine Koudele (Andrews University) and Randy Younker, assisted by Edwina Rao and Dustin Hill. Christie Goulart and Michael Younker oversaw digital photography assisted by Alice and Ron Haznedl. Lawrence Turner, Justin Wood, and Michael Younker were in charge of the Geographical Positioning System (GPS)—they were assisted by Darrel Rohl, Robert Bates, and Ron Hazneld.

The excavation staff's Field Supervisors for the 2005 season included Zeljko "Paul" Gregor (Northern Caribbean University), Mark Ziese (Cincinnati Christian University), Constance Gane (Andrews University), Jennifer Groves (Andrews University), Robert Bates (La Sierra University) and Paul Ray (Andrews University). Assistant Field Supervisor for Field A was Helena Gregor. Square Supervisors included John McVay, Lazarus Castang, Teale Niemeyher, Eva Katarina Glazer, David Adams,

conducted as part of the Madaba Plains Project. For a description of the project's long-term research objectives and previous results, we refer the reader to the preliminary reports published in earlier issues of *AUSS*.[5]

Excavations at Tall Jalul were conducted in six fields this season, (A, B, C, D, E, and F) (Figure 1) and uncovered remains from the Middle and Late Bronze Ages, Iron I (twelfth-eleventh centuries B.C.E.), and Iron II (tenth–nineth centuries B.C.E.) to the Late Iron II and Persian periods (c. eighth to fifth centuries B.C.E.).

Middle Bronze Age II (1700-1550 B.C.E.)

This season a significant amount of Middle Bronze II-III sherds were found mixed in with Late Bronze Age pottery in Late Bronze fills (Figure 8; see next section). These fills were located in Squares A3 and A4. No additional Middle Bronze II-III fills have been reached since the probe that penetrated such a fill in Square A3 in the 1999 season. The Middle Bronze II-III pottery forms and wares included white-slipped wares and Chocolate-on-White ware.

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[5]See Lawrence T. Geraty, "A Preliminary Report on the First Season at Tell el-`Umeiri (June 18 to August 8, 1984)," *AUSS* 23 (1985): 85-110; Lawrence T. Geraty, Larry G. Herr, and Øystein S. LaBianca, "The Joint Madaba Plains Project: A Preliminary Report on the Second Season at Tell el-`Umeiri and Vicinity (June 18 to August 6, 1987)," *AUSS* 26 (1988): 217-252; Randall W. Younker, Lawrence T. Geraty, Larry G. Herr, and Øystein S. LaBianca, "The Joint Madaba Plains Project: A Preliminary Report of the 1989 Season, Including the Regional Survey and Excavations at El-Dreijat, Tell Jawa, and Tell el-`Umeiri (June 19 to August 8, 1989)," *AUSS* 28 (1990): 5-52; Randall W. Younker, Lawrence T. Geraty, Larry G. Herr, and Øystein S. LaBianca, "The Joint Madaba Plains Project: A Preliminary Report of the 1992 Season, Including the Regional Survey and Excavations at Tell Jalul, and Tell el-`Umeiri (June 16 to July 31, 1992)," *AUSS* 31 (1993): 205-38; Randall W. Younker, Lawrence T. Geraty, Larry G. Herr, Øystein S. LaBianca, and Douglas Clark, "Preliminary Report of the 1994 Season of the Madaba Plains Project: Regional Survey, Tall al-`Umayri, and Tall Jalul Excavations (June 15 to July 30, 1996)," *AUSS* 34 (1996): 65-92; Randall W. Younker, Lawrence T. Geraty, Larry G. Herr, Øystein S. LaBianca, and Douglas Clark, "Preliminary Report of the 1996 Season of the Madaba Plains Project: Regional Survey, Tall al-`Umayri, and Tall Jalul Excavations (June 19 to July 31, 1996)," *AUSS* 35 (1997): 227-240. Øystein S. LaBianca and Paul Ray, "Preliminary Report of the 1997 Excavations and Restoration Work at Tall Hisban (June 18 to July 11, 1997)," *AUSS* 36 (1998): 231-244.

Late Bronze Age (1550-1200 B.C.E.)

Substantial Late Bronze fills were excavated in Squares A3 and A4. The fills in which the Late Bronze potsherds were found were tilted at nearly a 45-degree angle (i.e., they are running downslope toward the north side of the tell) and included some ashy lenses, indicating destruction by fire. The Late Bronze lenses conformed to the angle of the Iron I lenses above them, with no appreciable physical demarcation between the lenses apart from the pottery content and more pronounced dark ashy lenses of the Iron Age (Figure 9). Unfortunately, no architectural elements dating to the Late Bronze Age were uncovered this season, but the abundance of Late Bronze pottery in the fills points to a substantial phase of occupation during this period.

Iron I (Late Thirteenth–Eleventh Centuries B.C.E.)

Once again, excavations penetrated Iron I fills below the earliest Iron II architectural remains. In Field A, ashy lenses with Iron I sherds (collar-rimmed jars, carinated bowls, and flanged cooking pots), as well as some Early Bronze, Middle Bronze (Chocolate-on-White ware), and Late Bronze sherds (Mycenaean!) were found in small quantities in Square A3. In Square A4, these deposits were up to 2-3 m thick (Figure 9). The Iron Age fills consisted of the same fine ashy lenses seen in previous seasons. The lenses appear to represent a postoccupational phase, created in the latter part of Iron Age I, although the precise time is difficult to determine at present. Previously we have assumed that the ceramics in these ashy lenses dated to the late Iron Age I, based on the presence of, for example, collar-rimmed jars, carinated bowls, and flanged cooking pots that are typical of the period. However, closer examination of the forms now suggests that some of the collar-rimmed jars and bowls find parallels with the earliest Iron I vessels now being reported at our sister site of Tall al-'Umayri. Additionally, some bowl forms appear to resemble the so-called "Manasseh" bowls reported at Umayri, Hesban, and sites in the West Bank.[6] If so, some of the ceramics in these ashy lenses may reflect occupational activity dating as early as the late thirteenth century B.C.E.

The Iron I lenses conform to the Late Bronze lenses below them, dipping at about a 45-degree angle to the north (i.e., they are running downslope on the north side of the tell). There is no architecture associated with the fills—our team is speculating that these fills may be outside the city wall of the Iron and Bronze Ages.

Iron II (Eighth Century B.C.E.)

In Field A, the southern portion of the western wall of an eighth-century-B.C.E. building, found originally during the 1999 Season in Square A7, was exposed in Square A9. In Field B, several additional meters of an eighth-century-B.C.E. road, which approached the gate of Jalul, were found in Square B20. It was

[6]See Paul Ray, pp. 43-49; 79, 93 in *Hesban 6* (Andrews University Press, 2001).

anticipated that parts of this road would continue into Squares B21 and B22, but the road was destroyed in antiquity and disappears in the middle of Square B20 (Figure 10). In Field C, Square 6, a small stretch of cobbled street and a wall fragment of a building from the Iron II (eighth century B.C.E.) was uncovered southeast of the later Iron II/Persian-period building found in previous seasons.

Late Iron II (Seventh-Sixth Centuries B.C.E.)

In Field E, a small section of mud-brick wall was uncovered in Square E2 that appears to date to the eighth-seventh centuries B.C.E. (Figure 11). An Ammonite seal was also found in this field, which appears to date to the seventh century B.C.E. The seal is made of light tan clay and divided into three registers (Figure 12). The middle register depicts a galloping pony, while the upper and bottom registers contain an inscription. While most of the letters are easy to make out and appear to be seventh-century Ammonite, a few letters are poorly preserved, making a definite reading difficult.

Late Iron II / Persian Period (Sixth-Fifth Centuries B.C.E.)

In Field C, the north wall of a large Late Iron II/Persian-period (fifth century B.C.E.) building was found. Most of the material from the Late Iron II/Persian period was again found in Field D, where the collapsed roof debris was removed from several rooms of the large building found in 1999. In Square D3, some figurine fragments, as well as several whole vessels (e.g., whole-mouth kraters, bowls), were recovered *in situ* on the floor of the southwestern most room.

Summary and Conclusions

While Middle and Late Bronze architecture has not yet been exposed at Jalul, the presence of fills with pottery from both of these periods points to the possibility that occupational remains from this time will be found. If so, Jalul would be yet another site that overturns Nelson Glueck's original conclusions that Jordan was basically an empty land during the Middle and Late Bronze Ages.[7] While not much can yet be said about this central region of Jordan during these periods, the material culture seems to conform to that of Cisjordan's Canaanite culture. Still, the overall picture for the Middle and Late Bronze Ages does seem to point to a lower point in the level of sedentary occupation for Jordan.

That picture changes dramatically with the onset of the Iron Age. The ceramic horizons at Umayri, Hesban, and Jalul suggest that the earliest Iron Age settlements in both Cis-and Transjordan occurred in our area. The appearance of Manasseh bowls, collar-rimmed jars, and flanged cooking pots of the earliest Iron IA point to a close connection with the slightly later appearance of these forms to the west of the Jordan River. Does this support an east-to-west movement of Iron I peoples, as suggested in the biblical tradition? Do we have evidence of the Reubenites in central Jordan? The major ashy lenses of over 1 m in thickness that have been found under the early Iron II remains suggest that a major conflagration occurred toward the end of the Iron Age I.

Whether or not an archaeological case can be made for Reubenite

[7]Nelson Glueck, *The Other Side of the Jordan*, American Schools of Oriental Research (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1970), 140-141.

occupation in the Madaba Plains region for early Iron Age I, inscriptional evidence, such as seals and ostraca, iconographic evidence, and other aspects of the material culture at Jalul, Hesban, and Umayri indicate that by the middle of the Iron Age II, the Ammonites were in firm control of the Madaba Plains Region. Indeed, during the Iron Age IIB, it would appear that Jalul was along the southern most bastion of the Ammonite cultural sphere—sites such as Khirbat al-Mudayna on the Wadi ath-Thamad, just a few kilometers to the south, show a distinctive Moabite influence, as evidenced by ceramics and inscriptions. The growing strength of the Ammonite presence is supported by the settlement pattern, which shows a consistent increase in the number of settlements from Late Bronze to Iron II, with the peak occurring toward the end of Iron Age IIB.

Finally, excavations at Jalul and the sister sites of Umayri and Hesban, along with recent regional surveys, show that after the Babylonian period—that is, during the Persian period—the land was not abandoned, but continued to be occupied. Indeed, inscriptional evidence from Umayri shows that like Judah, Ammon had been incorporated as a province into the Persian administrative system.

Future seasons of work at Jalul will not only help expand our knowledge about what is already known about the site, but will also penetrate the earliest chapters of its long history in the Madaba Plains Region.
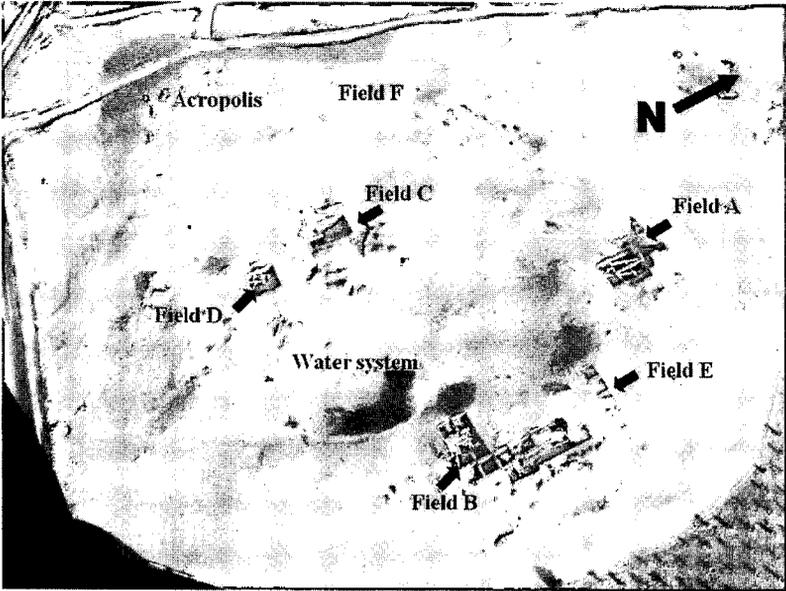
Figure 1. Aerial photo of Jalul showing the location of the excavation fields.

Figure 2. The 2000 Jalul team that opened Field E.
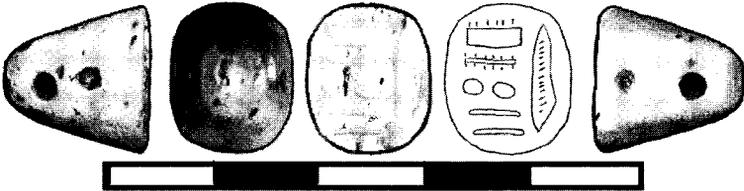
Figure 3. Ramesside seal found in Field E.

Figure 4. Art Chadwick operating the "rover" for the Z-Max system at Tall Jalul.

Figure 5. The 2004 Survey Team at Tall Jalul.
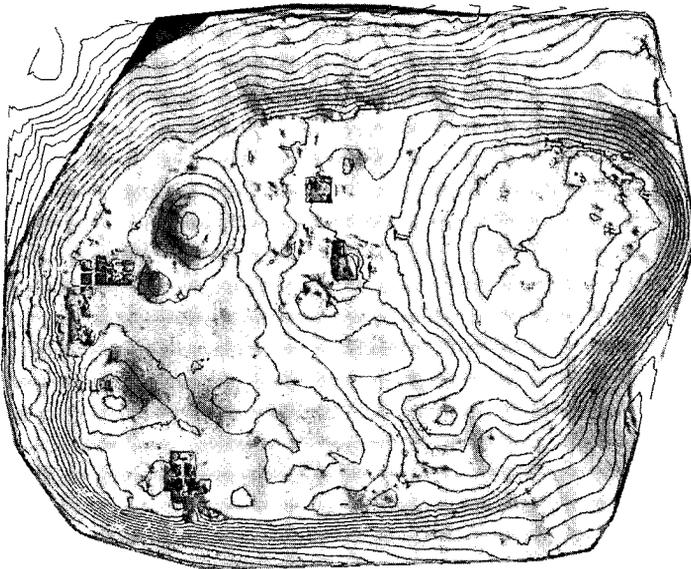
Figure 6. The topographic map created by Z-Max—it is superimposed on top of an aerial photo of Jalul through the use of special GPS software.
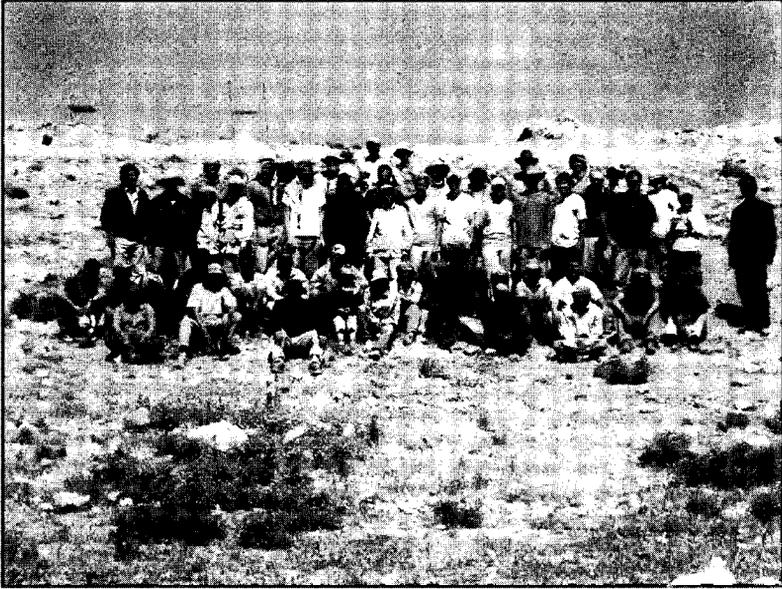
Figure 7. The main group of the 2005 Jalul excavation team.

Figure 8. Typical Middle Bronze and Late Bronze Age sherds—white-slipped ware and Chocolate-on-White wares were found in the fills.
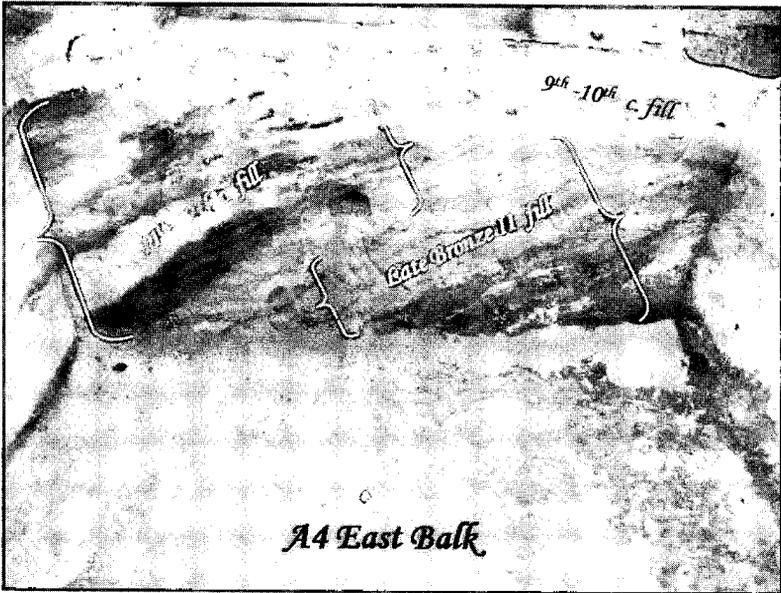
Figure 9. Iron and Late Bronze Age fills in Square A4 of Field A.

Figure 10. Iron Age II (eighth century B.C.E.) approach ramp in Field B.

Figure 11. Section of mud-brick wall found in Square 2 of Field E.

Figure 12. An Iron Age II (probably seventh century B.C.E.) Ammonite seal found in Field E.

ABSOLUTE THEOLOGICAL TRUTH
IN POSTMODERN TIMES

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Introduction

Postmodernity brought about the greatest paradigm shift in philosophical studies since Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle defined the basic structure and destiny of Western philosophy and science. In postmodern times, knowledge and truth have become relative to the historical and cultural conditions of the cognitive subject. Postmodern "hermeneutical reason"[1] replaces the "epistemological foundationalism" of classical and modern times.[2] The epistemological shift implies that truth changes with the times. We can no longer speak of "eternal" or "absolute" truth. Truth is relative to our historically and culturally conditioned lives.[3]

How should evangelical theology relate to this epoch-making epistemological shift? Can we speak in postmodern times of an absolute unchanging theological truth?[4] Recently, Stanley Grenz has addressed this issue,[5] proposing that evangelical theology should embrace postmodern epistemology and work from within the sociohistorical limitations of the church community and the culturally conditioned language of its tradition. In short, they see theology exploring "the world-constructing, knowledge-forming 'language' of the Christian community."[6]

In this presentation, I will attempt to outline an alternate way to affirm both the paradigmatic shift of postmodern epistemology *and* the absolute truth of Christian theology. I will argue, with Grenz, that evangelical theology

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[1]Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, 2d ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), 315-356.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, trans. Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall, 2d rev. ed. (New York: Continuum, 1989).

[4]For an introduction to the various senses in which the word "absolute" has been used in the history of philosophy, see, e.g., José Ferrater Mora, *Diccionario de Filosophifa*, 5th ed. (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 1965), s.v., "absoluto." In this article, I use the word "absolute" to describe theological truth as nonrelative or not conditioned to human-historical flux.

[5]Stanley Grenz and John R. Franke, *Beyond Foundationalism: Shaping Theology in a Postmodern Context* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001). Grenz has been especially active in developing the ideas found in this book, as well as in his other prolific writings. Therefore, the emphasis will be on Grenz in this article, rather than Franke.

[6]Ibid., 53.

should abandon classical and modern foundationalisms and replace them
with the postmodern understanding of hermeneutical reason.[7] However,
against Grenz, I will propose that adopting postmodern hermeneutical
reason does not impinge on the absoluteness of the truth of Christian
theological knowledge, but enhances our capability to understand and affirm
it. Instead of arguing, like Grenz, that Christian truth springs from the Spirit-
led community,[8] I will suggest that it flows from God's historical revelation
in the Spirit-originated Scripture.

    In order to achieve this objective, I will consider, first, whether Grenz's
approach to move beyond modernity makes room for absolute truth. Second,
I will explore the relation between epistemology and ontology and the way they
related in classical and modern foundationalism. Finally, I will review the
biblical view on truth to uncover the way in which epistemology and ontology
relate in biblical Christianity.

Beyond Foundationalism: Grenz's Proposal

Grenz argues that Protestant theology should accommodate to postmodern
epistemology because contemporary philosophers have abandoned the
foundationalist epistemology of modernism and replaced it with the
hermeneutical epistemology of postmodernity. Grenz correctly describes
foundationalist epistemology as the conviction "that certain beliefs anchor
other beliefs, that is, certain beliefs are 'basic,' and other beliefs arise as
conclusions from them."[9] He further explains that Friedrich Schleiermacher's
and Charles Hodge's theological methods are expressions of foundationalist
theological epistemologies.[10] For Schleiermacher, the father of liberal
theology, inner religious experience is the "foundation" on which theology
builds.[11] For Hodge, a conservative evangelical theologian, the deposit of
timeless revelation found in Scripture "formulated as a series of statements
or theological assertions, each of which is true in its own right"[12] is the
"foundation" on which theology builds. According to Grenz, these
theological methodological strategies came about as ways to accommodate

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    [7]For a scholarly introduction to the philosophical study of hermeneutics, see Josef
Bleicher, ed., *Contemporary Hermeneutics: Hermeneutics as Method, Philosophy and Critique*
(London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980), esp. Emilio Betti, "Hermeneutics as the
General Methodology of the *Geisteswissenshaften*"; Raúl Kerbs, "Sobre El Desarrollo De
La Hermenéutica," *Analogia Filosófica*, no. 2 (1999), 3-33; and John D. Caputo, *Radical
Hermeneutics: Repetition, Deconstruction, and the Hermeneutic Project* (Bloomington: Indiana
University Press, 1987).

    [8]Grenz and Franke, 47-54.

    [9]Ibid., 47.

    [10]Ibid., 37.

    [11]Ibid., 35.

    [12]Ibid., 47.

evangelical theology to a "strong" philosophical foundationalism that gave priority to scientific natural statements over religious ones.[13]

Grenz correctly perceives that postmodernity undermined the claim of strong Enlightenment foundationalism. Additionally, he believes that evangelical theology would greatly benefit from accommodating its theological method and systematic theology to the new friendlier patterns of postmodern epistemology. Thus, according to him, evangelical method and systematic theology should adjust to the new postmodern "communitarian turn."[14] Thinking from within the modernist tradition, whose epistemology he rejects, Grenz conceives that the task of theology springs not from divine revelation, but from religious experience. However, he attempts to distance his theology from the modern model by explaining that religious experiences are not bare spiritual events, but take place within a specific "interpretive framework—a grid—that facilitates their occurrence."[15] Adopting the postmodern communitarian turn,[16] Grenz conceives that concrete religious traditions provide the interpretative frameworks from which Christian experience and theology flow.[17]

Yet, if Christian theology is bound to the changing flow of tradition's interpretive frameworks, in what sense can we say that the theological vision of various Christian communities is true?[18] Grenz's theological proposal implies theological relativism. He recognizes that although theological constructions imply the claim to "validity," we cannot confirm their truth by means of a "a universally accessible present reality."[19] To "solve" the historical relativism embedded in his theological proposal, Grenz adopts Pannenberg's well-known "eschatological" strategy. Only the eschatological advent of God will confirm the transcendent theological vision generated by religious communities. Grenz's theological proposal leaves the question of present truth dangling in the uncertainty of cultural relativism, leaving no room for the absolute truth of Christianity.

Are we rationally bound to wait in our concrete communities of faith for

[13]Ibid.

[14]Ibid., 47-49.

[15]Ibid., 49.

[16]On the role of tradition in postmodern thinking, see, e.g., Delwin Brown, *Boundaries of Our Habitations: Tradition and Theological Construction* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1994). Brown's analysis, 138, of "tradition" as "canon" concludes with the conviction that "Theology should be the critical analyst and creative conveyor of the vast conceptual resources, actual and potential, of religious traditions. In this critically and creatively reconstructing of the past, a theology is a tradition's caregiver. That, indeed, is the vocation of theology."

[17]Grenz and Franke, 53.

[18]Ibid., 54.

[19]Ibid.

the eschatological confirmation of the absolute truth of Christian communities? Does the acceptance of hermeneutical reason unavoidably lead to theological relativism? Can evangelical theology adopt postmodern hermeneutical reason and still affirm the absoluteness of Christian truth?

The End of Absolute Truth in Philosophy

To assess the compatibility of postmodern hermeneutical reason with the absolute truth of Christianity, we need, first, to consider the nature of truth. Contrary to general opinion, the nature of truth belongs not only to epistemology, but also to ontology. The modern turn to the subject has led us to neglect the ontological ground of truth. For more than three centuries, we have become accustomed to thinking of truth as the outcome of human reason and language. We think of truth in epistemological categories. The antimetaphysical leanings of empiricism, mediated through analytical philosophy and the philosophy of language, have led many evangelical theologians to neglect the ontological ground of reason. Modernity forgot Parmenides's groundbreaking insight: "Being and thinking belong together."[20] According to this principle, knowledge, the words we use to communicate knowledge, and the truth of our words directly relate to the way in which we understand reality. Epistemology stands on ontological grounds. If this is true, the modern turn to the subject prevented modernity from properly assessing the nature of truth and the relation of scientific knowledge to truth.

The truth of statements stands on the nature of the reality to which they refer.[21] According to classical ontology, absolute truth refers to timeless, changeless realities. According to modern empiricist antimetaphysical ontology, relative truth refers to temporal, changing realities. However, the classical conviction that reason is able to produce absolute knowledge continued during the Englightenment because old habits of thought die hard. Kant's transcendental turn to the subject argued that the absoluteness of scientific truth stood not on ontological but epistemological grounds. In other words, the absoluteness and changelessness of scientific truth was the product of human reason.[22] In the twentieth century, scientific methodology replaced Kantian transcendentalism as the origin and foundation of absolute truth.[23]

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[20]Parmenides stated that "It is the same thing to think and to be" ("The Way to Truth," in *Ancilla to the Pre-Socratic Philosophers: A Complete Translation of the Fragments in Diels, Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, ed. Kathleen Freeman [Oxford: Blackwell, 1948], frag. 3).

[21]Martin Heidegger argues that "to say that an assertion 'is true' signifies that it uncovers the entity as it is in itself. Such an assertion asserts, points out, 'lets' the entity 'be seen' (*apoóphansis*) in its uncoveredness. The *Being-true* (*truth*) of the assertion must be understood as *Being uncovering*" (*Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson [New York: Harper and Collins, 1962], 1.6.44.a [p. 261], emphasis original).

[22]Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. J. M. D. Meiklejohn (Buffalo: Prometheus, 1990).

[23]That science produces absolute truth is a myth. Scientific methodology cannot

By the end of the twentieth century, philosophy finally came to realize the failure of Kantian transcendentalism and scientific methodology as sources of absolute truth. Moreover, in close relation to this discovery, postmodern philosophy also came to discover the failure of the timeless metaphysical ontology on which classical theology built its beliefs. In the absence of absolute reality, human reason cannot produce absolute (changeless) knowledge and truth. If reality changes so does knowledge. Consequently, postmodernity replaced absolute reason with historical hermeneutical reason in epistemology; and, timeless, changeless reality with temporal, changing reality in ontology.

Postmodernity proclaimed the end of absolute reason because it came to realize that ultimate reality is not timeless and changing as Parmenides, Plato, and Aristotle believed, but rather it is temporal and changing, as, for instance, Martin Heidegger[24] and Jean-Paul Sartre[25] have argued. The epistemological postmodern shift from classical absolute reason to hermeneutical reason springs from the ontological shift from a timeless to a temporal ontology.[26] In recognizing that ultimate reality is not timeless but temporal, postmodernity reversed the macrohermeneutical principle from which Christian theologians

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produce absolute truth. For an introduction to the epistemological limitations of scientific methodology, see, e.g., Fernando Canale, "Evolution, Theology and Method, Part 1: Outline and Limits of Scientific Methodology," *AUSS* 41 (2003): 65-100; idem, "Evolution, Theology and Method, Part 2: Scientific Method and Evolution," *AUSS* 41 (2003): 165-184.

[24]This radical ontological shift at the center of postmodern thought is clearly present, e.g., in Heidegger's introduction to his *Being and Time*: "Do we in our time have an answer to the question of what we really mean by the word 'being'? Not at all. So it is fitting that we should raise anew *the question of the meaning of Being*. But are we nowadays even perplexed at our inability to understand the expression 'Being'? Not at all. So first of all we must reawaken an understanding for the meaning of this question. Our aim in the following treatise is to work out the questions of the meaning of Being and to do so concretely. Our provisional aim is the Interpretation of time as the possible horizon for any understanding whatsoever of Being" (foreword, 1).

[25]Jean-Paul Sartre stated: "Modern thought has realized considerable progress by reducing the existent to the series of appearances which manifest it. Its aim was to overcome a certain number of dualisms which have embarrassed philosophy and to replace them by the monism of the phenomenon (*Being and Nothingness: An Essay on Phenomenological Ontology*, trans. Hazel E. Barnes [New York: Philosophical Library, 1956], xlv).

[26]Hans-Georg Gadamer, a brilliant disciple of Heidegger, reminds us that "the brilliant scheme of *Being and Time* really meant a total transformation of the intellectual climate, a transformation that had lasting effects on almost all the sciences." Gadamer insightfully testifies that "today, with the distance of decades, the philosophical impulse that Heidegger represented no longer has the same infatuating relevance. It has penetrated everywhere and works in the depths, often unrecognized, often barely provoking resistance; but nothing today is thinkable without it" ("The Phenomenological Movement," in *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, ed. David E. Linge [Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1976], 138-139).

have interpreted Scripture and constructed their doctrinal systems for more than two millennia.

On this ontological basis, postmodernity has correctly recognized that the capabilities and function of human reason are relative to historical-cognitive patterns and categories. Plato and Aristotle were incorrect in their convictions that the capabilities and function of human reason stood on timeless, immutable realities. Postmodern epistemological relativism, then, flows from the conviction that reason and the reality it knows are temporal. Thus there is no ontological or epistemological ground for universal and absolute truth. When knowledge and reality are temporal, they flow and change with the times. There is no longer an absolute truth. All truth is relative to the flow of temporal subjects and objects.

Thus absolute truth stands on the belief that our knowledge springs from timeless, changeless realities. Plato devised the timeless ontology on which the absolute truth of classical and modern times was constructed.[27] Postmodernity resulted from the conviction that in nature and history there is nothing immutable or absolute on which truth could stand. Therefore, human reason cannot produce absolute truth. Reason does not work "absolutely" from timeless, ontological "foundations," as modernists believed. Instead, postmodernity argues that reason works "hermeneutically" from the interaction of temporal-cognitive subjects with temporal, changing realities.[28]

Revelation and Theological Truth

A proper response of evangelical theology to postmodernity, therefore, should include not only its obvious epistemological shift from absolute to hermeneutical reason, but also its less publicized shift from timeless to temporal ontology.

Grenz's view that theological construction revolves around the social dynamics of the private tradition-community of evangelicalism does harness the historicity of postmodern hermeneutical reason. However, his proposal falls short of the absolute theological truth Christians have always attached to their theological convictions.[29] Can we embrace the historicity of hermeneutical

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[27]Plato explained that when the soul "investigates itself, it passes into *the realm of the pure and everlasting and immortal and changeless*, and being of a kindred nature. When it is once independent and free from interference, consorts with it always and strays no longer, but remains, in that *realm of the absolute, constant, and invariable*, through contact with beings of a similar nature" (*Phaedo*, 79.d, emphasis supplied).

[28]These realities include both the cognitive subject and the cognitive objects.

[29]E.g., from the Roman Catholic perspective, John Paul II recognizes that the divine revelation in Jesus Christ is absolute truth: "The truth of Christian Revelation, found in Jesus of Nazareth, enables all men and women to embrace the 'mystery' of their own life. As absolute truth, it summons human beings to be open to the transcendent, whilst respecting both their autonomy as creatures and their freedom. At this point the relationship between freedom and truth is complete, and we understand

postmodern reason and, at the same time, safeguard the absoluteness of theological truth? We can, if we engage postmodernity not by way of tradition, but by way of consistently following the *sola Scriptura* principle.

At this point, we should take seriously Karl Barth's conviction that theology should "resign itself to stand on its own feet in relation to philosophy."[30] To do so, theology should recognize that the point of departure for its method is revelation.[31] In short, the absoluteness of theological truth does not depend on the epistemological characteristics of human reason or the changing realities of temporal beings, but on the transcendent content of divine revelation. To follow Barth's advice, we should not answer the question about absolute theological truth by adopting philosophical answers. Instead, we should answer the question from within the patterns of Christian revelation (not tradition or community) that are publicly accessible in inspired Scripture.

Absolute Truth in Scripture

If Barth is correct, we should pursue the question of whether we can affirm absolute theological truths in the context of postmodern epistemology from revelation. For evangelicals, to start from revelation means to start from biblical thinking. Scripture is the only public cognitive source of revelation available to Christian theologians. This is so because the source of Scripture is God's being. Thus, not only in philosophy, but also in theology, being and knowing belong together. Since the being and acts of God become unconcealed in the pages of

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the full meaning of the Lord's words: 'You will know the truth and the truth will make you free' (Jn 8:32)" (*Fides et Ratio: Encyclical Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship between Faith and Reason* [Vatican: Holy See Web Site, 1998], 2:15). Hilary of Poitiers states: "But the voice of God, our instruction in true wisdom, speaks what is perfect, and expresses the absolute truth, when it teaches that itself is prior not merely to things of time, but even to things infinite" (*On the Trinity*, ed. Philip Schaff, *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers Series* 2 [Albany, OR: Ages Software, 1997], 12.39). Even the modernist approach of G. W. F. Hegel recognized that "religion has as its content absolute truth, and, therefore, also the highest kind of feeling. Religion, as intuition, feeling, or imaginative thought, the object of whose activity is God, the unlimited basis and cause of all things, advances the claim that everything should be apprehended in reference to it, and in it should receive its confirmation, justification, and certitude" (*Philosophy of Right*, trans. S. D. Dyde [Ontario: Batoche, 2001], 206-207).

   [30]Karl Barth, *Protestant Thought: From Rousseau to Ritschl* (New York: Harper, 1959), 191.

   [31]Barth, 191, states: "This third possibility would, in a word, consist in theology resigning itself to stand on its own feet in relation to philosophy, in theology recognizing the point of departure for its method in revelation, just as decidedly as philosophy sees its point of departure in reason, and in theology conducting, therefore, a dialogue with philosophy, and not, wrapping itself up in the mantle of philosophy, a quasi-philosophical monologue. It can only be said of this third possibility, which becomes visible on the border of the Kantian philosophy of religion, that it is at all events observed by Hegel and by several of his pupils, in theology."

Scripture,[32] let us review briefly the way in which Scripture deals with truth to see if absolute theological truth is possible in postmodern times.

The OT words for "truth" (אֱמֶת and אֱמוּנָה) emphasize the notions of reliability, firmness, sureness, stability, and continuance, which are ontologically grounded in the nature of God (Exod 34:6; Ps 31:5). Building on the OT, the NT word for "truth" (ἀλήθεια) underlines the unconcealment of God's being in the history of humanity.[33] In Scripture, then, truth stands on the ontological basis of God's revealing his very being by presence (John 1:14; 1 John 5:6), action (John 1:17), words (John 17:17; Ps 119:43, 151, 160; Dan 10:21), and teachings (Ps 119:142) in the flux of human history. God's historical revelation reached its highest manifestation in Christ, who, as God himself, is the truth (John 14:6), and who reveals truth by his ontological and epistemological presence and action and by epistemologically putting the truth in words and teachings (Mark 12:1).[34]

Though Scripture implicitly assumes Parmenides's maxim that "being and knowledge belong together," it departs from the notion that reality is timeless. Central to the notion of biblical truth is the direct revelation of God's being in the flux of time. We should not understand God's temporal being, however, as univocal[35] or equivocal[36] to our created time, but as analogously and infinitely

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[32]This approach is actually embraced by philosopher Nicholas Wolterstorff, who explains that he intends to derive his knowledge of God "from Scripture; I'll be appealing to what we learn about God from Scripture. I make no pretense of constructing a piece of natural theology" ("Unqualified Divine Temporality," in *God and Time: Four Views*, ed. Gregory E. Ganssle [Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2001], 193). However, Wolterstorff does not develop the ontological question of God's temporality. His view is a strong affirmation of the biblical picture of God's acting in our time, which at face value seems to assume the meaning of time as univocal. The notion of God's infinite, analogical, ontological temporality, assumed in Scripture, needs to be affirmed and explained in the limited measure allowed by our human cognitive and ontological limitations.

[33]According to the *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*: "Etymologically *aletheia* means "nonconcealment." It thus denotes what is seen, indicated, expressed, or disclosed, i.e., a thing as it really is, not as it is concealed or falsified" (G. Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, abridged ed. [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995], s.v. "aletheia").

[34]A report on the various meanings of the biblical words for truth can be found in Roger Nicole, "The Biblical Concept of Truth," in *Scripture and Truth*, ed. D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983).

[35]Theologians have wrestled extensively with God's relation to time. Most assume the meaning of time univocally. That is to say, time is a characteristic of limited human realities. In this camp, we find classical theologians, such as Augustine and Thomas Aquinas, as well as contemporary process philosophy and the contemporary evangelical debate generated by the Open View of God. Though Heidegger, 427, no. xiii, should be credited for expressing with great clarity the ontological macroparadigmatic shift from the classical-modern timeless understanding to the postmodern temporal: "If God's eternity can be 'construed' philosophically, then it may be understood only as a

temporal.[37] The epistemological side of Christian absolute truth in words and teachings stands on and proceeds from God's reality and actions in human and cosmic history.

However, according to Scripture, the analogous, infinite temporality of God's being does not imply that he is subject to human becoming and

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more primordial temporality which is 'infinite'. Whether the way afforded by the *via negationis et eminentiae* is a possible one, remains to be seen." Though Heidegger is correct in suggesting that divine temporality is infinite, he fails to understand that God's revelation grounds an analogical view of divine time.

[36]Following a Hegelian insight, Karl Barth attempted to bring time to the very being and essence of God, but did it by dealing with the notion of time in an equivocal sense. Thus he argues: "The being is eternal in whose duration beginning, succession and end are not three but one, not separate as a first, a second and a third occasion, but one sumultaneous occasion as beginning, middle and end. Eternity is the simultaneity of beginning, middle and end, and to that extent it is pure duration. Eternity is God in the sense in which in himself and in all things God is simultaneous, i.e., beginning and middle as well as end, without separation, distance or contradiction. Eternity is not, therefore, time, although time is certainly God's creation or more correctly, a form of His creation. Time is distinguished from eternity by the fact that in it beginning, middle and end are distinct and even opposed as past, present and future" (*Church Dogmatics*, ed. G. W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance, trans. G. W. Bromiley, 2d ed. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1975), II/I, 608. Thus, when Barth speaks of the "historicity of God" to explain his presence of the human Christ in eternity, he uses the word "time" in an equivocal sense (*Church Dogmatics*, III/I, 66). To explain the phenomenon of the revelation of the Word of God in the man Jesus of Nazareth, Barth speaks of God's own being as not timeless, but rather "historical even in its eternity." This "historicity" of God is conceived to be the very source of time (ibid., 67). This "historical eternity," however, is conceived by Barth as simultaneity, where the proper succession that belongs to the essence of time does not exist (ibid.; see the detailed discussion on God's eternity in *Church Dogmatics*, II/I, 608-677). I agree with Barth's conviction that the historical fact of God's incarnation in Christ requires the temporality and historicity of God. Yet, if we think this issue biblically, we should not conceive of God's time as equivocal or univocal to created time, but rather as analogical to it. An analogical notion of divine time means that while God experiences the future, present, and past sequence of time, he relates to it from the infiniteness of the creator and not with the limitations of the creature. Scripture gives ample evidence to support this view, which has not been, as yet, considered by Christian theologians.

[37]Oscar Cullmann is the one theologian that I know who has come closest to this understanding of the analogous and infinite temporality of God as the basic ontic characteristic of his being. He concludes: "Primitive Christianity knows nothing of timelessness, and that even the passage Rev. 10:6 is not to be understood in this sense. From all that has been said in the two preceding chapters it results rather that *eternity, which is possible only as an attribute of God, is time*, or, to put it better, what we call 'time' is nothing but a part, defined and delimited by God, of this same unending duration of God's time" (*Christ and Time: The Primitive Christian Conception of Time and History*, trans. Floyd V. Filson, 3d ed. [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1964], 62, emphasis added). For an introduction to various alternative ways to deal with God and time, see William J. Hill, *Search for the Absent God: Tradition and Modernity in Religious Understanding* (New York:Crossroad, 1992), 80-91.

limitations.[38] Because of the analogous, infinite temporality of his being, God is able to reveal his true, firm, reliable, and stable being (ontology) and wisdom (epistemology) from within the historical-temporal dynamics of human time. According to Scripture, God's being is not only analogously and infinitely temporal,[39] but also immutable and transcendent from human history and traditions. His eternity, immutability, and transcendence are not predicates of his timeless being, as classical, modern, and postmodern traditions have assumed. On the contrary, God's eternity, immutability, and transcendence are predicates of his analogously infinite temporal being.[40]

Moreover, according to Scripture, God is truth ontologically.[41] Truth is an aspect that describes the divine nature. Christ made it clear that "I am truth" (ἀλήθεια, John 14:6). Truth as ἀλήθεια names the unconcealment of God in human space and time. God has manifested himself directly in the flowing of human time, showing himself to us as he is, showing what truth is and what truth does. Because God's being, character, and purposes do not change (Mal 3:6; Heb 6:17-18; Jas 1:17), his truth is immutable (Pss 132:11; 146:6) in the flux of time (Pss 100:5; 117:2). The OT words for "truth" underline the reliability, firmness, and faithfulness of God's truth, that is, its absoluteness and universality throughout time and cultures.

Thus God's truth is absolute not because God's being is timeless and unchangeable, but because in his dynamic, temporal being he is truth. Because God's historical unconcealment through his presence, works (Ps 33:4; Dan 4:37), ways (Pss 25:10; 86:11), and words (Isa 25:1; John 17:17) cannot lie (Num 23:19; 1 Sam 15:29; Tit 1:2), but rather generate truth, Scripture describes him as the "God of truth" (Deut 32:4; Ps 31:5). Thus, as the ultimate source and reference of all truth, God is not only "truth," but also "true" in all his dealing with his creatures (Jer 10:10; John 8:26; Rom 3:4). Obviously, we do not know God's truth in him, but in his revelation in Scripture.

Absolute Truth in Postmodern Evangelical Theology

Grenz's model to accommodate evangelical theology to postmodern rationality finds its inspiration and patterns in the postliberal, cultural-linguistic proposals of

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[38]God's being is not in becoming.

[39]Nicholas Wolterstorff reviews the classical scriptural passages used to argue that Scripture has a timeless view of God and concludes that they "provide no such support whatsoever" ("Unqualified Divine Temporality," 190).

[40]While Wolterstorff recognizes that Scripture speaks about divine temporality, he see Scripture falling short of affirming divine immutability: "I conclude that . . . there are no passages in scripture which can be cited as supporting the doctrine [for God's timelessness]" (ibid., 193).

[41]Heidegger, 33, noted the ontological primacy of truth: "[B]ecause the λόγος is a definite mode of letting something be seen, the λόγος is just *not* the kind of thing that can be considered as the primary 'locus' of truth."

George A. Lindbeck[42] and Wolfhart Pannenberg.[43] As with his mentors, Grenz does not deal with the theological repercussions that postmodern temporal ontology bears on classical and modern constructions that persist in defining God's being as timeless. Thus, in his assessment of modern foundationalism and postmodern hermeneutical theory, Grenz fails to recognize the role of ontology in the interpretation of reason. He seems to forget that being and knowledge belong together. In turn, this failure may explain why his proposal revolves around the postmodern "communitarian turn" and neglects the ontological revelation of God in Scripture.

Because he relates only to the epistemological patterns of postmodernity, his model has no room for absolute theological truth. His model makes theological truth relative to the historical-conditions patterns operating in the community of faith at any given time in history.

Grenz's tradition-community-centered proposal is not the only way in which evangelical theologians may engage the intellectual changes brought about by postmodern thought. A better and more complete approach to the question of absolute truth calls for a rediscovering of the structural relation that exists between reason and being. This approach has the advantage of engaging reason and being in their mutual interrelatedness and thereby allowing evangelical theology to engage reason with divine revelation in Scripture.

Even though I agree with Grenz that knowledge takes place in a historical-cognitive subject who belongs to the tradition of a historical community, the truth of our knowledge depends on the nature of the reality we know. Truth and being belong together. Unless reality reveals itself to human thought and discourse, science is not truth, but fiction. Likewise, unless divine reality reveals itself in biblical discourse, our theologizing is not truth, but myth, symbol, saga, or mere narrative.

Postmodernity has taught us the indivisible relation between being and knowing. For instance, the content of the "context-specific" categories of hermeneutical reason does not spring into consciousness by way of the feelings, creativity, words, or teachings of the communities to which we belong, but from the "things themselves"—reality unconcealing itself to reason. In other words, the notion that postmodern rationality stands on the authority of social agreements and cultural convictions misses the ontological ground of postmodern rationality. Gadamer, the great philosopher of postmodern hermeneutics, clearly explains this point: "A person who is trying to understand is exposed to distraction from fore-

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[42]Grenz and Franke, 32-41, borrow from Lindbeck freely and without serious criticism. John E. Thiel explains: "Rationality as it actually functions is context-specific. If this is so, the intelligibility of intellectual constructs—from scientific theory, to hermeneutics, to theological interpretation itself—must be measured in terms that are context-specific. From the perspective of Lindbeck's postliberalism, that context is the ecclesial culture that believes and lives by the language of God's story" (*Nonfoundationalism* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994], 62).

[43]See, e.g., Grenz and Franke, 43-45.

meanings that are not borne out by the *things themselves*. Working out our appropriate projections, anticipatory in nature, to be confirmed 'by the *things themselves*,' is the constant task of understanding."[44] Moreover, Gadamer clearly dismisses the notion that a tradition could arbitrarily define truth, or that truth will stand on tradition rather than on the reality and nature of the *things themselves* (emphasis supplied).[45]

This may help us to understand that the newness in postmodern epistemology is not the switch from the individual rational subject to the "social subject" of community and tradition. Instead, the newness of postmodernity consists in the ontological conviction that ultimate reality, both of the knower and the known, is not timeless, but temporal. As we become familiar with the ontological ground of postmodernity, we realize that the evangelical grounding conviction that God revealed himself in Scripture is better suited to interact with postmodernity than the tradition alternative proposed by Grenz.

Evangelical theology stands on the *sola Scriptura* principle, not on tradition. Tradition is under the judgment of Scripture.[46] Tradition is the history of theological wrestling with divine revelation made public in the inspired writings of Scripture. Tradition is a secondary fallible discourse based on the primary discourse of Scripture, where the truth of God's being, actions, and words enlightens human reason within the flow and dynamics of time and space.

There is nothing in postmodern epistemology or ontology that indicates evangelical theology should retreat from using the *sola Scriptura* principle. On the contrary, postmodernity encourages us to criticize traditional teachings from an empathic listening to the "things themselves" (ontological reality).[47] In evangelical

[44]Gadamer, 267.

[45]Ibid. Gadamer further clarifies this point by explaining that "[t]he only 'objectivity' here is the confirmation of a fore-meaning in its being worked out. Indeed, what characterizes the arbitrariness of inappropriate fore-meanings if not that they come to nothing in being worked out? But understanding realizes its full potential only when the fore-meanings that it begins with are not arbitrary. Thus it is quite right for the interpreter not to approach the text directly, relying solely on the fore-meaning already available to him, but rather explicitly to examine the legitimacy—i.e., the origin and validity—of the fore-meanings dwelling with him [that is within his own history and tradition]."

[46]Alister McGrath clearly articulates the subordinated-to-Scripture and fallible role of tradition in evangelical theology. He believes that in regard to tradition, evangelicals "have felt free to appropriate the ideas that resonate with Scripture and discreetly pass over those that are obviously incorrect or shaped by outdated cultural norms. Evangelicalism is thus able to undertake a critical appropriation of its own heritage" ("Engaging the Great Tradition: Evangelical Theology and the Role of Tradition," in *Evangelical Futures: A Conversation on Theological Method*, ed. John G. Stackhouse Jr. [Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000], 150).

[47]Gadamer, 266-267, explains: "All correct interpretation must be on guard against arbitrary fancies and the limitations imposed by imperceptible habits of thought, and it must direct its gaze 'on the things themselves' (which, in the case of the literary critic, are meaningful texts, which themselves are again concerned with objects). For the

theology, the "things themselves" are those God has done, disclosed, and made public for all times and ages in the pages of Scripture. Thus, in postmodern jargon, Scripture is the discourse in which the unconcealment of God's character, wisdom, purpose, and actions has come to light in the thoughts and words of biblical writers. In Scripture, God reveals himself from within and in between the flow of human historical time as a transcendent and all-wise being whose character, plans, promises, and actions are reliable, faithful, and firm throughout history and for the unending times of future eternity.

Theological truth, then, is absolute in postmodern times because it is simultaneously temporal and transcendent. This is possible because in his transcendent being God is analogously and infinitely temporal and, therefore, able to disclose absolute unchanging truth within the changing dynamics of time. The understanding of God's absolute truth does not depend on human reason or the community of faith. On the contrary, human reason and the community of faith depend on the absolute truth that God is, and that he has historically revealed in Scripture.

Conclusion

Neither the postmodern interpretation of human knowledge, nor the social dynamics of the community of faith can support the claim of absolute theological truth. Yet divine revelation in Scripture is still able to support absolute theological truth even within the new epistemological and ontological parameters produced by postmodern philosophy. The absoluteness of Christian theological truth springs not from the supposedly universal parameters of human reason, but from the unchanging divine being whose ontic revelation in the flux of created time is testified and interpreted in the inspired record of Scripture. More precisely, the absoluteness of truth springs from the analogical, infinite, temporal transcendence and immutability of God's being, actions, words, and teachings preserved in Scripture. Because God's being and historical purposes are immutable and transcendent to our limited and sinful histories, his truth is also immutable and transcendent.

Secular-minded individuals do not recognize the reality of divine revelation because it contradicts the rational patterns of postmodern hermeneutical reason or ontology. Yet, postmodern philosophers, such as Heidegger and Derrida, considered that God's revelation in future history is possible.[48] However, most

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interpreter to let himself be guided by the things themselves is obviously not a matter of a single, 'conscientious' decision, but is 'the first, last and constant task.' For it is necessary to keep one's gaze fixed on the thing throughout all the constant distractions that originate in the interpreter himself."

[48]Heidegger not only places the question of God within the flow of temporal Being, but he leaves the possibility of a future God open. See, e.g., George Kovacs, *The Question of God in Heidegger's Phenomenology* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1990), 114, 78-79, 83. See also Karin de Boer, *Thinking in the Light of Time: Heidegger's Encounter with Hegel* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000), 162-163. Even Jacques Derrida kept the

postmodern thinkers do not recognize God's past revelation in biblical history most probably because they identify it with the onto-theo-logical construction[49] of the "great tradition" of church teachings.[50] Thus evangelical theology needs to go back to its essential conviction about divine revelation in Scripture and to think about theological truth not from within the dictates of the great tradition, but from within the light of the history of God's bottomless eternal past to the unending future of eternity.

This task, however, may require the critical deconstruction of many cherished doctrines that are rooted in tradition rather than in Scripture, such as the related doctrines of divine being and divine revelation.[51] Deconstruction of the history of theological interpretation is necessary to help us understand the absolute truth of Christianity that takes place within the general dynamics and truth of God's history.[52]

Individual or social human histories do not produce absolute truth, but a collage of conflicting and contradicting truths. Although in his transcendence, God's history and truth are independent of our personal and social-historical projects, he invites all humanity to center their personal historical projects within the general patterns and dynamics of his own eternal history. Only in this way can our personal histories share in the absolute truth that God is and shares.

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notion of God and a future messianic event open as compatible with his critical and postmodern approach to tradition. See, e.g., John D. Caputo, ed. *Deconstruction in a Nutshell: A Conversation with Jacques Derrida* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1997), 20-25.

[49]"Onto-theo-logy" is a way in which Heidegger refers to the metaphysical ground on which Christian theology, classical, evangelical and modern stand ("The Onto-Theo-Logical Constitution of Metaphysics, in *Identity and Difference*, ed. Joan Sambaugh [New York: Harper and Row, 1969]).

[50]For the positive role of classical Christian tradition in evangelical theology, see, e.g., McGrath.

[51]In a recent study on justification, Bruce McCormack ties current problems in the Protestant understanding of justification to the neglect of ontological issues: "The problem with refusing to engage ontological questions as an essential part of the dogmatic task is that we all too easily make ourselves the unwitting servants of the ontology that is embedded in the older theological rhetoric that we borrow—and so it was with Calvin" ("What's at Stake in Current Debates over Justification? The Crisis of Protestantism in the West," in *Justification: What's at Stake in the Current Debates*, ed. Mark Husbands [Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2004], 105). The same takes place when ontological issues are not clearly considered in the question of truth.

[52]On theological deconstruction, see, e.g., Fernando Canale, "Deconstrucción Y Teologia; Una Propuesta Metodológia," *Davar Logos* 1 (2002): 3-26.

CREATOR, CREATION, AND CHURCH:
RESTORING ECOLOGY TO
THEOLOGY

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Critical issues concerning the environment attract increasing attention. Modern technologies have affected all life and the environment, creating new situations that require consideration. Resultant moral deliberation, however, often remains restricted to human life. Important questions need to be asked. Are humans a part of the environment, or only stewards of it? Are humans merely "in" nature, or are they also "of" nature? What does it mean to "preserve" the environment?

Philosopher Holmes Rolston III raises an important point: "Environmental ethics stretches classical ethics to the breaking point."[1] Environmental ethics is not "anthropocentric," or limited to humans. It attempts to expand the circle of moral concern beyond human beings to include, at the very least, some "higher" mammals that share morally relevant features with us. Environmental ethics builds arguments to explain and justify why nonhumans should count morally.[2] By contrast, with few exceptions, Western ethics is predominantly anthropocentric, with moral value found primarily, if not exclusively, in humans. We will now examine representative examples.

Classical Western Ethics

Consequentialistic Utilitarianism

Utilitarianism is a form of consequentialism, the process of judging the rightness or wrongness of an action by assessing the consequences of that action. Consequences that result in more harm than good are judged to be morally wrong. To be judged as morally right or desirable, an act should, at least, produce a net balance of good consequences over harmful ones,[3] taking into account everyone who is affected.[4]

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[1]Holmes Rolston III, "Environmental Ethics: Values and Duties to the Natural World," in *Ecology, Economics, Ethics: The Broken Circle*, ed. Herbert Bormann and Stephen R. Keller (New Haven, CN: Yale University Press, 1991), 73.

[2]Rolston, 74, continues: "Environmental ethics requires risk. It explores poorly charted terrain, in which one can easily get lost."

[3]Ethical egoism and altruism are forms of consequentialism. An egoist strives to take only those actions that bring about the greatest benefit and least harm to the egoist alone. The altruist, on the other hand, prefers actions that bring about the greatest benefit and least harm to others, exclusive of the altruist.

[4]Principle of Utility: Always act to bring about the greatest good for the greatest

Of necessity, utilitarians offer methods of determining what is good and what is harmful. One widely accepted approach defines a harm as that which brings about suffering and pain, and a good as that which brings about pleasure and happiness.[5] If the consequences, on balance, bring about more pleasure than pain, the action is morally right. If they bring about more pain than pleasure, it is morally wrong.[6] Traditionally applied, utilitarianism is anthropocentric, limiting beneficiaries of an action to humans alone, albeit to the greatest number of persons. Arguments for nonhumans rest exclusively on their instrumental contribution to humans.[7]

Deontological Ethics

Within deontological ethics, a moral action is evaluated directly, instead of through its resultant consequences. A morally good action must satisfy, fulfill, or conform to some absolute, universal, and unconditional standard, usually expressed as a duty. Such "binding duties" are obligations that one must always do, or prohibitions that one must never do.

Where can these duties be found? Some believe in intuitions associated with the conscience. Hindus employ the Law of Manu. Christians believe in the standards of Scripture. Immanuel Kant preferred the authority of reason to that of revelation. The definitive feature of persons, he argued, is that they are autonomous, free, and rational. Thus they are fully capable of determining those universal duties that are binding on all persons within a reciprocal moral relationship, where each person has the duty to treat the other with the same standard or rights. For Kant, no nonhumans possess these qualifying features. Once again, this is anthropocentric ethics.[8]

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number of persons who are affected by the action.

[5]Since pleasure is valued by many, the utilitarian uses it as a standard for judging the moral worth of the consequences of an action. This can be compared with pain, e.g., which has no intrinsic value. We never seek it for its own sake.

[6]It can be argued that one's individual happiness may be another individual's unhappiness because people's desires or preferences vary considerably. This presents no difficulty for the utilitarian, who simply alters the Principle of Utility slightly to read: "Always act to maximize satisfaction of personal preferences for the greatest number of individuals affected by the action."

[7]E.g., the continued existence of an endangered species, particularly if it is not attractive or valuable to humans for aesthetic, social, or historical reasons, would be difficult to justify on grounds other than arguments about its potential contribution to medicine or perhaps the gene pool of economically productive domestic species. A small, endangered flower or animal, whose vanishing habitat is found in the acreage of a land developer, has little chance within utilitarian judgment.

[8]Immanuel Kant objected to cruelty to animals for reasons consistent with his thinking: not only is this bad behavior a bad example, but, Kant reasoned, if a man is cruel to animals he may develop cruel attitudes toward other human beings as well. Kant's argument remains an anthropocentric argument (*Lectures on Ethics*, trans. Louis

In both utilitarianism and deontology, nonhumans have no true moral standing. Nonhumans are not autonomous bearers of rights and thus are not included in "the greatest number of those affected." In either system, they qualify for moral consideration only indirectly, as means to human ends.

Anthropocentric Ethics

For many ethicists, the anthropocentric perspective is sufficient to address environmental problems. One can hold to an anthropocentric position and be environmentally concerned by appreciating the importance of a clean, healthy, beautiful environment for human well-being. Although we have no responsibilities for the environment in its own right, humans do have responsibilities to other persons who can be harmed by the damage caused to the environment. The natural world is not valued directly, for its own sake, but indirectly, for the sake of humans who find it valuable for the benefits it brings to them. John Passmore, an early environmental philosopher, took this position. He argued, for example, that industrial pollution is a case where some people were harming the health of their neighbors by degrading the air.[9]

Expanded and Revised Utilitarianism and Deontological Ethics: A Limited Biocentrism

More recently, environmentalists have made concerted efforts to broaden the range of moral standing to include more species than human beings. Peter Singer makes this attempt through utilitarianism; Tom Regan does it through deontology. Others, including Paul Taylor, argue that utilitarianism and deontology are too limited and opt to justify the inclusion of plants and lower animals.

Those concerned primarily with higher life forms are regarded as biocentrists. Singer, in *Animal Liberation*,[10] extends moral concern to nonhumans through sentience. Many animal species besides humans possess a sentience that can suffer. All of these qualify for moral consideration. Two morally relevant considerations are the reduction of suffering or the promotion of happiness. A sentient creature, whether it has fur, wings, or gills, deserves moral standing. As Jeremy Bentham noted in 1879: "The question is not, can they reason or can they

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Infield [New York: Harper and Row, 1963], 239).

[9]John Passmore's anthropocentrism works well when it is applied to environmental problems, such as industrial pollution, which have clear consequences for persons. It falls short, however, of providing guidance when the benefits to be derived from a particular action toward nature are minimal. E.g., what are the actual human benefits of preserving the vast remote areas of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge from oil exploration? For some, they seem to be few. Most people, such individuals reason, will never travel there.

[10]Peter Singer's book is the well-known "bible" for the movement of the same name (*Animal Liberation* [New York: Avon, 1976]).

talk, but can they suffer."[11] Arguments that humans alone are morally privileged rest on arbitrary distinctions and are guilty of what Singer called "specieism."

Because sentient animals experience needs and have interests that are similar to those of humans, they must be given equal consideration. Actions that bring about suffering to nonhumans must be justified to the same degree as if those actions were directed toward humans. Pain is pain for humans and nonhumans. Singer appeals for the moral worth of all sentient beings.

Singer, however, excludes insentient life forms, lower animals, and plants. These species are presumed not to suffer, thus they have no moral standing. He primarily includes mammals as morally qualified sentient beings. Donald VanDeVeer argues similarly for psychological capacity, roughly equating it with sentience.[12] Animals with greater psychological capacity would be favored.[13] However, the anthropomorphic bias remains.

Inspired by Kant's accounts of universal duties, Regan's deontology moves beyond Kant's claim that only free and autonomous human beings can qualify for moral worth.[14] He argues that any being that has a complex emotional and perceptual life, including pain and pleasure preferences, plus the ability to pursue actions and goals with a significant degree of independence, should be included within one's moral scope. Many species of mammals fall into this category and should be included with humans as candidates for moral standing. These "subjects-of-life," as Regan refers to them, have inherent value.[15] Thus he reaches the same conclusion as Singer, that many mammals have equal worth with humans, albeit from an entirely different direction.[16]

Singer and Regan are representatives of a limited biocentrism. They seek to extend moral consideration to nonhumans, but only within modified

[11]Jeremy Bentham, *The Principles of Morals and Legislation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1945), chap. 17, sec. 1, fn. to paragraph 4.

[12]See Donald VanDeVeer, "Interspecific Justice," *Inquiry* 22 (Summer 1979): 55-70; reprinted in Donald VanDeVeer and Christine Pierce, eds, *The Environmental Ethics and Policy Book: Philosophy, Ecology, Economics* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1998), 179-192.

[13]This position leads to a kind of *de facto* anthropocentrism because in conflicts in which individuals (members of a species with unequaled psychological capacity) are competing with a member of any other species, the interests of the human person would consistently prevail.

[14]See Tom Regan, *The Case for Animal Rights* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983).

[15]Regan's term corresponds roughly to "intrinsic value." No being with inherent value should be treated as a means to some end, as a resource or object to be exploited for the benefit of others. "Subjects-of-a-life" have rights that should be respected by free and rational agents who are morally responsible for their actions.

[16]With lower species, Regan finds himself in the same predicament as Singer. Although being sentient and the "subject-of-a-life" are almost identical, involving complex psychological capacities, lower animals and all plants remain excluded from consideration.

anthropocentric ethical systems. Other biocentrists applaud this, but fault them for failing to extend the range of moral standing any further. What about less complex animals and the plant kingdom? Is moral standing possible for these? Must justification for their welfare and protection rely exclusively on their instrumental, economic, or aesthetic value?

A "Teleological Center of Life" Approach

Paul Taylor believes he has found a way to extend the circle of moral concern beyond sentience in his "teleological center of a life."[17] All animals and plants, sentient or not, conduct their lives in a clearly directed way. They grow and maintain themselves in terms of their well-being. For example, a newly hatched chick seeks to become a full-fledged representative of its species, as does a live maple tree or a worm. There is nothing superfluous in the behavior of a living organism. Its very life is defined by and dedicated to its *telos*, even if it is not self-conscious of it.

Unlike psychological capacity, the *telos* of a species is open to objective description. One can know what harms or benefits an organism simply by witnessing its activities, even if the organism is not conscious of its nature or purpose. These have what is called "a good of their own," giving them worth and value. Teleological centers of life are valuable objectively apart from our assessment or judgment regarding them. Nor is the human *telos* superior to that of any other living thing.

Taylor calls this "the biocentric outlook," referring to the interdependence and equality within this planet's vast community. He expands the circle of moral concern, including greater numbers of nonhumans, going beyond the emphasis on consciousness or psychological awareness as the main qualification for moral standing. Taylor is committed to the equality of living teleological systems, human and nonhuman. However, he does not address the value of waterways, mountains, or entire ecosystems, except as they provide a suitable environment for the flourishing of teleological systems of life.

Revised and Expanded Consequentialism:
Environmental Ethics

An environmental ethic justifies the inclusion of large communities of animals, plants, rivers, lakes, mountains, and valleys. These are referred to in environmental science as ecosystems, "biomes," or, generally, as "the natural environment."

Ecosystems are loose associations of species, from microbes in the soil to forests and animals that live together in countless numbers as citizens in a community. Aldo Leopold, a pioneer of environmental ethics, was an early advocate of ecocentrism. His 1949 essay "The Land Ethic" is still considered

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[17]All living things (and for Aristotle, many nonliving things) have a *telos*—an inborn goal that they strive to realize and sustain. That this is true is obvious to any attentive observer. See Paul Taylor, *Respect for Nature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986).

a classic expression of environmental ethics.[18] Leopold advocates the extension of human ethic to include soils, waters, plants, and animals, or collectively, the land.[19] He uses the term "community" to describe the land as a highly organized whole, with its own integrity. Taylor speaks of the land as a "biocentric mechanism,"[20] extending the consequentialist ethic to ecosystems.[21]

J. Baird Callicott, a disciple of Leopold, endorses this interdependence within an ecosystem by using the image of an organism: "Like organisms proper, ecosystems are complexly articulated wholes, with systemic integrity."[22] He does not claim that ecosystems are alive, but that they resemble living things closely enough to allow for valid comparisons. For example, organisms can be ill or well. The health of ecosystems may be assessed by diagnostic tests that resemble medical examinations, including monitoring "vital signs" and identifying "risk factors."[23]

"Shallow" versus "Deep" Ecology

Others differentiate between "shallow" and "deep" ecology, claiming that living beings are constituted by relationships. Individuality is a minor aspect of its

[18]Aldo Leopold, *Sand County Almanac with Essays on Conservation from Round River* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1953).

[19]Ibid., 239.

[20]Leopold, 251, claims: "We can be ethical only in relation to something we can see, feel, understand, love, or otherwise have faith in." He, 262, concludes his essay with a succinct expression of his guiding principle: "A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise."

[21]At first glance, Leopold's principle, 262, almost appears deontological with its appeal to specific ideals rather than to subjective states of happiness or suffering. He defines human duties toward ecosystems: if the ecosystem is the proper and exclusive object of our moral attention, then the vast array of plants and animals constituting the system must be valued not intrinsically, for their own sake, but instrumentally, in terms of their contribution to its "integrity, stability, and beauty." The ecosystem does not serve individual creatures; the creatures serve the ecosystem and may be treated in ways that violate their individual interests or teleological self-fulfillment when the ecosystem requires, negating a prevailing idea that economics determines *all* land use.

[22]J. Baird Callicott, "*La nature est Morte, vive la Nature,*" *Hastings Center Report* 22 (September 1992): 19.

[23]Thus Callicot attaches value to ecosystems. Instrumentally, healthy ecosystems are obviously vital for the well-being of humanity, which is embedded in nature: "If our other-oriented feelings of goodwill may extend to nature, then ecosystem health is something we may value intrinsically" (ibid.). What is less than obvious, however, is why they are to be cherished intrinsically. Why is this extension of goodwill reasonable? An ecosystem is not conscious and would fail to qualify for moral standing under Singer's sentience requirement or Regan's "subject-of-a-life" criterion. It may possess sufficient "systemic integrity," however, and qualify under Taylor's teleological centeredness, especially if Callicott's claims for organic resemblance are valid.

embeddedness in a complex system of relationships. Reality is a universal river of energy. Individuals are merely local disturbances in that flow.

The human species does not fare well in deep ecology. Deep ecology proposes a species egalitarianism, where all creatures are equal in intrinsic value. More radical ecocentrists argue that the individual is completely subordinated to the well-being of the ecosystem. The whole is of much greater value than any of its parts, even the human parts.[24] Individuals, whether they are atoms or living beings, are the fundamental units of reality.[25] Murray Bookchin even argues for deep ecology to transform society,[26] drawing on social hierarchy models rather than the nature of the universe.

A "Top-down" Approach to Ecology

Bryan Norton, with his pragmatic approach to moral decision-making, discusses how utilitarian, deontological, or teleological principles can be "applied" to specific situations in a "top-down" approach.[27] Since situations are always different, it is difficult to employ the same universal principle unilaterally to every case in exactly the same way. Different parties in a dispute are not often likely to agree on the same fundamental principles. Yet Norton maintains that unity can be cemented by common interests, such as in caring for the environment.[28]

[24]The more outspoken deep ecologists sometimes invite the charge of misanthropy ("hatred of humans") by describing the species as a pathogen or plague of the earth.

[25]For Kant and many post-Enlightenment philosophers, "persons" are autonomous individuals who control their own destinies through rational decision processes. Thus the individual takes priority over community, and social relationships are mostly a matter of choice and personal advantage. Physically, we are minds or egos embedded within an almost impermeable envelope of skin and separated from all other existing beings as they are from us. Deep ecology reverses this position completely. With few exceptions, individual species, including humans, have little value within the absolute priority of the whole.

[26]See Murray Bookchin, *The Ecology of Freedom* (Palo Alto, CA: Cheshire, 1982); and idem, *The Philosophy of Social Ecology* (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1990). Most human societies, he claims, are structured according to levels of power, authority, and control. Those occupying the higher rungs control those on rungs below them. These relational patterns are built into the habitual patterns of belief and action in a culture. They become internalized and promoted as normative and beyond question. The solution lies not in merely changing forms of government. All forms of social structures are infected. The only cure is a soft form of anarchy.

[27]See Bryan G. Norton, *Toward Unity among Environmentalists* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991).

[28]This pragmatic approach relies on "moral pluralism" (i.e., using a variety of principles that are not deduced from a single master principle). However, when real conflicts occur, there are no standards to resolve them. What if a person is faced with a dilemma between deciding for humans (requiring an anthropocentric, person-respecting principle) or nonhumans (requiring a biocentric sentience or telos-respecting

Ecofeminism

Ecofeminists focus on hierarchical patterns of patriarchy, with the elevated and entitled status of male authorities as the primary form of social oppression. For them, eliminating patriarchy would go far toward the elimination of many forms of oppression, social and economic. This would result in proper relations with nature, for they suggest there is positive link between the subjection of women and nature. In 1973, with increasing fears of planetary ecological meltdown mounting, Francoise d'Eaubonne wrote that the only mutation that can save the world would be the "great upheaval" of male power that "brought about, first, overexploitation, then lethal industrial expansion."[29]

The Church and Ecology

Christian attitudes toward the environment are based on a distinctive understanding of the universe. The earth has exalted standing from its status as a creation of God and, as such, should receive respect. Since all of creation has value, even the nonliving environment is to be treasured.

The current ecological crisis has influenced some Christian scholars to pay more attention to the doctrine of creation. For example, Thomas Berry states that "we seldom notice how much we have lost contact with the revelation of the divine in nature. Yet our exalted sense of the divine comes from the grandeur of the universe, especially from the earth in all the splendid modes of its expression."[30]

Threats to animals, birds, fish, air, soil, and ecosystems endanger not only human lives and community, but also go against the directives of God himself. The scriptural assignment of dominion and responsibility is a stewardship ethic. The obliteration of forests and wetlands, the pollution of waterways, and the extinction of numerous species of plants and animals should be a genuine concern to all Christians.

Some Christian environmentalists have moved beyond anthropocentrism. For example, James Nash defends the biotic rights of other species and their

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principle)? Some moral pluralists would rank the two positions and select the one with overriding priority. They arrive at such a ranking with an appeal to some master standard. All the same, moral pluralists argue that life is too complex to be reduced to a single ethical standard.

[29]See Warwick Fox, "The Deep Ecology–Ecofeminism Debate and Its Parallels," *Environmental Ethics*, 11 (1989; Ariel Salleh, "Deeper than Deep Ecology: The Eco-Feminist Connection," *Environmental Ethics*, 6 (Winter 1984); "The Ecofeminism/Deep Ecology Debate: A Reply to Patriarchal Reason," *Environmental Ethics*, 14 (Fall 1992); "Social Ecology and the Man Question," *Environmental Politics* 5/2 (1996); Mary Mellor, *Feminism and Ecology* (Oxford: Polity, 1997); Carolyn Merchant, *The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology and the Scientific Revolution* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1990).

[30]Thomas Berry, *Thomas Berry and the New Cosmology* (Mystic, CN: Twenty-Third Publications, 1987), 17.

right to survive as a species ahead of human exploitation.[31] Other stewardship models include concern for future generations with different degrees of intrinsic value for various species.

However, many Christians have been slow to respond to ecological concerns and are often negligent in linking ecology with their theology. Some Christians even argue that ecological issues are a waste of time since the world is going to be destroyed eventually anyway. Even worse, accusations about Christians allege that of all the world's religions, Christianity has proved uniquely dangerous to the environment, abusing the "dominion" that God bestowed on human beings at creation.[32] Above all religions, Christianity is categorized as being negligent of ecological matters.

While Christians believe that God is Creator of this world and that he pronounced it "very good!" (Gen 1:31), unfortunately the emphasis placed upon Christian stewardship generally tends to focus on personal fiduciary responsibility and/or tithing, leaving the stewardship of the natural world neglected. Where is the needed encouragement from the pulpit to be mindful of the earth, the water, the air, and the animals? The consistent warning of many scientists is that our planet, with its many creatures and many systems, is not healthy. Mounting evidence testifies that the material world God created is indeed "groaning" (Rom 8:22).[33] What, then, would be the Christian response toward the natural world? Is it possible for Christians to find an appropriate response to the current ecological crisis?

A Biblical Perspective on Ecological Responsibility

The biblical perspective, from the beginning of the book of Genesis through the end of the book of Revelation, yields an impressive doctrine of ecology that emphasizes the close connection between human and animal life. Nowhere in Scripture is creation ever devalued. Rather, there is a consistent and impressive linkage between ecology and theology in the minds of the biblical writers.

The Hebrew Bible

The Pentateuch

On the fifth day of creation week, God pronounced a blessing on the new creatures of air and water, commanding them, as he did to humans on the sixth day, to "be fruitful and multiply" (Gen 1:22). Such blessing implies, at the very least, divine valuation of these creatures. Only a short time later the human fall into sin would, by divine directive, also affect the earth and all its nonhuman constituents (Gen 3:14-19).

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[31]James A. Nash, *Loving Nature: Ecological Inquiry and Christian Responsibility* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1991).

[32]Nash is one of many who writes about "the ecological complaint against Christianity." See esp. ibid., chap. 3.

[33]Unless otherwise noted, the NKJV of the Bible is used.

Later, when God could no longer tolerate the wickedness of humanity, he provided for the preservation of nonhuman creatures. Noah was told by God to take his family and a collection of animals into the ark "to keep this kind alive upon the face of all the earth" during a global catastrophe (Gen 7:3). The turning point in the flood narrative is seen to be Gen 8:1: "But God remembered Noah *and all the wild animals and the livestock* that were with him in the ark" (emphasis added). After the flood, the animals were explicitly included in God's renewed covenant with humanity: "Then God spoke to Noah and to his sons with him, saying: 'As for Me, behold, I establish My covenant with you, and with your descendants after you, and *with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the cattle, and every beast of the earth with you; of all that go out of the ark, every beast of the earth'*" (Gen 9:8-10, emphasis added). God links Noah with the animals four times in this covenant (Gen 9:9-10; 12, 15, 17). Thus, even in that current crisis, God did not forget his creatures and provided for the continuation of their kinds after the flood.

Respect for animals and the close ties they share with humans is thus an important Penteuchal theme. For instance:

- both animals and humans were created with the "breath of life" (Gen 1:20, 24; 2:7, 19);
- both were blessed by God (Gen 1:22, 28);
- both were given a vegetarian diet (Gen 1:29-30);[34]
- both have blood in their veins, which is a symbol of life (Gen 9:4-6);
- both could be held responsible for murder (Gen 9:5; Exod 21:28-32);
- both were included in God's covenant (Gen 9:9-10);
- both are under the death penalty if they engage in bestiality (Lev 20:15-16);
- both are given the Sabbath rest (Exod 20:8-10; Lev 23:10-12; Deut 5:14);
- the firstborn of both belong to God (Exod 22:29-30; 13:12-13);
- priests and sacrificial animals were to be without spot or blemish (Lev 21:17-21; 22:19-25);
- animals could not be sacrificed unless at least eight days old and then they were to be first dedicated to God. The same time period of eight days was given for a boy to circumcised and dedicated to God (Gen 17:12; Exod 22:30; Lev 22:27).[35]

In the OT patriarchal period, the needs of animals were tended to first after traveling. For example, Rebecca watered the camels of Abraham's servant

[34]As Charles Pinches and Jay B. McDaniel observe: "In the first story of creation, so often recited by Christians and Jews, animals and humans are treated together; both created on the sixth day, they are together given seeds, fruits and green plants to eat, not one another (Genesis 1:30)" (*Good News for Animals? Christian Approaches to Animal Well-Being* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1993).

[35]Adapted from Jiří Moskala, *The Laws of Clean and Unclean Animals in Leviticus 11: Their Nature, Theology, and Rationale, An Intertextual Study* (Berrien Springs: Adventist Theological Society, 2000), 298-299.

before inviting him to her house (Gen 24). Moreover, the sport of hunting is mentioned only in connection with violent persons, such as Nimrod (Gen 10:8-9) and Esau (Gen 25:27), and never of the patriarchs and their descendants.

In the book of Numbers, Balaam's donkey, after being beaten by Balaam, pleads for respect and fair treatment (22:21-33). The heavenly being, whom the donkey is reacting toward and whom Balaam does not see at first, also criticizes Balaam's harshness toward the creature.

As God led the children of Israel to the "Promised Land," he described it to them as a land rich with "milk and honey" (Exod 3:8; Lev 20:24). He carefully instructed the people about ecological responsibility: "[T]he land in which you are about to cross to possess it, a land of hills and valleys, drinks water from the rain of heaven, a land for which the LORD your God cares" (Deut 11:11-12). The Mosaic laws include the protection of nature, even outlawing the destruction of fruit trees to aid a military campaign (Deut 20:19). Large work animals were not to be muzzled so they could eat while doing the heavy work involved in agriculture, but were permitted to enjoy the harvest they were helping to reap (Deut 25:4).

The Hebrew people had an obligation to be kind to their animals. The Jewish historian Josephus notes how Moses taught compassion for animals:

> So thorough a lesson has he given us in gentleness and humanity that he does not overlook even the brute beasts, authorizing their use only in accordance with the Law, and forbidding all other employment of them. Creatures which take refuge in our houses like suppliants we are forbidden to kill. He would not suffer us to take the parent birds with the young, and bade us even in an enemy's country to spare and not to kill the beasts employed in labor. Thus, in every particular, he had an eye for mercy, using the laws I have mentioned to enforce the lesson.[36]

Humans, animals, and even the land are included in the stipulations for the weekly Sabbath and the sabbatical year:

> Six years you shall sow your land and gather in its produce, but the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow, that the poor of your people may eat; and what they leave, the beasts of the field may eat. In like manner you shall do with your vineyard and your olive grove. Six days you shall do your work, and on the seventh day you shall rest that your ox and your donkey may rest, and the son of your maidservant and the stranger may be refreshed (Exod 23:10-12; cf. 20:8-10; Lev 25:6-7; Deut 5:12-15).

Norman Wirzba is sensitive to the sabbatical instructions: "Sabbath observance has the potential to release the depth and meaning of God's many blessings at work within creation."[37] Further, when the Sabbath is observed, many others are also allowed to rest.

In the annual sabbatical festivals, Israel worshiped the Lord of nature as the

[36]Josephus, *Against Appion* 2:210-215, trans. H. St. J. Thackeray, vol. 1 (London: Heinemann, 1956).

[37]Norman Wirzba, *Living the Sabbath: Discovering the Rhythms of Rest and Delight* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2006), 15.

God of grace. The observance of these annual festivals was obligatory. God told Israel: "[T]hree times you shall keep a feast to Me in the year: You shall keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread . . . and the Feast of Harvest . . . and the Feast of Ingathering" (Exod 23:14-16; cf. Deut 16:16-17). These times of annual celebration commemorated the signal mercies of the God of Israel, who not only redeemed the people from bondage, but provided for them during their wilderness wandering. But further, the feasts also marked three different harvests. For example, the Feast of the Passover, followed immediately by the Feast of Unleavened Bread, commemorated Israel's redemption from Egypt. Taking place in the spring, usually during the month of April, the first sheaf of ripe barley was gratefully waved before the Lord. The second annual feast, the Feast of Weeks, also called the Feast of Pentecost or the First Fruits of Harvest, was celebrated fifty days (or seven weeks) after the Passover, around the beginning of June. This feast was a time of thanksgiving for the completed grain harvest of wheat and barley. The last annual festival, the Feast of Booths, was also known as the Feast of Ingathering, taking place during our month of October. By this time the produce of vineyard and olive grove had been gathered.

Thus Israel was taught to honor Jehovah, both as God of creation and as God of salvation. As such, the people, upon their settlement in the Promised Land, were to

> take some of the first of all the produce of the ground, which you shall bring from your land that the LORD your God is giving you, and put it in a basket . . . and say to [the priest], "I declare today to the LORD your God that I have come to the country which the LORD swore to our fathers to give us . . . and now I have brought the first fruits of the land which you, O LORD, have given me." . . . So you shall rejoice in every good thing which the LORD your God has given to you and your house, you and the Levite and the stranger who is among you (Deut 26:1-11).

John Stott comments on the rich symbolism of the gift of the firstfruits of the new land to God: "The basket of fruit was a token of 'all the good things' which God had given Israel. It was the fruit of the ground, fruit which God had caused to grow. But from what ground? From ground which God had also given them, as he had sworn to their fathers. The fruit was a sacrament of both creation and redemption, for it was the fruit of the promised land."[38]

The Historical Books

Besides redemption and salvation, God also linked ecology with righteousness. For example, following the dedication of the Temple, God appeared to Solomon in a dream and said to him: "When I shut up heaven and there is no rain, or command the locusts to devour the land, or send pestilence among My people, 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 I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and *heal their land*" (2 Chron 7:12-14, emphasis

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[38]John R. W. Stott, *Understanding the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999), 49.

added). Later, Israel would suffer drought because of their apostasy (1 Kgs 17).

Wisdom Literature

When God speaks to Job out of the whirlwind, he recounts the wonders of the created world, urging Job to contemplate several wild creatures. In his longest recorded speech (Job 38-41), God refers to animals such as the lioness, the mountain goat, a stallion, leaping high to paw the air, and the hawk, eagle, and raven. Finally, he turns to the behemoth and the mighty leviathan, noting concerning it that "Indeed, any hope of overcoming him is vain; Shall one not be overwhelmed at the sight of him? No one is so fierce that he would dare stir him up. Who then is able to stand against Me?" (Job 41:9-10). Wirzba insightfully comments that the "Leviathan represents an equally ferocious creature that we would do our best to leave alone. Yet God finds a reason to delight in creatures such as these: 'I will not keep silence concerning its limbs, or its mighty strength, or its splendid frame' (41:12)."[39] God exults in these members of the created world who will never be controlled by human beings. Apparently, even wild, untamed animals are of value in the "world as God sees it."[40]

Within the Psalter, God's providence for his creation inspired many prayers and hymns. The psalmists emphasize how nature reveals the glory of God, and how all of God's creation is included in his care. More than once, the reader is reminded that God provides sustenance for all life: "He gives to the beast its food, and to the young ravens that cry" (Ps 147:9). Further, the Psalter focuses attention on the glorious manifestation of life in God's creation. For instance, Ps 148:7-13 proclaims:

> Praise the LORD from the earth,
> You great sea creatures and all the depths,
> Fire and hail, snow and clouds;
> Stormy wind, fulfilling His word;
> Mountains and all hills,
> Fruit trees and all cedars;
> Beasts and all cattle;
> Creeping things and flying fowl;
> Kings of the earth and all peoples,
> Princes and all judges of the earth!
> Both young men and maidens;
> Old men and children.
> Let them praise the name of the LORD,
> For His name alone is exalted;
> His glory is above earth and heaven.[41]

Admonitions in the book of Proverbs also include a high regard for the

[39]Wirzba, 87.

[40]Philip Yancey, *I Was Just Wondering* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 10-11.

[41]Some have wondered if Christians should stop repeating Scripture passages of rivers and trees clapping for joy to the Creator (Ps 98:8; Isa 55:12) while forests are being turned into wastelands and waterways into life-destroying pollution.

animal kingdom. Solomon, for example, states: "Go to the ant, you sluggard! Consider her ways, and be wise, which, having no captain, overseer or ruler, provides her supplies in the summer, and gathers her food in the harvest. How long will you slumber, O sluggard? When will you rise from your sleep?" (Prov 6:6-9), and "A righteous man regards the life of his animal, but the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel" (Prov 12:10).

The Prophets

Isaiah the prophet instructed that if God's covenant is broken and the responsibilities of stewardship neglected, deterioration and pollution of the earth will follow: "The earth mourns and fades away, the world languishes and fades away; the haughty people of the earth languish. The earth is also defiled under its inhabitants, because they have transgressed the law, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore the curse devours the earth, and those who dwell in it are desolate" (Isa 24:5-6).

The prophet Jeremiah concurs, highlighting how Israel's sins affected the earth, drawing a direct correlation between deceitfulness and vengefulness and the broken conditions of the earth: "'Shall I not punish them for these things?' says the LORD. 'Shall I not avenge Myself on such as a nation as this? I will take up a weeping and wailing for the mountains and for the habitations of the wilderness a lamentation, because they are burned up, so that no one can pass through them; nor can men hear the voice of the cattle. Both the birds of the heavens and the beasts have fled; they are gone" (Jer 9:7-10).

Hosea contrasts the state of the earth when Israel remains within the constraints of the covenantal relationship with the dire consequences of gross sinfulness. In an echo of the Noahic covenant, God promises that "In that day I will also make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, with the birds of the air, and the creeping things of the ground. Bow and sword of battle I will shatter from the earth, to make them lie down safely" (Hos 2:18). But Israel did not guard their covenantal relationship, thereby bringing against them the charge, "There is no truth or mercy or knowledge of God in the land. By swearing and lying, killing and stealing and committing adultery, they break all restraint, with bloodshed after bloodshed" (Hos 4:1-2). But the gross inhumanity of humans for one another is not limited to affecting human life, Hosea states. It also leads to dire consequences for the ecosystem: "Therefore [because of Israel's sinfulness] the land will mourn; and everyone who dwells there will waste away with the beasts of the field and the birds of the air; even the fish of the sea will be taken away" (Hos 4:3).

According to the prophet Joel, both animals and land are devastated as the Day of the Lord approaches: "The seeds shrivel under their clods; the storehouses are in shambles; barns are broken down, for the grain has withered. How the beasts groan! The herds of cattle are restless, because they have no pasture; even the flocks of sheep suffer punishment. O LORD, to You I cry out; for fire has devoured the open pastures, and the flame has burned up all the

trees of the field. The beasts of the field also cry out to You, for the water brooks are dried up, and fire has devoured the open pastures" (Joel 1:17-20).

The prophet Jonah, petulantly demanding that God destroy the inhabitants of Nineveh even after they repented, had to be rebuked: "And should I not pity Nineveh, that great city, in which are more than one hundred and twenty thousand persons who cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand, and *also much livestock?*" (John 4:10-11, emphasis added). Thus God ends his discussion with Jonah with an intriguing reminder of his profound mercy that extends not only to the wicked Ninevites, but also to their animals.

God's statement to Jonah should not be surprising; the natural world is important to the Creator. The concluding question in the book of Jonah pointedly reminds the reader that even the animal kingdom is expressly included in God's tender regard. In God's extension of mercy to the humans of Nineveh, he was also sparing the animals. In an echo of Pss 36:6 and 145:9, the sentiment that God cares for the natural world is expressed. The psalmist states: "Your righteousness is like the great mountains. . . . O LORD, You preserve man and beast. . . . The Lord is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works."

The prophet Zechariah also repeats the pervasive biblical theme of human sin destroying the earth:

> Execute true justice, show mercy and compassion everyone to his brother. . . . But they refused to heed, shrugged their shoulders, and stopped their ears so that they could not hear. . . . Thus great wrath came from the LORD of hosts. Therefore it happened, that just as He proclaimed and they would not hear, "so they called out and I would not listen," says the LORD of hosts.

> "But I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations which they had not known. Thus the land became desolate after them, so that no one passed through or returned; for they made the pleasant land desolate" (Zech 7:9, 11, 12b-14).

A heartbroken Zechariah can only lament:

Open your doors, O Lebanon,
That a fire may devour your cedars.
Wail, O cypress, for the cedar has fallen,
Because the mighty trees are ruined.
Wail, O oaks of Bashan,
For the thick forest has come down.
There is the sound of wailing shepherds!
For their glory is in ruins.
There is the sound of roaring lions!
For the pride of the Jordan is in ruins (Zech 11:1-3).

An Old Testament "Theology of Life"

While the creation must suffer the consequences of human sin, God promises that ultimately the original perfection of creation will be restored. The prophet Isaiah eloquently describes the righteous reign of God and the reestablishment

of justice and righteousness on the earth. At last,

> The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play by the cobra's hole, and the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea (Isa 11:6-9).

The New Testament

The "theology of life" is also found in the NT, which often refers to God's care for his creation. Jesus' own appreciation for animals is demonstrated repeatedly in his teachings. He stresses that even the lowliest of creatures is loved by God. He once asked: "Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? And not one of them is forgotten before God" (Luke 12:6). The assurances that not a single sparrow falls to the ground without God's knowledge (Matt 10:29) is an echo of Ps 84, where the tiny sparrows are welcome in God's sanctuary.[42]

In the Gospels, Jesus stressed the divine concern for earth's smaller creatures: "Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them" (Matt 6:26). Further, he compared his care for Jerusalem with that of a mother hen's concern for her chicks (Matt 24:37). The Architect of two lavish OT sanctuaries marveled at the astonishing beauty of the flowers he created: "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these" (Matt 6:28-29).

Jesus continually demonstrated in his earthly ministry his lordship over nature:

- his first miracle changed water into wine (John 2);
- he walked on water (Matt 14:25-27);
- the stormy sea knew his voice and obeyed his command (Mark 4:35-41);[43]
- the barren fig tree immediately withered at his command (Matt 21:18-19);
- disease was healed by his authority, included the dreaded leprosy (Luke 17:11-21);
- death could not remain in his presence (Luke 7:16; John 11).

As Paul Santmire contends: Jesus "can be thought of as an ecological figure as well as an eschatological figure."[44]

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[42]"How lovely is Your tabernacle, O LORD of host! My soul longs, yes, even faints for the courts of the LORD; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God. Even the sparrow has found a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young—even Your altars, O LORD of hosts, my King and my God. Blessed are those who dwell in Your house; they will still be praising You" (Ps 84:1-4).

[43]Speaking of Jesus' quieting of the storm on Galilee, Jakob van Bruggen writes: "Jesus is not the pawn of the elements" (*Christ on Earth* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998], 178).

[44]H. Paul Santmire, *The Travail of Nature: The Ambiguous Ecological Promise of Christian*

Because of Jesus' incarnation, life, and resurrection, matter is no longer only warped and sinful. Human flesh is once again exalted. Moreover, Jesus restored health to crippled limbs and damaged bodies as a preview of the perfect world he promises—a world where sin, sickness, and death will be removed. Resurrection is even linked to the environmental renewal of this planet. The apostle Paul affirms:

> For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly. . . . For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. And not only they, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body (Rom 8:18-23).

Ben Witherington summarizes: "The resurrection of Christ, the destiny of believers, and the destiny of the earth are inexorably linked together."[45] Paul's profound theology of creation clearly recognizes the source of all things: "For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist" (Col 1:16-17). Paul goes on to insist that creation reveals the very nature of the Godhead: "For since the creation of the world His [God's] invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse" (Rom 1:20).[46] Thus Paul, ever sensitive to the close intertwining of all life, argues that the entire creation has been affected by human sin and is enduring the resultant suffering.

In the final book of Scripture, the entire world is dramatically encompassed with divine judgment. In Rev 7:1, four angels are pictured

> standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree. Then I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God. And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, saying, "Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads" (Rev 7:1-3).

After the seventh trumpet sounds in Rev 11, the twenty-four elders fall on

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Theology (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985), 201.

[45]Ben Witherington III, *Paul's Narrative Thought World: The Tapestry of Tragedy and Triumph* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1994), 171.

[46]Even Jonathan Edwards understood that God communicates not only "by his voice to us in the Scriptures, but also in creation and in historical events. The whole creation of God preaches" (cited in Allen C. Guelzo, "The Return of the Will," in *Edwards in Our Time: Jonathan Edwards and the Shaping of American Religion*, ed. Sang Hyun Lee and Allen C. Guelzo [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999], 133).

their faces and worship God, as they cry out against those who have wreaked
havoc on the created world:

> We give You thanks O Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was
> and who is to come, because You have taken Your great power and reigned.
> The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, and the time of the dead,
> that they should be judged, and that You should reward Your servants the
> prophets and the saints, and those who fear Your name, small and great, and
> should destroy those who destroy the earth (Rev 11:17-18).

The book of Revelation concludes with the resplendent restoration promised
earlier by the OT prophets, reminding the reader again that redemption involves
the renewal of God's original creation. The material world will participate in
redemption. Salvation is never described as an escape from the earth, but rather
as a reclamation of the earth! God's salvation is earth-affirming.[47] There is nothing
in God's creation that is irrelevant. Throughoout Scripture, the profound value
that God places on this created world is often repeated.

Conclusion

From Genesis to Revelation, Scripture consistently reveals a close link between
ecology and theology. When compared to modern attempts to attach earthly
values to ethical motivation, the biblical writers are far advanced. A close study of
the Scriptures suggests that authentic Christian faith must include ecological
concern. Since God is the Creator and Sustainer of this world, and humans are
created in his image and are to be his image-bearers on the earth, surely this must
include showing loving concern for this world as manifested by the Creator. Any
negative interference with his creation would be a daring act. The biblical writers
warned of the serious implications of failing to maintain a covenantal relationship
with the Creator. Tragically, what they warned against has become reality. As
pioneering ecological theologian Joseph Sittler insists:

> When we turn the attention of the church to a definition of the Christian
> relationship with the natural world, we are not stepping away from grave and
> proper theological ideas; we are stepping right into the middle of them. There is
> a deeply rooted, genuinely Christian motivation for attention to God's creation,
> despite the fact that many church people consider ecology to be a secular
> concern. "What does environmental preservation have to do with Jesus Christ
> and His church?" they ask. They could not be more shallow or more wrong.[48]

[47]Nancy Pearcey states: "God's command to Adam and Eve to partner with Him
in developing the beauty and goodness of creation revealed His purpose for *all* of
human life. And after He has dealt with sin once for all, we will joyfully take up that
task once again, as redeemed people in a renewed world. This comprehensive vision
of Creation, Fall, and Redemption allows no room for a secular/sacred split. All of
creation was originally good; it cannot be divided into a good part (spiritual) and a bad
part (material). Likewise, all of creation was affected by the Fall, and when time ends,
all creation will be redeemed" (*Total Truth: Liberating Christianity from Its Cultural
Captivity* [Wheaton: Crossway, 2004], 86).

[48]Joseph Sittler, *Gravity and Grace* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1986), 15.

Secular materialists believe that the world is unfolding in an endless process. Pantheists believe that God is in eternal emanation with this world. Atheists think the world evolved out of matter by chance. New Agers worship the earth as divine. Buddhists and Christian Scientists do not believe the world is real.[49] By contrast, biblical Christians believe God created this world with lavish care and declared it to be "very good" (Gen 1:31).

The Bible writers also insisted that God is not a distant or absent landlord. His hand is still seen in storms, thunder, and rain (Ps 77:17-18); he causes the wind and the darkness (Amos 4:13); he is active in and through all of creation, "for in him we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:28). As Jonathan R. Wilson concludes: "God is creator and God remains creator even of the fallen world. The fallen world has no life independent of God. Even in its rebellion it is dependent on God. . . . [I]n Jesus Christ, God redeems creation. That redemption is not salvation *from* the world but the salvation *of* the world through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ."[50]

Excursus: What Can Be Done?

It is not easy to become motivated to be frugal with the earth's abundant treasures in a land of plenty. However, Christians could recycle everything possible: glass, cans, plastic, batteries, newspapers, phone books, plus use white paper on both sides to save trees, "the lungs of the earth," and replenish soil by composting.[51] Water conservation and control of air pollution are also vital.

Americans must also become more sensitive to the issue of wasting food. When Jesus fed the 5,000, and later the 4,000, the disciples gathered up the leftover fragments so that nothing would be lost (John 6:12; Mark 8:8). The God who earlier provided the miracle of manna to the people in the wilderness for forty years (Exod 16:35) and who later provided a miracle lunch for

[49]Stephen Webb observes a significant result of a nonbiblical understanding of the material world: "The deist philosophers of the Enlightenment portrayed God as an architect who built what we can see, rather than a rhetor who spoke the world into being. The origin of modern science lies in this silencing of nature. . . . The primacy of vision turns the world into a thing and thus endows humanity with enormous powers, but it also makes humanity a spectator, alienated and estranged from the objects of our inspection. Our world is dull and quiet—the heavens no longer declare God's glory (Ps 19)—no matter how much we fill that void with the sights and sounds of consumerism" (*The Divine Voice: Christian Proclamation and the Theology of Sound* [Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2004], 40).

[50]Jonathan R. Wilson, *God So Loved the World: A Christology for Disciples* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001), 158.

[51]E-technologies, such as e-mail, have helped to conserve paper. Even the postal service has noted the difference in the amount of paper they move. Long before humans thought of recycling, however, nature provided examples. Beetles, ants, flies, maggots, and other insects work as recyclers. They assist with the decomposition of debris and other vegetation, while worms aerate the ground—all contributing to the renewing of the soil.

thousands from one boy's lunch (John 6:1-14), teaches the privilege of eating and the miracle of food by urging that nothing be wasted.

Diet is also related to ecological concerns. The vegetarian diet should be revisited in the light of ecological and even mental-health concerns. Philosopher Stephen Webb links this issue to the biblical record of the life of Daniel:

> The Book of Daniel, for example, tells the story of how Daniel and his friends refused to eat the impure food of Nebuchadnezzer, the Babylonian king. Instead, they ate only vegetables, and "at the end of ten days it was observed that they appeared better and fatter than all the young men who had been eating the royal rations" (Dn 1:15). It is tempting at this point to argue that even the Bible understands that eating less meat is better for one's physical as well as spiritual health.[52]

Perhaps the Christian Church should pay more attention to the crucial ecological issues involved with eating meat. When a fourth-generation cattle rancher[53] and Mennonite hog farmer[54] ceased raising animals for slaughter and became vegetarians, they pointed to the critical ecological issues involved in eating flesh meat. For instance, there is a wasteful "funnel effect" of many pounds of grain fed to a single steer—the same amount of grain that could be used to feed far more people. A few years ago, it was thought that animal protein was of paramount importance for optimum health. Now science has demonstrated from the study of human physiology that the optimum diet for human beings does not include meat. In fact, the digestion of animal flesh puts an enormous strain on the human body. Second, the huge amount of water used to grow fodder for feeding animals for slaughter is also well documented. The same amount of water could serve a much larger community of people.[55]

[52]Stephen H. Webb, *On God and Dogs: A Christian Theology of Compassion for Animals* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 22.

[53]See, e.g., Howard F. Lyman, *Mad Cowboy: Plain Truth from the Cattle Rancher Who Won't Eat Meat* (New York: Simon & Simon, 2001). Lyman is well aware of what goes into U.S. livestock—high doses of pesticides, growth hormone, and the ground-up remains of other animals. A fourth-generation Montana farmer, he regularly doused his cattle and soil with chemicals. It was only when he narrowly escaped paralysis from a spinal tumor that Lyman began to question his vocation and the effect it was having on people and on the land he loved. The questions he raised and the answers he found led him, surprisingly, to adopt a vegetarian diet. As a result, he lost 130 pounds and lowered his cholesterol by more than 150 points. He is now one of America's leading spokesmen for vegetarianism. Along the way, Lyman learned even more about the alarming dangers associated with eating meat, and blasts through the propaganda of the beef and dairy industries (and the government agencies that often protect them) and exposes an animal-based diet as the primary cause of cancer, heart disease, and obesity in this country.

[54]Gary L. Comstock, "Pigs and Piety: A Theocentric Perspective on Food Animals," in *Good News for Animals? Christian Approaches to Animal Well-Being*, ed. Charles Pinches and Jay B. McDaniel (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1993), 105-127.

[55]It takes approximately 14 trillion gallons of water annually to water crops grown

Some studies even show that not only is our water supply being slowly depleted on this basis, but also that our deep underground water sources are being polluted by the seepage from immense amounts of cow manure, resulting from present methods of animal husbandry.[56] These are but a few of the serious ecological issues related to the meat industry[57] and say nothing about the frightful cruelty to the animals that are slaughtered.[58] Webb is correct: "As long

to feed livestock in this country. As much as 4,500 gallons of water are required just to produce a quarter-pound of raw beef. Just to irrigate hay and alfalfa, it takes more water than that required for all vegetables, berries, and fruit orchards combined.

[56]As Carol J. Adams documents: "'Meat' eaters do not have to pay the true costs for the 'meat' that they eat. The cheapness of a diet based on grain-fed terminal animals exists because it does not include the cost of depleting the environment. Not only does the cost of 'meat' not include the loss of topsoil, the pollution of water, and other environmental effects, but price supports of the dairy and beef 'industry' mean that the government actively prevents the price of eating animals from being reflected in the commodity of 'meat.' My tax money subsidizes war, but it also subsidizes the eating of animals. For instance, the estimated costs of subsidizing the 'meat' industry with water in California alone is $26 billion annually (Hur and Fields 1985a, 17). If water used by the 'meat' industry were not subsidized by United States taxpayers, 'hamburgers' would cost $35 per pound and 'beefsteak' would be $89. Tax monies perpetuate the cheapness of animals' bodies as a food source; consequently 'meat' eaters are allowed to exist in a state of denial. They are not required to confront 'meat' eating as a 'pocketbook issue'" ("Feeding on Grace: Institutional Violence, Christianity, and Vegetarianism," in *Good News for Animals? Christian Approaches to Animal Well-Being*, ed. Charles Pinches and Jay B. McDaniel [Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1993], 148).

[57]Nineteenth-century health reformer Ellen White was sensitive to this issue: "Think of the cruelty to animals that meat eating involves, and its effect on those who inflict and those who behold it. How it destroys the tenderness with which we should regard these creatures of God!

"The intelligence displayed by many dumb animals approaches so closely to human intelligence that it is a mystery. The animals see and hear and love and fear and suffer. They use their organs far more faithfully than many human beings use theirs. They manifest sympathy and tenderness toward their companions in suffering. Many animals show an affection for those who have charge of them, far superior to the affection shown by some of the human race. They form attachments for man which are not broken without great suffering to them.

"What man with a human heart, who has ever cared for domestic animals, could look into their eyes, so full of confidence and affection, and willingly give them over to the butcher's knife? How could he devour their flesh as a sweet morsel?" (*Ministry of Healing* [Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1942], 315-316).

Even the skeptic David Hume granted this point, even while insisting that any truth was opposed to his methodological skepticism: "[N]o truth appears to me more evident, than that beasts are endow'd with thought and reason as well as men. The arguments are in this case so obvious, that they never escape the most stupid and ignorant" (*A Treatise of Human Nature*, 272, cited in Bernard E. Rollin, *The Unheeded Cry: Animal Consciousness, Animal Pain and Science* [Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1998], 22).

[58]J. R. Hyland states: "We have increasingly hidden the slaughterhouse, and its

as it is more acceptable to say that we love meat than it is to say that we love animals, our views on animals will continue to be deeply distorted."[59]

A meatless diet, then, permits humans to live in peace with God's creation, even before the Parousia. At Christ's return, the nonviolent diet of the original Eden will be restored for both humans and animals. One day, all killing will cease. People and animals will stop doing harm to each other (Isa 11:6-9). As we await this glorious future, Christians can begin to live by the compassionate patterns of God's governance for all of his creation.[60] In the process, we can offer praise to God for his glorious creation by how we live and eat. Thus we will, finally, be linking our theology with ecology, as God has done in Scripture, where he instructs us how to see and love the world as he does.

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victims, from sight. Very few persons have any direct experience of the violence and brutality that is inflicted on animals in order to satisfy a carnivorous population. Additionally, the steaks, chops, hamburgers, and cold cuts that are consumed show little resemblance to the creature who had to be killed in order to obtain them" (*God's Covenant with Animals: A Biblical Basis for the Humane Treatment of All Creatures* [New York: Lantern Books, 2000], 102); see also Eric Schlosser, *Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal* (New York: Harper, 2002).

[59]Webb, *On God and Dogs*, 12.

[60]"1 Cor 6:14 comes in the middle of Paul's discussion about the proper use of the human body. Resurrection is introduced here to explain why it is important to act morally in and with the body—the body is meant for the Lord and, in fact, will participate in the eschatological state of salvation. V. 14 makes the analogy between Christ's resurrection and that of believers quite explicit. Both are raised up by God's power. The context makes clear that by resurrection Paul means something involving a body. Again, we see a clear connection made between the believer's present condition and his or her future condition. Ethics circumscribes bodily conduct because the body has a place in the eschatological future of the believer" (Witherington, 174).

THEOLOGY AND LIFE: ATTENDING
TO THE GAP

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Theology happens when the church seeks to know God and his truth. When reading the Bible, exegeting the text, learning about the time and history of the biblical narrative, formulating doctrines and elaborating them into a system, theologians nurture the church's identity and safeguard the deposit of truth given to her in trust (1 Tim 6:20). As part of their religious community, theologians confront new questions with appropriate answers, new lies with eternal truth, and new challenges with up-to-date and relevant responses.

But there must be more to theology. While I was lecturing at McGill University, a master's student inquired of me: "Why do you do theology? What difference does it really make? Does the doctrine of the Sabbath make one a better citizen, wife, or mother?" This is a relevant question about the relevance of theology. Why *do* we do theology? Is it for the sake of truth alone, for the sake of tradition, or is it also for the sake of enriching and ennobling human character and life? What difference *do* we theologians make in growth in grace, in struggle against sin, and in the life and ministry of the church? How indispensable *is* the work of a theologian in making the Word of God relevant and transforming? Such questions point to a gap that emerges between theology and human life, between beliefs and practices. Scholars are concerned about the relevance of Scripture[1] because the path from text and doctrine to lifestyle is not easily found.[2]

This essay has a threefold task: to try to find the possible causes of the disconnectedness between beliefs and practices, to examine the role of theology in God's act of salvation, and to look for ways of making the Word of God more relevant and theology more user-friendly for everyday living.

The obvious cause of disconnection between beliefs and practices is human sin and finiteness. Vices, habits, fears, heredity, and constant temptations from within and without compound the problem. In addition, human limitations in time, space, knowledge, and power create gaps that cannot be bridged. It is true that if humans could clearly foresee the consequences of our actions or decisions, we would be much wiser and happier, but these are not our concerns here. We are searching to find if there are things that theologians can do, or refrain from doing, so as to enhance and facilitate the application of the truth we know and teach. A closer look at this divide yields three layers: the distance between *ignorance and knowledge, knowledge and action,* and *action and character.*

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[1]W. Klein, C. Blomberg, and R. Hubbard, *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation* (Waco: Word, 1993), 403.

[2]I. H. Marshall, "The Use of the New Testament in Christian Ethics," *ExpTim* 105/5 (1994): 136.

The Gap between Ignorance and Knowledge

The first danger to a seamless connection between theology and praxis of life is a tendency to make the search for truth an end in itself, rather than a bridge between ignorance in sin and knowledge of a better alternative. Theology is then absorbed by its own issues, debates, and controversies, often leading to a self-serving parachurch or a disconnected "independent ministry." Yet this contradicts the very nature of the science of theology as seen by most eminent Christian theologians. "Theology is the function of the church," says Emil Brunner.[3] Karl Barth concurs, insisting that "Whoever wishes to engage in the science of dogmatics . . . must accept the responsibility of remaining within the parameters of the Christian church, engaged in the task of the church. This is a condition *sine qua non*." Theology must respond to the concrete and actual questions and needs of the church, speaking the language of the pew, and feeding biblical insights into the minds and hearts of the faithful.[4]

The search for truth and a knowledge of truth are of pivotal importance. Scripture presents knowledge as one of the essential elements of the redemptive process. Isaiah's messianic prophecy declares that "by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous" (Isa 53:11), while, through Hosea, God laments saying: "My people are destroyed for the lack of knowledge" (Hos 4:6). The people of God, therefore, are not a group of ignorant lunatics. The OT priests, prophets, and Levites were charged to instruct and educate (Exod 18:20, Mic 4:2, Mal 2:7), and the ministry of Jesus and his disciples consisted primarily of teaching and preaching (Matt 7:29, 1 Tim 4:11).

But the human predicament is not simply a result of misinformation and ignorance. Education alone cannot change human behavior nor transform the character, as Plato taught. Knowledge alone "puffs up" (1 Cor 8:1) and pride is at the core of sinful human tendencies.[5] The highly educated terrorists, criminals, and miserable, lost, homeless intellectuals are the evidence of that truth. "Go and teach," says the Master, inform all, from the squatter towns to the palaces, that there is but one way back to abundant life, to meaningful existence, to communion with self and others, by trusting God as one trusts a father.

Theological jargon and preaching cliches can also prove a hindrance to bridging the gap between ignorance and knowledge of truth. Highly sophisticated vocabulary may impress hearers and yield respect from peers, but it can also hamper communication, even between the theological sciences themselves and, worse, between theologians and the church. Frequently used terms, such as salvation, love, forgiveness, repentance, and grace, need

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[3]Emil Brunner, *La Doctrine Chrétienne de Dieu* (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1964); my translation.

[4]K. Barth, *Esquisse d'une Dogmatique* (Neuchatel: Delachaux & Nestle, 1968), 7; my translation.

[5]Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Nature and Destiny of Man* (New York: Scribner's, 1964), 3.

clarification and fresh articulation in order to be relevant for everyday living.

Some methods of interpretation can work against bridging the gap between ignorance and knowledge of biblical truth. John Frame, for example, claims that "The meaning of Scripture is application."[6] Since theology does not seek to discover abstract truth in itself, it is "the application of the Word of God by persons to all areas of life."[7] This method is safe only if and when we have heard the biblical message in its completeness and clarity. A hasty jump into the application of the text may, in fact, perpetuate ignorance.

The Gap between Knowledge and Action

What happened to the thousands who had the privilege of hearing Jesus? No doubt they were impressed (John 7:46), but we have no reports or statistics of conversions or baptisms, as found in the book of Acts. It seems significant that even Jesus' audiences experienced the gap between *knowing* and *doing*. Could it be that, prompted by such concerns, Jesus once said that just *hearing* his words profits little? "Every one who *hears* these words of mine and does not *do* them will be like a foolish man who built his house upon the sand" (Matt 7:24-27; emphasis added). Head knowledge needs realization, incarnation, historicization. Theory must receive legs, arms, pulse, and breath. However, there are many obstacles to such a realization.

The claims of the traditional method of interpretation, that exegesis (description) comes first and application last, may be problematic as well. Krister Stendahl makes this cogent statement: "When the biblical theologian becomes primarily concerned with the present meaning, he implicitly or explicitly loses his enthusiasm . . . for the descriptive task."[8] The theologian is tempted to jump too quickly to action. Consequently, the two phases of exegesis and application must not be comingled or "the Bible will not exert maximum influence."[9]

There is much to say about the importance of letting Scripture speak fully before an application is made. Too often subjective concerns interfere and we put our own meaning into the text, the very thing that the last words of the book of Revelation forbid under the penalty of a curse (Rev 22:18-19). However, Stendahl's approach may unintentionally separate the text too far from the application in the mind of a theologian. Is it possible or even advisable to become so throughly detached from the present context as to preempt the possibility of personal confrontation with the message as the grasping of its strangeness happens? Is such a spontaneous impact always an evil thing? It seems that striving for objectivity must not handicap the

[6]John Frame, *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God* (Phillipsburg: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1987), 67, 97.

[7]Ibid., 80-84.

[8]Krister Stendahl, "Biblical Theology, Contemporary," *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, ed. George A Buttrick, et al. (Nashville: Abingdon, 1962), 1:419-422.

[9]Ibid.

interpretation by producing a brilliant "left brain" exactness that would impair absorption of the message into daily life. Some of those experiences of encounter with the text can never be recovered later, and such interpretations may prove less user-friendly and widen the gap between knowledge and action, rather than bridging it.

The gap between the knowledge of doctrines and the actions informed by them can ensue from theology itself. Concern for the actual conduct of a Christian is lessened by the sacramental view of sanctification or formalism. If sins are atoned for by a mere eating and drinking of the emblems, and if the sacramental bread and wine work *ex opere operato*, the Christian believer and his or her actions are distanced from the responsibility of acting in harmony with God's will. One may feel less concerned about lifestyle issues. However, sins happen on the level of actions, which need cleansing and forgiveness.

Similar dynamics may be operating in tradition, where justification overshadows sanctification. If salvation comes to humans by Jesus alone, if we can do nothing to attain righteousness, if the death of Christ has paid our debt and completed our right to adoption as sons and daughters of God, and if all one needs to do is to believe and live this new status that is freely offered, that is good news indeed! But that also opens the way for the corrupted, sinful soul to see the grace of God as expensive to him, but cheap to the sinner.

> Cheap grace means grace as a doctrine, a principle, a system. It means forgiveness of sins proclaimed as a general truth, the love of God taught as the Christian "conception" of God. An intellectual assent to the idea is held to be of itself sufficient to secure remission of sins. The Church which holds the correct doctrine of grace has, it is supposed, *ipso facto* a part in that grace. In such a Church the world finds a cheap covering for its sins; no contrition is required, still less any real desire to be delivered from sin.[10]

Fear of legalism can also contribute to the distance between truth and life. When Christian standards of behavior and obedience to God and his will are set aside, unpopular theology gives way to antinomianism. It is claimed that God is not concerned with specifics. He gave humanity broad principles and freedom to navigate within them. But as Daniel M. Doriani states: "Fear of legalism should not foster a nebulous idealism that never actually says 'Do this, not that.'"[11] Wolfgang Schrage reminds that

> Beyond all doubt Jesus demanded not just a new attitude, a rethinking and an inward conversion, but concrete and specific obedience—not in the form of a universal moral appeal to the human conscience, but in concrete injunctions. What Jesus requires is not the relationship of the soul to its God, not inward renewal, but totality of the person, including concrete actions.[12]

Disjunction between God's law and love has similar effects on practicing

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[10]Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship* (London: SCM Press, 1959), 35.

[11]Daniel M Doriani, *Putting the Truth to Work* (Phillipsburg: Presbyterian and Reformed, 2001), 125.

[12]Wolfgang Schrage, *The Ethics of the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982), 44.

biblical teachings. Ellen G. White describes this tendency:

> Satan deceives many with the plausible theory that God's love for His people is so great that He will excuse sin in them; he represents that while the threatenings of God's word are to serve a certain purpose in His moral government, they are never to be literally fulfilled. But in all His dealings with His creatures God has maintained the principles of righteousness by revealing sin in its true character—by demonstrating that its sure result is misery and death. The unconditional pardon of sin never has been, and never will be . . . that so-called benevolence which would set aside justice is not benevolence but weakness.[13]

Dichotomy between God's law and his love is unbiblical. Doriani insists that "Generalized beneficence towards others ('Everybody, I love you') is not love. The law of God indicates which acts are loving, and which are not. Love fulfills the law" (Rom 13:10; Matt 22:37-40).[14]

Bridging the Gap between Knowing, Doing, and Being

Both *thinking* and *acting* impact the human *being*. Proverbs 23:7 states that "as he thinketh in his heart, so is he"(KJV). Thinking is not a secondary function of the mind. My thinking determines my inner mood and my self-concept. Norman Vincent Peale demonstrated the power of positive thinking on the quality of human life, but more recent counseling literature emphasizes the impact that "self-talk" can have on human character and quality of life.

Moreover, actions impact character because repeated actions form habits, and repeated habits create virtues or vices. Paul, in Rom 7:17-24, notes how engagement in sinful behavior materializes another entity in the human psyche that makes war against its host. The presence of sin confronts Paul in a pseudoontological fashion, dehumanizing and highjacking him. Thus Aristotle could say that "We become just by doing just acts; temperate by doing temperate acts; brave by doing brave acts."[15]

The first step toward a theological contribution to bridging the chasm between doctrine and the quality of being is to recognize that the biblical text is unlike any other piece of literature. The impact of nineteenth-century Post-Enlightenment theology must be dealt with first.

Contemporary theologians would do well to eavesdrop on Christ's conversation with his disciples. Speaking about the nature of his words, Jesus says: "It is the spirit that gives life, the flesh is of no avail; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life" (John 6:63). Exegeting and interpreting the biblical text requires us to keep in mind the creative power of the inspired Word. It is not outside of the human being, and thus not an intrusion. If it feels

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[13]Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets* (Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1970), 522.

[14]Doriani, 124.

[15]Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics* 1103, trans. Martin Ostwald (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1962), 34.

strange, as Stendahl claims, it is not because of the Word's inadequacy. The reason is that to the extent we are deformed by sin, to that same extent the Word will seem alien to us. It is not foreign to life, *it is life* (Deut 30:11-14).

This implies that a theologian cannot assume a superior posture vis-à-vis the text. Understanding implies standing under the Word. The message must be communicated in spite of its unpleasantness, just as a physician's diagnosis and/or therapy must be faithfully indicated and applied. Paul directs Timothy to divide the word of truth "rightly" (2 Tim 2:15), whether it is pleasant, "in season," or not (2 Tim 3:2-5).

Gabriel Marcel has drawn a distinction between *fidelity* and *constancy* in religious life.[16] When lifestyle illustrates fidelity, the entire being is involved, including beliefs. A person becomes willing to go as far as necessary in his or her service to God. Constancy, on the other hand, refers to a mere conformity, in which a person is not involved in the deepest sense. Jonah, for example, mentally accepted God's will to go to Nineveh, yet he was not willing to accept God's indiscriminate mercy toward the Ninevites following their repentance. Outwardly his actions showed conformity to God's plan, but he diverged as soon as deeper fidelity and trust were required of him. The gap between actions and being is then determined by the quality of commitment. By the same token, a theologian's deep commitment in his or her religious experience will express theory as practicable, and practice as faithful to biblical truth.

The author of the book of Hebrews wrote to the Christians in Rome, asking them to measure the standard and the extent of their commitment. He notes that believers have seen how far some of the heroes, such as Abraham, Daniel, Jeremiah, and even Rahab, were willing to go in their practice of faith. They were not always the picture of fidelity. They often struggled at the level of constancy (e.g., Gen 20:1-18); but then there were moments of triumph, such as Abraham's encounter with God on Mount Moriah (Gen 22). A theologian who has not experienced Heb 11 on his or her own might be prone to set himself or herself apart as a standard and thus perpetuate the gap between the teachings of God's Word and Christian life.

As theologians focus on their work by asking, "What did these words mean?" followed by "What does this mean for us today?" they cannot limit the definition of the word "means" to a theoretical, cognitive, or epistemological sense. Rather, theologians must discipline themselves and ask, "What should I do now, given this information? What shall my readers do now, given this truth?" Miroslav Volf and Dorothy C. Bass concur:

> Today rapid social change and intense spiritual restlessness evoke fierce yearning in many people, in our neighborhoods and around the world. Some observers see this yearning as a quest for meaning, others as longing for spiritual consciousness or experience. Important as these quests are, we think that they arise from a deeper longing, longing for a life that adds up to

[16]Gabriel Marcel, *Creative Fidelity*, trans. Robert Rosenthal (New York: Noonday Press, 1964).

something that is in a deep sense good for oneself, for other people, and for all creation. As Christians, the two of us affirm that such a way of life—right down to the specific words, gestures, and situations of which it is woven—finds its fullest integrity, coherence and fittingness insofar as it embodies a grateful human response to God's presence and promises.[17]

Conclusion

The work of a theologian can use occasional examination. The search for truth is the essential *first* step in the task of theology. If occasional attempts to devote sustained thought to the meaning, application, and significance of a particular Christian belief and the practices that embody that belief are not undertaken, such practices can become hollow, insignificant, and ultimately unpersuasive—even to those who undertake such practices with diligence and love.[18] The gap that ensues can become scandalous.[19]

This occasional self-searching effort made by theologians is indispensable. It is significant and troublesome to hear from our pulpits and read in some publications that doctrines are not important. What matters the most is to have a close and deep relationship with God. Such comments should be taken as a clarion call to the church's theologians. It is a call to us to present biblical doctrines to our hearers and readers as a way of living, not only as a way of understanding. Without theology and doctrine, what does "relationship" mean? What sort of God do we speak about? If our theologizing is not clear as to what we shall do about the well-articulated truth, our work is far from finished. For when God sends his Word to his people, it must not return to him empty because it is too hard to understand, too esoteric, or too theoretical. It must not return to him without accomplishing the task for which he is sending it.

[17]Miroslav Volf and Dorothy C. Bass, eds, *Practicing Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 16.

[18]David S. Cunningham, *The Practice of Trinitarian Theology* (Malden: Blackwell, 1998), 8.

[19]A glaring example can be found in the theology of apartheid. Consider Abraham Kuyper's claim that racial diversity is God-given and that each race has a right to maintain its identity. In addition, he insisted that Christ did not die for every human being. Such claims opened the doors for apartheid policies of hierarchical ordering of economics, politics, and social standing, and justified negative discrimination against the "non-whites" (*Particular Grace: A Defense of God's Sovereignty in Salvation* [Granville: Reformed Free Publishing, 2001], 22-56).

ACADEMIC WRITING AND
THEOLOGICAL INQUIRY

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Introduction

Academic writing and research in the seminary context or the undergraduate religion classroom can, at times, feel disconnected from both the spiritual formation of the writer and the task of ministry. A better understanding of theological inquiry as a spiritual discipline and the community of inquiry in which knowledge is communicated and formed could provide a context in which that disconnect may be addressed.

Two approaches to teaching academic writing and research in theological education have been discussed. First, Nancy Vyhmeister defines research as "the search for truth—for God is truth—whether it be historical, scientific, or theological—it is all God's truth."[1] For Vyhmeister, truth is objective, centered in God, and is something to be sought.

Barry Hamilton suggests an alternative approach to the teaching of research methods that focuses on the writer. He notes that

> the research project as a theological enterprise does not stand as an isolated object, but rather integrates the researcher's vocation into his/her spiritual and intellectual formation. The researcher must ask, "What is God calling me to do in this project? How does my work as a researcher relate to my life's journey with God? How has God led me thus far? How will this project influence the course of this journey? How will this project shape my character? Will the outcome be congruent with the vocation to which God has called me?"[2]

Thus, for Hamilton, the value of research relates to the person.

A comparison of these two approaches demonstrates that, for Vyhmeister, truth is to be found outside and above us—it is a process of discovery, while Hamilton's approach focuses on the spiritual formation of the writer and can be understood as reflecting a process of spiritual growth. A third approach, which I will develop in this article, views academic writing and theological inquiry as a ministry, in which the writer is served by and, in turn, serves the community of faith for the purpose of building a corporate knowledge of God. Research is service and the dissemination of the knowledge of God in the corporate experience of the community of faith. Research-method pedagogy will be enriched when all three research approaches are incorporated in the student's understanding of the academic-writing task. Because I believe that the

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[1]Nancy Jean Vyhmeister, *Quality Research Papers: For Students of Religion and Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 2.

[2]Barry Hamilton, "A Model for Teaching Research Methods in Theological Education," *Summary of Proceedings of the American Theological Library Association* 57 (2003): 158.

approaches of Vyhmeister and Hamilton are valid and should be included in the academic writing process, I will not attempt to critique their approaches here. Therefore, this article will focus on the third aspect of theological research—theological inquiry as a service to the community of faith.

I will use Albert Borgmann's definition of information to provide a thematic outline for this article. A functional definition of information, as articulated by Borgmann, states that "INTELLIGENCE provided, a PERSON is informed by a SIGN about some THING within a certain CONTEXT."[3] When Borgmann's definition is applied to the question of theological inquiry in the context of academic writing three questions emerge: What is the THING that academic theological inquiry is about? What is the SIGN that academic theological inquiry points toward? and What is the CONTEXT of academic theological inquiry?

Theological Inquiry and the Community of Faith

What is the "THING" that academic writing along the lines of theological inquiry is about? To begin, theological inquiry, for the purposes of this article, refers to the systematic and intentional seeking of a knowledge of God through the Scriptures, including exegesis (the text itself), theology (the themes of Scripture), church history (the cumulative response of the community of faith to Scripture), and practical theology (the application of Scripture in the life of the community of faith). Jesus stated: "But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given you as well" (Matt 6:33).[4] Each person, as an individual, is invited to "Come to me" (Matt 11:28). There is no substitute for this personal experience.

The process of gaining a knowledge of God has been termed "spiritual formation," an experience of special interest in theological education. This formation happens in a variety of settings, including the development and application of personal spiritual disciplines in the individual life and in community worship.[5] Hamilton suggests that academic writing should also be

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[3]Albert Borgmann, *Holding on to Reality: The Nature of Information at the Turn of the Millennium* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 22, emphasis original. The term "information" may be understood from a number of perspectives. For example, information literacy is the defining pedagogical mission for librarians. Studies on the history of the book examine the impact of technological advances on the dissemination of information from the earliest clay tablets to the internet. Philosophers debate the interaction of information and knowledge and the mind. Sociologists explore the social impact of information and the political aspects of information sharing. Composition teachers focus on disciplinary-discourse formation and rhetoric, preparing novices to enter the world of scholarly communication. In the midst of this published give and take, information theorists seek to define information and to explain how it functions.

[4]Unless otherwise noted, all biblical references are from the *NIV*.

[5]Keith Beasley-Topliffe notes that "Spiritual formation can include all the ways people seek either to grow toward greater consonance with a religious tradition or to form others within that tradition. Christian spiritual formation is the conscious effort

integrated into the process of spiritual formation so that the student views "theological research as a means for engaging the whole person and insuring the integration of spiritual formation and knowledge formation components of the seminary curriculum, as well as enhancing timely completion of projects. And instead of completing assignments that constitute an alien 'other', seminarians could pursue cognitively relevant research that would reflect their path to knowledge as a journey with God."[6] Thus, in the context of theological education, research writing becomes one way among many to "seek first his kingdom and his righteousness." Theological inquiry is, then, based on the primary text that reveals God—the Scriptures.

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Biblical Evidence for the Social Aspect
of Theological Inquiry

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Paul's conversion in Acts 9 illustrates the social aspect of information-sharing in theological inquiry. Saul, who was on his way to Damascus with arrest warrants for the followers of Jesus, was suddenly confronted with "a light from heaven." "He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?' 'Who are you, Lord?' Saul asked. 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,' he replied. 'Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do'" (Acts 9:3-6).

That moment of divinely inspired insight altered Saul's perception of what he was doing. His former zeal was based on his understanding of the law of God, as he had been educated as a Jew (Acts 22:3). Supernatural revelation, however, provided an additional important piece of information: the identity of Jesus. For everything else he needed to know as a Christian, Saul was sent to Damascus to be informed by Ananias and the church.[7]

The blindness Saul experienced as a result of his experience on the road to Damascus, while physically real, can be understood as a metaphor for his lack of understanding and his false beliefs about Jesus. While zealous in his persecution of the followers of Jesus, he fully believed he was doing the right

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to mold oneself or others in the traditions of Christian spirituality. Thus Christian formation can begin with family spirituality and memorization of simple verbal prayers. Sunday school classes and worship services continue formation through reading and studying scripture; singing hymns; receiving the sacraments of baptism and Holy Communion; and joining or hearing prayers of adoration, confession, thanksgiving, petition, and intercession" ("Formation, Spiritual," *The Upper Room Dictionary of Christian Spiritual Formation* [Nashville: Upper Room Books, 2003], 109-110).

[6]Hamilton, 157.

[7]Ellen G. White states: "The marvelous light that illumined the darkness of Saul was the work of the Lord; but there was also a work that was to be done for him by the disciples. Christ had performed the work of revelation and conviction; and now the penitent was in a condition to learn from those whom God had ordained to teach His truth" (*Acts of the Apostles in the Proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ* [Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1911], 121).

thing and honoring God. Saul was spiritually blind. It took the ministry of the Christian community of faith to restore his sight.

Therefore, just as Saul was sent to the church in Damascus to be informed about the kingdom of God and God's righteousness, so too the theological researcher is sent to the community of faith to be instructed. In the context of academic writing, the community of faith includes the written documents of the historic church. Throughout history sincere Christians have struggled to apply the Scriptures in their personal lives and in their communities and to subsequently record their thoughts and experiences. As Chris Armstrong summarizes: "All of the 'saints' worth reading share this: they followed their Lord, offered up their gifts, and tried to discern their paths—right in the very midst of all that was good, bad, and ugly in their surrounding cultures."[8] The information these writings provide can be useful in theological inquiry, either by enhancing the understanding or by clarifying understanding through the study of differing perspectives.

In addition, the Scriptures warn of error and heresy in the community of faith (2 Pet 2:1). Being able to differentiate between truth and error is critical for theological inquiry. This distinction can be worked out through dialogue with other thought leaders, whether from the past or present, using the medium of the written word. While individually the limitations of being human may lead to incomplete or incorrect conclusions, corporately the combined efforts of many can lead to a greater appreciation of truth.

The Seventh-day Adventist Perspective for the Social Aspect of Theological Inquiry

Theological inquiry from the Seventh-day Adventist perspective is informed by the "Great Controversy" theme[9] and the belief in the imminent return of Jesus. These themes require an intentional emphasis on the Scriptures as the primary source of information about God. As Fernando Canale affirms: "In the church to think is to do theology. In Adventism, 'to do theology' is not to understand tradition and beliefs of the church or our own personal faith, but instead, to understand biblical revelation. This is the real basis for our identity as a people."[10] Thus, while a researcher may narrowly analyze and evaluate any word of Scripture or any written text in the history of God's people, the "Great Controversy" theme and the second coming of Christ should permeate the

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[8]Chris Armstrong, "Grateful to the Dead: The Diary of a Christian History Professor #2: 'All Things to All Men' or 'Be Ye Separate'?" *Christian History and Biography*, October, 2005, <www.christianitytoday.com/history/newsletter/2005/oct27.html>.

[9]The great controversy theme refers to the cosmic struggle between good and evil through all ages until Christ's Second Coming, at which time sin and evil will be destroyed.

[10]Fernando Canale, "Thinking Biblically and the Pastoral Ministry," *Reflections: A BRI Newsletter*, October 2005, 3.

entire process of theological inquiry.

Canale concludes that "Adventist pastors may choose to face the complexities of ministry not from the dictates of contemporary culture or evangelical tradition but from the dictates of eternal truth as revealed in Scripture. By realizing that the central responsibility of ministry is to help people to 'think in the light of Scripture,' Adventist pastors will become truly ministers of the power of God. This trend will not only increase biblical literacy and develop a healthy sense of identity, but also unify the church in its message and mission."[11]

Canale's conclusion was arrived at in conversation within the Adventist community of faith, which is seeking first the kingdom of heaven and which is in dialogue with many in the larger community of faith. The ability to clarify this emphasis on Scripture and establish it as a marker of Seventh-day Adventist identity assumes knowledge of a broad spectrum of theological writings. Identity is achieved as much by contrasting characteristics as by comparing them.

From Information to Knowledge

One further distinction needs to be made concerning theological inquiry. Collecting information in and of itself is not enough. Information must be used to build knowledge. Often, the terms "information" and "knowledge" are used synonymously, but, for the purposes of this discussion, John Seely Brown and Paul Duguid's distinctions between "information" and "knowledge" are useful:

> First, knowledge usually entails a knower. That is, where people treat information as independent and more-or-less self-sufficient, they seem more inclined to associate knowledge with someone. . . . Second, given this personal attachment, knowledge appears harder to detach than information. People treat information as a self-contained substance. It is something people pick up, possess, pass around, put in a database, lose, find, write down, accumulate, count, compare, and so forth. Knowledge, by contrast, doesn't take as kindly to ideas of shipping, receiving, and quantification. It is hard to pick up and hard to transfer. . . . Third, one reason knowledge may be so hard to give and receive is that knowledge seems more by way of assimilation. Knowledge is something we digest rather than merely hold. It entails the knower's understanding and some degree of commitment. Thus while one often has conflicting information, he or she will not usually have conflicting knowledge.[12]

This pattern of assimilation and commitment is illustrated in the story of Saul's conversion: "Placing his hands on Saul, he [Ananias] said, 'Brother Saul, the Lord—Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here—has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit.' Immediately something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see again.

[11]Ibid., 4.

[12]John Seely Brown and Paul Duguid, *The Social Life of Information* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2002), 119-120.

He got up and was baptized, and after taking some food, he regained his strength" (Acts 9:17-19). Ananias, as a representative of the community of faith, spoke and acted for God. Saul's experience on the road—a schema—provided him with new information. Saul accepted that new information as truth and the scales fell from his eyes, thereby transitioning him from spiritual darkness to light. The geography of his mind was transformed. The first action Saul took following his conversion was to express his commitment to this new knowledge through baptism. He then regained his strength by eating, which can be understood as being metaphorically suggestive of the process of internalizing, digesting, and assimilating truth.

Scholarship and academic writing as a form of theological inquiry can thus be understood as a personal fulfillment of the command of Jesus to seek first the kingdom of heaven and, as such, the writer should "be transformed by the renewing of the mind" (Rom 12:2). Scholarship is an active engagement in the community of faith, past and present, for the purpose of contributing to the collective knowledge and community experience of God. Such community-oriented scholarship is less likely to generate error and heresy because it is open to criticism and correction. From this perspective, it is hoped that student writers can appreciate research assignments in theological education as opportunities for both spiritual growth and ministry.

The Signs and Symbols of the Community of Faith

What is the "SIGN" that academic theological inquiry points toward? In the broadest context, signs that inform are everywhere. Words, linguistic units, are one form of sign that represent meaning. The primary source for transmitting information about God is the Scriptures, which are a symbolic coding of truth consisting of letters formed into words and words combined to make sentences for the purpose of expressing ideas. The cumulative expression of words and their meaningful use is language. Information transmission is thus a function of language.

Biblical Evidence: The Tower of Babel

The power of language is illustrated in the biblical account of Babel (Gen 11:1-9). Rather than spreading out and inhabiting the earth as God had commanded, the people chose to stay together. To defy God, they decided to build a tower that would reach to heaven and there they would make a name for themselves (v. 4). "But the Lord came down to see the city and the tower that the men were building. The Lord said, 'If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other" (vv. 6-7). It took the confusing of the language to disperse the people. United under one language, anything they planned would be possible. Their power lay in the ability to share information as a society.

Douglas S. Robertson illustrates this principle by describing levels of

civilization based on their ability to store and handle information: The first level of civilization relied only on spoken language. Information was stored in the mind of the individual and was shared once at a time in a nonfixed form to those who were close enough to hear. Second, the invention of writing, though limited due to the laborious process of copying, allowed for information to be stored on documents that others could consult. The copies could be altered either through human error or through intentional enhancements, thus no two copies were exactly the same. Third, with the invention of the printing press, a renaissance occurred, in which information could be stored in a fixed format and distributed broadly, with access made simultaneously available to a much larger audience. It is this broad access to information that has made possible the technological and intellectual advances of contemporary society. Fourth, the information explosion caused by the printing revolution is predictive of a new and much larger information explosion due to the computer's ability to store and disseminate information, which, in turn, will impact and change society in as yet unknown ways.[13]

The social crisis at Babel did not happen, however, because of technological breakdowns in the storage and retrieval of information. It can be inferred that attempts to communicate continued, just as before God intervened. The problem came because the people could not "understand each other" (v. 7).

Communication theorists have worked through the quantification and speed of information flow, including the formulation of mathematical formulas. But, as Fred I. Dreske points out, regardless of how much communication takes place, unless there is understanding and unless the equation includes meaning, it does not serve any purpose.[14] Both the sender and the receiver must equally understand the "signs" or "symbols." This shared ability was no longer functional in Babel. The differentiation of languages made communication impossible.

Interpretation and Translation of Signs

Bible translations illustrate the challenge of interpreting and translating signs. Simply substituting words from one language to another is not adequate. Alister E. McGrath describes particular problems the translators of the King James Version faced with the Hebrew Bible because they lacked a knowledge of Hebrew idioms and unique words. As a result, in several passages the translators' efforts do not make sense.[15]

Recent efforts to translate the Bible into non-European languages face equally daunting challenges. David J. Clark uses the experience of the Bible

[13]Douglas S. Robertson, *The New Renaissance: Computers and the Next Level of Civilization* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 20-24.

[14]Fred I. Dretske, *Knowledge and the Flow of Information*, David Hume Series (Stanford: CSLI, 1999), 40-41.

[15]Alister E. McGrath, *In the Beginning: The Story of the King James Bible and How It Changed a Nation, a Language, and a Culture* (New York: Anchor Books, 2002), 230-234.

Society in translating the Bible into Kalmyk and Yakut, languages of Siberia: "Translation problems can be usefully considered in two general categories, linguistic and culture . . . [and in] an area where they intertwine, namely the translation of figurative language."[16] After providing a number of examples, Clark concludes:

> Enough has been said to demonstrate that translating the Bible is very much more than transferring the words of one language into another. Language and culture are intimately connected, and a culture is deeply influenced by the ecological environment and philosophical worldview of its members. The result is that far from being a mechanical task that could be taken over by a machine, the translation of the Bible requires a deep understanding of and empathy with both the source language and culture and the receptor language and culture. It will continue to demand the highest level of skill, creativity, discipline, and commitment on the part of its practitioners.[17]

Disciplinary Discourse

The storage and sharing of information within a specific discipline follows a similar pattern. Eric Sheppard and Trevor Barnes define "disciplinary discourse" as "a network of concepts, statements, and practices that produce a distinct body of knowledge. A disciplinary discourse, for example, would include specialized vocabularies, conceptual and theoretical frameworks, diagrams, variables, and even tables of figures."[18] As an academic discipline, theological inquiry has these elements and can be described as having both a language and a culture. Academic writing in theology should follow the conventions and patterns, the "signs," of the discipline as a component of credibility. Just as the context and the audience should inform the shape of the sermon, so should these also inform academic written work.

Disciplinary discourse has a functional value. Careful participation minimizes the impact of extraneous cultural diversity or ambivalences in community knowledge building. Steve Fuller explains that while some scholars tend

> to suppose that all scientists experience the same kinds of ambivalence, a finer-grained analysis of the concept might reveal that each discipline has a characteristic way of resolving its ambivalences, which, in turn, become the basis on which its cognitive status is evaluated by other disciplines and the public at large. This thesis of *Disciplinary Ambivalence* may be illustrated by considering the multiple *linguistic* functions performed by the discourses of disciplines. Our model, adapted from Popper, specifies four such functions, each associated with a virtue of disciplinary discourse.

[16]David J. Clark, "Minority Language Biblical Translation Work in Russia, Then and Now," in *Sowing the Word: The Cultural Impact of the British and Foreign Bible Society, 1804-2004*, ed. Stephen Bataldan, Kathleen Cann, and John Dean (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2004), 255.

[17]Ibid., 233.

[18]Eric Sheppard and Trevor Barnes, *A Companion to Economic Geography* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), 13.

(j) The virtue of *signaling* is efficiency. A discipline aims to convey the most (new) information per unit of discourse expended.

(k) The virtue of *expressing* is surveyability. A discipline aims to make each step of its reasoning evident in its discourse.

(l) The virtue of *describing* is accuracy. A discipline aims to maximize the total amount of truth conveyed in its discourse.

(m) The virtue of *criticizing* is precision. A discipline aims to maximize the total amount of error eliminated from its discourse.[19]

These four functions of disciplinary discourse contribute to the community of faith's ability to build a knowledge of God. Through the careful adherence to the norms of the discourse, academic writers provide texts that readers can understand efficiently and effectively. Unlike the builders at Babel, it becomes possible to work together because the same language is spoken and the objective of increasing the community's knowledge of God is achieved.

Fuller's proposal brings us back to Jesus as the "Word." This symbol is a metaphor for the incarnation because it embeds Jesus in both language and culture; he is the "Sign" through whom humanity is informed about God. And just as words have been used to preserve information about God in a written, fixed form that has been shared by a community of faith, so also the "Word" is fixed, permanent, unchanging, and is known and shared by a community of faith unbounded by time or culture.

The Role of Scholarship in the Community of Faith

What is the "CONTEXT" of academic theological inquiry? A common perception about scholarship is that the scholar is devoted to writing books and articles on esoteric subjects. For the most part, he or she works alone, relying on written rather than verbal communication. For the uninitiated, much of what is produced seems almost impossible to understand. Thus it may appear that the scholar is an elitist who is set apart from society at large and, while interacting with other scholars, speaks what may seem like a different language.

Granted, the scholar engaged in theological inquiry may examine texts or topics in detail, framing his or her findings by efficiently using disciplinary discourse. But seeking the kingdom of heaven and accepting Jesus as the Word takes place in a context—the community of faith. Just as scholarship in general does not become recognized as such until the results or findings of the inquiries are published and scholarly peers recognize them as valid, so also in the community of faith. Scholarship in theological inquiry implies communication. As Patrick Granfield states: "Christianity is a religion of communication."[20]

Granfield defines communication "as the transmission and interchange of information, as the way we share ideas, feelings, experiences, attitudes, and

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[19]Steve Fuller, *Social Epistemology*, 2d ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002), 201.

[20]Patrick Granfield, "The Theology of Church and Communication," in *The Church and Communication*, ed. Patrick Granfield (Kansas City: Sheed & Ward, 1994), 1.

values with others."[21] This definition implies what he calls the "forum model," which "holds that there is a dynamic relationship between sender and receiver. The receiver actively participates in this dialogic exchange on the basis of experience, understanding, and interpretations. Receiving involves active and creative dialogue by which the message is re-created and interpreted by the receiver."[22] Thus, for Granfield, "the Church is a group of communicating persons, a network of meaning and values, where continual and multiple interactions take place."[23]

Following Granfield's model, the scholar listens to the message of God through the voices of the church in the past and present, is transformed both intellectually and spiritually by the message through the processes of interpretation and assimilation, and then shares the enriched message with others using appropriate methods and conventions of communication. The never-ending cycle continues as the receiver of the message from the scholar is also transformed by the message and, in turn, passes it on to new receivers. Thus the truth of God's revelation in Jesus is handed down from generation to generation throughout time, with each new generation experiencing the transforming power of the gospel as they struggle to understand and apply the message in their new setting. The role of scholarship is that of a servant of the community of faith and scholars who emulate the Spirit of Jesus best serve truth.

Biblical Evidence: An Application of Communication Theory

The Gospels record an incident that relates to Granfield's theory of communication. Human institutions, such as the university and the church, reward the most effective scholars with respect and recognition. Career opportunities are often governed by the objective evaluation of scholarly productivity. In Matt 20:20-28, when the sons of Zebedee asked a favor—to be granted the top positions in the kingdom—from Jesus through their mother, the other disciples became indignant. Jesus replied: "You know the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Matt 20:35-38).

Gerald Gerbrandt clarifies the role of scholar/servant: "Scholars in their scholarship serve the church as they fulfill their unique mandate of being the critical thinkers of the hermeneutical community. On the one side, the mandate of the scholars should be clear; on the other side, they do it not as those who

[21]Ibid., 3.

[22]Ibid.

[23]Ibid., 5.

have the final say or as individuals but as part of a community."[24] This mandate to serve the church through critical thinking suggests that "all aspects of life—the assumptions and traditions of society, the faith and traditions of the church, as well as the customs and 'givens' of the university—must be put under the microscope. Faculty at our church institutions thus must ask difficult and uncomfortable questions, *not because they have a right or freedom to do so, but because it is their responsibility and assignment.*"[25] From this perspective, success as a scholar is not measured merely by productivity and recognition, but by faithfulness to a calling and to the furthering of the mission of the church. Following Jesus, the scholars in theological inquiry seek not to be served, but to serve and to give their lives for the church.

Purposes of Scholarship

One way to clarify the role of scholarship in the community of faith is to define its purposes. Calvin College has done this in their mission statement:

> *Conserving* scholarship promotes understanding of the various Christian traditions in order to provide the Christian community with the integrity, vision, and wisdom needed both to frame and to energize its ongoing work. . . .
>
> *Transforming* scholarship may establish Christian criteria for knowledge or for its application, or may implement those criteria in a particular field in such a way as to challenge the wisdom prevailing there or to show the critical, redemptive, or reconciling power of the Christian faith. . . .
>
> *Enriching* scholarship brings the insights or methods of the arts and sciences to bear on Christian thought and the understanding of creation and culture. Such scholarship can enhance appreciation for God's creation and human experience, expand the fund of human knowledge and wisdom, help Christians engage in proper self-criticism or self-understanding, and enrich the testimony of the Christian message.[26]

Individual scholarly projects in theological inquiry can fulfill any of these purposes. The purpose and function are determined by the nature of the inquiry and the audience for which the findings are prepared. Academic writing presupposes certain expectations concerning subject matter, research methods, and audience (in this case, professional peers). However, permeating the research process is the awareness that the scholar is a servant of the community of faith and is seeking to contribute to the mission of the church. Thus the context of scholarship in theological inquiry is the community of faith.

Conclusion

While Borgmann's definition of knowledge may be useful for discussion purposes, the elements are not discrete. Discussion of the message includes

[24]Gerald Gerbrandt, "Scholars as Servants of the Church," *Direction* 33/2 (2004): 139.

[25]Ibid., 136, emphasis original.

[26]Expanded Statement of Mission: Part II: C. The Mission of Calvin College in Scholarship <www.calvin.edu/ admin/provost/mission/part2c.htm>.

considering the sources that have been preserved, interpreted, and applied within a community of faith. Academic research seeks this knowledge through a better understanding of the Scriptures, the Word incarnate, and through the collective experience of the community of faith throughout time as preserved in written records. Thus the knowledge of the kingdom of heaven is made known through the Scriptures, as mediated through communication within the community of faith. It is in conversation with the historic community of faith that information about God is shared. The systematic and intentional research of scholars fulfills an important function within the church by thinking critically about the community's knowledge of God. This role is an essential ministry that will enable the community to build knowledge and to grow spiritually.

Discussions of scholarly discourse in composition studies and information and communication theory emphasize the role of the community in forming and understanding the signs used to share information. Epistemology reminds us that information must be transformed into knowledge. This applies both to individuals and communities. Finally, in theological inquiry, God is at the center of the process, from message to sign to community. The transformation within the scholar and the community from having information about God to knowing God requires the power of the Holy Spirit. Through the Holy Spirit, God is an active participant in all theological inquiry.

Academic scholarship, then, can be viewed as a calling to a ministry of transforming information that will edify the community of faith. Individual assignments and projects may not appear in and of themselves to contribute much to this vision; however, the cumulative effect of individual and corporate scholarship within the community of faith will lead to a better and richer knowledge of God and his purpose for his people. Research-methods pedagogy and academic-writing assignments, which lead the student to discover truth (what the student *knows*), are also meaningful for the student's spiritual formation (what the student *becomes*). Thus academic writing assignments prepare the student to *do*, thereby aiding him or her in a ministry of corporate knowledge building and communication that edifies the community of faith.

DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

MORAL IMPLICATIONS OF DARWINIAN EVOLUTION FOR HUMAN PREFERENCE IN CHRISTIAN ETHICS: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS AND RESPONSE TO THE "MORAL INDIVIDUALISM" OF JAMES RACHELS

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Date Completed: May 2007

The Topic

This dissertation explores and analyzes James Rachels's efforts to prove that Darwin's theory of evolution has catastrophic implications for traditional Christian ethics.

The Purpose

The purpose of this dissertation is to explore and evaluate the question of whether or not protology affects ethics. In particular, I propose to distill the implications of evolutionary views of origins for ethics, mainly in reference to the issue of human preference over nature in ethics. I propose to disclose Rachels's understanding of the implications of evolution on human preference ethics (such as biblical-Christian ethics), and to evaluate his views on the basis of his internal consistency, and the accuracy of his use of Christian history and biblical data.

The Sources

In order to accomplish this purpose, many sources were consulted, starting with the works of Rachels himself. Additional authors include J. V. Langmead Casserly, Richard Dawkins, Stephen J. Gould, John F. Haught, Cornelius Hunteer, Jerry Korsmeyer, Andrew Linzey, John Rawls, Tom Regan, Lewis Regenstein, Michael Ruse, Richard Ryder, Peter Singer, Gerhard von Rad, Stephen Webb, Lynn White Jr., and Benjamin Wiker.

Conclusions

First, Rachels is essentially correct in his analysis of the impact of Darwinian evolution on Christian ethics. Second, possibly his greatest contribution is identifying Darwin's rejection of teleology as the philosophical nerve of Darwinism. Third, he correctly identifies two key pillars of human preference in Christian ethics and shows how evolution undermines each pillar. Fourth, the work of evolutionary theologians verifies Rachels's assertion that any kind of theism supportable by Darwin's theory cannot sustain a traditional Christian view of morality. Fifth, the dependence of evolutionary theologians on Process Theology undermines the grounding of God's moral authority by limiting his foreknowledge. Sixth, Wiker is correct in his assertion that cosmology affects morality, and that changing from a biblical cosmology to a materialist one cannot help but eventually undermine Christian ethics. Seventh, I conclude that, in the evolutionary system, rights become grounded in individual functionality, whereas in Scripture they are granted by God, with the latter providing a more secure foundation for grounding rights.

Brode, Douglas. *From Walt to Woodstock: How Disney Created the Counterculture.* Austin: University of Texas Press, 2004. xxxiv + 252 pp. Paper, $22.95.

Douglas Brode's thesis, early expressed, exhaustively explored, advanced with conviction and competence along multiple lines of argument, is that contrary to popular conventionalization and/or trivializations of Walt Disney, this historic character of America's twentieth century was no child's-play artisan of film. His movies, TV programming, and theme parks significantly contributed to the transformation of mid-1950 American kids into late 1960s rebels. Brode proposes a three-pronged exposition of his thesis, through a close textual analysis of individual films, comparison of movies as parts of a whole, and sociopolitical analysis of Disney's work within its historical context (x). Brode agrees with cinema historian Peter Noble that "The ordinary filmgoer has his whole outlook formulated by the film; politically, socially, [and] intellectually he forms his opinions 'unconsciously' through experiences—the most important of them in childhood—with popular entertainment" (cited xxvi-xxvii; cf. Peter Nobel, *The Negro in Films* [New York: Arno, 1970], 8). It is by targeting the most impressionable of all—children—that Disney has impacted multiple American generations.

The notion that Walt Disney Pictures is nothing more than innocuous children's entertainment is a myth, though so enduring that it seems absurd or worse to even question it. In a 1997 protest by the religious right, Southern Baptist Convention president Richard Land could complain that Disney, under Michael Eisner, was no longer "Mom & Dad's Disney" (cited xxi). Brode treats the myth as the fruit of Disney's mastery. For the truth is that "When studied individually and then as an oeuvre, his movies offered a homogenized society the big bad wolf of an iconoclastic ideology. Disney films challenged the impressionable audience's acceptance of the status quo, puckishly doing so in the sheep's clothing of soothingly conventional family films" (xxvii).

As with many great artistic innovators, Disney passed through the three-stage institutionalization of acclamation, repudiation, and rehabilitation and vindication. For Brode the value and consequence of Disney's contribution remains unappreciated so long as we miss the prescience of his prophetic anticipation of the Woodstock generation of flower power, rock 'n' roll, and hippiedom. Disney, Brode contends, gave the world long-hair youth rebellion before the Beatles—through Jimmy Bean (Kevin Corcoran) in *Pollyanna* (1960). It would be four years (1964) before the Beatles first appeared on the Ed Sullivan Show. *Pollyanna* "predated, predicted, and, more significant still, defended . . . a coming rebellion in which youth stands up to the adult world" (xxvii).

Significantly, in regard to rebellion, Disney movies, whether set in the Scotland of the 1400s (*Rob Roy*, 1954) or pastoral America (*So Dear to My Heart*, 1948; the Johnny Appleseed character of *Melody Time*, 1948; *Davy Crockett*, 1954-55), Disney dared to exploit the "inherently rebellious implications" of dance (6). Daringly, in terms of respect for standards and the status quo, he gave the world, in *The Parent Trap* (1961), its first example of a fusion between rock and classical music. And in *Fantasia* (1940) he supplied the ultimate trip movie to highflying potheads an astonishing thirty years before Stanley Kubrick's 1968 work, *2001: A Space Odyssey*.

Disney's independent radicalism extends to socialist sympathies expressed in a solid preference for faithful labor and a deep despising of the worship of money. As seen in *The Story of Robin Hood and His Merrie Men* (1952), Disney's ideal is a "progressive-populist" vision, akin to that of Kirk Douglas's Spartacus in Stanley Kubrick's opus of the same

name (1960), rather than an "elitist-imperialist" one (61), such as that of Charlton Heston in Anthony Mann's *El Cid* (1961). Disney's perspective of the world fascinated Lenin's chief cinematographer Sergei Eisenstein and terrified Frank Lloyd Wright, despite a belief strongly shared with the latter in the importance of harmony with nature. Wright's visit to Disney's study ended in horror as the architect retreated, exclaiming: "Democracy? That's not democracy, it's *mob*ocracy!" [cited 29]. Disney would later be responsible for the wording of the Motion Picture Alliance charter that called for "a revolt" against movements such as Communism and Fascism that sought to undermine the American way of life. Nevertheless, the Alliance's Communist-baiting era saw him insisting that his name be struck from the officers' list (37).

Brode proposes that Disney was never a window on his epoch. The man who could be enthusiastically Democratic with Franklin Roosevelt, but a registered Republican in later years, was consistently label-resistant, a rebel against the very traits that permit, produce, and permeate the conservatism of categorization. He could satirize the superficiality of small-town America when others hailed it as a proof of wholesomeness (*Pollyanna*); his *Susie, the Little Blue Coupe*, on a car retired because of its advanced years, is anti-ageist as early as 1952; *No Hunting* (1955) is remarkable as the first antigun cartoon. Other Disney movies contextualize his perspective on his message—*Westward Ho the Wagons* (1956), *Johnny Tremain* (1957), and *The Liberty Story* (1957). Any Disney message on guns in *Westward Ho* is nuanced by character Bissonette, whose sale of rifles to the Indians involves both commercialism's self-interest and a validation of the dignity of Indian personhood, otherwise so often despised. At the same time, last-resort violence is compelled in *Johnny Tremain* and *The Liberty Story* "against any system that denies basic human rights" (69).

Finally, the director's *Lady and the Tramp* (1955), along with two adaptations of Mark Twain's 1881 work, *The Prince and the Pauper* (1962, 1990), both assault the prejudiced elitism of rules of status, whether in love or economics. Disney's primary goal was to bring all people together across every barrier of class, social status, or prejudice. For example, he used directorial-fusion technique to blend rock and classical music in *The Parent Trap* and the "formal (upper-class) literary approach" with the "informal (working-class) ballad tradition" (55) in *Pinocchio* (1940), *Robin Hood* (1952), and *Davy Crockett: King of the Wild Frontier* (1955). For Brode, Disney was a destroyer of all barriers: sociologically, between privileged and destitute, commoner and sophisticate; cinematographically, between animation and live action; epistemologically, between fact and fiction; theologically, between traditional creationist belief and the new scientific insights of Darwin (e.g., *Fantasia* as the ultimate visualization of the law of the jungle; *Pollyanna* as the teacher of pantheism; and *The Three Lives of Thomasina* as the introduction to reincarnation) (118-123). Brode states: "Disney films consistently undermine the Judeo-Christian vision of death, ingrained into the American psyche from the puritan era to the twentieth century" (187).

Brode effectively cuts through Disney's reputation as a conventional filmmaker, showing him to be the father of the sixties counter-culture revolution, leaving the reader to ponder the deeper meanings behind an apparently innocuous medium of children's programming.

Andrews University   LAEL CAESAR

Damsteegt, P. Gerard. *The Great Controversy Experience: First Century Christianity.* Vol. 1 Multimedia CD-ROM. Berrien Springs: Christian Heritage Media, 2004. $59.99.

The Great Controversy Experience: First Century Christianity is the first volume of a four-part series of CD-ROMs intended to highlight crucial periods of the Christian church. P.

Gerard Damsteegt, the author and producer, is Associate Professor of Church History at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, Andrews University. Damsteegt leads every summer (since 1994) "Great Controversy Tours" to the major European historical sites mentioned by Ellen G. White in her classic work of Christian history, *The Great Controversy*. In the course of preparing for these tours, he has accumulated a large collection of photographs and historical documents, which serve as the basis for the current CD-ROM project and that help to bring alive and give a more enduring nature to the Great Controversy tour experience.

The design of this CD-ROM is excellent, with an impressive richness and variety of options and resources. The opening scene shows an ancient Graeco-Roman building, the sides of which are covered by fog. This opening scene might easily lead first-time users to assume that the quality might not be as impressive as it could be. This wrong impression is erased once the researcher enters the museum and is surrounded by an atmosphere that gives the actual feeling of what it would be to visit an ancient building. The floor, walls, columns, and the decoration of the rooms seem to be real.

Once in the Lobby, the visitor will find a helpdesk and options for entering the Museum to the left or the Library to the right. Within the Museum, the program leads the visitor to a Gallery where he or she can choose to see four museum displays: "Jesus' Life," "Apostles' Church," "Jerusalem's Fall," and "The Persecutions." When the visitor clicks on one of the displays, a short narration with soft background music plays. New options appear when displayed objects are clicked on and each object is briefly described.

A small sundial appears at each of the four museum displays, which when clicked will lead the visitor to the timeline of that era, including a detailed historical background based on the prophecies of Daniel. Several different symbols are used in the timelines to indicate important people of the period and major events related to that time. My first impression was to find the symbols to be somewhat confusing. However, with a bit of patience, I discovered a table of symbols at the top right of the screen that explains the meaning of each symbol. By clicking on each symbol on the timeline, I was led directly to a written explanation in the *Encyclopedia of Persons, Places, Events*, which is kept in the Library.

Besides the Museum, the visitor might choose to walk into the Library, which contains three major works: Josephus's *Wars of the Jews*, the first chapter of E. G. White's *Great Controversy*, and Damsteegt's *Encyclopedia of Persons, Places, Events*. The fact that the pages of these books can be turned adds a nice touch. The chapter of White's *Great Controversy* is divided into eight parts and narrated in audio, with pictures that change as the narration continues. The Library contains, under the title "Sources," an extensive Bibliography of the CD-ROM, as well as image and photo credits. While the background music and William Fagal's text narration are outstanding, the user has the option of switching off the audible narration and just reading the text itself.

The whole project is based upon the notion that human history unfolds itself within the framework of the great cosmic controversy between God and truth, and Satan and error. Biblical prophecies are understood as being of a predictive nature and requiring a historicist hermeneutic in order to be correctly understood. Damsteegt makes extensive use of Jewish, Roman, and Greek primary sources to describe the ancient world with its kings and emperors and to give an accurate context of the experience of the early Christians. The most important literary contribution of this project is his own *Encyclopedia of Persons, Places, Events*, which comprises much of his original research on the subject.

The graphics, photos, images, and other illustrations are excellent throughout, providing the necessary background important for comprehending the subject. Especially impressive is the three-dimensional Temple of Jerusalem at the "Jerusalem's

Fall" display. The menu bar on the right side of the screen is complete and helps the visitor to easily navigate through the displays. Well-defined maps add a geographical dimension to the topics covered. A helpful expanding line shows gradually, for example, the conquests of Alexander the Great and Paul's missionary journeys. Yet, that animation could be improved so that the screen could move automatically whenever the cursor moves into those parts of the map not shown on the screen without the manual use of the scrollbar. In addition, the maps of Palestine seem to leave a blank strip at the bottom and the right side of the screen that could be either erased or filled up. Also worth mentioning from a more technical perspective is the four-page "User's Manual." Additional technical support is provided at www.christianheritagemedia.com, info@christianheritagemedia.com, and support@christianheritagemedia.com.

I commend Damsteegt and all his helpers for their outstanding contribution in producing such an insightful and helpful source of information. I highly recommend its use for personal Bible study, small-group study, evangelism, and undergraduate religion classes.

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Douglass, Herbert Edgar. *Truth Matters: An Analysis of the* Purpose Driven Life *Movement*. Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2006. 2324 pp. Paper, $15.99.

In *Truth Matters,* Herbert E. Douglass deals with a movement that is a hot global issue in the religious world. Living in the time of the end, it is urgent for Christians to discern biblical truth from falsehood and a genuine revival from a counterfeit one. *Truth Matters* is a valuable help in testing one of the most influential movements of the day—Rick Warren's *Purpose Driven Life* movement.

Douglass presents a factual description of the origin and development of this seemingly successful movement. He sums up the appealing facts in the *Purpose Driven* ministry, such as being contemporary, emphasizing personal needs, and particular interests of the various age groups in a popular and comfortable form of evangelism. The question is whether this way of evangelizing can be biblically accepted. Is it compliant with the truths presented in the Bible?

In chapter 3, Douglass mentions a number of solid biblical statements he especially likes in Warren's messages. Since, however, solid biblical truth is often presented with falsehood, thus paving the way for compromising truth with error, I am glad that Douglass is quick to conclude that "we will take another look at what Rick Warren seems to mute or overlook. My primary concern is that his readers will laud Rick Warren for those statements that appear so positive and obvious, but that in their appreciation, they will not be led into seeing a bigger biblical picture regarding what God really has in mind for planet Earth and its inhabitants" (39). This is an important observation, for, as a matter of fact, the *Purpose Driven Life* movement has not outlined a biblical end-time message, clarifying how God will close human history. It may also be added that the *Purpose Driven Life* movement does not blow a warning trumpet against deception and apostasy. There is no emphasis on the importance of discerning truth from error nor stressing the necessity of being alert for falsehood—a vital and urgent responsibility of a true church in the time of the end.

After analyzing Warren's preaching methods in chapter 5, Douglass argues in chapter 6 that the basic gospel message of Scripture is either minimized or neglected in the *Purpose Driven Life* movement. Chapter 7 deals with the misuse of Bible texts and

the use of questionable paraphrases. Appendix D presents a list of 53 examples where the correct biblical meaning is obscured or twisted.

In chapter 11, Douglass discusses references to New Age leaders. Well-informed readers will discover subtle but strong New Age influences in the *Purpose Driven Life* movement's literature and ministry. Warren, for instance, asks: "What is the driving force in your life?" Since "force" is a key New Age concept, is it then amazing that many are troubled because of Warren's New Age implications? Is it only a matter of "coincidence" that Warren uses a five-step P.E.A.C.E. plan that resembles New Age writer Neale Donald Walsch's five-step Peace Plan? And what about Warren's use of Peterson's paraphrase of Col 1:16, where we find the common occultic New Age term "as above so below"?

In chapters 12–15 and 18, Douglass explores the deeper theology of the *Purpose Driven Life* movement, including doctrines such as the nature of humanity and the Calvinistic view of irresistable grace (once saved, always saved). Chapters 16 and 17 consider counterfeit religion in the end time and argue that counterfeit gospels will satisfy "felt" needs without providing for "real" needs.

There are several questions about this movement that Douglass does not deal with, such as the use of popular music and the divisive nature of Warren's program. Finally, what is the significance of Warren's urging evangelicals to cooperate with political leaders and governments? Where does such urging ultimately lead to? Is it any wonder that *The Wall Street Journal* in a recent article says: "But the purpose-driven movement is dividing the country's more than 50 million evangelicals"? (September 5, 2006). (Those interested in a broader view of these and other decisive aspects, as well as the various misleading influences including the impact of Eastern religion and the spiritual formation movement in modern church growth may also want to read my *The Hidden Agenda* [Brushton, NY: Teach Services, 2007].)

The book is rounded out with a useful Index and valuable Appendices presenting an overview of the various translations and paraphrases Warren makes use of: the relationship between Warren's ministry and the Church-growth movement, the doctrinal statements of Warren's Saddleback church, and examples of Warren's use of biblical texts. Appendix E contains a sampling of NT texts that spell out the purpose of the everlasting gospel. This pointed testimony of the gospel message helps to decide in what measure the *Purpose Driven Life* ministry reflects the biblical pattern.

Geesburg, The Netherlands   JAN VOERMAN

Fahlbusch, Erwin, et al., eds. *The Encyclopedia of Christianity*. Vol. 4, P-Sh. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005. xxx + 952 pp. Hardcover, $100.00.

The fourth volume of the English-language version of the *Evangelisches Kirchenlexikon: Internationale theologische Enzycklopädie* (3d ed.) has joined the first three in providing English-only readers with exposure to a major reference work that has been of service to German scholars since the first edition appeared in 1950. Under the English-language editorship of Geoffrey W. Bromiley, the English version is more than a translation. Beyond tailoring many of the articles to specifically meet the needs of English readers and adding several articles just for such readers, the English version has updated and anglicized bibliographies and updated statistics.

As with the previous volumes, this one can be characterized by the descriptors of "breadth," "ecumenical," "up-to-date," and "authoritative." Volume 4 contains 299 articles on topics ranging from "pacificism," "parable," and "Paraguay" to

"Sabbatarians," "Salvation Army," and "Shinto." The articles are generally equal to or superior to those found in other reference works with similar aims. The one consistent exception to that statement is the introductions to the books of the Bible. Generally more satisfactory treatments may be found in Bible dictionaries or encyclopedias, introductions to the OT and NT, and the preliminary sections of commentaries; works that are nearly always found in libraries housing the *Encyclopedia*. That deficiency, however, is a part of the price that must be paid when a work seeks to be all-inclusive. The sad fact is that no work, no matter how expansive, can be best in everything.

A reader wonders, however, if such an encyclopedia should even attempt to accomplish everything. For example, volume 4 contains only seven biographies— Phoebe Palmer, Pius IX, Pius XII, Karl Rahner, Walter Rauschenbusch, Friedrich Schleiermacher, and Albert Schweitzer. That selection is not only an interesting assortment, but it obviously passes over many persons who deserve consideration. Given the limitations of space, it might have been better to set some editorial delimitations for content and merely refer readers to the extensive works on religious biography and biblical introduction that are available to modern readers. To put it another way, given the cost of publishing today, it may be impossible to be as encyclopedic as such treatments as *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge* (12 vols., 1908-1912) or McClintock and Strong's *Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature* (10 vols., 1867-1887).

Having said that, it should be added that *The Encyclopedia of Christianity* is a helpful place to begin the study of a wide range of topics. A survey of articles with which the present reviewer has either expertise or relative ignorance has indicated both helpful introductory-level discussions and extensive bibliographies. The bibliographic information in itself makes the *Encyclopedia* valuable for those venturing into any of an extensive array of topics related to religion.

No reference work is perfect. Reductionism is an in-built problem of the genre. But *The Encyclopedia of Christianity* is a monumental reference work that has accomplished the task better than most. It has set a standard that will dictate an essential place for it in theological libraries.

Andrews University   GEORGE R. KNIGHT

Kuhn, Wagner. *Christian Relief and Development: Biblical, Historical, and Contemporary Perspectives of the Holistic Gospel.* Engenheiro Coelho, Brazil: Adventist University Press, 2005. 163 pp. Paper, $7.50.

Wagner Kuhn, who holds a Ph.D. from Fuller School of Intercultural Studies, is Associate Director of the Institute of World Mission for the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Previously he served as director of Adventist Development and Relief Agency's (ADRA) in Central Asia from 1994-2002.

Kuhn begins by stating his thesis: "a holistic approach to development has advantages over the secular approaches to development, as it does not dichotomize between body and spirit, between the physical and spiritual realities of life" (1). His purpose is "to promote an awareness of the importance of a biblical theology of transformational development for missionaries as they aim to be holistic witnesses of the gospel of Jesus Christ in a cross-cultural context" (2). He senses the need for a clearer theology of mission to prevent disputes over whether an evangelistic or social ministry is fulfilling the biblical mandate (127-137).

According to Kuhn, God is identified as the first "emergency relief worker" when

he provided clothing for Adam and Eve! Kuhn mentions the creation of wholeness and cites OT welfare principles in chapter 1, and concludes by suggesting that the Sabbath, the Year of Jubilee, Shalom, and the Messianic hope are four exemplars of relief and development. In chapter 2, he devotes thirteen pages to the proclamation of the kingdom of God through the teaching, preaching, and healing ministry of Jesus Christ, who focused on the needs of women, the sick, and the poor, while speaking out against corruption, oppression, and hypocrisy. He cites efforts in the apostolic church to promote relief and development by sharing together, but ignores the deployment of deacons to care for widows mentioned in Acts 6. He devotes a scant three paragraphs to Paul's contribution to the topic.

Kuhn devotes the second half of the book to an excellent summary of charity relief and development in the history of Christianity to 1945. Kuhn highlights the contributions of the Benedictines, Nestorians, Orthodox monasteries, Celts, Franciscans, and Dominicans. Then he focuses on Luther's writings and the contribution of Protestants and Catholics (such as Vincent de Paul in France). His reflections on Puritanism, Pietism, the Moravians, and Wesleyan Methodism are useful because they focus on these groups' unique contributions. He remembers the work of the antislavery movement and the agricultural, educational, economic, and social reform efforts of William Carey. Chapter 4 summarizes the contributions of nineteenth-century Protestant missionaries and social gospel advocates, such as Walter Rauschenbusch. The book takes us up to "the Great Reversal," when conservative evangelicals, about halfway through the twentieth century, rejected much of the social-gospel agenda because of its association with liberalism.

Chapter 5 traces the revival of social concern through the influence of people such as Carl F. H. Henry and Ron Sider, showing how the kingdom-of-God motif contributed to this reawakening, and explaining how modern colonialism and capitalism have affected development. On pages 101-125, Kuhn interacts with secular development theory for the first time—often relying on Bryant L. Myers's insights (*Walking with the Poor: Principles and Practices of Transformational Development* [Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1999]). Here he concludes there *is* a place for political social action in Christian work. He evaluates paradigms such as "economic," "participatory," "from below," and "community development," concluding with the suggestion that "holistic development" motivated by love is his paradigm of choice. Chapter 6 describes the need for a biblical theology of holistic mission for Christian welfare/relief work and transformational development so that the Christian church in general, the Adventist Church and ADRA can benefit from it.

This book appears to originate with the author's dissertation, "Toward a Holistic Approach to Relief, Development, and Christian Witness, with Special Reference to ADRA's Mission to Naxcivan, 1993-2003 (2004). However, the book does not attempt to extrapolate any lessons from the case study in Azerbaijan—even in the contemporary perspectives section. I would like to know what the author learned as a result of his fieldwork in that country. Reports of interviews and observations there could have provided some primary source material to complement the fine secondary sources that were used.

Kuhn's ability to "promote an awareness of the importance of a biblical theology of transformational development" for missionaries as they serve as cross-cultural witnesses of the gospel—his stated purpose—is weakened by his failure to show how well established motifs of mission theology, such as the "kingdom of God" and "covenant," cannot provide solutions to the problem of evangelism versus social concern in mission. Earlier in the book, he discusses the "kingdom" motif (championed by Arthur Glasser and others) favorably; then suddenly, in chapter 6, he announces that a biblical theology for holistic mission is needed. Kuhn could be right, but I would have liked to have seen him

analyze how and why our current theologies of mission are lacking.

One contribution to the new theology of mission that Kuhn seeks could come from a focus on holism in the Bible. Kuhn defines holism as "the belief or theory that reality (things or people) are made up of organic or unified wholes that are greater than the simple sum of their parts. The term 'holistic' has to do with holism and as such it emphasizes the importance of the whole and the interdependency of its parts" (135). He is clearly referring to the synergistic nature of wholes and parts as they relate. I have begun work on a biblical theology of synergism or holism, and have identified five conditions (based on a study of Gen 1–4 and qualitative field work) for building synergic unity among diverse parts in Christian organizational wholes: spirituality, communication, identifying, appreciating, and defining mission (see Doug Matacio, "Creating Unity in a Multicultural Christian Organization: Is the Seventh-day Adventist Church Effectively Meeting Its Goal of Scriptural Unity?" *AUSS* 43 [2005]: 315-331).

The biblical section of this book, with its numerous examples of welfare and development principles found in the Bible, is a good source of support for field workers around the world. These are the seeds for Kuhn's future theology of holistic mission, a theology that will need to carefully balance social concern with evangelism. The historical section is a superb summary and fingertip resource for historical trends. It is also a good starting point for those planning deeper research into the history of Christian social responsibility.

By comparison, the contemporary perspectives section, while informative and useful, does not thoroughly engage contemporary secular or Christian theorists in dialog. For example Jayakumar Christian's work, including *God of the Empty-Handed: Poverty, Power and the Kingdom of God* (Monrovia, CA: MARC, 1999), is barely mentioned. This book should be read along with Myers's *Walking with the Poor*, mentioned above.

The fairly numerous typographical mistakes found in this book do not detract much from the author's ability to get his message across in clear and easily understandable prose.

Many lay persons who have logged hours of fund-raising in behalf of the poor, and who volunteer in community service centers have questions about the relief and development enterprise of the church. I know of no better place to direct them than to Kuhn's introduction to the field. This book should stimulate further studies into God's plan for holistic mission.

Canadian University College   DOUG MATACIO
Lacombe, Alberta, Canada

Lee, Harold L., with Monte Sahlin. *Brad: Visionary Spiritual Leadership*. Lincoln, NE: Center for Creative Ministry, 2005. 259 pp. Paper, $14.95.

Charles Bradford, a truly historical figure, was the first Black leader of the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists. Harold Lee and Monte Sahlin describe his life as a "moving story of visionary Christian servant-leadership manifested in a gifted personality, a Jesus man" (v). The authors have attempted to include much of Bradford's thinking on the major issues faced by the church during his life and ministry, drawing much of the material for the book from Bradford's personal experiences, memories, testimonies, scholarly papers, official documents, letters, sermons, and essays.

This rich treasure of material casts a revealing light on the life of Bradford, showing him to be a visionary and Christ-centered leader, a powerful and persuasive preacher, a competent administrator, and a skillful and tactful negotiator. His most

enduring contribution to the church was in the area of ecclesiology. His practical ideas and approaches to leadership, church administration, and church growth, along with his concerns about social issues and creative evangelism, still influence the Seventh-day Adventist Church today.

Brad reflects biographical characteristics, but is not a true biography. Although the book initially deals with chronological issues in Bradford's life (chap. 1), it focuses primarily on the great themes and issues that dominated his life, ministry, and personal reflection, approaches, and methodology in dealing with those issues (chaps. 2–8). Chapter 9 is a summary and a challenge to readers to consider the continuing relevance of Bradford's ideas.

Using excerpts from a number of Bradford's articles on preaching and pastoral ministry, the authors conclude that he was first and foremost a pastor who passionately believed that the local church is the most important entity in the denominational structure. For him, all ministry was local. He fervently believed that the ministry of the gospel was given to all members, thereby leaving no room for hierarchy or rank within the community of faith. This fundamental belief would inform his leadership style, preaching, views on women, and concerns about social issues within the church.

On the matter of preaching, Bradford strove for clarity and a distinct Adventist message. He once noted that "We are living in the age of double speak, technical jargon and information overload. There are many confusing voices. Nobody seems to understand what the other is saying. Preachers must not fall into this pattern. Clarity is imperative. We cannot afford the luxury of being obscure. We must ruthlessly discard every ounce of excess verbiage" (30).

According to the authors, Bradford's approach to administration was highly relational. He was committed to "servant leadership" and was convinced that the main duty of the pastor is to equip, enable, and encourage members to carry out their individual ministries. Leaders are "to empower others, to widen the leadership group, to grow new leaders" (57). For him, the denominational structure existed to serve the local church; it was never intended to be a hierarchal superstructure to rule over God's people.

Bradford was also noted for his bold and courageous stance on issues that were considered controversial. He excoriated the church for its position on the issue of race, drawing upon the counsels of Ellen G. White to buttress his case. He challenged the church to reach out to African-Americans of the inner cities and to implement remedial action to alleviate their suffering. He raised serious questions about the fairness of the Adventist financial structure relative to the regional conferences. He urged the church to employ more Black Adventist youth and set up scholarships for them.

Bradford was not afraid to engage in one of the church's most controversial issues: women's ordination. He urged his readers to look into the broad, general principles of the Bible through the prism of three major biblical doctrines (salvation, Holy Spirit, and the church), arguing that the ordination of women was in keeping with biblical principles. Who are we to question whom God has called? For Bradford, Christians achieve a new identity in Christ. Race, nationality, color, and gender are superseded by this new identity, making the believer one of God's people. God is at liberty to call any of us to any position regardless of gender.

A minor criticism of the book is that while Lee and Sahlin have painted a powerful portrait of a great visionary leader, they seem to have forgotten that he was also human. Little is said about Bradford's faults and weaknesses. Did he experience any significant failures in his ten years as president of the North American Division? What were his deficiencies in the different areas of leadership in which he served? We rejoice in his successes, but we are aware that no one is perfect. A chapter that focused on Bradford's

challenges and failures would have brought a balance that the book lacked. Even the Bible is not afraid to tell us about the failures of its heroes.

The book also lacked a coherent theme in conveying Bradford's life, making it feel disjointed and disconnected. While Bradford's personal papers were insightful, at times it was difficult reading. Some of them could have been summarized and analyzed by the authors so the readers could better understand them.

In spite of these criticisms *Brad* is excellent reading material for church leaders at all levels. It provides precious gems of wisdom from one of the most successful Adventist administrators who, despite his rise to international leadership, maintained a pastor's heart for the local church and an attitude of a servant-leadership that reminds all of Christ the Chief Shepherd and great Servant-Leader.

Andrews University   TREVOR O'REGGIO

McKibben, Bill. *The Comforting Whirlwind: God, Job and the Scale of Creation.* Cambridge, MA: Cowley, 2005. 73 pp. Paper, $13.95.

Modern Western culture blindly pursues a false god that Bill McKibben succinctly summarizes with one word: "more." Unfortunately, this is no benign idolatry; the entire earth groans under our consumerism as we cut down forests, fill in wetlands, drive rare species to extinction, and consume obscene quantities of oil and coal—all so we can eat cheaper food, make and acquire more stuff, and live in greater luxury.

What are we to do? The answer is obvious, but deep patterns of thought and life die hard, and we must find sources of wisdom and strength deep enough to motivate and sustain new habits. McKibben's essay mines such wisdom from the book of Job by suggesting two parallels between Job's crisis and ours. First, both crises witnessed collision between reality and received wisdom (in Job's case, he knows the reality of his innocence, but his friends repeat *ad nauseum* the conventional view that his suffering must reflect God's punishment). Second, in both cases the received wisdom reflects a deep, underlying anthropocentrism—Job's friends expect that God will act according to *their* standards of justice; modern man believes that all things exist to support *our* wants.

But the central message of Job, as developed by McKibben, emerges as God appears in the whirlwind. God does not directly answer Job or his friends, but confronts him with a visceral portrayal of the mystery, grandeur, and wildness of creation that McKibben views as history's "first great piece of nature writing" (43). Much of what God describes provides no direct benefit for humans (e.g., rain in the wilderness, food for the lions, behavior of the ostrich, freedom of the wild ass), yet God uses these aspects of nature as exhibits of his power and care.

McKibben believes that God's revelation to Job calls for two responses: First, we (like Job) should fall humbly before God, acknowledging that "God can" and "we can't." Job accepts his place as part (not center) of creation and repents, and so should we. Second, we are drawn upward and outward into a deep, visceral sense of transcendent *joy*, a joy that comes when we find our place in God's creation. It is this combination—humility with joy—that McKibben hopes will motivate and sustain new ways of thinking and living toward creation, although he worries that we may lose both as humans increasingly eliminate wildness and gain the power to shape what remains for our own ends (think genetic manipulation).

McKibben is a writer and environmentalist, not a theologian, and his well-written book is more evocative than scholarly (his book has no footnotes or references). I cannot evaluate McKibben's theological arguments or fidelity to the original text of Job,

but I do offer personal confirmation of a central thesis: reading Job, as a Christian and a biologist, elicits both humility and joy in the presence of a powerful Creator who sustains and loves all his creatures. I hope we will learn to love what God loves.

Andrews University   H. THOMAS GOODWIN

McWilliams, Warren. *Where is the God of Justice? Biblical Perspectives on Suffering.* Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2005. xii + 259 pp. Paper, $16.95.

Warren McWilliams addresses the doctrine of retribution from the backdrop of a transcendent, omnipotent God whose foreknowledge, creation, and continuing preservation of that fallen creation render him ultimately responsible for the problem of evil. Within God's providence, aspects of his intervening will—limitative, permissive, directive, and preventative—are considered in tension with humanity's own responsibility for moral and natural evils. The goal is a practical biblical theology of suffering, exploring scriptural evidence of the complex relationship between a God of love, his creatures, and the reality of suffering. An experienced writer, theologian, and teacher, he explores a variety of topics including faith, prayer, and the spread of the gospel in the book of Acts. He has a related book on theodicy, *Fear No Evil,* whose theme is God's identity with our suffering, the strength he gives us, and our duty to reach out and help others. This present work is more concerned with the Christian experience of and response to suffering.

McWilliams contends that the Bible does not focus on the origin of evil, but the God who, through Christ, overcame evil (173). The need for Christians, then, is not so much to understand the "why" of suffering, but the "how." He recounts the experience of the prophet Habakkuk, who was distressed because he believed Israel was God's chosen people; therefore he did not understand how God could let a heathen nation hurt his people. God's response was that Habakkuk needed to live by faith, not by sight (1). Of course, this response from God to Habakkuk, and to us, opens up all kinds of issues and questions in the believer's mind. McWilliams wants us to take this advice and develop a strategy of creatively and reverently coping.

The introduction and first section of the book lay a basic philosophical foundation: Is God willing but incapable of stopping evil? Or is He capable but unwilling? McWilliams concludes that God is willing and capable. So why is there so much evil?

The second section contains a thorough description of basic forms of suffering. At the conclusion of each topic, McWilliams concludes his description and biblical illustrations of suffering by returning the reader to the need for an intelligent, faith-motivated response. For example, chapter 7 discusses friend, marital, and family relationships and the emotional and psychological pain caused by betrayal. After experiencing the pain of betrayal, the sufferer often doubts the trustworthiness of God, or anyone, for that matter. McWilliams stresses the importance of grieving and expression as a healthy, biblical activity. Then, through the process of suffering, we can, with Paul, come to the conclusion God is good (91).

The final section presents McWilliam's attempt to create a "theodicy for living in the real world" (171: Be practical. Ask clear questions. Know your needs. Then, creatively and reverently respond.

The highlight of the book occurs in the midst of a group of dizzying questions that humans typically ask in desperation. The author reminds us that God suffers too. He suffers because of us (Gen 6:6), with us (Ps 23), and for us (Isa 53). It is this profound truth that legitimizes the author's intent. The reader who wonders about God's care for him or her can begin to move from lamenting "why" to asking "how can I survive"?

Another highpoint occurs at the end of the book. The author's portrayal of God's relationship to suffering is well balanced, taking into account both God's character *and* his allowance of evil. He gives a beautiful picture of God as a "wooer," who voluntarily limits the exercise of his power (188) in order to coax us back into relationship with him.

Reading this book is akin to participating in a session with a Christian counselor. The reader can recognize a source or two of their own suffering from the list, be educated as to some possible responses, and then be challenged to exercise faith and creatively cope. McWilliams is openly evangelical in his theology. His scriptural applications are generally effective. However, in one place he claims that "Jesus does not endorse the cynicism of Ecclesiastes" (8), while at the same time he uses other OT books, such as Job, with the seeming assumption that they are authoritative in spite of their apparent cynicism. While the remark about Ecclesiastes may not be intrinsic to his argument, the inconsistency of his esteem of different sections of Scripture cracks his biblical foundation and contradicts his purpose in coming to a *biblical* theology of suffering. The theology of the preacher in Ecclesiastes would contribute greatly to McWilliams's project: a man who has had and experienced much, lost much, and suffered greatly as a result. The Preacher has learned that there are no clear answers, at least "under the sun." The race does not always go to the swift, the wise do not always receive bread, but "time and chance do happen to them all" (Eccl 9:11). This great sufferer concludes that "under the sun" humans will not have all the answers. Just make sure we do what God wants. McWilliams would add that we should do it creatively.

The most troublesome area is McWilliams's analysis of death as "a departure." He states: "Although Christians still die physically, the sense of death as a primarily negative experience has been transformed through Christ's death" (147). The "sting" of death that has been lost by Christ's death does not lessen the negativity of death itself, but lessens its grip on humanity through the blood of Christ. Our response to death need not be negative—as if we did not have hope. In short, death is still bad, but there is a solution to escaping it. The problem is rooted in McWilliams's understanding of death. For him, death only affects the body. Jesus, however, admonished us to fear him who can destroy both body *and soul* in hell (Matt 10:28). The destruction of our soul—which is our life–is as serious, and as negative, as the notions of immortality and perfection are serious and positive. On this important category of suffering, McWilliams is short on scriptural evidence. Instead, he says that "many religions and philosophies have stressed that death is the doorway to another life (146)." He cites Paul as exemplifying this positive view of death (2 Tim 4:6-7), but leaves out verse 8, which refers to Paul receiving his crown "at that day" of Christ's appearing. The main problem with this view in the context of suffering is that the Bible admonishes us to comfort one another with the hope of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ (2 Thess 4:16, 17), not with a positive view of death. It is true that Paul views death as "his friend" in light of the difficult life he has lived. Job did too. So do many suffering today. But it is seeing Jesus "at that day" of Jesus' Second Coming that gives Paul his hope of a life without trial and suffering, as it should for us "who love his appearing." Our own death does not give us that hope. It is not a doorway to a better life.

The strength of this book is its effective documentation of forms of suffering in such a way that a variety of readers can identify with the message. This book is not aimed at scholars or philosophers, but at anyone who has suffered. For pastors and laity, it is a valuable tool. Given the immense difficulty of the topic and the complexity of ideas involved, McWilliams has done an admirable job of giving us a "theodicy for living in the real world" (171). However, a positive consideration of concepts in Ecclesiastes and a more biblical view of death would lend weight to the author's

argument and better point us to the answer to our questions on suffering and death: Jesus and his Second Coming.

Berrien Springs, Michigan   DEREK NUTT

Noll, Mark. *America's God: From Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2005. 640 pp. Hardcover, $55.00.

Noll argues that American Protestantism developed a unique religious perspective due to the combining of three historical ideas: the theology of the Protestant Reformation, the philosophy of republicanism that arose from and was animated by the American revolution, and the thought of the Scottish common-sense Enlightenment. Protestantism's ability or willingness to speak the language of these three strands of thought made it the religion of choice and influence in the early republic, as its apologetic and evangelistic discourse echoed contemporary political assumptions and commitments.

But, Noll argues, there was a downside to this success. The theology of Protestantism was itself changed by the use of this republican and common-sense language, and evolved from a logical and systematic, reformed orthodoxy into a freer, arminian-"tainted" popular theology. These changes led to a literalistic, individualistic biblical hermeneutic that, according to Noll, made American Protestantism unable to speak definitively on the issue of slavery.

North and South used the newly modified American Protestant hermeneutic to come to radically different conclusions on the morality of slavery. This intractability ended in the Civil War, which was not just a political crisis, but a theological one. The failure of the American Protestant synthesis to resolve the great moral issue of slavery, Noll argues, caused it to lose its social force, and opened the way for the modern era.

Noll's argument is almost overwhelming in its learning and attention to detail. He lays an exhaustive groundwork of eighteenth-century religious/philosophical/political thought, moves into early nineteenth-century theological evolution of Calvinism and Methodism, and then builds to a Civil-War-era climax of heated, yet impotent, theological dispute. Each section is so rich and deep that challenging Noll on his intermediate conclusions is a daunting task; yet, Noll's ultimate conclusion is so challenging in its implications for non-Calvinist Protestant theologies that a closer look is warranted. A few key observations can be made.

Noll has a tendency to so broadly define his key terms that their essential meaning becomes vague, obscure, and highly malleable. The most obvious example of this is his use of the word "republicanism," which Noll uses to cover concepts such as "virtue" (common good), "antiaristocracy," "rule of law," "proper use of power," "separation of powers," "representative government," and most largely, the belief in the "reciprocity of personal morality and social-well being" (55-57).

He later adds to this mélange of meaning by distinguishing between "civic-humanism" republicanism, which was concerned with the public good and order, and "liberal" republicanism, which emphasized individual self-determination and, according to Noll, economic rights (210-211). Noll acknowledges that "republicanism" was a "multivalent, plastic and often extraordinarily imprecise term" (447); yet, he frequently cites historical writers and speakers in support of his "republicanism" thesis without attempting to determine which particular meaning of republicanism the historical thinker had in mind.

Noll is also guilty of dealing with the "common sense" Enlightenment in a similar manner. Every reference to human reason, intuition, insight, or other source of

knowledge other than Scripture becomes an example of common-sense philosophy, whether the reference is before or after Hutcheson and Reid. The great flexibility of terms is significant, as it gives Noll enormous latitude in his argument to accept or reject thinkers, ideas, and theologies depending on how they relate to his main thesis.

Perhaps the single most important argument against Noll's larger thesis is Methodism. Pre-Revolutionary Methodism used a literalistic, individualistic hermeneutic, along with the "reasonable" view of God, sinners, and salvation that Calvinism only moved toward as it was tempered by post-Revolution republicanism and common-sense philosophy (333-334). To his credit, Noll acknowledges the "sting" of the Methodist argument, agreeing that Methodism contained the elements of "American Protestantism" before it actually came to America (334, 340-41). Acknowledging the sting is one thing; removing it is another. Noll does not do this. Methodism does seem to raise an unanswered challenge to the charge that it was the "corruptions" of republicanism and common-sense thought that caused Protestant America to turn literalistic, individualistic, and arminian, and to be unable to cope with the problem of slavery. Methodism was all these things without republican and common-sense reasoning, and it was, at least initially, forcefully antislavery. Thus an alternate interpretation to Noll's is that: biblical Protestant Christianity contained the seeds of individuality, freedom, and common sense that found echoes in republicanism and common-sense thinking; the intractable nature of the slavery dispute had to do with flawed constitutional rather than theological compromises; and southern religious views were shaped more by the commercial impulses of their founding than by faithfulness to a biblically derived hermeneutic. These points are supported, at least in part, by Noll's understanding of the process of theological development: the insights of general revelation (general human experience) interact with, clarify, and even cause a modification of, understandings of special revelation (biblical interpretation), and vice versa. Suffice it to say that the majority of American Christians today would claim allegiance not to Edward's God, or Lincoln's God, or Noll's God, but to the Bible's God—as they read about and understand him in the Bible for themselves. Which is not a bad legacy for a "permanently damaged" theology (445).

Andrews University   NICHOLAS MILLER

Pearcey, Nancy. *Total Truth: Liberating Christianity From Its Cultural Captivity*, Study Guide
    Edition. Foreword, Phillip E. Johnson. Wheaton: Crossway, 2005. 512 pp.
    Hardcover, $25.00.

Nancy Pearcey, who is Francis A. Schaeffer Scholar at the World Journalism Institute and a former agnostic, studied the Christian worldview under Francis Shaeffer at L'Abri Fellowship in Switzerland. She has authored numerous scholarly articles and contributed to a number of books, including two books she coauthored: *The Soul of Science: Christian Faith and Natural Philosophy*, Turning Point Christian Worldview Series (Pearcey, Charles Thaxton, and Marvin Olasky [Crossway, 1994]) and *How Now Shall We Live?* (Chuck Colson, with Pearcey [Tyndale House, 2004]).

Pearcey's latest book, *Total Truth*, is a call for Christians to create their own unique worldview. Acknowledging the existence of competing worldviews, Pearcey, nonetheless, challenges Christians to create "a biblically informed perspective on reality." In spite of the inherent difficulty of creating a practical work from such an abstract topic as "worldview," Pearcey is remarkably practical in her presentation. She deftly covers her topic, using practical illustrations to make her point. That Pearcey can cover such a theoretical and abstract topic as "worldview" in such a practical fashion is a testimony to her ability as a

scholar. She manages to inform the reader on a wide range of topics, including Rousseau's negative reaction to the Enlightenment, feminism, and the problems that have resulted from the antiintellectual strain of evangelicalism found among many North American adherents. Other topics include a critique of Darwinism and a favorable presentation of intelligent design. Her primary goal in following the trajectory of history is to demonstrate the impact of society on Christianity.

The value of *Total Truth* may be found in Pearcey's apt defense of an objective Christian reality. Starting with the fact/value split in society, she seeks to remove religion from the constraints placed on it by society. Enlightenment criticism marginalized religion to relativistic values. Further, Enlightment thought posited that religion was not to impose its morality on society as a universally valid approach for human beings to follow. Under Pearcey's capable hand, however, Christianity becomes something more than one worldview among many. She reasserts Christianity as ultimate Truth for all humanity, thereby repairing the epistemological split rendered to the science-theology continuum by the Enlightenment.

Building on Schaeffer's foundation, Pearcey locates the core of Christianity's problems in regard to worldview and reality in the interdependence of social, philosophical, scientific, and religious movements that reinforce a two-tiered view of truth. In the lower level of this two-storied building lies objective, real knowledge, such as that generally associated with scientific data and empirical reason. In the upper story is found noncognitive, nonempirical knowledge, such as that which gives meaning to life, and which is essentially nonrational and deeply personal. Modern society places religion in this latter category, including with it a moral relativism that governs private affairs, such as abortion and sexual preference. Pearcey seeks to set Christianity free from this two-tiered reality.

As a worldview, Christianity ascribes to the notion of intelligent design. Believing that God purposefully created the universe is, therefore, an integral part of the foundation of the Christian worldview. Pearcey thoughtfully disassembles evolutionary thought, calling into question the idea that evolution is a fact-based theory. But, importantly, she demonstrates how evolutionary theory has impacted our understanding of the creative event. Christians have become accustomed to thinking of the origin of the universe from a purely scientific perspective. Pearcey urges the reader to rethink creation from a purely Christian perspective that spans, and in fact buttresses, the entire span of reality.

Although Pearcey is clearly an evangelical, she is able to critique her own tradition. Friedrich Schleiermacher's separation of human reason from human emotions, along with his placement of the divine-human point of contact in the emotive section of the mind (as opposed to the classical point of contact in human reason), is still found within the heart of those evangelical traditions that came out of the revivalist/pietistic tradition. Such revivalist/pietistic tendencies, Pearcey contends, makes evangelicalism vulnerable to cultural paradigms that require a two-tiered reality.

Total Truth is much more than a diatribe against the shortcomings of Christians; the subtitle "Liberating Christianity From Its Cultural Captivity" conveys a theme of hope and practical change. Once we understand what a worldview is—what different worldviews are—the Christian worldview becomes a priceless gift. We are liberated to understand not only the beauty of Christianity in a refreshingly new manner, but also why those with different worldviews think as they do. Such understanding not only inoculates Christians against the subtle pitfalls of other worldviews, but also opens up a plethora of new options for sharing the splendor of Christianity with others.

The media indisputably plays a powerfully seductive role in shaping worldview, often leaving Christian teachers, parents, and pastors feeling powerless to diagnose and address the resulting problems. *Total Truth* directly addresses this problem, not only educating

Christians about worldviews, but equipping them to deal with the various issues resulting from the secular and pagan worldviews their children will inevitably be exposed to as active participants in modern Western culture. Just as Pearcey's mentor, Schaeffer, made a huge impact on thinking Christians in the 1960s and 1970s, so Pearcey will impact Christians in present and future generations. I strongly recommend Pearcey's *Total Truth* as an important guide in the development of a Christian worldview.

Geoscience Research Institute   TIMOTHY G. STANDISH
Loma Linda, California

Roberts, J. Deotis, *Bonhoeffer and King: Speaking Truth to Power*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2005. 160 pages. Paper, $19.95.

J. Deotis Roberts, pastor and theologian, is one of the founders of the Black Theology movement. Having previously published *The Prophethood of Black Believers: An African American Political Theology for Ministry; Black Theology in Dialogue; Liberation and Reconciliation: A Black Theology;* and *A Black Political Theology* (all published by Westminster John Knox Press), Roberts, with biography and theological reflection, delves into Dietrich Bonhoeffer's courageous stand against Nazism in Europe and Martin Luther King's intrepid mission for civil rights in America.

The book is structured in three sections: Part 1 is biographical. The reader is informed of the geographical backgrounds, family, early education, and professional training of Bonhoeffer and King. Both completed a doctorate in theology and both had pastoral experience. Their tragically brief contributions are reviewed in Part 2. Both sought to fight ugly collective evil. King's sense of mission is set within America's Civil Rights movement, while Bonhoeffer's is set in Nazi Germany. Both were put to death at the age of thirty-nine.

Part 3 studies Bonhoeffer's and King's respective political theologies. Again, the comparison of their lives is insightful. Both were Protestant (King was Baptist; Bonhoeffer was Lutheran). Neither's passion for social justice had a secular motivation; both issued from their religious convictions. In addition to Scripture, Gandhi's life and teachings also had a major impact on both King and Bonhoeffer. All three were deeply affected by Jesus' "Sermon on the Mount." Bonhoeffer and King spoke out against a solely heaven-directed faith. Ahead of their respective times, they revealed an "earthward direction in their ethical concerns" (125). Bonhoeffer and King were political activists, in what Roberts terms a "social eschatology" (130). While not delving into some of Bonhoeffer's more enigmatic statements, Roberts does touch on Bonhoeffer's views on the relation of church and state. He does the same with King, although King's thinking is more accessible. Roberts is also interested in how King and Bonhoeffer made decisions in a crisis.

One might not readily think of making a comparison of Bonhoeffer and King, but Roberts prepares a credible and convincing case. Having never met either, he studied their published materials. He also taught advanced seminars comparing Bonhoeffer's and King's thinking and work at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Lancaster Theological Seminary, Yale Divinity School, and Duke Divinity School. As a result of the dialogue with the faculty at these various institutions, Roberts decided to write this book. His study of their lives and theologies is historically and theologically helpful. And in this day of floating pluralism, it is good to be reminded of two courageous reformers who truly believed that there are some fundamental truths that anchor reality and that are worth living and dying for.

Andrews University   JO ANN DAVIDSON

Wirzba, Norman. *Living the Sabbath: Discovering the Rhythms of Rest and Delight.* Grand
    Rapids: Brazos, 2006. 172 pp. Paper, $19.99.

Norman Wirzba, who holds a Ph.D. from Loyola University, Chicago, is Professor and
Chair of Philosophy at Georgetown College in Georgetown, Kentucky. He has also
authored *The Paradise of God: Renewing Religion in an Ecological Age.* In the present book,
which is part of the *Christian Practice of Everyday Life* Series, Wirzba reminds readers of
what he calls "some of this planet's vital principles, its inherent goodness and its
maker's approval of it, in gratitude for our membership in it"—as Wendell Berry
summarizes in the Foreword (12).

The book is divided into two sections: "Setting a Sabbath Context" and "The
Sabbath in Practical Context." Wirzba's stated goal for the book is that Sabbath-keeping
should be the "culmination of habits and days that express gratitude for and joy in the
manifold blessings of God" (13), and "that Sabbath teaching contains an inner logic
that helps us make some theological and practical sense of God's revelation" (14).

Only in chapter 3 does Wirzba enter into the important discussion of the
Sabbath/Sunday issue. He believes that there is a continuity between the Jewish
Sabbath and the Christian "feast day," urging Jürgen Moltmann's position that "The
Christian Sunday neither abolishes Israel's sabbath, nor supplants it. . . . The Christian
feast-day must rather be seen as the messianic extension of Israel's sabbath" (*God in
Creation, A New Theology of Creation and the Spirit of God* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993],
294). Wirbza works within the Christian position that the Sunday Sabbath finds its
completion within Jesus, citing the early medieval pope Gregory the Great: "For us, the
true Sabbath is the person of our Redeemer, our Lord Jesus Christ" (cited in John Paul
II, *Dies Domini*, May 31, 1998, <www.papalencyclicals.net/all.htm>). But his intent is
not to substantiate or belabor the correct day for Sabbath. Instead, the rest of the
chapter draws out the salvific significance of the Sabbath through Christ's healing and
teaching ministry. For example, Wirzba writes: "Just as the Sabbath represents the
climax or fulfillment of creation, so too Jesus reveals what God's intentions for life to
have been all along. What does it mean to be a creature of God, and what are we to do
with the life given us? How do we best live the life that will bring delight to God and
health and peace to the whole of creation? The life and ministry of Jesus enable us to
answer these questions in new ways" (43). Wirzba seeks to instruct that Sabbath
observance has the potential to "reform and redirect all our ways of living. It should be
the source and goal that inspires and nourishes the best of everything we do" (14).

Wirzba makes a broad case for how the Sabbath is a pervasive element of biblical
thought, which undergirds its importance. Thus the Sabbath should inform all of our
habits as Christians, affecting even our treatment of the created world itself. Drawing on
many contemporary sources, Wirzba instructs the reader as to how Sabbath principles
apply to family life, eating, farming, education, economics, and worship. Sabbath-keepers
and those interested in ecological issues will appreciate Wirzba's discussion of the vital
linkages in earth's vast web of life and his insightful pairing of Sabbath observance with
"a fuller awareness of the contexts of our living" (100). Sabbath is not just for "keeping,"
but also for "living." However, the vast importance of Sabbath and creation issues might
actually be undergirded and enhanced by the seventh day of the weekly cycle, which
Wirzba and much of Christian discussion often misses.

Andrews University   JO ANN DAVIDSON

GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS AND REVIEWERS

"Guidelines for Authors and Reviewers" and frequently used abbreviations may be found on our website at www.auss.info, or in *AUSS* 40 (Autumn 2002): 303-306 and back covers, or copies may be requested from the *AUSS* office.

For general English style, see Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 6th ed., rev. John Grossman and Alice Bennett (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

For exhaustive abbreviation lists, see Patrick H. Alexander and others, eds., *The SBL Handbook of Style* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1999), 68-152, 176-233. For capitalization and spelling examples, see ibid., 153-164.

Articles may be submitted by email, attached document. Queries to the editors in advance of writing are encouraged. See "Guidelines for Authors and Reviewers" for further details.

TRANSLITERATION OF HEBREW AND ARAMAIC

CONSONANTS

א	=	'	ה	=	h	ט	=	ṭ	מ	=	m	פ	=	p	שׁ	=	š
ב	=	b	ו	=	w	י	=	y	נ	=	n	צ	=	ṣ	שׂ	=	ś
ג	=	g	ז	=	z	כ	=	k	ס	=	s	ק	=	q	ת	=	t
ד	=	d	ח	=	ḥ	ל	=	l	ע	=	'	ר	=	r			

MASORETIC VOWEL POINTINGS

ַ	= a	ְ	= e	ֱ	= ê	ֹ	= ō	וֹ	= ô
ָ	= ā		= ē		= i	ֳ	= o	וּ	= û
	= a	(vocal shewa)	= e		= î		= o		= u

No distinction is made between soft and hard begad-kepat letters; dāgēš forte is indicated by doubling the consonant.

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