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Jan./Feb. 1988

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An international journal for theological students
75p

Vol. 13

No. 2

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An international journal for theological students, expounding and defending the historic Christian faith. It is published three times a year jointly by the British Theological Students Fellowship, a constituent part of the Universities and Colleges Christian Fellowship, and the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students. It seeks to address itself to questions being faced by theological students in their studies and to help readers to think out a clear biblical faith.

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Reviews

Books for review should be sent to Mr A N S Lane, London Bible College, Green Lane, Northwood, Middlesex HA6 2UW, or (North American books) to Dr Jim Stamoolis (address as above).

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be sent

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PO Box 7895, Madison, WI 53707-7895, USA

Subscription rates (including postage)

British Isles £3.40

Subscribers in the Republic of Ireland please pay in sterling. (Payments can be made to our National Giro Account Number 5038316, marked for *Themelios*.)

Elsewhere (surface mail, including bank charges) for orders through the appropriate address shown above

1 year	£3.40	US \$9.00
2 years	£6.80	US \$17.00
3 years	£10.20	US \$25.00

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Each issue of *Themelios* can only contain a few articles; but there is a wealth of useful material in back issues. Information about the contents and availability of back issues may be obtained from TSF, 38 De Montfort Street, Leicester LE1 7GP, England.

ISSN 0307-8388

Editorial: Marriage and singleness in Paul and today

One of the commonest misunderstandings around – among theologians and others – is that the apostle Paul had a negative view of marriage and sex. In fact, on this, as on so many other matters, he had a positive and balanced view, which we would do well to embrace in an age when there is so much confusion and hurt in this area. We could sum up the Pauline view – and indeed the view of Scripture as a whole – under three headings:

1. *Human sexuality is an important, powerful and good part of God's creation.* Paul's description of the church as the radiant bride of Christ in Ephesians 5:22-33 is the most obvious evidence for his positive view of marriage. He portrays the marriage relationship as something beautiful (compare Rev. 21:2,9), and not just as beautiful but as comparable to the intimate relationship of love between Christ and his church. And, lest anyone suppose that he has an unreal, other-worldly view of marriage (as some people do have), it should be noted that he refers specifically to marriage as something involving the bodies of husband and wife.

The Ephesians passage is not isolated in Paul's writings: in Romans 7:4, 1 Corinthians 11:3 and 2 Corinthians 11:2 (where he speaks of presenting the Corinthians to Christ 'as a pure bride to her husband') he compares divine-human relationships with the relationship of husband and wife.

1 Corinthians 7 is often thought to present a negative view of marriage on Paul's part quite different from that in Ephesians 5; this has been used as an argument against the Pauline authorship of Ephesians or seen as an indication that Paul underwent a major change of opinion. But this is to misunderstand the passage, and in particular to fail to recognize the problem Paul is dealing with in the chapter. The problem is that some in Corinth were putting forward the view that 'it is good for a man not to touch a woman' (v. 1). What they meant, as is apparent from Paul's comments on their views, is that those who are spiritual should not have sexual relationships, and they suggested that husbands and wives should not come together (v. 3), that the unmarried should remain unmarried (v. 8, *etc.*), and perhaps even that the married, certainly those married to non-Christians, should divorce their partners (vv. 10ff.). So there were indeed people in the early church who were negative towards sex.

Paul, however, rejects their supposedly spiritual asceticism, and, although he does believe that there is value in singleness (a point to which we shall return), he opposes the anti-sex lobby at almost every point, arguing that husbands and wives should not deprive each other of sexual intercourse, that unmarried people, except those with the special gift of singleness, should marry, and that divorce should be discouraged not encouraged. Paul recognizes very clearly in this chapter the power of the sexual drive, and when he

speaks about the dangers of immorality when people are unmarried, he is not downgrading marriage so much as attacking the dangerous foolishness of those who fail to recognize the power of sexual instincts, which should not be suppressed.

That Paul's view of marriage even in 1 Corinthians 7 is positive is hinted at in verse 4, where he speaks in a remarkable way of the equal rights of husband and wife over the partner's body. He probably has in mind here the thought that is explicit in Ephesians 5 about husband and wife becoming 'one flesh'; he has referred to that creation principle (Gn. 2:23) in 1 Corinthians 6:16, when explaining that prostitution is not to be contemplated, and he probably has it in mind too in 1 Corinthians 6:18, where he says, 'he who sins sexually sins against his own body'. It becomes clear that for Paul sexual union expressed in marriage brings husband and wife into a profound union, such that they can be thought to have a shared body: the two have become one.¹ It is this principle which Jesus in Matthew 19/Mark 10 uses as an argument against divorce and which Paul, who no doubt learned it from Jesus (*cf.* 1 Cor. 7:10, where he refers to Jesus' teaching), uses both to exclude immorality and to explain the mutual responsibilities of husbands and wives.

We conclude that, although Paul does not spell out his understanding of marriage in 1 Corinthians 7 (since he is not addressing the question of marriage as such in this passage, but the ascetic question), he does imply the same very high view of marital union as is found in Ephesians 5. The repeated comparison that he makes of marriage to divine-human relationships, and even to relationships within the Godhead (*e.g.* 1 Cor. 11:3f.), suggests that he saw marital union as modelled on and a reflection of divine relationships – the highest and most beautiful relationships of all.²

If some or most of this analysis is correct, then the idea that Paul is anti-marriage and sex is very far from the mark. In fact he has about as high a view of marital union as one can imagine, far higher than the views of many moderns who glorify sex, but who see it as little more than an animal instinct or as an evolutionary mechanism for propagating the species. The Pauline and Christian view has all sorts of implications: it means that sex is not something to be embarrassed about or ashamed of, but, as part of God's good creation, is something to be thankful for and to be enjoyed. It means that sexual feelings, thoughts and drives are natural and powerful; to experience them is normal, not something unspiritual or to be alarmed about. On the other hand, it means that the proper use of sex is vitally important. To this we will return.

2. *Sex is not the most important thing in life.* Paul, as we have seen, has no time for the asceticism that sees marriage and sexual union as unspiritual; he sees marriage as very good.

But he does not consider it the highest good or as an essential of human life. Indeed he sees singleness as an even higher calling than marriage, not in itself, but because of the 'shortness of the time' and the passing nature of this world (1 Cor. 7:7, 25-35, 38).

We are reminded of Jesus' teaching about living for eternity and laying up treasure in heaven: he announced the coming of God's wonderful and exciting kingdom and told his disciples to seek the kingdom rather than worry about the things of this present passing age (cf. Mt. 6:25-34). He also explained that marrying is a this-worldly activity, not an activity of heaven (Mt. 22:23-33). Paul reflects the same priorities in his teaching: he believes that the Christian, whether married or single, should be looking and living primarily for the world to come (cf. 1 Cor. 7:29-31), but he knows that this is simpler for the single person (if he or she has the gift of singleness) than for the married person, since married people have to work out their devotion to the Lord in the context of a very demanding this-worldly commitment. In commending singleness Paul is not being anti-marriage or anti-sex; he insists that there are different callings and that each must live the life the Lord assigns him (1 Cor. 7:17). But he is being realistic about the complications of marriage and family, and consistent in his Christian priorities. Given a belief in the kingdom of God as the supreme joy and priority in life, there is no point in single Christians getting married for the sake of it. On the contrary the single person, who has the gift of self-control, can give himself or herself undistractedly to the Lord's work in ways that others cannot. Paul was a living proof of the point, as was Jesus, as have been other great Christians since. It is a gift, given only to some, to remain single, not dissimilar to other gifts such as teaching and healing, enabling the person concerned to minister in ways that those with other gifts cannot.

The importance of this teaching is considerable. Secular society tends both to romanticize and to idolize sex, and to suggest that the person who does not get sexual fulfilment in marriage or in some other way has missed out in life. The Christian wants to affirm the goodness of sexuality and sexual relations, but to affirm also that they are not the most important thing in life. Nor is singleness the greatest disaster in life: for some who are not conscious of being gifted in this way it may be exceedingly hard to live with, and they deserve all the support and understanding that they can get; for others it is a gift that gives them opportunity for more effective service and ministry. But the ultimate fulfilment and joy for the Christian, whether married or single, lies not in this world, but in the relationships of the world to come, of which marital union is only a pale copy.³

3. *Use according to the maker's instructions.* Paul's very high view of human sexuality leads him to insist on its proper use. We have already seen how Paul rules out immorality because it is in contradiction to the 'one-flesh' way God designed marriage, and how for the same reasons he urges husbands to love their wives and both husbands and wives to give each other proper marital rights. For the same reasons he tells couples intending to split up to seek reconciliation rather than remarriage, and he insists that Christians embarking on marriage must marry 'in the Lord' (1 Cor. 7:10,11,39).⁴

Sometimes Christian morality is seen as negative and restricting, but we can see how the Pauline view of marriage

has negative implications (e.g. about immorality), but also positive implications (e.g. about the place of sex in marriage). But even the negatives of the Pauline teaching are not a reflection of a negative view of sex, but of a supremely positive view. (There is a parallel in the Christian's 'negative' view of abortion, being a reflection of a very high view of human life.) It is a low view of sex which sees it as little more than a pleasurable animal function, and which accordingly says that almost anything goes sexually (except perhaps the conceiving of unwanted children). That supposedly liberated view leads to chaos, because sex is a powerful force with dangerous potential when misused; it leads to the sexual distortions, unhappiness and violence that are characteristic of the 'free' societies of the West, as well as to the aborting of millions of unwanted children. The Christian and the Pauline view sees sex as a great good created by God, to be used with care in the context of a loving, ongoing relationship between one man and one woman. In that context human sexuality can be the joyful, beautiful thing that it is designed to be, rather than the ugly thing that the human race has often made it.

Of course Christians never live up fully to the Maker's instructions. But the intended pattern is clear, and the challenge of Paul to those who are married is to live out the pattern, loving each other, giving to each other, and holding together even when tempted to pull apart. It is important in the modern world, where there is so much confusion and so many anti-Christian pressures, that we understand and teach the Christian view of sex and marriage, not just to those who are married, but to those who will marry. We need to show people that Christian 'narrowness' is not negative, but liberatingly positive, and that Paul got it right!

¹ The biblical phrase 'becoming one flesh' is not simply stating the obvious fact that the bodies of man and woman become physically linked for the moment of sexual intercourse, but it is saying that, through coming together, the partners become bound to each other in a new and intimate relationship. This new relationship represents in some sense at least a break with old family loyalties ('leaving father and mother') and the beginning of a new family unit.

² Paul does not explicitly say that marriage is for the procreation of children; he emphasizes the relationship of husband and wife to each other in a way that is significant. However, his failure to mention the procreative purpose of marriage is probably because that was not a question he needed to address in his letters rather than because it was unimportant for him. It is probable that he presupposes the OT understanding of marriage as being 'to bear fruit' (in terms of children; cf. Gn. 1:28; Rom. 7:4-5), and his teaching about marriage is regularly followed by teaching concerning family life. Although our modern context is different from Paul's (so that we need to take our responsibility in the matter of over-population very seriously), he would, we suspect, have resisted any trend towards understanding marriage as being only for the mutual benefit of the two partners. Marriage is the bringing into being of a new family and household, and the model of divine relationships would suggest that it is to be an outgoing and creative relationship.

³ A sensitive book on the question of human sexuality in the modern world, which may not be known to *Themelios* readers, is *Man and Woman He Made Them*, by the Roman Catholic Jean Vanier (Darton, Longman and Todd, 1985). The author, founder of the L'Arche communities, is writing in the first instance about ministry with mentally handicapped people — and his book is important reading for those involved in such ministry — but it has wider relevance and value.

⁴ There are differing scholarly opinions as to whether Paul envisaged any situation in which a Christian could divorce and

remarry. Much of Paul's teaching on marriage (and indeed singleness) probably owes its origin to Jesus' teaching as found in Matthew 19/Mark 10, and in 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 Paul explicitly echoes and endorses Jesus' teaching on the question of divorce. For Jesus and Paul, marital breakdown and divorce are never good, but the judgment as to whether either ever permitted remarriage of divorced people depends on one's understanding of the so-called 'Matthean exceptions' of Matthew 5:32 and 19:9, and of the 'Pauline permission' of 1 Corinthians 7:15. Interpreting these texts is a delicate business, not only because of the difficulty of the texts themselves, but also because of the personal and pastoral pressures that affect the interpreter. For a helpful discussion of the whole issue see David

Field's Talking Points article, 'The divorce debate: where are we now?', in *Themelios* 8:3 (1983), pp. 26-31. For further discussion see W. A. Heth and G. J. Wenham, *Jesus and Divorce* (Hodder, 1984), who in a careful study judge that there is no NT permission for remarriage; John Stott in his *Issues Facing Christians Today* (Marshall's, 1984) discusses a wide range of contemporary issues with his usual care, and in his chapter on marriage and divorce argues that remarriage is permitted in some cases of immorality and desertion; most recently Ward Powers, in his *Marriage and Divorce: The New Testament Teaching* (Jordan Books, 1987), argues that the NT is against marital breakdown, but permits remarriage of those whose marriages have broken up (see review later in this *Themelios*).

Jesus in history

The author of Ecclesiastes got it right when he said, 'Of making many books there is no end, and much study wearies the body' (12:12). Most theological students have known that feeling of weariness when ploughing through one mediocre book after another! However, occasionally a book stands out and is actually a pleasure to read.

Several such books have recently appeared in the NT field. Two of them, Gerd Theissen's *The Shadow of the Galilean* and Tom Wright's Tyndale commentary on Colossians, are reviewed later in this *Themelios*. Another is Marcus Borg's *Conflict Holiness and Politics in the Teaching of Jesus*, which has been published a few years now, but has just been reissued as a paperback.¹ It is certainly one of the most constructive and original books about Jesus to have been written in recent years.

The author sets out to understand Jesus, his teaching and his life, in the religious and social context of his time, and he argues that, despite the contrary opinions of many who have understood Jesus in purely eschatological or existential terms, Jesus did have a distinctive socio-political stance. He begins the main part of his book by setting the scene for Jesus' ministry: he explains that Roman rule of Palestine was very uncomfortable to live with, both because of the ineptitude of the appointed officials and especially because of the economic effects of taxation. Borg describes the taxation system, and observes that a conscientious Jewish farmer wishing to pay his temple dues as well as the Roman taxes could be parting with 35-40% of his produce. As a result there was very widespread hostility and resistance to Roman rule among most Jews (not just among a Zealot party).

He then notes that the Jewish resistance to Rome had its focus in the great institutions of Torah and Temple, and he proceeds to explain how Judaism had developed in Palestine since the exile. Faced with imperial power and the threat of pagan religion, the Jews came increasingly to emphasize the importance of holiness and separation. The events of 169 BC, when Antiochus Epiphanes desecrated the temple and tried to abolish Judaism, thus provoking the heroically successful Maccabean rebellion, encouraged this trend and inspired Jewish resistance, not least within the NT period. The holiness/separation movement was evident in Jesus' time both in the Essene movement and in the Pharisees, both groups emphasizing the need for faithfulness to the law and purity of worship. Borg claims that the Pharisaic vision came to be very widely held in Palestine, even by non-Pharisees.

This vision was the ideological basis for Jewish resistance to Rome and helps to explain the sensitivity in Jesus' time of law and temple. One of the effects of the trend to emphasize separation/holiness was that it did indeed produce separation, and not only between Jews and others, but also between Jew and Jew, since strict Jews separated themselves from less strict Jews, and so there was a strong tendency towards the fragmentation of society.

Jesus, though a holy man, took a very different line from this dominant Jewish ideology. He mixed with sinners and tax collectors, the latter being regarded as traitors and as defiled by their contact with Gentiles. By eating with them — a very significant action — Jesus was acting in direct contradiction to the separation/holiness school of thought, and he was challenging their view of God and their vision of the people of God. His view, as expressed in many of his parables (such as those of Lk. 15), was that God looked for mercy and love, not just holiness, and that the influential Pharisaic model of holiness was in fact leading individuals and the nation away from God. Jesus taught that the way to imitate God was not by interpreting 'Be holy as I am holy' in a separationist way, but by being merciful as God is merciful. Jesus taught love, not hatred, of 'your enemies' (i.e. the Romans), and his view of holiness was that it is something that reaches out and heals rather than something that withdraws and protects itself. So Jesus touches and heals the leper rather than keeping away from defilement, and he and his followers are the 'peace party' in the troubled political scene of first-century Palestine.

Borg goes on to put Jesus' teaching on the sabbath into this context: the sabbath was a great symbol of national identity. Jesus, for example by his healings, shows that the sabbath is to be celebrated by mercy, not by making it a symbol of separation/holiness. The temple too was a key symbol in the separation/holiness way of thinking, and there was a widespread belief that God would not let it be destroyed. Jesus in cleansing the temple rejects the way the Jews had turned it into a place of separation (as symbolized by the money-changers) instead of a place of prayer for all nations. And he warns of its destruction, if that path continues to be followed.

Borg's one from last chapter is on Jesus and the future, and here he argues that Jesus' primary expectation was of judgment on the Jewish nation if they failed to respond to his mercy-programme. Borg is inclined to discount an expectation of final judgment beyond that, and to read passages such

as Mark 13:24-27 as referring not to the Second Coming but to the destruction of Jerusalem, an event of truly cosmic importance described by Jesus in pictorial OT language. He doubts if Jesus spoke of himself as the future coming Son of man.

In his conclusion Borg tries to relate his understanding of Jesus' mission to Jesus' own understanding of himself and his work. He sees Jesus as a Jewish 'holy man' with a deep knowledge of God whom he experienced as merciful, and as a 'sage' who learned in his own experience (e.g. at his baptism) that what is needed is to die to oneself and to receive a new heart from God. In speaking of the 'kingdom' Jesus was referring to the reality of God that he had experienced and which he called others to experience.

The interest of Borg's book will, I hope, be evident from my description of it, though I have not, of course, been able to do more than describe his position in general; there is also a great deal of fresh and valuable detailed exegesis. Some parts of the book and some details are less satisfactory than others. In particular, his last two chapters and his treatment of eschatology and Christology — significant issues to say the least — may be seriously questioned. Borg over-reacts to the views of those who have seen Jesus as an apocalyptic prophet who expected an imminent end to all things by denying that Jesus had any vision of the end of the age and the ushering-in of the perfect kingdom of God; but this is to ignore the tremendous note of excitement about the breaking-in of God's new age which is present both in the gospels and in the epistles (e.g. Mt. 11:2-15, important verses not commented on by Borg). His understanding of Jesus' person is also deficient in a similar way: the Jesus of the NT is not just a holy sage offering an alternative programme to the Pharisees, but is someone far more significant: he is the Son of man bringing

salvation to God's people (cf. Dn. 7); he is the Son of the divine owner of the vineyard (cf. Mk. 12:1-12); he is the powerful presence of God on earth (cf. Mk. 2:1-11).

But despite these significant weaknesses and other less serious details which may be questioned, Borg has undoubtedly offered us an illuminating perspective on Jesus in the social context of his day. His main argument is not, I think, seriously weakened by the deficiencies of his eschatology and Christology, but could just as well be married with more traditional views of those matters: Jesus is the divine Son who brings in the new age of God's forgiving love and who calls his people to the path not of separation and self-preservation, but to the way of self-denial and to a mission of mercy for the world.

Borg does not react with some of the other recent and significant works on the historical Jesus, such as A. Harvey's *Jesus and the Constraints of History* and B. Meyer's *The Aims of Jesus*; perhaps this is to be explained by delays in publishing a book that was originally an Oxford doctoral thesis completed in 1972. But this does not prevent his book being an important contribution to an important ongoing debate. The original hardback edition was prohibitively expensive (especially for a book printed from typescript), but the appearance of the paperback edition should make the work much more accessible. Students and scholars alike need to take the book seriously, building on those insights that are sound and seeking to improve on Borg's treatment where it is weak.

¹ New York & Toronto: Edwin Mellen Press, 1984, 397 pp., \$59.95 hardback. Textbook edition \$14.95 direct from the publisher at PO Box 450, Lewiston, New York 14092, USA.

Justification: the new ecumenical debate*

Alister McGrath

*We are grateful for this article to Dr McGrath, who is a particular expert on the subject of justification, having written a major two-volume work *Iustitia Dei: A History of the Christian Doctrine of Justification* (CUP, 1986). He is also author of *ARCIC II and Justification: an Evangelical Anglican Assessment* (Latimer House, Oxford, 1987) and of the new *Justification by Faith: An Introduction* (Zondervan/Marshall, 1988). Dr McGrath, who teaches at Wycliffe Hall in Oxford, has written several other significant works in recent years which Themelios readers should be aware of, including *Luther's Theology of the Cross* (Blackwells, 1985), *The Making of Modern German Christology* (Blackwells, 1986) and *The Enigma of the Cross* (Hodder, 1987).*

In recent years a number of ecumenical discussions have focused on the doctrine of justification by faith. On 30 September 1983 the US Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue group released a 24,000-word document which represented the fruit of six years of discussions on the doctrine of justification. This document, entitled *Justification by Faith*, is by far the most important ecumenical document to deal with the theme of justification to date, and represents a landmark in ecumenical discussions. Anyone who wishes to deal with the dialogue between Protestant and Roman Catholic theologians on justification will have to make this document his point of departure. This has been followed by the report of the Second Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC II), entitled *Salvation and the Church*, published on 22 January 1987. In this article we propose to examine some difficulties in the modern discussion of justification, with particular reference to these documents.¹

The European Reformation of the sixteenth century saw the battle-lines drawn between Roman Catholics and Protestants over the doctrine of justification by faith alone. For the Protestant Reformers, the doctrine of justification was the 'article by which the church stands or falls'. The Roman Catholic church, in their view, had fallen over this doctrine, and thus lost its credibility as a genuinely Christian church. For the Reformers, this more than adequately justified breaking away from the medieval church, in order to return to the authentic teaching of Scripture. The Reformers, by reclaiming the insights of the NT and Augustine of Hippo, were able to claim that they had recovered the biblical doctrine of justification by faith.²

But what were the differences between Roman Catholic and Protestant teachings on justification in the sixteenth century? We may make an immediate distinction between two types of differences: differences which were actually nothing more than *misunderstandings* (where both sides were saying more or less the same thing, but misunderstood

each other); and differences which were disagreements (where both sides understood precisely what the other was saying, and regarded it as unacceptable). We shall consider both these types of differences.

Sixteenth-century misunderstandings

It is obvious that both Protestants and Roman Catholics agreed on the following, although their discussion of them was confused by some difficulties which we shall note below.

1. We cannot take the initiative in beginning the Christian life – it is God who moves first. Original sin prevents our finding our way back to God unaided by grace. Popular Catholic religion in the later Middle Ages was obsessed with the doctrine of justification by works, however, pointing to a radical divergence between what theologians taught and what the common people believed!
2. The foundation of the Christian life is the work of Christ, and not anything which we ourselves can do. Once more, popular Catholic piety tended to lay considerable emphasis upon merit, and showed an obsessional interest in the various ways in which this merit could be gained and stored, rather like funds in a bank account.
3. Although the Christian life is not begun on the basis of good works, good works are the natural result of and expression of genuine Christian faith.
4. The Christian life takes place at the communal, and not just the individual, level. By beginning the Christian life, the believer finds himself within a community of faith.

None of these points was the subject of dispute between theologians in the sixteenth century – the difficulties arose primarily in relation to how these points were expressed.

An excellent example of these difficulties is provided by the term 'justification' itself. Following St Augustine of Hippo, the Council of Trent defined justification in terms of 'making righteous'. Trent's comprehensive definition of justification makes it clear that 'justification' includes both the initiation and the subsequent development of the Christian life, as the believer grows in holiness and righteousness. Augustine's interpretation of the post-classical Latin term *iustificare* as *iustum facere* reveals his celebrated etymological shortcomings, although the importance of this point would not be appreciated until the sixteenth century.³

On the basis of the new advances in philology associated with the Renaissance, and especially the new interest in the Hebrew text of the OT, both Lutheran and Reformed theologians recognized that the verb 'to justify' was forensic, meaning 'to declare or pronounce to be righteous', and *not* 'to make righteous'.⁴ Although the Reformers had a great respect for Augustine, they had no hesitation in criticizing him when the direct study of the Hebrew and Greek texts of Scripture

* A paper read at Church House, Westminster, London, on 10 October 1987.

showed him to be wrong – and Augustine's definition of what justification itself actually was came to be recognized as a classical case of an error arising from the use of the Latin version of Scripture, rather than Scripture in its original language.

The Reformers therefore rejected the predominant tradition of the western church concerning the meaning of the term 'justification' – and by doing so, added considerably to the difficulties of the sixteenth century debates on justification. For the simple fact was that Protestants and Roman Catholics used the term 'justification' to mean rather different things. For the Protestant, 'justification' refers to the external pronouncement on the part of God that the sinner is regarded as righteous in his sight (*coram Deo*), thus marking the beginning of the Christian life. For the Roman Catholic – who, in this matter, continues the common teaching of the western church, deriving from Augustine – 'justification' means both the *event* by which the Christian life is initiated and the *process* by which the believer is regenerated. In other words, Trent understands by 'justification' what the Protestant understands by 'justification' and 'sanctification' or 'regeneration' taken together. This semantic difference led to enormous confusion at the time, as it still does to this day.

To illustrate this point, consider the following two statements: 1. We are justified by faith alone. 2. We are justified by faith and by holiness of life.

In terms of popular polemics, the former is generally identified as the Protestant, and the latter as the Roman Catholic, position. To the Protestant, the first statement stipulates that the Christian life is begun through faith alone – which is obviously right, in that it corresponds to the NT teaching on the matter. To the Roman Catholic, however, the same statement implies that the Christian life is begun through faith alone *and continued* in faith alone – which is obviously a travesty of the NT teaching on the matter, which makes explicit reference to the Christian life being continued in holiness, obedience and good works.

Now consider the second statement. To the Roman Catholic, this would mean that the Christian life is *begun* through faith, and *continued* in holiness of life – which is obviously an excellent summary of the NT teaching on the matter. To the Protestant, however, the same statement means something very different: that the Christian life is *begun* through faith and holiness of life – which is virtually Pelagian, and a gross distortion of the NT teaching on the matter. In fact, it will be obvious that the first statement (understood in the Protestant sense) and the second (understood in the Roman Catholic sense) are actually saying more or less the same thing – but the convergence is obscured by the different understandings of the term 'justification'. This point has been made frequently in most ecumenical discussions of justification, ARCIC II included.

It will, of course, be obvious that Protestant theologians were not for one moment suggesting that it was possible to be justified without being sanctified: they were simply insisting upon a *notional distinction* between the two concepts, distinguishing *at the conceptual level* two ideas which had hitherto been regarded as essentially the same thing. On the

basis of their new and more reliable knowledge of Hebrew philology, the new understanding of justification was totally justified, making correction of Augustine on this point acceptable. Although the Reformers vigorously upheld Augustine's ideas on grace, they felt perfectly free to correct his interpretation of Scripture where it was based upon bad Hebrew!

Sixteenth-century disagreements

As we noted in the previous section of the article, there was an important degree of agreement between Protestants and Roman Catholics on the doctrine of justification in the sixteenth century. Perhaps we could summarize the situation by suggesting that both were committed to anti-Pelagian Christocentric theologies of justification. Nevertheless, alongside this real, if obscured, agreement was genuine disagreement, where each side understood perfectly well what the other was saying, and took exception to it. It is here that the real focus of the Reformation controversies is to be found. Two matters were regarded as being of central importance at the time:

1. The nature of justifying righteousness (sometimes also referred to in the period 1575-1700 as the 'formal cause of justification').

2. The question of assurance (which is closely linked with the nature of justifying righteousness).

We have space only to consider the first of these two questions.

The nature of justifying righteousness

Luther insisted that justifying righteousness was *iustitia aliena Christi*, an 'alien righteousness of Christ' – a righteousness which was extrinsic to the believer, covering him protectively in much the same way as a mother hen might cover her chicks with her wing.⁵ Substantially the same position was taken up by both Lutheran and Reformed theologians, who held that justifying righteousness is not a righteousness inherent to the individual, but one outside him. God effects our justification from outside us, prior to effecting our renewal within us. The righteousness of justification was perfect and imputed, whereas that of sanctification was imperfect and inherent. The point which the Reformers wished to emphasize was that the righteousness of the saints was permanently imperfect, and therefore could not function as the basis of the divine verdict of justification. We are accepted on the basis of a perfect righteousness – the righteousness of Christ.

The Council of Trent, however, meeting in 1546-7 to formulate the Roman Catholic response to the Reformation doctrines of justification, insisted that the single formal cause of justification was an inherent righteousness, a righteousness within the believer. Although stressing that this righteousness was provided by God, Trent equally insisted that it was located within the believer as part of his person. The Reformers found this idea inconsistent: if God's verdict of justification was not to be a legal fiction, it would have to be based upon a perfect righteousness – and if this righteousness was inherent to the believer, how could Trent speak of a believer growing in righteousness when he already possessed

a perfect righteousness? It seemed to the Reformers that any inherent righteousness was, by its very nature, imperfect and in need of supplementation – and the imputation of the alien righteousness of Christ dealt with this difficulty.

For the Reformers, it was necessary to know that one was a Christian, that the Christian life had indeed begun, that one had been forgiven and accepted by God – and on the basis of this conviction, the living of the Christian life, with all its opportunities, responsibilities and challenges, could proceed. Being justified on the basis of the external righteousness of Christ meant that all that needed to be done for an individual's justification had been done by God – and so the believer could rest assured that he *had* been accepted and forgiven. The Reformers could not see how Trent ensured that the individual was accepted, despite being a sinner. For if the believer possessed the perfect righteousness which ensured his justification, he could no longer be a sinner – and yet experience (as well as the penitential system of the Catholic church!) suggested that believers continually sinned. For the Reformers, the Tridentine doctrine of justification was profoundly inadequate, in that it could not account for the fact that the believer was really accepted before God while still remaining a sinner. The Reformers were convinced that Trent taught a profoundly inadequate doctrine of justification as a result. The famous phrase, due to Luther, sums up this precious insight with brilliance and verbal economy: *simul iustus et peccator*, 'righteous and a sinner at one and the same time'. Luther is one of the few theologians ever to have grasped and articulated the simple fact that God loves and accepts us just as we are – not as we *might* be, or *will* be, but as he finds us.

As the Tridentine debates on justification make clear, Trent recognized exactly what Protestant theologians were saying on this matter – and explicitly rejected it. Although a number of theologians present at Trent clearly sympathized with the Protestant position, they were outnumbered and outmanoeuvred by their colleagues. This was no misunderstanding, but a deliberate, weighed and explicit rejection of the Protestant position.

Here, then, is an area where there was genuine and apparently insuperable disagreement between Trent and the Reformers in the sixteenth century. As even the most superficial survey of Protestant and Roman Catholic polemical writings from 1550 onwards makes clear, it is in relation to these two questions – the nature of justifying righteousness and the question of assurance – that the real divisions were perceived to lie. It is thus of some considerable interest to note that it was precisely these two questions (originally not on Trent's agenda, incidentally – they had to be added later, when it was obvious that they could not be avoided) which caused the long delay in the formulation of the decree on justification. (Indeed, at one point it seemed that Trent would not be able to say *anything* about the question of assurance, so difficult was it proving to reach agreement.)

It will therefore be clear that any attempts to engage with the *real* differences between Protestants and Roman Catholics over the doctrine of justification must be addressed to these two questions, which *historically* were regarded as central. There is little to be gained from recapitulating what

was agreed in the sixteenth century (although that agreement was, of course, obscured by polemics and terminological differences), unless it can be shown that these two issues are no longer of any importance.

But what did the Anglican theologians of the Elizabethan Settlement make of these differences? We are very fortunate to have at our disposal an excellent study of this question from the pen of the Anglican Bishop of South Carolina, Fitz Allison. In his book *The Rise of Moralism*,⁶ Allison shows how Anglican divine after Anglican divine of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries declares that the doctrine of justification (and, more specifically, the question of the nature of justifying righteousness) is *the* issue at stake between the Church of England and Rome. Thus for Richard Hooker, 'the grand question, which hangeth yet in controversy between us and the Church of Rome, is about the matter of justifying righteousness'. Similarly, John Davenant's *Disputatio de Iustitia habituali et actuali* (1631) – noted, incidentally, by the writers of *Salvation and the Church* – represents a sustained attack upon the Roman Catholic polemicist Robert Bellarmine's views on the nature of justifying righteousness. Both Bellarmine and Davenant are agreed that the crucial question dividing Catholics and Anglicans was that of the nature of justifying righteousness.⁷

A central disagreement which must therefore be dealt with thoroughly in any ecumenical discussion of justification is this: is justifying righteousness *external* (the Protestant position), *internal* (the Roman Catholic position), or *both* (the position adopted at the abortive Diet of Regensburg in 1541, and repudiated by both Protestants and Roman Catholics in the sixteenth century)?

So what has the recent ecumenical debate on justification achieved? In view of the fact that the most recent contribution to this debate is the ARCIC II document *Salvation and the Church*, we shall attempt to answer this question with specific reference to this document.⁸ In many ways, however, this document illustrates recent trends in this discussion, and the comments which follow will be of relevance beyond the limits of the Anglican-Roman Catholic discussion of justification.

Earlier, we noted two main types of controversy concerning justification in the sixteenth century: those which reflected *simple misunderstandings* (in which both sides were saying basically the same thing, but weren't aware of it at the time), and those which represented *genuine disagreement* (where each side knew what the other was saying, and didn't agree with it). The document *Justification by Faith* represents an excellent example of how both types of controversy can be dealt with – not necessarily leading to their resolution, but at least setting them in perspective in order that real points of convergence may be identified.

Salvation and the Church greatly assists contemporary dialogue between Anglicans and Roman Catholics by summarizing the main points of agreement between the churches, which were often obscured by controversy in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries (§§3, 9-24). It is very helpful to have these misunderstandings clarified. It is shown that both churches are agreed that 'even the very first movements which lead to justification, such as repentance,

the desire for forgiveness and even faith itself, are the work of God' (§24); that justification is an 'unmerited' gift of God (§24); that our justification leads to our recreation and hence to good works as the fruit of our new freedom in Christ (§19); and that justification involves being incorporated into the community of the church (§25), rather than a solitary life of faith. Although none of these points was actually the subject of real disagreement in the sixteenth century, it is helpful to have absurd caricatures of both the Reformation view of justification and its Roman Catholic counterpart disarmed. The document rightly points out the tendency to produce caricatures or stereotypes of doctrines with which one disagrees (§8), and it is to be hoped that this document will dispel some of the absurdities which have lingered on within both Roman Catholic and Anglican circles concerning each other's ideological heritage. Incidentally, most of these absurdities, it must be said, date from the nineteenth century.

Personally, I regard ecumenical discussions of this type to be so important that it is inappropriate to 'rock the boat' by implying that certain pressing questions have not been discussed adequately, or perhaps have been quietly set to one side. Nevertheless, I think four questions have to be asked. I would not like to suggest that these questions imply criticism of ARCIC II, but simply a need for clarification. If these questions can be clarified satisfactorily, then no criticism need result; if, on the other hand, it is evident that no clarification is forthcoming, or that ARCIC II is taking refuge in terminological flexibility to minimize theological disagreement, then criticism is both demanded and deserved. Let me identify these questions.

1. *What sort of justifying righteousness are we talking about?* Earlier, we noted the centrality of this question to the sixteenth-century debates on justification. ARCIC II seems to treat this question as unimportant. It is not dealt with in the discussion. The brief historical analysis of the Reformation debate on justification makes no reference to the importance of this question. It is simply not addressed. Certainly, ARCIC II points to the way in which some sixteenth-century misunderstandings have been resolved — but when it comes to addressing real points of disagreement, ARCIC seems reluctant to recognize their force. The Reformation debate on the nature of justifying righteousness, of such central importance to late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century Anglican criticisms of Roman Catholicism, is studiously set to one side.

2. *Merit*

The document's statements on merit require considerable clarification. The following paragraph (§24) apparently explicitly excludes the possibility of meriting justification.

The language of merit and good works, therefore, when properly understood, in no way implies that human beings, once justified, are able to put God in their debt. Still less does it imply that justification itself is anything but a totally unmerited gift.

This statement, however, avoids a serious difficulty dating from the sixteenth century — the Roman Catholic distinction between *two types of merit*.⁹ This is complicated, but requires attention.

The medieval period saw a distinction develop between merit in the strict sense of the word ('condign merit') and

merit in a weaker sense of the word ('congruous merit'). No medieval theologian suggested that an individual could merit his justification in the strict sense of the word — in other words, earning justification. But some theologians, especially Franciscans, argued that an individual could do certain things (such as performing good works) which made it 'appropriate' for God to justify him. God was placed under a moral, rather than a legal, obligation to justify such an individual. The Reformers were, as might be expected, totally opposed to the idea that one could merit justification, in *either* sense of the word. With this important point in mind, let us consider the statement of ARCIC II cited above.

Does this statement mean that the Commission excludes the traditional and contemporary Franciscan teaching that it is possible to merit justification congruously? Once more, we must raise a question about the membership of ARCIC II: while fully recognizing the difficulties attending the selection of members, the history of the doctrine of justification, especially the proceedings of the Council of Trent, would indicate the need for a Franciscan theologian to be included. The Franciscans' fiercest opponents at Trent on such questions as whether justification can be merited and the possibility of assurance were, of course, the Dominicans. The Commission is fortunate to have two Dominican members — but why exclude Franciscans, when they have such a distinctive contribution to make to such a debate? Is not the Roman Catholic contingent somewhat unrepresentative as a result, especially when viewed in the light of the schools of thought present at the Tridentine debates on justification? In the present writer's opinion, the exclusion of Franciscans from ARCIC II is just as unpardonable as the continuing under-representation of evangelicals on the Anglican side.

Let us then lay down a question which needs clarification. Is ARCIC II saying that justification cannot be merited *congruously*? If not, it will give considerable offence to Anglican evangelicals, who feel that the idea of merit, especially merit prior to justification, is odious. Furthermore, the sixteenth-century debates did not concern whether someone could earn justification — after all, this was simply Pelagianism, as both sides knew. The debate, especially as it involved Luther and Calvin, centred on the concept of congruous merit — a more subtle concept of merit. If on the other hand, ARCIC II is saying that justification *cannot* be merited congruously, we may naturally ask why those who happen to disagree with this view on the Roman Catholic side appear to have been excluded from representation, and whether ARCIC II's statements on this aspect of the doctrine of justification may in any sense be said to be representative of the full spectrum of Catholic opinion. Was the Roman Catholic side preselected in order to exclude the theological school which, traditionally, is most opposed to the Reformation insights concerning merit and justification? Perhaps ARCIC II would care to clarify its position on congruous merit. I think that, until ARCIC II clarifies this point, we cannot regard them as having made any contribution to this aspect of the debate on justification.

3. *Indulgences*

In a final section, the document moves on to deal with 'The Church and Salvation'. This is by far the weakest section of the document. The entire discussion of the bearing of the doctrine of justification upon the life of the church — in other

words, the *practical* questions, which so aroused the Reformers — is abstract and unfocused. It is in this section that we have every right to look for, and find, a discussion of indulgences. After all, the historical origins of the Lutheran Reformation are linked with this practice, and there appears to be some degree of confusion within modern Catholic theology as to what the role of indulgences actually is. It is therefore of considerable importance that we have a *magisterial* pronouncement on indulgences — in other words, not just the views of some individual Roman Catholic theologians (the reliability of which varies considerably!), but an authoritative statement by the teaching office of the Roman Catholic church as to what the function of indulgences actually is. ARCIC II cannot flee from history: attention must be given to the question of what was actually at stake in the indulgences controversy of the sixteenth century, and how such differences may be, or have been, resolved.

As John Frith, the greatest of the neglected English Reformers, pointed out, the doctrine of justification by faith necessarily called the doctrine of purgatory into question. Indulgences, purgatory and prayer for the dead (which *Salvation and the Church* apparently brings into the debate at §22, for reasons which are not clear) — all these ideas and practices, brought into the discussion on account of the broadening of the theme from 'justification' to 'salvation and the church', point to areas of continuing divergence. As one leading Lutheran ecumenist points out, the question of how the doctrine of purgatory may be reinterpreted or revised in the modern period is an inevitable part of any genuine engagement with the doctrine of justification. 'Catholic interpretations of purgatory leave Lutherans with nagging questions: was Christ's work insufficient, and do our works somehow have merit?' Paul VI may have refined Trent's stipulations on indulgences — but the basic framework it presupposes (purgatory and purgatorial penalties, for instance) remains as unacceptable to Protestants, whether Anglican or otherwise, as it has always been.

Once more, the wisdom of *Justification by Faith* must be noted. In discussing the question of how an individual may be said to apply the satisfaction of Christ, this document noted:

Further study will be needed to determine whether and how far Lutherans and Catholics can agree on these points, which have far-reaching ramifications for traditionally disputed doctrines such as the sacrament of penance, Masses for special intentions, indulgences and purgatory. These questions demand more thorough exploration than they have yet received in this or other dialogues.

It is a pity that ARCIC II did not seize this opportunity to pursue this study, with a view to clarifying the bearing of the doctrine of justification (or 'salvation') on these beliefs and practices. ARCIC II must elucidate the indulgence question, clarifying its relation to the doctrines of justification and purgatory. It is at this point that the interaction of theology (the doctrine of justification) and the life of the church (for example, the practices of praying for the dead, the obtaining of indulgences, and so forth) becomes clear, indicating that the doctrine of justification cannot be discussed in a purely theoretical manner. It must be grounded in the life and practice of the church. ARCIC II has failed to deal with such matters, even though its unilateral extension of its brief to include 'salvation' rather than 'justification', as well as the doctrine of the church as it bears upon these matters, would

indicate that such discussion was necessary. It may well be the case, of course, that ARCIC II was laying down a marker for future further discussion of the question of indulgences — in which case we must encourage them to make public their deliberations.

Indulgences is not some obscure and antiquated sixteenth-century practice which can be dismissed as no longer of any importance or relevance in ecumenical discussion. The modern Roman Catholic teaching on indulgences has been stated and clarified in three documents, dating from 1967 (*Indulgentiarum doctrina*, of Paul VI), 1968 (*The new Enchiridion of Indulgences*, issued by the Sacred Apostolic Penitentiary), and the new Code of Canon Law of the Roman Catholic Church, dating from 1983 — and this last, it must be noted, was not taken into account by the US Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogue Group, simply because it had not appeared by the time their deliberations on justification were complete. Let me quote two canons from this new code of canon law.

992. An indulgence is the remission before God of the temporal punishment due for sins already forgiven as far as their guilt is concerned. This remission the faithful, with the proper dispositions and under certain determined conditions, acquire through the intervention of the church which, as minister of the redemption, authoritatively dispenses and applies the treasury of the satisfaction won by Christ and the saints.

994. The faithful can gain partial or plenary indulgences for themselves or apply them for the dead by way of suffrage.

The casual reader of ARCIC II's report might gain the impression that the sixteenth-century debate on indulgences had led to the matter being resolved. Yet here we have the same basic ideas being restated in substantially the same form within the last few years! How, one wonders, can agreement be reached when this matter is so obviously outstanding?

It seems to me that there is only one answer to this question, and that it rests upon a single phrase in §32. 'We believe that our two communions are agreed on *the essential aspects of the doctrine of salvation*.' This phrase, 'the essential aspects of the doctrine of salvation', seems to hold the key to ARCIC II's approach to the sixteenth-century debate on justification, in that it seems that indulgences are not to be regarded as an essential aspect of the doctrine of salvation. I think we must ask ARCIC II to be very honest on this point, and ask this very specific question, to which we have a right to a very specific answer: are the 1983 canons on indulgences an *essential* aspect of the Roman Catholic doctrine of salvation? I think ARCIC II would say 'No'. But as a historian, I have to suggest that the sixteenth-century answer given by the Roman Catholic church to its Protestant critics, in England and elsewhere, was rather different. After all, John Frith was burned at Smithfield in 1533 for denying that purgatory was a necessary dogma.

4. *The relation to history*

This point brings me to my fourth observation and request for clarification. The document appears somewhat reluctant to address the real disagreements which classical Anglican theologians perceived to exist between themselves and Rome. The emphasis placed by Anglican theologians of the later sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries upon the nature of justifying righteousness as the central issue, even the 'grand question which hangeth yet in controversy',

between Rome and England naturally leads us to inquire how the Commission deals with this question. The Commission is evidently aware of the difficulties raised by this difference, but appears to address it rather circumspectly. It is far from clear as to whether we are to regard the question of the nature of justifying righteousness as having been *resolved*, or having been declared to be *irrelevant*. The impression gained is that it is quietly being marginalized as *something which is not an 'essential aspect' of the doctrine of salvation*.

ARCIC II handles the real points which divided the churches in the sixteenth century in a way which suggests that they regard such disagreements as concerning areas which are not 'essential aspects' of the doctrine of salvation. The question of the nature of justifying righteousness, treated by Richard Hooker as the real point of controversy, seems to be treated as an inessential aspect of the doctrine. In fact, it seems that ARCIC concentrates upon establishing what was agreed between Protestants and Roman Catholics in the sixteenth century — and then treats the points at which they differed as inessential.

It is hoped that this paper will go some way towards assisting further discussion of the ARCIC II report. It is inevitable that the evaluation of this report will take some years, due partly to the complexity of the issues in question (after all, ARCIC II took some three years to produce this document!) and partly to the need for clarification of points (such as the four noted above) before a full *informed* response can be made. It is to be hoped that adequate time will be allowed for this process of evaluation to take place. *Salvation*

and the Church is to be welcomed as an important contribution to a central ecumenical debate, which must now continue outside the somewhat restricted membership of ARCIC II. It is hoped that this paper will catalyze such discussion, by identifying areas where clarification is required, and criticism is possible.

¹ 'Justification by Faith,' *Origins: NC Documentary Service* 13/17 (1983), pp. 277-304; *Salvation and the Church: An Agreed Statement* (Church House Publishing/Catholic Truth Society, 1987).

² The historical development of the doctrine of justification is exceptionally complex. See Alister E. McGrath, *Iustitia Dei: A History of the Christian Doctrine of Justification* (2 vols: CUP, 1986). A more easily readable introduction to the subject is Alister McGrath, *Justification by Faith: An Introduction* (Zondervan/Marshall Pickering, 1988). The following works are also of relevance: Robert G. England, *Justification Today: The Roman Catholic and Anglican Debate* (Latimer Study 4: Latimer House, Oxford, 1979); Robin A. Leaver, *The Doctrine of Justification in the Church of England* (Latimer Study 3: Latimer House, Oxford, 1979); J. I. Packer *et al.*, *Here We Stand: Justification by Faith Today* (Hodder & Stoughton, 1986); Gavin Reid (ed.), *The Great Acquittal: Justification by Faith and Current Christian Thought* (Fount, 1980).

³ See McGrath, *Iustitia Dei*, vol. 1, pp. 40-51; vol. 2, pp. 1-3.

⁴ See McGrath, *Iustitia Dei*, vol. 2, pp. 23-26, 31-32, 68-72.

⁵ See McGrath, *Iustitia Dei*, vol. 2, pp. 10-13.

⁶ C. F. Allison, *The Rise of Moralism: The Proclamation of the Gospel from Hooker to Baxter* (Morehouse Barlow, 1986).

⁷ See McGrath, *Iustitia Dei*, vol. 2, pp. 105-111.

⁸ We have responded in detail to this document elsewhere: Alister McGrath, *ARCIC II and Justification: An Evangelical Anglican Assessment of 'Salvation and the Church'* (Latimer Study 26: Latimer House, Oxford, 1987).

⁹ See McGrath, *Iustitia Dei*, vol. 1, pp. 109-119.

Go therefore and make disciples . . . The concept of discipleship in the New Testament

Hans Kvalbein

The author, who is Professor of New Testament at the Free Faculty of Oslo in Norway and an international editor of Themelios, contributed an article last year on 'Jesus and the poor'. We are grateful for permission to publish this further article, which appeared first in Theology and Life, the journal of the Hong Kong Lutheran Theological Seminary.

The great commission in Matthew 28:18-20 has a magnificent structure. It starts with a declaration of power: 'All authority . . . has been given to me'. It sounds like the enthronement of a king. This powerful king has an important message to his people. The message consists of two sentences. The first is an order: 'Go therefore and make disciples. . .'. The second is a promise: 'And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age.'

The order Jesus gives his disciples is longer and has a more complicated structure than the first and last sentence of the great commission. In the Greek text the main verb is 'make disciples'. This main verb is supported by three participles:

'going', 'baptizing' and 'teaching'. The main verb describes the aim of the work of the disciples. The participles describe the means to reach this aim. The disciples are asked to make disciples by going out, by baptizing and by teaching.

The structure of the great commission can be summarized as follows:

- | | | |
|------|----------------------|---|
| I. | Declaration of power | All authority on heaven and earth has been given to me. |
| II. | Commission | Therefore go and |
| | a) goal | <i>make disciples</i> of all nations |
| | b) means | <i>baptizing</i> them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit and <i>teaching</i> them to obey everything I have commanded you. |
| III. | Promise | And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age. |

In this article I want to concentrate on the main verb in the great commission. What does it mean to 'make disciples' or to be a disciple? Very much has been said and written on the other parts of this basic text for the understanding of the mission of the church. Books and articles on Christology deal with the character of Jesus' authority as described in the NT. The command to 'go out' has been a main concern in the missiology, defining mission as crossing borders in order to proclaim the gospel for people who still have not heard it. Lots of research has been done on the meaning of baptism and on the question of basic teaching of Christian faith. The promise of Jesus has been the centre of innumerable devotions and meditations to encourage believers in an age of indifference and resistance to the gospel.

By comparison with these elements of the great commission, very little has been said and written on the meaning of the main element of this command from the risen Lord. The biblical concept of discipleship has in our church tradition been replaced by other concepts and other words. Perhaps we might learn something about our position as Christians by considering again what it meant to be a disciple in the time of Jesus and in the early church. Jesus' call to discipleship is a challenge to modern men and women — and to our traditional church life and Christian life-style.

I will put my points in the form of 13 theses with some comments added. I start with some linguistic observations.

1. 'Disciples' was the first name for the Christians

The Greek word *mathētēs*, pl. *mathētai*, is used about the church in Jerusalem, Acts 6:1, and in Ephesus, Acts 19:9. In Acts 11:26 we find a very interesting sentence: 'In Antioch the disciples were for the first time called *Christians*.' From this we learn that the word we use most often, '*Christians*', was not the first name for this new group. They were first simply called the 'disciples'. This makes it clear that the group consisted of the first followers of Jesus during his ministry in Galilee and Judea, and that the newcomers to the group regarded their relationship to the risen Lord Jesus in some way similar to the relationship of the first disciples to the earthly 'rabbi' Jesus.

2. The verb *mathēteuō*, 'make disciples', is seldom used in the NT and has different meanings.

The use of this verb in Acts 14:21 is most close to the use in the great commission: Paul and Barnabas visited Derbe, where they 'preached the gospel and made many disciples'. The preaching of the gospel is here the means to make disciples, corresponding to 'baptizing' and 'teaching' in the great commission.

A striking parallel to the great commission is found in John 4:1, where 'baptizing' is the means to 'make disciples' (here not expressed by the verb *mathēteuo*, but by the expression *poiei mathētas*) during the earthly ministry of Jesus. We cannot discuss this passage at length here. In my opinion it shows that the continuity between the followers of John the Baptist and the disciples of Jesus is somehow the key to the question of the origin of Christian baptism. The Great Commission itself has not the form of an institution of baptism as a new ritual, as it is traditionally understood in many churches. It refers to baptism as a well-known act of initiation.

In Matthew 27:57 Joseph from Arimathea is described as a person who had 'been made a disciple'. But we don't learn anything about the character or the conditions for his discipleship.

Very special is the context of the verb in Matthew 13:52: 'a scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of Heaven'. Normally the word 'scribe' refers to opponents of Jesus. But here it is used positively of his adherents. The 'training' for the kingdom refers to some 'school' activity among Jesus and his followers similar to the teaching activity of the Jewish scribes. The saying must refer to a special group of teachers in the Jesus group who had functions similar to the scribes. The children of the kingdom can be described as a 'school' with 'scribes'.

This leads us to the basic meaning of the word 'disciple' in the NT:

3. 'Disciple' (*mathētēs*) means 'learner', 'student'. For his adherents Jesus alone is Teacher and Master, Rabbi. A Christian is always and only a student in relation to Jesus.

The highest hope of a student in a rabbinic 'school' was to become a rabbi like his own teacher. The rabbis tried to educate disciples that in their turn might become rabbis and pass the traditions on to new disciples who could become teachers for still a new generation. This was the basic pattern for the Jewish, rabbinic tradition. It was a great honour to become a rabbi, and the position as a disciple of a famous rabbi gave the possibility to advance to be a famous rabbi yourself.

The relationship of Jesus to his disciples was different. Jesus had a unique position that could not be transferred to his disciples. 'But you are not to be called "Rabbi", for you have only one Master and you are all brothers. And do not call anyone on earth "father", for you have one Father, and he is in heaven. Nor are you to be called "teacher", for you have one Teacher, the Christ' (Mt. 23:8-10). This text shows very clearly that the relationship between Jesus and the disciples is compared to teacher and pupils in a school. But it also very clearly shows the difference. It is necessary to have a teaching function in the church. There are 'scribes trained for the kingdom of Heaven'. But these scribes or teachers have no special position in relation to Christ. He is always the supreme teacher. Basically all members of a church or a theological seminary are fellow students in the school of Jesus. In this respect there is no difference between pastor and layman or between professor and student.

The name 'disciples' reminds us that the church from the beginning was the 'school' of Jesus. Therefore the teaching function must be very important in the church. But the only real teacher is Jesus himself. The church is basically a fellowship of his students.

4. A disciple learns by (a) hearing his Master, and (b) doing like his Master.

Our modern word 'teacher' is often associated with a person involved mainly in theoretical instruction. But it may also imply practical training. A teacher of a handicraft should have the skill to do the work in a way that the learner can imitate. In the activity of Jesus as a teacher we find his disciples both learning by hearing and learning by doing.

The Sermon on the Mount describes a typical situation of Jesus as a teacher. Jesus is sitting, like the preacher in the synagogue, and he teaches his disciples by talking to them (Mt. 5:1-2). Their activity is listening and memorizing his words. A similar situation is described in Luke 10:38-42. Mary takes the position of a disciple listening to the teacher. Martha is not rebuked for worldly worries, and not at all for her activities in the kitchen *per se*, but for neglecting the instruction of Jesus as rabbi. Compared to his contemporaries Jesus was quite radical when he in this way included women among his disciples. Many times in the gospels we meet Jesus preaching the gospel and teaching in the synagogues and in public places, discussing with his disciples and with his adversaries in order to instruct them about the will of God and about the gospel of the kingdom. In all these situations the disciples are learning by listening to their Master.

Less obvious are the many references to the disciples when they are learning by doing. But the Sermon on the Mount and the many stories about Jesus' healings are in fact followed by an instruction for the disciples to do the same as their Master: to preach the message of the kingdom and to heal the sick (Mt. 10:7-8). The total mission of the disciples is in this way put under the heading: They should do like their Master. Jesus is an example to be imitated by his disciples.

This is stated explicitly in the story about the washing of the disciples' feet: 'You call me "Teacher" and "Lord", and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you' (Jn. 13:13-15). This symbolic act points to the death of Jesus. His real service for his disciples is his death for them. He is the kernel of wheat that falls to the ground and dies in order to bear a rich fruit (Jn. 12:24). As an atoning death for the many, the death of Jesus is unique and cannot be imitated. But as an example of selfless service and unlimited love it has set a standard for the life of his followers. '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 as a ransom for many' (Mt. 20:26-28).

These words correspond to the way Jesus is preached as an example for his followers in the early church. The epistles never encourage the believers to imitate some specific action of Jesus' public ministry or some special aspect of his personality. Jesus is referred to as an example because of his incarnation and his death. These show his humility, love and radical readiness to serve others, and this is applied as a call to Christian people to tolerate and honour each other (Phil. 2:1-11), to share money with each other (2 Cor. 8:7-9), to suffer unjustly if necessary for the gospel (1 Pet. 2:18-25), or to help brothers in material need (1 Jn. 3:16-18). In this way Jesus is seen as a teacher not only through his words, but also through his actions. He doesn't only give a 'doctrine', but also a new self-understanding and a new life-style to be preserved by his followers.

To be a disciple of Christ in this way is therefore not only a matter of 'inner' qualities like faith and convictions. It concerns our whole life in word and deed.

5. *The disciples are chosen by Jesus.*

This thesis is very short, but very important. Normally a student is the one who chooses his teacher. He can come and ask for a place in a school or he can go to another. This was not the way of Jesus. He called his disciples to follow him. The stories of Jesus calling his disciples are well known. The disciples could only give an answer to his initiative. They left everything behind and followed him. But they might also have said 'no' to his call. The rich man was called to follow Jesus, but he 'went away sad'. A man can answer the call, but only Christ himself can call to discipleship. According to John 15:16, this was important: 'You did not choose me, but I chose you to go and bear fruit.'

This corresponds to Jesus' unique character and to the unique character of the church. He has chosen the disciples in a way similar to the way God chose Israel to be the blessed people and to be a blessing for others. They are not chosen because of their own abilities, but by his grace alone. The disciples should not thank their own deliberation and decisions for the privilege of being his disciples, but his undeserved choice.

6. *In the earthly ministry of Jesus we should distinguish between the disciples in a narrow sense — those who literally followed Jesus — and a broader group of adherents and sympathizers.* Luke 10:5-7 gives an interesting picture of the way the disciples were sent out by Jesus. They had no money, no extra shoes or clothes, and they were sent from village to village in order to preach the gospel. In other words, they were totally dependent on the hospitality of the people they met. They were in no way beggars, but they expected to be supported by those who received their message. They brought the good message of the kingdom, and they received food and shelter. The people receiving them were not made disciples in the narrow sense of 'people who followed Jesus and served him full-time'. But through their hospitality they did not only receive the messengers and their message, but Jesus himself (Lk. 10:16; Mt. 10:40-42). They belonged to a broader group of adherents and sympathizers. Without such a group of supporters who did *not* leave their homes to follow Jesus, the ministry of Jesus and his disciples would have been impossible. Jesus had power to multiply the bread and fish in the desert. But he did not use that power every day.

Luke 8:3 gives us a hint that some prominent women were among these supporters of Jesus. And even if the gospels are more concerned about Jesus' relationship to the disciples in the narrow sense, we get some glimpses of people supporting Jesus without leaving their homes. We have already mentioned Martha and Mary who received Jesus and served him in their own home. Zacchaeus exerts a similar function and has a similar position according to Luke 19:1-10. He receives Jesus and his followers for a meal in his home, but no hint is given that he left home and profession in order to be a literal 'follower' of Jesus. Perhaps people like Joseph of Arimathea (Mk. 15:43), Nicodemus (Jn. 3:1ff., 19:39), and many of those who experienced the healing power of Jesus and his disciples, belonged to this broader group of supporters.

The distinction between these two groups has been elaborated from a sociological point of view by G. Theissen in his book *The First Followers of Jesus* (1977).

7. *In the early church only the disciples in the narrow sense and their 'following' Jesus were the models for being a Christian. It is basically wrong to think of the 'disciples' as models for some special or 'higher quality' Christians among other Christians.* A Roman Catholic scholar (H. J. Degenhardt) has tried to apply the distinction between the following disciples and the resident supporters of Jesus as an argument for a distinction between ministers (*Amtsstraeger*) and laymen in the church. This corresponds to an old Roman Catholic tradition of separating the 'religiosi' – priests and monks and nuns – from the laity of the church. This interpretation has been refuted as unhistorical by other scholars, including Roman Catholic scholars. In the book of Acts the word 'disciples' is without any doubt used about all the believers, not only about a limited number of them. There is a continuity between the 'disciples' in the ministry of Jesus and the primitive church in Jerusalem and the subsequent churches. They did not look upon themselves as supporters, but as disciples of Jesus, even if they were not able to 'follow' him geographically like the first disciples in his earthly ministry. All believers have this position, and every attempt to make some basic distinction between 'disciples' and 'ordinary' Christians is contrary to the biblical sources.

This observation is not only a challenge to the classical 'High Church' distinction between clergy and laity. It is also a challenge to the use of the word 'disciple' in some modern renewal movements. There is a tendency to distinguish active 'disciples' from ordinary Christians. In charismatic movements this terminology also can be used to distinguish the charismatic, Spirit-filled, Christians from the others. This is in fact just another way of putting Christians in two different classes, which very easily are given different value as first- and second-class Christians respectively. Such distinctions cannot be supported from the biblical concept of discipleship. On the contrary, the words of Jesus in Matthew 23:8-10 should warn us not to make differences of honour and position in the church. The church is the school where Jesus alone is teacher, and where we all are students only, helping each other with our different gifts to become better students.

8. *The call to be a disciple meant in Jesus' lifetime to leave family, profession and property.*

When James and John, Peter and Andrew, were called to be Jesus' disciples, they left their boats and could not pursue their profession as fishermen (Mk. 1:16-20). In the same way Levi had to leave his tax collector's booth and give up his profession to be a full-time follower of Jesus (Mk. 2:14).

The disciples also had to leave their families in order to follow Jesus (Mk. 10:29). In many ways and on many occasions Jesus spoke about the cost of following him (Lk. 9:57-62, 14:26-33, 18:22). The disciples were invited to share his conditions on earth. 'Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.'

These radical demands for discipleship have always been felt as a challenge to the traditional churches. Some Christians have seen these words as a personal call to themselves. They have left family, profession and property in order to serve the Lord full-time in a new place. Others have applied them to a new community. Monks and nuns have been inspired by these demands to renounce marriage and private property. Some have even seen literal obedience to

these demands to be real Christian living in opposition to the 'secularized' patterns of church life of our time.

Even if individuals have received a genuine call to literal obedience to these words, it cannot be right to make them a general standard of the church. They cannot be separated from other important parts of the testimony of the NT.

9. *A literal 'exodus' like this was not expected in the early church. Jesus' death and resurrection inaugurates a new time with new requirements for the disciples.*

In his last discourse with his disciples according to Luke, Jesus refers back to the time he sent them out 'without purse, bag or sandals'. The disciples assure him that they didn't lack anything at that time. Then Jesus says: 'But now if you have a purse, take it, and also a bag; and if you don't have a sword, sell your cloak and buy one' (Lk. 22:36). This word clearly speaks of a new period which is different from the previous period. The task of the disciples – to preach the gospel of the kingdom – is not changed. But the conditions are changed. They are now allowed to bring what formerly was forbidden. The situation is now different. They must be prepared to meet resistance, and their Master will be taken away from them.

It should be evident that the content of 'following' Jesus and being his 'disciple' has new content when it no longer refers to a relationship with a bodily present Master but with the risen, invisible Lord. When the disciples cannot literally 'follow' him from place to place, they don't in the same literal way need to leave profession, family and property. This is made clear when we see how these requirements are followed up in the early church.

10. *In the early church we find exhortations, (a) to live a family life 'in Christ', (b) not to leave work and profession, and (c) to share generously and to care for the poor.*

Jesus' call to his disciples to leave their family and even 'hate' father and mother, wife and children (Lk. 14:26) is of course no general command of unlimited validity. It only has relevance when these relationships prevent an absolute obedience to him. It cannot make invalid the command of the decalogue: 'honour your father and your mother', which is confirmed both by Jesus (Mk. 10:19) and by the apostle (Eph 6:2). We find no hint that the early church encouraged people to leave their family in order to serve the Lord. On the contrary, we find many exhortations to live a family life 'in the Lord'. The new way of 'disciple' life and 'following' Jesus is fully compatible with matrimony, child education and care for the whole family (Eph. 5:21-6:9; Col. 3:18-41; 1 Pet. 2:18-3:7). Paul knows that the other apostles, including James and Peter, are married (1 Cor. 9:5). But he also personally prefers the single state for himself and for those who have a special service for the Lord and a gift for living single (1 Cor. 7:32-35).

In a similar way the first Christians in Thessalonica are encouraged to stay in their professions and work with their hands (1 Thes. 4:11; 2 Thes. 3:6-13). Even if they remembered how the first disciples had 'left everything', this was not regarded as an example to be followed literally by everybody. Disciple life after the death and resurrection of Jesus is different. It is compatible with a secular profession.

In Acts 2:44f. and 4:32-37 many scholars have found reason to assume that the primitive church in Jerusalem abandoned private property and lived in a community of full property fellowship. But we don't find references to such a fellowship in property elsewhere in the NT. The indications in Acts should probably not be taken as general descriptions of the property conditions in the church. They generalize what occasionally happened when church members shared their property to relieve the need of the poorest among them. It was no sin to have property in the early church. But there are many warnings against greed, and the rich are encouraged to be 'rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share' (1 Tim. 6:17-19). The many exhortations to care for the poor show us that the first Christians in general were not dependent on the support of others, and that most of them had a surplus they could share with the needy. On the other hand they also show us that there were many poor people in the churches needing support from the more affluent. In Jesus' lifetime the disciples literally had to leave their property to follow Jesus. This could not have the same literal meaning in the church. Perhaps the expression 'give up' or 'say farewell to' everything in Luke 14:33 indicates the way this picture of the disciples was transferred to the early church: the call is to an inner detachment with different practical consequences. Jesus had warned against Mammon as an idol, and he encouraged practical love for neighbours in need. This encouraged a new attitude to money and property in the early church.

Through these examples we see that the radical demands for the disciples in the ministry of Jesus are not simply abandoned in the early church. They are transformed for a new situation where literal 'following' is no longer possible. Some scholars have looked upon this process as a sort of decline, due to relaxed eschatological expectations and the secularization or 'Verbuergerlichung' of the church. I think it is better to look upon this as a necessary and right development. The 'school' of Jesus simply had to change character when the Master was no longer present in the body but only in the Spirit.

11. *Life as a disciple is now 'death and resurrection' with Christ, inaugurated in Christian baptism.*

We have noticed that the exhortations concerning family, profession and property are related to the formula *en Christo*, 'in Christ'. This is a reference to the new dimension of Christian life given in baptism. Romans 6 explains that baptism is to be joined with Christ and to die and live with him. This is the basis for Christian life. It corresponds to the way Jesus talked about 'carrying the cross' to follow him or to say no to one's own life. In Mark 8:34-37 this is closely linked with Jesus' prediction of his death and resurrection. The unity of Jesus' death with the 'death' of his followers is also made clear in the comparison with the kernel of wheat in John 12:23-26. Death and service for others is here connected in the same way as when Jesus washed the disciples' feet.

There is a continuity between the concept of discipleship in the gospels and the baptismal exhortations and ethical teachings of the letters. Baptism in the early church corresponds to the call to discipleship in the ministry of Jesus. Therefore it is not by accident that the Great Commission explains baptism and ethical instruction to be the means to

'make disciples' of all nations. The expression 'teaching them to obey everything I commanded you' is in the gospel of Matthew evidently a reference to the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5-7. This corresponds to the fact that the ethical instructions in the letters of the NT have more references to this text than to any other text in the gospels, and that the tradition behind the Sermon on the Mount according to Didache has been a catechetical tradition in the early church.

Baptism is therefore initiation into discipleship giving admittance to the 'school' of Jesus and starting a new life in obedience to him and his commands.

12. *To be a disciple is to be called to make new disciples.*

This is the evident implication of the Great Commission in Matthew 28:19. The disciples are told to make disciples. The concept of 'discipleship' is a dynamic concept. It implies multiplication. When the disciples were sent to preach the gospel of the kingdom for Israel, they were not asked to make disciples. But now this is included in their mission. The word 'disciple' has got a new and a broader meaning than referring to those following their Master in Galilee and Judea. All nations are invited to this new fellowship. And therefore all disciples are called to this mission.

This corresponds to the words of Paul in 2 Corinthians 5:18, when he so closely connects the gift of being reconciled with God with the ministry of reconciliation. Those who have received reconciliation are also Christ's ambassadors, urging others to 'be reconciled with God'. Being a disciple is to become the co-worker of Christ in his world-wide mission. 'He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world' (1 Jn. 2:2).

13. *The disciples have fellowship with Christ in life and death and are the inheritors of the kingdom of God.*

A disciple is called to give up his own interests in order to obey the call of Jesus. He is also called to the world-wide, overwhelming task of making all nations disciples. Confronting this great task and his own limited resources, it is easy to lose courage and simply give up.

Therefore it is good to see that the Great Commission does not stop with the command, but with a promise. The risen, almighty Lord is with them — not only when they feel it or when they succeed, but always, to the very end of the age. The disciples live under the promise that the kingdom of God belongs to them (Lk. 12:32). They are chosen for this destination by God's own will. Therefore they should not fear nor despair. To be a disciple of Christ is a great privilege. Christ is still calling us to 'leave everything' and follow him.

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The Paulinism of Acts again: two historical clues in 1 Thessalonians

David Wenham

Introduction

Few books of the NT are so important as the book of Acts for the question of the historical reliability of the NT, and few books are so controversial. Many scholars have seen Acts as offering the most objective and concrete evidence for the historical competence of one of the evangelists; others have seen Acts as a thoroughly theological book which is of doubtful historical value.

Scholars arguing in favour of the first view have noted, among other things, the remarkable accuracy of Acts on points of historical and geographical detail, e.g. over the names of the officials of the different cities mentioned (e.g. the 'strategoi' of Philippi in Acts 16:20; the 'politarchs' of Thessalonica in 17:6; the 'grammateus' of Ephesus in 19:35; the 'protos' of Malta in 28:7). They have seen this as confirmation of the seriousness of Luke's claim in the prologue of his gospel to be writing an accurate account on the basis of eyewitness testimony (1:1-4) and of his implicit claim in the 'we' passages of Acts to have been a companion of Paul, closely in touch with eyewitness tradition (cf. Acts 16:10ff.).

William Ramsay (1851-1939), who was one of the foremost experts on ancient Asia Minor in his day, was one of the best known advocates of this first view: he started out with a sceptical opinion of Acts as a theological and historically imaginative work of late date (a view resembling that of some modern redaction critics), but he ended up convinced of Luke's stature as a historian of the first rank.¹ A modern scholar in the same general tradition is F. F. Bruce, who concludes a major recent survey on 'The Acts of the Apostles: Historical Record or Theological Reconstruction?' as follows: 'A writer may be at one and the same time a sound historian and a capable theologian. The author of Acts was both. The quality of his history naturally varied according to the availability and trustworthiness of his sources, but being a good theologian as well as a good historian, he did not allow his theology to distort his history.'²

Scholars arguing in favour of the more sceptical view of Luke's writings have noted particular historical difficulties, such as the supposedly anachronistic references to Quirinius in Luke 2:2 and to Theudas in Acts 5:36. They have also detected significant discrepancies between the account given of Paul in Acts and what we know of the apostle from his own writings. For example, it is argued that there are historical contradictions between Paul's own account of his conversion

and the events following it in Galatians 1 and 2 and Luke's account in Acts 9-15; also that the Lukan portrait of Paul as a moderate man open to compromise, for example in Acts 21, is quite unlike the radical apostle of freedom whom we meet in, for example, Galatians.

Such arguments have not gone uncontested. For example, on the question of Paul's radicalism it is observed that in his epistles Paul can be conciliatory and flexible, and that the Paul of Acts 21 is not very different from the Paul of 1 Corinthians 9:19-23 (though this is not to deny that Luke may have emphasized some aspects of Paul's theology and ministry more than others). On the questions of chronology, the difficulties are admitted, and yet, it is argued, they are much less formidable than they at first appear, when the limitations of our historical knowledge, the fallibility of Josephus (whose testimony is sometimes at variance with Luke's) and the differing purposes of Acts and Paul's epistles are borne in mind. Also, there are satisfactory explanations of some of the difficulties: for example, if Paul's visit to Jerusalem in Galatians 2 is identified with the famine relief visit of Acts 11:27-30, not with the Jerusalem Council described in Acts 15, this eliminates one group of historical problems.³

However, the purpose of this article is not to tackle the question of the Paulinism of Acts in general, but simply to make a few observations about two possibly relevant texts in 1 Thessalonians. I have argued elsewhere that 1 Thessalonians throws a lot of light on the history of gospel traditions, notably on the traditions of Jesus' eschatological teaching, since Paul presupposes and echoes those traditions.⁴ I wish now to suggest also that the epistle throws some interesting light on the book of Acts.

The Areopagus speech

One of the most controversial questions about the book of Acts has to do with the speeches of Paul and the other apostles. It is widely accepted that the speeches are the composition of the author of Acts rather than records of what was actually said historically by the speaker referred to. Comparison is made of Josephus and other Graeco-Roman historians who felt free to compose speeches for participants in their narrative. So far as Paul's speeches in particular are concerned, it has been argued that the ideas expressed in the Pauline speeches in Acts (and in the non-Pauline speeches also) are Lukan, not those of the Paul of the epistles. So, for example, the rather philosophical Paul of the Areopagus

speech of Acts 17 is thought to be different from the Paul of the epistles who knew only Christ and him crucified.

This view of the speeches of Acts has been countered in various ways: for example, it is argued that the speeches are not polished literary pieces such as might be expected if Luke were following the tradition of other Graeco-Roman authors in composing them. It is argued that Luke's regular use of sources, such as Mark, for his speeches in his gospel makes it unlikely that he will have invented the speeches in Acts. It is suggested that the differences between the Paul of the Acts speeches and the Paul of the epistles may partly reflect Lukan editorial selectivity, but partly the differing audiences and situations presupposed: the epistles are instruction for converted Christians, the Acts speeches are apologetic to unbelievers, with the exception of the speech in Miletus in Acts 20:17-35, which is notably more similar to Paul's epistles.

It is not the purpose of this article to elaborate or examine these general arguments, but simply to contribute to the debate some observations about one piece of evidence from 1 Thessalonians that has been insufficiently noted by scholars. The evidence is that of 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10, where Paul describes his missionary visit to the Thessalonians and their response to his ministry. Their response was to 'turn to God from idols, to serve a living and true God, and to await his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who rescues us from the coming wrath'.

The striking thing about this summary is its close correspondence to Paul's Areopagus speech described by Luke in Acts 17:16-31. That speech, which is preceded by Luke's description of Paul's grief over the idolatry of Athens, begins with an extended discussion by Paul of the Athenians' ignorant and idolatrous religiousness as contrasted with the truth of God as the creator who gives life and breath to all things and 'in whom we live and move and have our being'. Paul then invites the Athenians to repent of their ignorant idolatry, because 'God has fixed a day in which he will judge the world by a man whom he appointed, providing assurance of this to all by raising him from the dead'.

The similarity of the ingredients in the two passages hardly needs spelling out:⁵ in both there is an emphasis on (a) turning from idolatry to the living God, (b) coming judgment to be prepared for, (c) the resurrection of Jesus. There are some differences of emphasis, for example in that 1 Thessalonians speaks of Jesus as the saviour from the wrath and Acts of him as the appointed agent of judgment (though Acts implies his saving role). But the comparison at least tells against those who see the emphases of Acts 17 as unPauline, and it lends some support to those who argue that the differences in the emphases of Paul's speeches in Acts and his epistles reflect the difference between his evangelistic preaching and his subsequent Christian instruction: the significant thing about 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10 is that Paul is here describing the response to his evangelistic ministry and preaching.

Of course the similarity between the two passages need not prove Lukan knowledge of the Pauline sermon. It could simply be that both Paul and Luke are reflecting a common and well-known pattern of Christian preaching to Gentiles.⁶ But, although this possibility must be reckoned with, it is still significant that Paul describes the Thessalonians' conversion

and by implication his own evangelistic preaching in these terms: the gap between the Paul of the Acts and the Paul of the epistles is thus reduced.

But a further consideration that has not been taken full account of by commentators and that may favour the view that Luke is drawing on historical reminiscence is a consideration of chronology. According to the most widely accepted chronology of Paul's ministry and according to the most natural reading of 1 Thessalonians, Paul wrote 1 Thessalonians quite soon after his visit to Thessalonica and after his subsequent visit to Athens.⁷ 1 Thessalonians is usually supposed to have been written by Paul from Corinth, where he had gone on from Athens. The significance of this for our argument is this: 1 Thessalonians was written very soon after the speech which, according to Acts, Paul delivered to the Areopagus. It could be a remarkable coincidence that Luke describes Paul's evangelistic ministry at this time in terms so strikingly similar to those actually used by Paul in describing his own ministry in this period; but it is simpler to do without the hypothesis of coincidence and to suggest that Luke had accurate information about Paul's ministry at this time.⁸

The appointing of elders

Another historical reference in Acts which may be illuminated by 1 Thessalonians is the reference to Paul's appointment of elders in Acts 14:23. It has often been argued that this is an anachronism, reflecting more on the 'early catholicism' of Luke's church than on historical realities.⁹ It is suggested, not least because of the evidence of 1 Corinthians and Paul's failure in that letter to refer clearly to the leaders of the church, that the earliest Pauline churches did not have formally appointed ministers.

However, the evidence of 1 Thessalonians once again puts this commonly accepted view in doubt. The evidence in this case is Paul's injunction to the Thessalonians to 'respect those who labour among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work' (5:12-13). This evidence indicates that, although Paul had a relatively short and turbulent stay in Thessalonica (as may be deduced from 1 Thessalonians as well as Acts), he did not leave without establishing some sort of eldership (although the actual word 'elder' is not used). If he did so in Thessalonica, it is entirely probable that he will also have done so in his ministry in Galatia not very long before, as Acts suggests.

But what then of the evidence of 1 and 2 Corinthians? In this case also it is useful to recall the probable Pauline chronology. Paul, having established the church in Thessalonica, moved south via Berea to Athens and then on to Corinth; and it was while he was establishing the church in Corinth that he wrote 1 Thessalonians. Given this probable chronology and given the evidence indicating that Paul appointed church leaders in Thessalonica, it seems intrinsically probable that he will also have appointed such leaders in the Corinthian church.

A comparison of 1 Thessalonians and 1 Corinthians certainly suggests that these two churches, which were geographically quite close to each other and which were founded at the same sort of time, had much in common. For example, they both probably had a 'charismatic problem' (cf. 1 Thes. 5:19-20 with 1 Cor. 12-14), and they had questions over the

resurrection and the second coming — perhaps quite similar questions (cf. 1 Thes. 4:13-18 and 1 Cor. 15). But did they have similar structures of church leadership? The *a priori* probability that they will have done so is confirmed by a comparison of 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 with 1 Corinthians 16:15-16, where Paul speaks of the *diakonia* of the household of Stephanas, 'the first converts in Achaia', and of other 'fellow-workers and labourers'. The language used in the two passages is quite similar (with the *kopiaio* and *erg-* roots in common). The church of Corinth did then have recognized church leaders; note also the reference to 'helps and administrations' in 12:28, the latter word *guberneseis* having very similar connotations to the word *episcopos*.¹⁰ Their lack of prominence in Paul's letters to the Corinthians may reflect the fact that they were a relatively ineffective and/or divided force in the Corinthian church, as well as Paul's strong convictions about the corporate nature of the church with the leaders being only part of the body, and his preference for dealing with issues theologically rather than institutionally. We may conclude that the evidence of 1 Corinthians in no way contradicts the testimony of Acts about Paul's appointment of elders; on the contrary, the combined evidence of 1 Thessalonians and 1 Corinthians tends to confirm what Acts says.¹¹

The two pieces of historical evidence that we have noted in 1 Thessalonians are not, of course, new discoveries. But their significance for an appreciation of the historical plausibility of Acts has not been adequately recognized by the majority of scholars.

¹ On Ramsay and on the history of Acts studies see W. W. Gasque, *A History of the Criticism of the Acts of the Apostles* (Tübingen/Grand Rapids: Mohr/Eerdmans, 1975).

² This very valuable article is in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt*, eds. H. Temporini and W. Haase (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1985), vol. II.25.3, pp. 2578-2603.

³ On this see, for example, Colin Hemer's article 'Acts and Galatians reconsidered', *Themelios* 2:3 (1977), pp. 81-88. Compare also his 'Luke the Historian' in *BJRL* 60 (1977), pp. 28-51. Before his recent death, Dr Hemer read and kindly commented on this paper; I gratefully acknowledge his help on this and many previous occasions. On the Quirinius and Theudas questions see, for example, I. H. Marshall, *Luke* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1978), pp. 99-104, and *Acts* (Leicester: IVP, 1980), pp. 122-123.

⁴ See my *Rediscovery of Jesus' Eschatological Discourse* (Sheffield: JSOT, 1984). I did not there point out another historical question which may be clarified by the evidence of 1 Thessalonians, namely the question of the authenticity of 2 Thessalonians. It is often argued that 2 Thessalonians expresses a different eschatological under-

standing from 1 Thessalonians. If, however, it can be shown that both 1 and 2 Thessalonians are drawing on the same corpus of dominical teaching (as I argue in *Rediscovery*), and that the supposedly divergent theological perspectives derive from that underlying tradition, then the negative case against Pauline authorship of 2 Thessalonians is weakened and the positive case for common authorship of the two epistles is strengthened.

⁵ Cf. L. Cerfaux, *Christ in the Theology of St Paul* (New York/Edinburgh and London: Herder/Nelson, 1959), pp. 15ff.

⁶ Cf. U. Wilckeis, *Die Missionsreden der Apostelgeschichte* (Neukirchen: Neukirchener, 1963:2), pp. 81-88. It may be noted that the Lystra speech of Acts 13 does not resemble 1 Thes. 1:9-10 as closely as the Areopagus speech.

⁷ In G. Lüdemann's radical reconstruction of the chronology of Paul's ministry, put forward in his *Paul, Apostle of the Gentiles* (London: SCM, 1984), Paul's foundation of the churches in Greece is dated before AD 40. My particular argument about the Areopagus speech works just as well given Lüdemann's chronology as on the traditional chronology. But Lüdemann's relatively negative assessment of the historicity of Acts is called into question by the sort of observations noted in this article. For criticisms of Lüdemann's reconstruction see F. F. Bruce, 'Chronological Questions in the Acts of the Apostles', *BJRL* 68 (1986), pp. 273-295.

⁸ We must, of course, take seriously Paul's statements in 1 Corinthians about the centrality of the cross in his gospel. Some scholars have explained the absence of reference to the cross in the Areopagus sermon through the hypothesis that Paul had a major change of policy when he came to Corinth. But this hypothesis is unnecessary (and improbable): in the first place, it is a silly reading of Paul's words in 1 Cor. 2:2 to take them to mean that he preached about the cross and nothing else — 1 Corinthians itself shows that the resurrection was an important part of his gospel; see 15:1ff. — or even that the cross was always the most prominent (as opposed to the most fundamental) element in his sermons. In the second place, it is a silly reading of Acts 17 to suppose that Luke intends this as a complete transcript of Paul's sermon, rather than a selective summary of important points. The climactic point of the sermon is the resurrection, and it is not unlikely that Luke presupposes that the preaching of the resurrection included explanation of the death of the one who rose. In any case the point remains that Paul too — in 1 Thessalonians — can summarize his evangelism at this time in a similar way to Luke, without specific mention of the cross.

⁹ E.g. E. Haenchen, *Acts* (Oxford: Blackwells, 1971), p. 437.

¹⁰ C. K. Barrett, *1 Corinthians* (London: Black, 1971²), speaks of 'helps and administrations' possibly foreshadowing the ministry of deacons and bishops (pp. 295, 296).

¹¹ We note also the evidence of Phil. 1:1 as showing that yet another church founded on the same missionary journey by Paul had officially appointed leaders, 'bishops and deacons'. The accumulation of evidence noted makes it clear that the sort of church order presupposed in the Pastoral Epistles is not as obviously unPauline as is often suggested. On the passages in 1 Thessalonians and 1 Corinthians, and generally on the structure of ministry in the Pauline churches, see E. E. Ellis, *Prophecy and Hermeneutic in Early Christianity* (Tübingen/Grand Rapids: Mohr/Eerdmans, 1978), pp. 1-22.

Theological trends in Asia

Bong Rin Ro

This is the first in what we hope will be a series of introductory articles on theological trends in various parts of the world. We are grateful to Dr Bong Rin Ro, who comes from Korea but who works at present in Taiwan as Executive Secretary of the Asia Theological Association and Dean of the Asia Graduate School of Theology, for this contribution. It is a slightly modified version of an editorial that appeared in the Asia Theological News.

The imposition of Western theology in Asia

'Theological ideas are created on the Continent (Europe), corrected in Great Britain, corrupted in America, and crammed into Asia,' said one theologian. In Asia there are approximately 1,000 theological institutions including Bible schools, the majority of them established by Western missionaries. Since 1945 thousands of Asian students have gone to the

West for their graduate theological education and many of these returning to Asia have introduced Western theologies at different theological schools throughout Asia.

Nevertheless, because of rising nationalism and the re-assertion of traditional values in Asia since the end of World War II, Asian theologians have been seeking liberation from Western theologies in order to make the gospel more relevant to their own life situations.

The proliferation of Asian theologies

Many Asian theologies have appeared in the theological arena: Pain of God Theology (Japan), Waterbuffalo Theology (Thailand), Third Eye Theology (for the Chinese), Ying Yang Theology (Chinese and Korean), Theology of Change (Taiwan), Minjung Theology (Korea), as well as Indian and Sri Lankan Theology. The proliferation of Asian theologies has escalated markedly since the 1960s and will continue to multiply in the future; already these theologies have made a great impact. They have also caused conflict and confusion in theological institutions and Christian churches in Asia.

Asian theologies can be grouped into four categories:

Syncretism

Since the Programme Unit on Faith and Witness of the World Council of Churches (WCC) has sponsored a number of religious dialogues with the leaders of other living religions, the increasing tendency towards syncretism in Asian theology has created alarm in the Asian church. For example, Raymond Panikkar, in his book *The Unknown Christ of Hinduism* (1964), stressed that Christ already dwells in the heart of a Hindu and that the mission of the church is not to bring Christ to the Hindu but to bring Christ out of him.

Accommodation theology

Accommodation is another subtle attempt to contextualize theology in Asia. Just as a hotel or a family accommodates a guest, so theological accommodation considers prevailing customs and religious practices of another culture and accommodates good ideas from other religions.

Dr Kosume Koyama, a former Japanese missionary professor at Thailand Theological Seminary in Chiang Mai, in his *Waterbuffalo Theology* (1970), opposes syncretism for not doing justice to both parties. He advocates accommodation instead. Dr Koyama believes that one cannot mix Aristotelian pepper with Buddhist salt in the North Thailand theological 'kitchen'. One must, therefore, emphasize good Neighbour-ology rather than mere Christology. Dr Koyama believes that every religion has positive as well as negative points and that Thai Christians must accept the positive elements of Buddhism in Thailand in order to change their life-style.

Dr Batumalai Sadayandy, a Malaysian Anglican priest, in his doctoral thesis at Birmingham University in the United Kingdom published a book, *A Prophetic Christology for Neighborology* (1987), and voiced the similar concept of accommodating the Malaysian Muslim context in terms of 'Neighborology'.

Yet the question of where to draw the line between syncretism and accommodation depends on whether the person is willing to accept the unique revelation of God in

Jesus Christ and in the Scriptures in his accommodation. A person's answer to a question such as, 'Do Buddhists and Muslims need to be converted to Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of their sins?' will reveal whether or not he believes that Jesus Christ is the only way to God.

Situational theology

Another type of Asian theology derives directly from a particular situation. This situational theology may not be in agreement with the biblical and historical doctrines of the Christian church but speaks to concrete situations in Asia.

Dr Kazoh Kitamori's **Pain of God Theology** in Japan is an excellent illustration. He tried to demonstrate to the suffering people in Japan after their defeat in World War II that the God revealed in the Bible is the God of suffering and pain who could identify with the suffering Japanese.

The **Liberation Theology** of Latin America has influenced Asian theologians and been expressed in different forms: the Minjung Theology in Korea, and Liberation Theology in India and the Philippines. The Christian Conference of Asia (CCA), which represents the Asian arm of WCC, has been the chief proponent of Liberation Theology in Asia, focusing on human rights, poverty, injustice and nuclear war.

For example, it is not uncommon to read in ecumenical journals and magazines such as the *CCA News*, *CTC* (Commission on Theological Concerns) *Bulletin*, and *East Asia Journal of Theology* critical comments against the governments of South Korea, Taiwan, the Philippines, and other countries for violations of human rights. And yet, it is interesting to notice the virtual absence of any critical comments against the Singapore government in the same magazines, because the main office of CCA is located in Singapore.

The **Minjung (Masses of People) Theology** is a form of situational theology in South Korea developed to deal with socio-political issues in the country. The present religious situation in South Korea cannot be fully understood apart from the impact of the Minjung Theology. The Minjung Theology as a Korean version of liberation theology takes into consideration the cries and groans of the suffering people known as 'han', because the Minjung (masses of People) are politically oppressed and powerless and economically exploited.

Dr Kim Yong Bock, Director of the Christian Institute for the Study of Justice and Development, edited a book, *Minjung Theology: People as the Subjects of History* (1981). This book is an outcome of a Theological consultation on Minjung Theology sponsored by the Theology Commission of the Korea NCC in October 1979.

In 'Theology and the Social Biography of the Minjung', in *CTC Bulletin* (April 1985), Dr Kim pointed out that the suffering of the Messiah must be understood politically and historically in that he suffered and the minjung suffered under the unjust political-religious-social power of the rulers of their time. Christ's suffering is more than just spiritual suffering, as Dr Kim explained:

Christian theology has traditionally underestimated the seriousness of social evil, a mistake caused by its attempt to understand sin and evil in individual, spiritual or metaphysical terms. It is only in recent times that serious political character has been found in sin and evil (p. 74).

Likewise, the resurrection of the Messiah, according to Dr Kim, also provides aspirations of the Minjung, *i.e.*, the resurrection movement of the minjung and the participation of the resurrection community in the minjung movement. Therefore, the church must initiate its witness in society to protect the poor and the weak lest she loses her historical validity.

Scores of ecumenical church people and Roman Catholic priests who have been affected by Minjung Theology and actively participated in anti-government demonstrations were arrested.

The Korean NCC organized the Human Rights Department; and consequently, the NCC-related denominations have organized their own Human Rights Committees that have inflamed the human rights issues by holding prayer meetings and rallies at the local church level for the 'prisoned saints' and against the use of tear gas by the riot police.

It is unfortunate that the foreign press, particularly the ecumenical denominational press in the West, overstated the religious issue in Korea as though the whole Korean church had risen against the South Korean government.

Biblically oriented Asian theology

There has, alongside and in response to the theologies we have described, been a continuing strong tradition of more conservative and evangelical theology in Asia. This is represented, for example, by the Asia Theological Association (ATA), which held a consultation on 'Contextualization: Asian Theology' in Seoul, Korea, August 23-31 1982, with 85 evangelical theologians from 17 countries. *The Bible and Theology in Asian Contexts* (1984) was published as an outcome of this Consultation. The Third World Theologians' Consultation followed right after the ATA consultation in Seoul with 50 delegates and 33 observers from Asia, Africa, the Caribbean and Latin America to deal with the same question of contextualization in the Third World.

At the Asian theologians' consultation, *The Bible and Theology in Asia Today: Declaration of the 6th Asia Theological Association Theological Consultation* was adopted. This Declaration warned of the danger of syncretism and universalism in Asian theology. It encouraged Asian theologians to give careful thought concerning contextualization and Asian theology, and circumscribed the area for evangelical theologians where they could exercise contextualization. Evangelical theologians have a set of presuppositions in their faith such as the inerrancy of the Scriptures, the uniqueness of Christ, substitutionary atonement and missiological objectives in theology, *etc.*, which set a basis for making the gospel relevant in each culture.

The task of Asian theology

The West has its own theological formulations derived from its own cultural background — Calvinism, Arminianism,

death of God, *etc.* Yet in Asia the historical and cultural background is quite different from that of the West and demands careful attention from Asian Christians to their own cultures in order to make the gospel relevant to their life situation.

Some of the issues we are facing today are Communism, poverty, overpopulation, hunger, suffering, war, demon possession, bribery, cheating, idolatry, ancestor worship, caste system, secularism, and the resurging Asian religions of Buddhism, Islam and Hinduism. Asian theologians must grapple with these issues and produce Asian theology that wrestles with these problems, yet being faithful to the historic teachings of the Scriptures over the centuries.

More particularly, the task of Asian theology, and of evangelical theology in particular, is threefold: first, they must search the Scriptures and provide joint guide-lines to the grass-root churches on key controversial issues such as Christian responses to socio-political situations in Asia. For example, Christian young people are confused as to how they should express their Christian faith on socio-political issues or whether they should participate in student demonstrations against the government.

Secondly, they should encourage the Asian church to adopt a holistic approach in ministry by caring for the needs of society. Evangelical churches have been often criticized by Christians as well as non-Christians for their lack of social concern.

Thirdly, they must emphasize that the priority of the church is evangelism and mission in this vast continent of Asia which has only 3% Christian population in the midst of three billion people, *i.e.* 60% of the world's population.

God is still at work in the Asian church, giving continuing growth even in the midst of confusion, violent demonstrations, and many unsolved problems in society and within the church.

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New Testament Pseudonymity? A review

Donald G Guthrie

It is commonly held among critical scholars that various of the NT books are pseudonymous: for example, Peter, it is said, did not write 2 Peter, Paul did not write the Pastoral Epistles or Ephesians; even Colossians and 2 Thessalonians may not be genuinely Pauline. In recent years a number of evangelical scholars have argued in favour of pseudonymity, not seeing this as in conflict with an evangelical understanding of Scripture. These include Richard Bauckham, in his magisterial commentary on 2 Peter, and now David G. Meade in a significant thesis produced under the supervision of Professor James Dunn at Nottingham University, published under the title Pseudonymity and Canon (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1986). In this review Dr Donald Guthrie, who is author of the Tyndale commentary on the Pastoral Epistles and who has made a particular study of pseudonymity, for example in his New Testament Introduction, responds to Dr Meade's thesis.

This book is not a discussion of the possibility or probability of pseudonymity in the biblical texts. It takes canonical pseudonymity for granted and is an attempt to explain the practice from a theological point of view. It is therefore a study from a very definite standpoint. Moreover, Meade defines pseudonymity in so broad a manner as to exclude any suggestion of a mere literary device. Indeed he regards a literary approach as superficial, and considers the question of whether literary parallels can be found to be of minor importance. By this means Meade leaves the way clear for the thesis that literary attribution is primarily an assertion of authoritative tradition, and not of literary origins (cf. p. 157).

This study appeals to three groups of OT and Jewish writings in which the author finds what he calls an interpretation or development (*Vergegenwärtigung*) of tradition which nevertheless is attributed to the same source as the originator of the tradition which has been used. The first group consists of the prophetic writings, from which he selects as an example the Isaianic literature. The second group comprises the Wisdom literature. The third group is Apocalyptic Tradition, from which he selects the books of Daniel and Enoch. He concludes from his studies that the collection of Jewish writings assumes a continuity between revelation and tradition in a way which supports the idea of pseudonymity.

Whatever the value of his suggestions with regard to the OT, the crucial question is what relevance they have in explaining the alleged (or for Meade, assumed) NT pseudepigraphs. Meade assumes that his deductions from Jewish literature will automatically apply to the growth of Christian literature. But is this valid, in view of the differences in literary genre? Further, Meade's methodology may be questioned, for having accepted canonical pseudepigraphs he is clearly searching for some better explanation for the practice than has so far been given. He is to be congratulated for recognizing the need to do this. But this study, in spite of its detail and technical expertise, does not escape the danger of special pleading.

It is not until the end of his study that Meade turns his attention to the question of literary parallels. He is forced to admit that pseudonymity 'in the biblical mode' (his own qualification) soon dropped out of practice. We may perhaps be permitted to ask whether in the end this does not beg the question. If pseudonymity was such an acceptable theological procedure because it recognized, for instance, that Paul in the Pastorals and Ephesians, and Peter in 2 Peter, had themselves become part of the tradition, it is strange indeed that the device was not more widely used. The fact is that NT criticism is faced with a dilemma, which is not likely to be lessened by Meade's study. Before NT epistolary pseudonymity can be assumed, it is not unreasonable to expect that some adequate parallels should be furnished and that some probable link between these and any

possible NT pseudepigraphs should be established. It simply will not do to dismiss such a demand as superficial, as Meade in fact does. The weakness of his approach can be demonstrated by selecting the example of the Pastoral Epistles.

Even before setting out his thesis on the Pastorals, Meade speaks of 'the explicit epistolary pseudonymity of the Pastorals' (p. 122). It is clear therefore that he begins his study with the strongest possible prejudice against the authenticity of the Pastorals, which colours his presentation of the evidence. He then goes on to maintain that the Pastorals take up many elements from Paul's writings and 'actualize this material for their own generation' (p. 139). But there is too fine a distinction here between Pauline thought and developed tradition. The latter must necessarily be sufficiently Pauline to be regarded as an extension of Paul's teaching, but not sufficiently close to be written by Paul himself. If the unknown writer could get as close as this to adapting Paul's teaching to a new situation, it is difficult to see on what logical grounds Paul himself is excluded from such extended application. The age-old dilemma is not resolved by appealing to the process of *Vergegenwärtigung* (interpretation), for such a process could be demonstrated within the undisputed Pauline epistles. Paul was throughout adapting his teaching to the needs of his readers.

We need to examine carefully Meade's main contention that pseudonymity (in the biblical mode) is not an assertion of literary origins, but of authoritative Pauline tradition. He is requiring us to believe that the Christian church was quite happy about someone writing a letter purporting to be by Paul because what he was doing was setting out an extension of Paul's teaching. But this assumes that in NT times the church was less concerned about literary forms than was the case at a later date. Meade tries to convince us that church leaders like Tertullian and Serapion, who both condemned pseudonymity, did so only when it was used in the interests of heresy. But such a distinction cannot reasonably be maintained. In fact Tertullian points out that the author of the *Acts of Paul*, who cannot be described as a heretic, was nevertheless condemned, even though he claimed to have written out of love for Paul. Similarly Serapion, in commenting on the pseudepigraphic *Gospel of Peter*, expressly declared that he rejected works falsely attributed to apostles.

The real Achilles' heel of Meade's case is when he is obliged to admit that there was an element of deception in the process. He dismisses, of course, any charge of forgery, but frankly admits deception. His explanation is not new, for he resorts to the well-worn expedient of claiming that what we now call deception would have been regarded differently in NT times. He states categorically, 'The more blatantly "deceptive" form of canonical epistolary pseudonymity is just the result of historical accident, the conjunction of a fundamentally Jewish understanding of authorship and revelation with a fundamentally Greek form of literature' (p. 199). The fact is, the epistolary form of pseudepigraphy can find no support in any kind of literature remotely parallel to the NT writings, and to resort to the theory of 'historical accident' will not convince those genuinely concerned about the problem of pseudonymity and the canon.

Since Meade has explained his NT examples of pseudonymity as being due to *Vergegenwärtigung*, he tries to account for the falling-off of the process of the interpretation of tradition by claiming that the rise of heresy demanded a more fixed approach to tradition, hence the process of the closure of the canon. But is it not relevant to ask when the church began to realize that its flexible approach to pseudonymity was leaving a wide-open door for heretical groups to do their own *Vergegenwärtigung*? Meade's book will no doubt be welcomed by those already convinced of NT pseudonymity who are looking for a new style of explanation for the phenomenon, but is hardly likely to commend itself to those who are seriously concerned about the element of deception which it involves. I suspect that to maintain that 'authorship is not primarily a statement of literary origins' would be rejected by literary critics in any other sphere than biblical studies.

Evangelical commentaries on Isaiah

Martin J Selman

In this review Dr Selman, an associate editor of Themelios who teaches at Spurgeon's College in London, discusses two new commentaries. J. N. Oswalt, The Book of Isaiah, chapters 1-39 (The New International Commentary on the Old Testament: Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1986), 746 pp., £26.60; and J. D. W. Watts, Isaiah 1-33 (Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 24: Waco, Word Books, 1985), 449 pp., price unknown.

It is a rare event and a great pleasure to be able to welcome not one but two new commentaries on the book of Isaiah, both by evangelical scholars. Both works are part of major commentary series, and most unusually for substantial twentieth-century commentaries on Isaiah, both are devoted to the whole book. At the moment, neither commentary is complete, so that one cannot judge whether either author has been fully successful in joining together what man has so often put asunder, but even for the first volumes, this holistic approach makes a significant difference to the interpretation. The point of division between the volumes is not of great import in either case, and Watts' decision to begin vol. 2 with ch. 34 does not imply acceptance of Brownlee and Harrison's theory concerning a bipartite structure. Comparisons between them will be inevitable, not least because for most students (and their teachers!) sharp conflict will arise between the allure of the bookshop and the alarm of the bank manager!

Despite their outward similarities, the two works are very different in both approach and method. This first major work by Oswalt, who lectures at Trinity, Deerfield, is the more traditional volume from an evangelical perspective, though one should not underestimate the considerable creativity and freshness in his work. In comparison with the useful, but now dated, contribution by E. J. Young, his predecessor in the NICOT series, it marks a notable advance. Oswalt's literary style and discussion are refreshingly contemporary, and he manages to maintain a distinctive evangelical emphasis without resorting to polemics. Nor does he indulge Young's preference for allowing the NT to determine exegetical issues in Isaiah, or confine himself to a strictly verse-by-verse approach.

Oswalt's concern for the theology of Isaiah is particularly attractive, and all those interested in what the book of Isaiah actually says, as distinct from what it might originally have said, will find much help here. Preachers as well as students will be grateful. Two theological themes are seen as crucial, those of trust (the unifying theme of chs. 7-39), and of servanthood. Israel is called to servanthood, but fails until and unless she recognizes the work of the Messianic Servant. A balance is maintained between identifying the Servant of chs. 49-55 and the Messiah of chs. 9 and 11 on the one hand, and on the other of underlining the close association between Israel's servanthood and that of the supreme individual Servant. Another striking feature, particularly in a scholarly work, is the attempt to work out the implications of Isaiah's message for today's world. Many commentary dust jackets arouse the reader's expectations in this area, but few commentators even begin to justify their publisher's blurb. The application, which focuses on philosophical and theological issues rather than ethical or political ones, is generally sensitively done. It is good to see an evangelical commentator taking seriously the fact that the OT is the Word of God for all generations and not just a piece of revealed history and/or literature. Oswalt's work is eminently readable, though just occasionally one comes across phraseology that will be incomprehensible outside the North American continent (e.g. 'bootless'). If one is going to quibble, one notices a lack of interaction

with some recent work on Isaiah, notably with the massive commentary of Wildberger, and some of the more recent contributions in the debate about unity in Isaiah. Oswalt is also generally content to follow previous form-critical conclusions, particularly those of Westermann. Nevertheless, there is much here that is stimulating as well as informative, and students of various theological persuasions will be grateful to Oswalt for what is a considerable achievement.

Watts' contribution follows the regular format of the Word series, with each section of the commentary being divided into six sections, enabling the reader to concentrate on his own preferences. Although one appreciates the reasoning behind this approach, it does make for a more disjointed reading. But perhaps one cannot have it both ways! However, although the format may follow traditional lines, the content certainly does not do so. Watts, who has written commentaries on several of the prophetic books and who now teaches at the Southern Baptist Seminary in Louisville, describes Isaiah as a Vision. This word, based of course on the first word of the book's Hebrew text, is understood as a literary term referring to the whole book. The Vision is interpreted as a literary drama divided into twelve acts (though the title page of the commentary proper confusingly has ten!), and within each section of text, individual speakers (such as heaven and earth, chorus, etc.) are identified. Each of these acts (also called generations) is delineated on the basis of historical references or associations. For example, the first act (chs. 1-6) concludes with the death of Uzziah (6:1), and the second (chs. 7-14) with the death of Ahaz at 14:28 (so disturbing the familiar grouping of oracles to the nations in chs. 13-23). Other acts, particularly after the mention of Cyrus in 44:28-45:1, are defined on the basis of increasingly slender evidence. The entire Vision is given a fifth-century perspective and dated around 435 BC, though it covers the whole period from the eighth to the fifth centuries, and is in 'substantial conformity to the vision and the words of Isaiah of the eighth century' (p. xxiv). This date is based on the latest historical setting in the book, the final downfall of Edom (63:1-6), which, since Edom does not appear in Ezra-Nehemiah, is thought to have occurred by the mid fifth century.

It is quite impossible within the short compass of this review to discuss adequately the distinctive features of Watts' work. There is undoubtedly much here that is not only stimulating, particularly in terms of Watts' attempt to understand the book as a whole, and in his emphasis on the book as essentially divine revelation. Some criticisms, however, must be voiced, though little more can be done here than to list this reviewer's hesitations. Firstly, although the author cannot bring himself to say so, he still assumes the existence of two Isaiahs in spite of the praiseworthy effort to interpret the book as we have it (this is a 'final form' approach, though the term itself is not used). References to both the historical prophet and the literary prophet amount to a tacit acceptance of this position, but there is need of greater clarification. One of the reasons for the author's uncertainty is connected with a second weakness, namely, that the authorship issue is dealt with ambivalently. On the one hand, Watts speaks of a single author who consciously provided the book's design without being confined by his inherited traditions, and yet at other times he refers to 'composers', 'writers', etc. Thirdly, the argument for a fifth-century setting can be described at best as hypothetical. Little attempt is made to develop the implications of this view by integrating Isaiah with either Ezra or Nehemiah, even though the latter would certainly have been a close contemporary with the assumed author(s). Fourthly, and perhaps most importantly, one must question the assumption of a fundamental change in Israelite theology in the mid eighth century. According to Watts, with the

emergence of Tiglath-pileser III, God abandoned his plan of political world rule through the Davidic kings and instead carried them out through a succession of world empires. Through this entire period, Israel was made aware, however painfully, that her role was as God's servant community, a spiritual gathering without political ambitions. While this theory has some attractive elements, it seems to reveal a fundamental flaw if, as is argued, it was understood by Ahaz and Manasseh but not by Hezekiah and Josiah.

Despite their divergent approaches, certain similarities in the two works are striking. Space allows the mention of only two of these common features, but both are fundamental to the study of Isaiah. The first is the interest in Isaianic unity. It is remarkable that for both authors, unity is not synonymous with authorship (Oswalt comes closest by insisting on 'the guiding hand of a single master' within the lifetime of Isaiah, though Watts' emphasis on a single design in the fifth century is not dissimilar). Isaiah's thought-structure is the key for Oswalt, and the essence of the book's unity is theological. Watts,

on the other hand, understands unity in literary terms, as evidenced by the book's structure, plot, characterization, style and motifs. It is clear, even from this extremely brief résumé, that after a rather sleepy period, evangelicals are making a lively and productive contribution to this debate. The second feature is also a welcome one, namely the return to a theological emphasis in exegesis. The authors' common conclusion that servanthood is the central feature of Isaiah's message is especially interesting. It would be unfair to compare the separate development of this theme in each commentary without the appearance of the second volume, but one looks forward with anticipation to the future direction of the interpretation of Isaiah.

No doubt every reader, like this reviewer, will have their own preference for one of these volumes. One might hazard a guess that for all Watts' willingness to search out new paths of understanding, the qualities of Oswalt's work will prove more rewarding and enduring. But both authors have put us in their debt, and the publication of their remaining volumes will be eagerly awaited.

Book Reviews

Robert P. Gordon, *1 and 2 Samuel. A Commentary* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1986), 375 pp., £12.95.

This commentary is the latest in a series of detailed works on 1 and 2 Sa. which have recently inundated the world of biblical studies. It can usefully be read in conjunction with a book written by the same author three years ago (*1 and 2 Samuel*, JSOT Press, 1984) which deals with questions of introduction to 1 and 2 Sa., and which as such prepares the way for this commentary.

The introductory section of the commentary provides a careful summary of the subjects covered in the first book and includes a brief discussion on the question of Deuteronomistic history. A large part of the Introduction is taken up by an overview of 1 and 2 Sa. In it Gordon proposes to divide the text into eight sections. To delimit them he does not rely on a reconstruction of the historical development of the book but rather on thematic criteria. Scholars today, when examining the historical development of the text of 1 and 2 Sa., distinguish three levels which are said to be the three stages in the growth of the book: the ancient sources, the middle stage with series of continuous narratives (pre-Deuteronomistic texts), and the Deuteronomistic overlay. Unlike them, realizing the difficulty in defining level one and two, Gordon studies the form of the literature, its origin and setting in life, only when he thinks that an original source can be discerned with certainty. Finally, in the Introduction the difficulties of the text are analysed with clarity and there is an examination of the links between Samuel and Chronicles, of the themes of David and Christ, of the Davidic covenant, and of David and the Psalms.

The commentary proper covers 252 pages, at times concentrating on just one verse, at others explaining a group of verses together. Assuming perhaps that the average reader knows what to expect to find in a commentary, Gordon does not give in his Introduction any clue as to what his goal will be or his method of explanation. After a few pages, however, it becomes clear that the main aim of the author is to provide the information that is needed for understanding difficult aspects of the text in the light of the conclusions of the most recent scholarly literature. The interpretation proper is left to the reader. Gordon is looking for the plain and literal meaning of the text and his method of exegesis is historical and grammatical. Quotations given are from the RSV but the author goes into more detail on the Hebrew words which need clarifying, referring where useful to the cognate languages. He deals with problems of variant readings and situates the verse in its context. In form then the commentary reads as a list of points made on various aspects of the verse under scrutiny. The short comments are left unconnected and it is up to the reader to decide how to use them, which in itself is not a bad exercise. But I am not too sure whether an amateur interpreter will be able to distinguish among all the information provided, between the elements

which are crucial for a correct interpretation of the text and those which are of secondary importance. In fact, Gordon provides us here and there with comments that could well be ignored in the task of interpreting the verse under consideration. The amount of technical detail given, even though it has been limited, would restrict the use of the book to readers with previous biblical training.

As for his approach to the text, Gordon works on the basis that a text cannot be chopped up for the sake of localizing sources without taking into account the rules of the poetics of biblical narrative which to some extent dictate the constitution of a text. With that understanding in mind it is a pity that the author has not made more use of the recent discoveries concerning the poetics of biblical narrative. Whilst one has to agree with Gordon that there is a need to be wary of those who pursue structure analysis at all costs, it is at the same time important to recognize that a discourse-oriented analysis, when used with competence, is a necessary tool for the understanding of the biblical text. This would have helped to keep more the overall purpose of 1 and 2 Sa. before the reader's eye and allow insight into the development of the narrative and the description of the characters. Today the reader of 1 and 2 Sa. has to choose between the traditional type of commentary offered by Gordon or the literary approaches offered by Eslinger, Miscallo or Garsiel. It is to be hoped that commentators will realize the interdependence of the disciplines and see the need for the two orientations to join forces within each and every inquiry on the biblical text.

Jean-Marc Heimerdinger, London Bible College.

A. G. Auld, *Amos* (Old Testament Guides; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1986), 89 pp., £2.95/\$3.95.

This addition to the series of OT Guides is a wide-ranging introduction to a popular prophet, and says much that is useful as an introduction to OT prophets in general. Auld resists the temptation to begin in the usual way, with the historical background of the 8th century BC and social conditions in the northern kingdom. Instead he begins by discussing Amos himself. How should we describe Amos? As a visionary? (The first-person reports in the final third of the book recount five visions, and 'seer' is the title given to Amos by Amaziah in 7:12; cf. also 1:1.) As a prophet? (Amos's own words in 7:14 make this label problematical if, as Auld argues, they should be translated in the present tense: 'I am not a prophet'.)

Auld's reason for approaching Amos via these fundamental questions is stated in his Introduction: '... Much reading of the Bible's prophetic literature is prejudiced since readers *know* in advance what a prophet or visionary *really* is — but are wrong. The best way to combat this ... is to make a detailed scrutiny of those very passages in Amos which report visions or talk about prophesying.' The result is that Auld's first three chapters are devoted to such a scrutiny, perhaps in more detail than many would expect or look for in a brief introduc-

tory volume such as this. Indeed, some students may find this material rather hard work for an exploratory foray into OT prophecy. However, there is no denying the importance of the questions raised (though not all will agree with Auld's answers, some of which are held over until the last chapter).

The fourth chapter looks at 1:3-2:16, the oracles against Israel's neighbours, culminating in Amos's indictment of Israel herself. A range of scholarly opinions on the authenticity of individual oracles, and the unity of the whole section, is reviewed. Literary issues bulk large in this chapter, and indeed in the previous three, but are the special focus of ch. 5. A discussion of the structure of 5:1-17 is broadened to a discussion of the literary structure of the book as a whole. Not surprisingly, this is the least conclusive chapter of the book.

Ch. 6 tackles 'Social and Religious Critique' in the book of Amos, briefly analysing texts which focus on these two areas. Auld reminds his readers, however, that social misdemeanours and the unacceptability of the cult were not separate compartments and the unacceptability of the cult were not separate compartments for Amos, but were closely linked. Short but useful sections are included on the light supplied by the social sciences and archaeology, and the chapter ends with a discussion of the Hebrew terms for 'poverty', 'justice' and 'righteousness'.

The seventh and last chapter considers 'The Message of Amos'. This is partly a drawing together of previous lines of enquiry, but it also explores new material, such as the doxologies and the relationship between 'religion' and 'cult'. Although useful things are said here, this is the least satisfactory chapter. One wishes a few more answers had been suggested to questions raised previously. The treatment of the 'Hope at the End' (9:11-15) is particularly weak - only three-quarters of a page on these verses and their relationship to the rest of the book. Yet they are surely crucial to understanding the overall message and theology of the book, regardless of whether one regards them as authentic words of Amos or not. (Auld apparently sees them as 'post-exilic mitigation' [p. 83] of the foregoing message, though he does not spell out his own position clearly on this, or on various other issues.)

My major criticism of this OT Guide is that it tackles too much in too much detail for most students embarking on the study of Amos. One loses sight of the overall message and theological contribution of the book without fully recovering it at the end. The discussion of critical issues also seems somewhat uneven. Compare, for example, the too-brief discussion of 9:11-15 with the fairly lengthy treatment of 7:10-17 (which Auld argues is a late addition to the text). The important 'day of Yahweh' passage (5:18f.) also receives scant attention.

My references to Auld's exclusion of 7:10-17 and 9:11-15 from the authentic words of Amos may suggest that evangelical students will find this OT Guide uncongenial. To be fair, however, Auld's treatment of critical issues is generally a balanced one. He usually presents both sides of an argument fairly, and sometimes defends the authenticity of verses which other scholars have relegated to a late phase in the growth of the book (e.g. 5:14-15). In most cases Auld attempts no more than an introduction to scholarly debate, and his suggestions for further reading will help students to follow issues through and assess the arguments for themselves.

Indeed, a great strength of Auld's book is its extremely useful sections on 'Further Reading' at the end of each chapter. Books and articles are not simply listed, but their stance and conclusions are usually indicated and specific pages are often recommended within a longer treatment. The student is thus introduced to a very wide range of literature (including some in German and French) in the most helpful way. If there is a risk that this OT Guide will make the study of Amos seem daunting and beset by insoluble questions, it undoubtedly provides a valuable set of signposts for the further exploration of important territory.

John J. Bimson, Trinity College, Bristol.

J. D. Kingsbury, *Matthew* (Proclamation Commentary) (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), x + 133 pp., \$6.95.

J. D. Kingsbury, *Matthew as Story* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), x + 149 pp., \$9.95.

J. D. Kingsbury, a prominent Matthean scholar of a moderate critical position, has revised and enlarged his Proclamation Commentary on Matthew (*PC*) and has written another introductory book on Matthew from a literary-critical point of view (*Story*). Both books were written in order to initiate beginners into Matthean studies.

The author himself summarizes the revised edition of *PC* as follows: 'Chapter 1 presents a brief overview of the history of Matthean research in this century and explains how redaction, or composition, criticism is both similar to and different from other interpretive (*sic*) methods. It also sketches the particularities of the approach to Matthew taken here. Chapter 2 deals with Matthew's portrait of Jesus by discussing both his person and his mission. Next, because what is unique about Jesus in Matthean perspective is that in him God draws near to humankind with his end-time rule, chapter 3 explores Matthew's understanding of God's rule, or kingdom. And finally, because the Matthean Jesus is also one who calls disciples and founds the church, chapter 4 concerns itself with Matthew's understanding of the community of the disciples.' The author claims that he has employed the form of redaction criticism, often called composition criticism, by which one attempts to ascertain what is Matthean by examining the Gospel as a whole without distinguishing between tradition and redaction.

Story is 'a study in literary, or narrative, criticism. . . . The object is to explore the world of Matthew's thought with an eye to the flow [plot] of the gospel-story that is being told. Chapter 1 explains the method that informs the other chapters. It likewise contains a great deal of material that is meant to supplement and enrich the further discussion. Chapters 2-4 trace the story-line of Matthew as it pertains to Jesus, and chapter 6 does the same with reference to the disciples. Chapter 5 focuses on the use in Matthew of the title 'the Son of man'. Chapter 7 takes the reader outside the world of Matthew's story and deals with the community for which the first evangelist wrote. Chapter 8 rounds out the book with concluding remarks.'

In spite of his claim that 'this book is fundamentally different in character' from the *PC*, these two books are, in fact, the same in substance. Certainly ch. 1 of *Story*, which is probably its most useful chapter, cannot be found in the *PC*, but apart from this chapter and the technical terms peculiar to literary criticism, almost everything which appears in *Story* is either repetition or expansion of the *PC* on Matthew. Chs. 2-4 are basically an expansion of two sections of ch. 2 of the *PC*, supplemented with materials which appear in different places of the *PC*. Ch. 5 is an enlarged version of the section on the Son of man in the *PC*. Chs. 6-7 are virtually the same as ch. 4 of the *PC*. They seem to overlap even to the extent of confusing the reader. That the author cannot find anything new by employing a new method may invalidate the method as such, but the failure is probably due to the author's application and understanding of the method. In this respect, it is definitely worth comparing *Story* with *Matthew's Story of Jesus* (Fortress Press, 1985) by R. A. Edwards, which is overlooked in Kingsbury's bibliography. A basic difference between the two books is their understanding and emphasis of the structure of Matthew. Edwards, in addition to his different scheme of Matthew's Gospel, emphasizes the point of view of a reader who begins at the beginning without knowledge of a whole scheme of the Gospel, whereas Kingsbury emphasizes the scheme of the Gospel which appears in the *PC*.

The present reviewer would like to question the validity of both literary and composition criticism used by themselves because both approaches tend to ignore the historical background. Can we interpret historical documents without paying proper attention to their historical context as well as their literary context? For instance, Kingsbury argues in the *PC* that the first evangelist did not explain the phrase 'the kingdom of heaven' because its meaning is sufficiently clear in his own writing. But there is a good case for arguing that the phrase was familiar in the first century and that Matthew presupposes that familiarity among his readers. Although the present reviewer does not disagree with Kingsbury that the gospels must be seen as unified documents, we also need to know their historical context in order to understand them fully. Another example is Kingsbury's disregard of any biblical background in his discussion of the Son of man and his almost exclusive concentration on the Matthean texts. Although he admits that the Danielic Son-of-man lies behind at least one passage (*PC* p. 97, *Story* p. 123), he does not make use of this biblical background in his exposition. In a word, the present reviewer

would like to question the validity of applying a method used in the study of modern literature, particularly of fiction, without considering the differences in literary genre. In addition, Kingsbury dates Matthew in AD 85-90 and denies the authorship of Matthew the apostle, but the reviewer would like to challenge his view in spite of the scholarly consensus (cf. J. A. T. Robinson's *Redating the NT and The Priority of John*, also R. H. Gundry's and D. A. Carson's commentaries on Matthew).

In conclusion, Kingsbury's revised edition of *PC* on Matthew is a valuable introduction to the Matthean studies, but there are major questions about *Story* regarding both Kingsbury's application of literary criticism and the validity of his method.

Akio Ito, Wycliffe Hall, Oxford.

Gerd Theissen, *The Shadow of the Galilean* (ET, London: SCM, 1987), 212 pp., £5.95.

This book is amazing. If you thought that German academics were incapable of writing interesting material for the ordinary Christian, just try this. I was going to say that this is the most exciting book about Jesus since Dodd's *Founder of Christianity* – but in fact that is to rate it too low. I have never seen a book like it.

If I tell you that it is an attempt to help the non-specialist to a fuller understanding of the historical Jesus by distilling a vast specialist knowledge of the history of the first century into popular form, you will wonder what is so new about that. I could list several other books which fit that description. But none of them gets anywhere near this for readability, for creative reconstruction of an entirely believable scenario, and indeed for sheer enjoyment.

The plot is pure fiction, the background solidly substantiated fact. It is an historical novel, about a totally imaginary Andreas, from Sepphoris, whose adventures and encounters with Romans and Jews lead him ever closer to the mysterious figure of the prophet Jesus. From the time when Jesus is first mentioned (a quarter of the way through), his 'shadow' broods over the book, even though Andreas never in fact meets him face to face. The effect is thus to reconstruct the world in which Jesus lived, with all its cultural, religious and political tensions, and to allow Jesus gradually to take shape within that wider scene, as an outsider might have seen him.

Such a project could easily have turned out embarrassingly wooden and unbelievable, like so many 'Christian novels'. That it succeeds brilliantly is due in part to the author's impeccable scholarship, but much more to the fact that he has thrown himself into the creative task with verve and skill. Andreas and his friends (who include Barabbas) are characters with whom it is easy to identify. His moods and fears, and his reaction to his distasteful task as Roman agent, ring true. You can feel what it must have been like to live in Roman Palestine. Theissen calls his method 'narrative exegesis'; I think it might be better characterized as a 'holy whodunnit'. Indeed, the skill and imagination in combining perceptive character study with meticulously researched factual detail and local colour reminded me above all of Dorothy L. Sayers. And, as with Sayers, I challenge any reader to leave it unfinished.

Theissen's expertise extends beyond the Jewish scene, and he makes effective use of relevant quotes from a wide range of Latin authors, which he weaves into the language of Pilate and his officers. Careful footnotes guide the interested reader to the source of all his material, but the flow of the text is not broken. His main source outside the NT is, rightly, Josephus. In using such historical sources he has used the novelist's licence in transferring from other periods people and incidents which help to illuminate the social and political scene, but with such a responsible sense of what is appropriate that I did not feel in any way cheated.

This and other methodological principles are intriguingly explained and defined in a brief 'letter' at the end of each chapter to an equally imaginary academic colleague who is sceptical of the value of the enterprise. These Kratzienger letters allow Theissen a few delightfully tongue-in-cheek digs at scholarly convention, e.g.: 'You know that things have to be put in a complicated way if they are to be taken seriously in the academic world.' Let us hope that this book in

itself will help to give the lie to that assumption; here is uncomplicated and enjoyable scholarship, and I hope his academic colleagues will enjoy and appreciate it as much as the wider public for whom it is so superbly crafted.

Of course there are things here and there that I disagree with or am uncertain about. But I am not going to list them here, because I know that you will all read it and discover them for yourselves. From now on theological students who have not read Theissen are going to be as much to be pitied as literature students who do not know Tolkien.

Dick France, London Bible College.

Dieter Georgi, *The Opponents of Paul in Second Corinthians* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986/Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1987), xvii + 463 pp., £19.95.

With respect to the question of who Paul's opponents were, there are three current answers: (i) some kind of Judaizers, (ii) some kind of Gnostics, or (iii) something like Georgi's suggestion. The value of Georgi's book lies in its rejection of the Gnostic hypothesis, and the collection of important textual reasons for believing that Paul's opponents were (a) different from his opponents in 1 Cor., and (b) Jews, but not Judaizers, who were influenced by wisdom literature and Hellenistic syncretism. This book represents the English translation of a 1958 doctoral dissertation, revised and published in German in 1964. The published version has become the standard work on its subject. More than a translation, however, for from p. 333 on Prof. Georgi has written an Epilogue with five bibliographies, discussing some of the topics raised in the original book from a more modern perspective. Students will rightly turn to this book as a standard reference work.

The book falls into four parts. After a brief introduction Georgi surveys the self-designations of Paul's opponents in 2 Cor. 10-13. This includes important discussions of terms like *diakonos christou*, *apostolos christou* and *sperma abraam*. He concludes from these studies that the opponents were similar to Hellenistic-Jewish missionaries. In ch. 2 Georgi moves to Jewish and Greco-Roman material. He argues that there were in the first century wandering Jewish missionaries similar to the Cynic-Stoic wandering preachers. Important evidence for this view is found in Jewish apologetic literature (e.g. Philo or Josephus). These missionaries were charismatic miracle workers and street philosophers, vying for the public ear in the cities of the ancient Mediterranean world. They saw themselves as 'divine men', and painted Moses in this light. A *theios aner* or 'divine man' worked miracles, spoke for God, and generally acted as an organ of divine power. Georgi then looks at early Christian missions, and concludes that the majority of early Christian missionaries were similar to the Hellenistic-Jewish pneumatic apologists, seeing Jesus as a 'divine man' (cf. Mark's view of Jesus). The third chapter then gives reasons, from the text of 2 Cor. 2:14-7:4 as well as 10-13, for his view that Paul's opponents found in Jesus a 'divine man', and believed that genuine apostles should also be such. Georgi correctly argues that the issue between Paul and his opponents is not merely socio-political, but also Christological. Georgi identifies the theology of Paul's opponents with their 'spiritual relatives' Luke and the Pastoral Epistles (i.e. so-called 'early catholicism') which eventually triumphed through political power. Fourth, in the Epilogue Georgi wanders through the various topics and issues which his previous dissertation touched upon. These include source criticism of 2 Cor., Hellenistic Jewish Apologetics, and the divine man motif. The central theme of the Epilogue is the social and religious pluralism of both Judaism and Christianity during this period. This is used as a stick to beat Georgi's opponents.

The major point against Georgi is his specific identification of the Hellenistic-Jewish opponents of Paul. The whole picture Georgi paints of Jewish magician missionaries is based on very shaky evidence (see C. L. Holladay, *Theios Aner in Hellenistic Judaism* [Missoula: Scholars Press, 1977] for a critique; Georgi's response to Holladay is inaccurate and inadequate, p. 415). The exegetical basis Georgi gives for finding this motif in the gospels, or in the opponents of Paul in 2 Cor., or in Hellenistic Judaism, is generally weak and

often tendentious. This is especially true in the Epilogue. The new section reflects and reacts with various recent trends in NT studies but is generally disappointing.

In sum, students of early Christianity and Hellenistic Judaism, especially those interested in 2 Cor. or in Jewish missions and apologetics, will need to study this book carefully. Few if any will follow Georgi's lead all the way.

Alan G. Padgett, Oriel College, Oxford.

N. T. Wright, *The Epistles of Paul to the Colossians and to Philemon: An Introduction and Commentary* (Leicester: IVP/Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 192 pp., £3.50/\$0.00.

The *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries* are being revised to serve a new generation, and Tom Wright has provided us with an excellent model. It is both admirably untechnical and lucid, while yet also being theologically nuanced and providing a fresh and original contribution to the understanding of the letters, particularly of Colossians.

Colossians, like most (if not all) of Paul's letters, was written to particular historical circumstances, and how one understands the situation addressed affects the reading of the whole letter. It is usually surmised from the warnings in 2:8-21 that Paul is facing some sort of heretical teaching, and the hunt is then on to define the heresy. Unquestionably the false understanding Paul opposes has Jewish elements: these come to clear expression in the mention of regulations concerning foods, festivals, new moons and sabbaths (2:16), in the (implicit) argument about circumcision (2:11; 3:11) and in the enigmatic reference to 'worship of angels' (2:18). For most scholars, however, this is not the whole story: the emphasis in the epistle on Christ's superiority to the powers (1:16; 2:20), on the importance of 'knowledge', on visions (2:18) and on asceticism (2:20-23) means that the false understanding was a syncretism of Jewish and pagan religion – usually identified as a sort of proto-Gnosticism (so R. P. Martin); although it has also been understood as a special brand of mystical apocalyptic *Judaism* (e.g. F. F. Bruce). The embarrassment that both these must face is that there is no evidence for such a group at Colossae, and the former has to draw evidence from much further afield and from later writings.

Wright circumvents this last criticism by arguing Colossians is polemic against Judaism itself:

... Paul is warning the readers not to be taken in by the claims of Judaism, which would try (as in Acts 15:5) to persuade converts to Christianity that their present position was incomplete. On the contrary, Paul declares: in Christ you have already been 'circumcised', and you have been set free from any claim that the Jewish law might make on you. No-one must therefore attempt to exclude you from the inner circle of God's people (2:16, 18, 20). *The master stroke in Paul's argument is thus that he warns ex-pagans against Judaism by portraying Judaism itself as if it were another pagan religion.* It is a 'philosophy' (2:8) developed by human tradition (2:8, 22); and to follow it is to return to the same type of religion the new converts had recently abandoned (pp. 24-25, reviewer's italics).

In other words, Wright thinks Paul is doing in Colossians what he did in Gal. 4:1-11; only in Galatians Paul is facing Judaizing that has already begun, while in Colossians it is treated as a real danger, but only potentially so. This thesis starts with the advantage of a measure of *a priori* probability (i.e. the situation envisaged must have been one Paul constantly faced), but it is also carefully argued in the introduction, in fuller and more technical essays forthcoming, and in the commentary itself. The letter, he thinks, was probably written from Ephesus in the early fifties (hence the close parallels with 2 Cor. 3-5 as well as with Gal. 3-4 and Rom. 7:1-6), and is genuinely Pauline.

The commentary proper, both on Colossians and on Philemon, is unusually clear; commentators all too often seem to hide behind the learned discussion of technicalities, and forbear to say what they think the writer really means, but Wright avoids this. Even when he is dealing with the most complex sections (such as 1:15-20 and 2:13-19),

it is always clear what he thinks Paul is saying, and how it relates to the rest of the letter. He has a good eye too for irony: see for example the light thrown on the notoriously difficult sentence in 2:15 by his assertion,

These powers, angry at his challenge to their sovereignty, stripped *him* naked, held *him* up to public contempt, and celebrated a triumph over *him*. In one of his most dramatic statements of the paradox of the cross, and one moreover which shows in what physical detail Paul could envisage the horrible death Jesus had died, he declares that, on the contrary, on the cross God was stripping *them* naked, was holding *them* up to public contempt, and leading *them* in his own triumphal procession – in Christ, the crucified Messiah (p. 116).

And within the confines of the allotted space, Wright also indicates the *significance* of what is said for theology, for the church, and for the individual Christian. Nor does the commentary suddenly become pedestrian when it comes to the more detailed ethical considerations in Colossians (chs. 3 and 4) and in Philemon. On the contrary, the warm-hearted and theologically perceptive exposition of the latter oft-neglected book is itself more than worth the price of the whole – and the reviewer would say the same even if the book cost twice as much! This is a commentary that deserves wide reading.

Max Turner, King's College, Aberdeen.

Pedrito U. Maynard-Reid, *Poverty and Wealth in James* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1987), 136 pp., \$8.95.

When a Jamaican Seventh-Day Adventist presents what we suspect is his doctoral thesis, it is time to rejoice over seeing Caribbean scholars joining in scholarly dialogue. Furthermore, a study of the sociological background of James is a needed contribution. Thus the topic, methodology, and background of this book form an auspicious beginning for a fresh approach to James.

Maynard-Reid argues that James is to be set in the period before AD 50, thus in the earliest period of the church before there was any separation between church and synagogue. In the light of this dating and the general attitudes towards rich and poor in the first century, he exegetes Jas. 1:9-11; 2:1-13; 4:13-17; and 5:1-6, looking at the attitudes they show towards rich and poor. His basic conclusion is that James' community did not include the rich; indeed, the rich are seen as oppressors outside of the community. In this James' community shared some of the attitudes of the Judaism of the common people of his day. Furthermore, James argues for 'God's option for the poor' and thus is an encouragement to Christians to 'take that option and to take up the cause of the oppressed'.

Generally this work is carefully done, using the James scholarship available up to 1985. Nor is there much in his conclusions with which this reviewer would disagree. However, one gets the continual feeling that the book is far too short for what it tries to do. For example, while he shows the possibility that James fits the pre-AD 50 period, he does not show that this is superior to R. P. Martin's setting in the early 60s, when rich-poor tensions in Judaism were running higher. And while he notes that some have seen the literary form of James as coming from a later period than the original sermons and sayings, the effects of this on his conclusions are not mentioned.

One is quite pleased with the wide amount of background material employed by Maynard-Reid, but his use of rabbinics is open to question, for he never discusses the dating of the citations he uses. This is quite significant, for the cataclysm of AD 66-70 profoundly affected Judaism, as did the second war in AD 135. Thus one cannot without corroborative evidence read statements made after AD 70 back into the earlier period without possibly mixing the sociology of Mishnaic Judaism with that of the earlier period. It is quite possible that Maynard-Reid can establish each of his points, but the data is not in this book.

It is also disturbing to find the sudden conclusion to the work. The streams from the four passages are never drawn together, but the work simply ends with a call to care for the oppressed. James ends with a call to endure for 'the Judge is at the door'. This seems far from

'take up the cause of the oppressed'. Again, Maynard-Reid may be able to establish this conclusion as being implied in James (as he well establishes James' interest in the poor and his viewing the rich as outside the church), but the argument needed to do so is simply not present.

In short, this is a good book, but it is a good beginning. It is not a conclusion, but a helpful basis for further study. It goes somewhat beyond previously existing literature, but not far. We look forward to others building on this foundation and extending the arguments it begins.

Peter H. Davids, Coquitlam BC, Canada.

L. T. Johnson, *The Writings of the New Testament: an Interpretation* (Philadelphia: Fortress/London: SCM, 1986), xxi + 593 pp., £15.00.

This book has won me over. My first impression was of yet another 'Introduction to the New Testament', expanded by the addition of some material on the historical, cultural and religious setting of the early church. As such I expected it to be worthy but unremarkable, and the introduction fuelled my fears, as the author talked, as I thought, rather pompously about the failings of earlier introductions and the need for a new approach by way of an 'experience-interpretation model', seeing the growth of the NT within the 'symbolic world' (which seemed to mean simply 'culture') of first-century Judaism. A glance at the table of contents, with its apparently traditional book-by-book account of the NT writings, suggested to me that all this was just pretentious verbiage, and that nothing had really changed.

I wish to apologize to the author for jumping to such unjustified conclusions. I suggest to other readers that rather than starting with the introduction, they should first read the author's 'ten theses on the canon' (pp. 544-547). There you will find an approach to the study of Scripture which, while it in no way wishes to dispense with critical scholarship, keeps it firmly in its place. The Bible is the church's book, and its study must take place within the life of the church, not as a detached academic pursuit. There are strong echoes here of Brevard Childs' 'canonical' approach to Scripture. It breathes an air of wholesome, reverent, appreciative attention to the text, in order to learn from it rather than to 'explain' it. The whole is bathed in healthy Christian common sense. If this book is, as I believe, an indicator of the way biblical scholarship is moving away from arid analysis of sources and composition towards a desire to let the text speak for itself, then we have a lot to look forward to.

Before turning to the books themselves, Parts One and Two introduce us to 'The Symbolic World of the NT' and 'The Christian Experience'. These cover roughly what we have been used to calling 'NT background' and 'Christian origins'. The former is fairly traditional; the latter more impressive in its attempt to do justice to how and why the Christian movement ever got off the ground in the first place. A whole chapter is devoted to the resurrection of Jesus as the essential foundation of Christian faith, not just as an idea, but as something which really happened. The growth of the Jesus traditions towards the writing of the NT books is then discussed in a way reminiscent of Moule's *Birth of the New Testament*, i.e. one which treats first-century Christians as real (and believing) people in a real world, not as mechanical manipulators of fragmentary sources.

Nearly 400 pages are then devoted to going through the 27 books one by one. But very little of this space is used on the usual literary critical questions of date, authorship, etc. It is, for instance, a bit of a shock to find that of 100 pages on the Synoptic Tradition the 'Synoptic Problem' takes up only one (and then without attempting to solve it, or even apparently regarding a solution as terribly important!). Questions of authorship and date are not ignored, but generally despatched very briefly. There is no discussion of other scholars' views by name in the text, and there are no footnotes. Each chapter has instead a concluding 'bibliographical note' which gives a survey of scholarship available in English (predominantly American).

The aim is rather to get straight to what the text actually says, and

to deal with introductory matters only in so far as they are important for understanding it. The approach to the individual books is sensibly varied. Where the reader will be helped by a running commentary on the development of the argument, this is offered (most helpfully in Romans, where 18 of the 22 pages are devoted to a full and sensitive tracing of Paul's argument). In other cases it is more appropriate to focus on themes and characteristics of the book. The differing character of the books is allowed to set the agenda, and the result is a responsible and stimulating attempt to let the reader listen with deeper appreciation to what the book wants to say. The book really is, as it claims, an 'interpretation' rather than a critical introduction.

On one area of traditional introduction, however, Johnson has rather more to say. He is not happy with the increasing assumption of widespread pseudepigraphy in the NT. Not that he has any dogmatic reason to defend traditional authorship in every case. But he sees much traditional critical argument in this area as too artificial, not sufficiently open to the real-life possibilities of authorship in the first-century church. He takes the complexities of possible methods of composition very seriously — co-authorship, amanuenses, etc. — but concludes that 'the whole Pauline corpus is one that Paul "authored" but did not necessarily write' (p. 257); and that includes the Pastorals (or, as he prefers, 'Letters to Delegates'). The general methodological remarks on this subject (pp. 255-257), together with his remarks on each of the disputed books, would provide wholesome food for thought and ammunition for those who are not prepared to accept bland dismissals of traditional attributions of authorship. The discussion of the letters to Timothy and Titus is particularly interesting in his refusal to treat the three as an undifferentiated whole, in regard to either authorship or character.

Throughout the discussion of the individual books good things abound: arresting new insights, round dismissal of some corny old critical shibboleths, and above all a sensitivity to the literary character and message of each distinct book by someone who 'loves these writings'. The whole book is a breath of fresh air.

It is a very big book, perhaps too big for the non-specialist to venture into, and yet too thin on traditional technical discussion to satisfy the specialist. As a text-book for theological students it requires a different sort of course from what is still generally to be found in our theological faculties, a course which treats the NT as *Christian literature* rather than as documents for historical-critical analysis. Perhaps it may encourage change in that direction. At any rate, it is a book we should all be aware of, and one which offers much cause for hope.

Dick France, London Bible College.

Christopher Tuckett, *Nag Hammadi and the Gospel Tradition* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1986), 194 pp., £11.95.

Christopher Tuckett, Lecturer in NT Studies at Manchester, has undertaken the ambitious study of analysing a great mass of parallels to the synoptic gospels found in the Coptic Nag Hammadi tractates and the related Berlin Codex (8502). He excludes from his study *The Gospel of Thomas* (Nag Hammadi Codex II, tractate 2) inasmuch as it has been the subject of numerous comparisons.

The original stimulus for the project came from the contention of J. M. Robinson and H. Koester that *The Gospel of Thomas* contains primitive traditions similar to the hypothetical Quelle which underlies the gospels of Matthew and Luke. For the most recent expositions by these scholars see J. M. Robinson, 'The Nag Hammadi Library and the Study of the New Testament', and H. Koester, 'Three Thomas Parables', in *The New Testament and Gnosis*, ed. A. H. B. Logan and A. J. M. Wedderburn (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1983), pp. 1-8, 195-203; H. Koester, 'Gnostic Sayings and Controversy Traditions in John 8:12-59', and J. M. Robinson, 'On Bridging the Gulf from Q to the Gospel of Thomas (or Vice Versa)', in *Nag Hammadi, Gnosticism, and Early Christianity*, ed. C. W. Hedrick and R. Hodgson, Jr (Peabody: Hendrikson, 1986), pp. 97-110, 127-175.

Tuckett found that *The Apocryphon of James* (I, 2) betrayed knowledge of the gospels of Matthew and Luke (p. 97). The text does

contain a number of interesting independent sayings on such as a parable of dates, which the author does not consider 'necessarily dominical' (p. 89). On the other hand C. W. Hedrick, 'Kingdom Sayings and Parables of Jesus in *The Apocryphon of James: Tradition and Redaction*', *NTS* 29 (1983), pp. 1-24, has argued that this saying, along with others, fits the criteria for determining authentic sayings of Jesus.

Synoptic allusions in (*The Gospel of Truth* I, 3 and XII, 2) can be explained as due to dependence on Matthew (pp. 58, 68), as is also the case with *The Apocryphon of John* (II, 1; III, 1; IV, 1; BG 8502, 2) (p. 27). All the synoptic allusions in *The Gospel of Philip* (II, 3) can be traced to Matthew except for the reference to the Good Samaritan, which comes from Luke (pp. 74, 80). *The Sophia of Jesus Christ* (III, 3 and BG 8502, 3) is likewise dependent upon Matthew and Luke (p. 35).

Synoptic tradition in *Authoritative Teaching* (VI, 3) reflects a dependence on Matthew (p. 51), whereas *The Concept of Our Great Power* (VI, 4) betrays knowledge of Matthew and perhaps of Luke (p. 137). *The Second Treatise of the Great Seth* (VII, 2) is exceptional in betraying its dependence on Mark (15:21) in its reference to Simon of Cyrene (p. 124). The author argues that all of the synoptic material in the *Apocalypse of Peter* (VII, 3) (pp. 108, 117, 123), and also in *The Teachings of Silvanus* (VII, 4) (p. 46) can be explained on the basis of Matthew alone.

Melchizedek (IX, 1) betrays knowledge of Mark (p. 139), and *The Testimony of Truth* (IX, 3) depends upon Matthew and Luke (p. 144), as does also *A Valentinian Exposition* (XI, 2) (p. 83). *The Interpretation of Knowledge* (XI, 1) depends on Matthew (p. 145). *The Gospel of Mary* (BG 8502, 4) also relies on Matthew (p. 38).

The author's search for pre-synoptic sources in the Nag Hammadi tractates turned out to be futile, as he discovered that allusions to synoptic materials were dependent upon the gospels in their present final form (p. 9). His repeated discovery that the tractates relied primarily on Matthew is consistent with the popularity of the first gospel among the early churches (p. 150).

Tuckett concludes:

One important, albeit negative, result of the analysis undertaken here is that there appears to be no evidence for the use of pre-synoptic sources by the authors of the texts studied. Insofar as they reflect synoptic tradition at all, the texts examined here all seem to presuppose one or more of the finished gospels of Matthew, Mark or Luke . . . there is also no evidence for the continuing survival and use of a Q source (or any other pre-redactional synoptic source) by Gnostic communities (p. 149).

His conclusion thus runs counter to the convictions of scholars such as Robinson and Koester. On Koester's attempt to argue that *The Dialogue of the Savior* (III, 5) points to a common source similar to Q, which underlies parallels in *The Gospel of Thomas*, John, and I Cor., Tuckett points out that there are three sayings in the Dialogue which appear 'to show clear knowledge of Matthew's finished gospel' (p. 130).

Inasmuch as decisions on NT allusions in the Nag Hammadi tractates are often based upon subjective judgments, we have probably not heard the last word on this subject. But we can be grateful to Tuckett for his labours, which pose a clear challenge to those who believe these texts contain traditions earlier than the canonical ones.

Edwin Yamauchi, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio.

D. A. Carson and John D. Woodbridge (eds.), **Hermeneutics, Authority and Canon** (Leicester: IVP, 1986), xi + 468 pp., £9.95.

This book is a companion to the earlier volume, *Scripture and Truth* (IVP, 1983), by the same editors. The same basic thesis is again presented here, i.e. the evangelical view of the phenomenon of Scripture and its implications for the modern critical debate. Most of the contributors belong to a new breed of evangelical scholars and have written many books and articles on several topics. The nine

essays are on three specific areas, as the title indicates, though not evenly distributed.

First of all comes an introduction by Carson, the wide scope of which, together with the clarity of expression characteristic of the author, makes it an excellent way into the debate. Kevin Vanhoozer writes on Biblical Semantics. He argues for a concept of propositional revelation that allows for a due appreciation of the varied literary forms in the Bible. Moises Silva addresses the question of Historical Reconstruction. He presents two test cases: first-century Pharisaism and Christianity. Silva pinpoints some well-established prejudices which hamper a better understanding of the NT. He contradicts the idea that the Pharisees were 'too strict' in their observance of the Law. Silva demonstrates that their problem was exactly the opposite, viz. 'the relaxation of God's standards' (p. 119). Craig Blomberg deals with the problem of Harmonization. His thesis is that 'additive' harmonization (where one account complements the other), in conjunction with Redaction Criticism, can be legitimately employed to explain many discrepancies in the Bible.

Douglas Moo discusses the problem of *sensus plenior* ('full sense'). He believes that a better alternative can be found in a 'canonical approach' that sees the NT use of the OT within the 'framework of the canon as witness to salvation-history' (p. 209). John Frame concentrates on the work of the Spirit in revelation, inspiration and internal testimony. He challenges the Barthian school on its assumption that the orthodox view of biblical authority denies God's (the Spirit's) sovereignty. He also states against G. Berkouwer's distinction between the message and the form of Scripture: 'Believing Scripture is believing that message [Gospel]', and 'believing the message entails believing the book' (p. 228).

John Woodbridge contradicts the widespread idea that modern evangelical emphasis on inerrancy originated as a reaction to the rationalistic outlook of the Enlightenment. He makes a strong case for the continuity of the doctrine of inerrancy held by the Reformers and modern evangelicals. G. Bromiley surveys Barth's position regarding biblical authority, especially his view of the Scriptures as being witnesses to but not revelation themselves, and Barth's dismissal of inerrancy. But Bromiley sees merits too in Barth's view, particularly in his emphasis that the Bible derives its authority from God himself.

D. Dunbar contributes the only (but lengthy) essay dealing with the canon of the Scriptures. In the discussion of the canon of the NT he agrees with Ridderbos' approach to canon history, viewing it on the basis of Salvation-History as the matrix for the church's recognition of the NT books.

The reading is not always easy. Vanhoozer's essay, for instance, has a lot of linguistics jargon. Also, one cannot fail to notice that some of the proposals here are too tentative, needing further elaboration and testing. This is clearly the case with Moo's very interesting view of the canonical approach to the complex problem of the NT usage of the OT, and Blomberg's additive harmonization. Nevertheless, much new ground has been explored. Woodbridge's essay on the Enlightenment is an important contribution in the light of modern controversies about the doctrine of inerrancy. Dunbar's study of the biblical canon, if not revolutionary, is no doubt an exciting and refreshing review of an issue that has been brought to the fore in recent scholarship (e.g. J. Barr, B. Childs).

On the whole, an impressive collection of essays, on relevant issues related to Scripture, by scholars who are able to combine solid scholarship with a strong commitment to the authority of the Word of God. A combination not always easy to find these days.

Estevan Kirschner, London Bible College.

Alan S. Duthie, **Bible Translations: and how to choose between them** (Exeter: Paternoster, 1985), 127 pp., £3.50.
 Kenneth L. Barker (ed.), **The Making of a Contemporary Translation: New International Version** (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1987), 222 pp., £7.95.

There is a wealth of choice of versions lying before the reader of the Bible in English. Riches indeed! — but the very variety may be

confusing in itself. Bible teachers, preachers and Christian leaders are often called upon to help decide on a version to be used as basic or standard for a particular church fellowship or study course, or to advise individual Christians on 'Which is the best translation?'. Unfortunately the specialist knowledge that is called for in understanding the translation process and evaluating different versions is not part of our normal basic training. If you are consulted on this question with any frequency it would be good to do a bit of 'homework' reading. Fortunately a recently published book gives a very clear introduction to the whole topic: Alan Duthie's *Bible Translations*.

Duthie approaches the question from a detailed understanding of linguistics and translation theory as well as biblical studies and a Christian faith that takes the Bible seriously. Every aspect of the translation process is considered, from the identity of the translators, the original languages and texts they translate from, and 'how to translate accurately', to the typographical presentation of the version and the criteria for assessing translations. The aspects of Bible translations which are discussed range from superficial (but to some readers oh how important!) features like the colour of the cover, to essential questions of meaningfulness, accuracy and readability.

The main discussion is of principles, with illustrative examples drawn from many of the specific English versions in a list of about 40 whole Bibles and 60 NTs. Each of these translations is cited in exemplification of both desirable and regrettable characteristics considered in the general discussion. In contrast, most of the other books about Bible translations tend to tackle the field version by version. This is true of histories of the English Bible such as Bruce (*The English Bible*, Lutterworth, 1961), which also tend to have much fuller discussion of the earlier history than of the 20th-century versions, though this imbalance is somewhat redressed in Bruce's revised edition (*The History of the Bible in English*, 1979). It is also the case that general introductions often take a polemic line, citing one particular version or type of translation for all the castigated features, while illustrating the 'proper' way to translate from the author's favoured version(s). This is the case with surveys such as that of Jack Lewis (*The English Bible from KJV to NIV*, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981). The features of individual versions are also very clearly laid out for comparison by S. Kibo and W. F. Specht in *So Many Versions?* (Zondervan, 1983 [2nd edn.]) — another very useful work in this area... but expensive! The advantage of Duthie's approach is that when further versions or major revisions appear in the future, users can apply the principles taught in the book for themselves to evaluate these new translations.

Paternoster have done an excellent job of producing the book with a nicely distinguished bold face, italic and small capitals used to give emphasis and to distinguish different types of version cited. There are very few typographical errors, none causing serious comprehension difficulties. I would thoroughly recommend this book for everyone concerned with the choice of Bible versions. I found the arrangement in a large number of very short chapters, presumably a reflection of the original publication of the material in 14 magazine articles in *Harvester*, rather unsettling for a cover-to-cover reader, but the way in which this presentation separates out sub-topics may well make the book more convenient to use as a reference work. Each little chapter has a cluster of footnotes: these are, to my mind, overused. Neither honesty nor humility requires that every point one makes be referred to another writer's comparable coverage, nor that every example be attributed to some author who may have used the same Bible verse to illustrate the point in question. It would be enough to footnote substantive discussion of side-issues or references for verbatim quotes from other works. Otherwise the detailed research to which the footnotes bear witness could have been more appropriately shared by giving a list of references as part of the handy summaries ('the argument so far') which occur regularly throughout the book.

If for a particular purpose one has to decide on one version, or a short-list of two or three, it would be useful to be able to read in greater detail about the particular characteristics of the translations in question (Lewis, and Kimo and Specht, do this, but cover so many versions that each has only a brief treatment). Most versions have a short introduction by the translators or sponsors at the front, but these are rarely detailed enough to be useful. It would appear that the NIV, at least, should be so served by another recently published work, *The Making of a Contemporary Translation* (sub-title on the cover: the

purpose and method of the New International Version). In fact in many ways the short title is more accurate than the fuller one: most of the principles which the book describes and advocates are common in all major modern translations, rather than being distinctive of the NIV. This book is really a collection of discussions of some points in 20th-century Bible translation practice, with exemplification mainly from the NIV. The work is, in fact, a collection of 14 separate papers, varying widely in approach from the rather diffuse generalities of Colin Linton on literary style (ch. 1) to the discussion of single translation problems like the rendering of *she'ol* (Richard Harris — ch. 5) and technical questions such as the textual criticism of the Hebrew (Earl Kalland — ch. 3) or Greek (Ralph Earle — ch. 4) texts. The topics may be roughly divided into three groups: those dealing with technical points in the 'mechanics' of preparing a translation; specific questions of exegesis which present themselves to the translator as 'translation problems'; and more general discussions relevant to versions of Scripture in contemporary English.

The technical matters discussed start with textual questions. There are the chapters already mentioned by Kalland on the Hebrew text ('How the Hebrew and Aramaic Old Testament Text was Established') and Earle on the Greek ('The Rationale for an Eclectic New Testament Text'); there is some overlapping between the former and Larry L. Walker's 'How the NIV Made Use of New Light on the Hebrew Text' (ch. 8). Burton L. Goddard's account of 'The Footnoting System' (ch. 2) also naturally mentions textual variants which are one of the major categories for footnotes. A technical question where versions may differ significantly and where a statement (and justification) of the principles followed in the NIV would have been useful is that of the handling of the quotation of one biblical passage by another, but 'Old Testament Quotations in the New Testament' (Ronald F. Youngblood — ch. 10) only gives us a review of the number and importance of such quotations. Another interesting topic is how a translation bridges the gaps between current dialects of written English — particularly in this case, 'Anglicising the [American-translated] NIV' (Donald J. Wiseman — ch. 13); this paper is a brief history of how they went about it, with a few examples of the sort of changes that needed to be made. We may doubt whether any different principles were applied in the same process for, for instance, the GNB: a subjective appraisal suggests that the British adaptation of the Good News was rather more thoroughly done.

The discussions on particular translation problems are of considerable interest to Bible scholars and translators, but are just a few randomly selected items. They may be of value to other Bible users as a help in understanding what is involved in making a translation when faced with some of these difficult terms, though not particularly relevant to the choice between versions. Besides *she'ol* (Harris) there are discussions of various points in Psalms 2 and 4 by Bruce L. Waltke (ch. 7), 'Lord Almighty' ('Sabaoth'/'of Hosts') by the volume's editor Kenneth Barker (ch. 9), and 'one and only son' ('only-begotten'/'beloved') by Richard N. Longenecker (ch. 11). These last two papers concentrate on justifying the choice of a particular interpretation rather than on the way in which the preferred meaning should be rendered in English.

Of the general topics, Linton writes on the importance of literary style and says a translation should reflect the stylistic variations of the original. I would heartily agree, but am not convinced that this is widely put into practice in the NIV — more revealing is Stek's speaking of 'the normal idiom and style of the NIV' (p. 98) and of using this same style for poetic as well as prose passages. Stek's own paper, 'When the Spirit was Poetic' (ch. 6), talks about patterns of structure in some poetic passages. Herbert Wolf's 'When "Literal" is not Accurate' (ch. 12) and Edwin Palmer's 'Is the KJV Good Enough?' (ch. 14) are basically collections of texts where the NIV rendering seems preferable to that of the KJV.

In general this is a well-produced book but, as often happens with these collections of uncoordinated papers, it is rather unsystematic. Good for specialists and libraries; less so, perhaps, for others. With its frequent avowals of the paramount importance and vital truthfulness of Scripture it might serve to allay some of the suspicions of ultra-conservative evangelicals against all post-1611 Bible translation work.

Tony Naden, Ghana Institute of Linguistics,
Literacy and Bible Translation.

G. O'Collins, **Jesus Risen** (New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1987/London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1987), 233 pp., £6.95/\$16.95.

This is a fine book by the Jesuit Professor of Fundamental Theology at the Gregorian University in Rome, author of 20 books. He regards the resurrection of the crucified Jesus as the central mystery of the Christian faith. The first three chapters deal interestingly with the history of the Christian understanding of the resurrection: the Fathers and Trypho and Celsus; Aquinas; modern theologians – Barth, Bultmann, Pannenberg, Marxsen, Moltmann, Rahner, Küng, Sobrino. Ch. 4 deals with the historicity of the Easter event and comes down firmly on the bodily character of the resurrection and the fact of the empty tomb. Sadly, however, though affirming the agreement of the evangelists on the primary datum, he can do no more than say that 'notoriously the evangelists do not agree about secondary details'. Ch. 5 is excellent on faith in the resurrection and its validation. Ch. 6 shows how all the great doctrines radiate from the central doctrine: Christology, the Trinity, Creation, the church – this is done in a biblical and heart-warming manner. On the sacraments there is a tiny whiff of transubstantiation! The section on Peter rightly stresses the primacy of Peter in the apostolic body, but labours rather unconvincingly to make him *the* Easter witness and by implication to make the Bishop of Rome the primary official witness to Christ's resurrection today. Ch. 7 on 'Redemption and Hope' has a helpful treatment of the nature of the Christian's resurrection body, while ch. 9 is a pioneer effort to show the resurrection as the triumph of divine love.

The final chapter, 'Communicating the Risen Christ', is a little disappointing, being a rather diffuse and sketchy discussion of the value of symbols, liturgy and experience and of what he calls 'the communicative presence', while failing to give a strong statement of the power of the Word of God and what should be the content of that Word in today's preaching. Without retracting in any way my judgment that this is a fine book and one which would provide much material for thoughtful sermons, I was nevertheless disappointed that the whole work was not more closely integrated and brought to a more decisive conclusion. The last page of the book gives 'Some Afterthoughts' in which the author says, 'I cannot finish this work on Jesus' resurrection, I can only abandon it.' Perhaps the writing of 20 books has its dangers!

John Wenham, Oxford.

Mary Hayter, **The New Eve in Christ** (SPCK, 1987), 160 pp., £6.95.

In spite of its sub-title, 'The Use and Abuse of the Bible in the Debate about Women in the Church', Mary Hayter actually limits herself to the debate about the ordination of women within the Church of England. Readers not concerned with that particular debate are likely to find the book, which inevitably makes assumptions about the nature of ordination that they may not share, a little frustrating. However, within that context it has a very useful contribution to make.

Part I assumes, for the sake of the argument, the view that ministry in the NT and in the church is directly related to the cultic sacrificial priesthood of Israel (a view which the author does not herself hold). From that starting point it examines the arguments against the ordination of women based on the assumptions that (a) God is male and (b) a male God can only be represented by a male priest. Hayter argues fairly convincingly that neither of these assumptions is consistent with biblical teaching. The God who is 'not man' completely transcends sex and to stress maleness in God is, as much as calling God female, breaking away from the transcendent Creator and 'magicalizing religion'. Again, priesthood is representative but not representational and even if God were male that does not mean that priests have to be male any more than ambassadors of a queen have to be female.

Part II looks at certain texts and asks whether the Bible 'embodies a timeless dogma of male leadership and female subordination' which would mean that women have a subordinate theological standing which prevents them from being ordained. Chs. 5-6 deal with Gen. 1-3 and find that this kind of subordinationism is not built into the accounts of creation and the fall. Ch. 7 discusses the NT uses of the OT and concludes that there are in fact two approaches, 'subordinationist' and 'equalitarian', depending on what the particular crisis was in which the discussion arose. Hayter concludes that we must accept this diversity and work from it, using a 'culture-critical' method for which ch. 8 provides a defence.

Personally I found these latter chapters less satisfying than the earlier ones. Part of the reason for this is my unwillingness to set biblical texts in opposition to one another, but I also felt that the careful analysis of the creation narratives was not repeated in the discussion of NT passages where traditionalist interpretations were simply taken for granted. I sympathize with Hayter's conclusion that 'the culture-critical method enables it to be clearly demonstrated that the equalitarian position on womanhood – propounded in verses like Gal. 3:27f. . . – is the scriptural position which should be taken as authoritative for modern doctrine', but I was left unconvinced that her arguments had really taken us that far.

Mary J. Evans, London Bible College.

Ward Powers, **Marriage and Divorce: The New Testament Teaching** (Petersham, Australia: Jordan Books, 1987), 384 pp., \$25 (Australian).

This book by the head of NT at Sydney Missionary and Bible College is a broadly ranging discussion of marriage, sexuality, divorce and remarriage. Although its title indicates that it is primarily a study of NT teaching, this is in fact only part of the story, since the book gives considerable attention also to OT-teaching, to historical perspectives and to practical issues (such as contraception, appropriate behaviour in courtship and so on), and it includes appendices discussing, among other things, the population explosion, polygamy and non-Christian marriages and (in unnecessary detail) animal reproduction. It is written by someone with real pastoral concern, primarily though not exclusively with the Western cultural scene in mind, and it contains much useful and down-to-earth discussion. The author emphasizes the goodness of human sexuality as made by God, the importance of life-long marriage, the fact that no divorce is good because all marital breakdown involves sin, and the reality of God's forgiveness.

On the controversial issues of divorce and remarriage, the author strongly repudiates a number of commonly-held views, including that of W. A. Heth and G. J. Wenham in their *Jesus and Divorce* (1984), who consider that Jesus took an 'Indissolubilist' view of marriage, such that remarriage following divorce is never right, and that of John Stott, who argues that divorce and remarriage are only permissible in cases of adultery and desertion (most recently in his *Issues Facing Christians Today*, 1984). He finds himself most closely in agreement with David Atkinson's views in his *To Have and to Hold* (1979). Powers argues that it is divorce, or more fundamentally marital breakdown, rather than remarriage that is sinful: whereas other scholars believe that the NT sees remarriage as being the decisive violation of marital union and (with some possible exceptions, depending on one's understanding of the 'except' clauses in Matthew's gospel) as constituting adultery, Powers argues for the separation of the two. Divorce is always contrary to the will of God – Powers is surely right to emphasize this – but marriages do come to an end (contrary to the opinion of the indissolubilists) and there is forgiveness for marital breakdown as for any other sin, given true repentance. Remarriage in such a situation in no way compounds the sin; indeed it may be positively therapeutic and even be encouraged by Scripture. For this last point he appeals to 1 Cor. 7 and to Paul's recognition that not all 'unmarried' people can or should remain unmarried. Powers argues that Paul's 'unmarried' category includes divorced people, appealing particularly to 1 Cor. 7:11.

This interpretation of the Pauline text is one of a number of exegetical points that are, to say the least, debatable. Does Paul really

mean in 1 Cor. 7:11 that a separated wife is, until she is reconciled to her (former?) husband, 'unmarried'? Surely not: the separated wife needs to be reconciled to her husband (who is still her husband), not to remarry him; and Paul's instruction that she remain 'unmarried' means that she should not marry someone else. The implication seems to be almost the opposite of that suggested by Powers: that breakdown of marriage does not mean the end of the relationship. Powers agrees that there should be an attempt to rebuild marriages that are in trouble, but he believes that at some point one may say to people that 1 Cor. 7:11 no longer applies, because the case is hopeless.

On the crucial sayings of Jesus about divorce, Powers, accepting the priority of Matthew and the originality of the Matthean form of the sayings, argues that in Mt. 5:32 and 19:9 Jesus is commenting on divorce that was not permitted by the Mosaic law: the Mosaic law only permitted divorce on grounds of 'uncleanness' (the word used in Deuteronomy) or 'immorality' (the word used in the gospels), but many of Jesus' contemporaries allowed divorce on almost any ground. In response to this Jesus argues in 5:32 that any divorce outside the Mosaic category ('except for marital unfaithfulness') had the effect of branding the divorced woman as an adulteress when in fact she was not such, and of similarly branding any second husband she might have. In 19:9 Jesus condemns as adulterous those who divorce their wives not for the Mosaic reasons ('not for marital unfaithfulness') but in order to remarry. Powers' interpretation has Jesus endorsing the Mosaic divorce regulation, not revoking it (though that is not to say that Jesus, or even Moses, approved of divorce; on the contrary). In favour of this he appeals to Mt. 5:17 with its insistence on Jesus' fulfilment of the law and the prophets. However, elsewhere in Mt. 5 Jesus clearly does go beyond the letter of the OT law to a more fundamental kingdom-righteousness, and it makes sense to see his teaching on divorce as in this category, both in Mt. 5 and Mt. 19, where he explains the fundamental 'one flesh' principle. Mt. 5 portrays a Jesus whose teaching far surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, whereas Powers' Jesus does not obviously go beyond the more strictly inclined rabbis. Despite Powers' arguments, it is more likely that in 5:32 Jesus is saying that the sort of divorce he is describing produces what is real adultery in God's eyes than that it puts stigma of adultery on people who don't deserve it (*i.e.* the divorced woman and any possible second husband). In 19:9 Powers admits that a certain type of divorce involves real adultery in God's eyes (not, this time, just the stigma of adultery), but he sees the intention of the divorcing husband as being what makes it adulterous rather than the remarriage. However, this is not the literal force of the words here or in the Markan and Lukan parallels: it is the remarriage (being the irreversible rejection of the old marriage) which is seen as adulterous. Despite Powers' arguments, there is a strong case for understanding Jesus' and Paul's profound and radical teaching to be that marriage brings into being a union of persons that the partners can neglect or abuse but not terminate. This teaching is difficult both to live out (as the disciples realize, Mt. 19:10) and to administer pastorally in a fallen world (as Powers stresses), but it is a stronger and less objectionable case than Powers makes out.

Other points in the book are also controversial. For example his claim that Jn. 4:18 ('You have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband') proves that Jesus recognized the validity of more than one marriage is pressing the text more than is justified. His belief that human life begins not at conception but at implantation is a view with potentially far-reaching implications in an age of genetic engineering. His argument that the procreation of children is not one of the primary purposes of marriage and that married couples may opt out of it is arguably an over-reaction to those who suggest that sexual union is only for procreation. Like many others he claims that the Christian understanding of forgiveness means that those whose first marriages have failed and who have repented of their sin should be allowed to begin a new marriage; but it is a fallacy to think that because a person is fully forgiven by God, he or she is therefore exempt from all the earthly consequences of sin or that he or she must have the same options available to them after the sin concerned as before.

Writing on the question of marriage in today's world is like walking through a minefield. (For a very judicious summary of issues and approaches see David Field's article in *Themelios* 8:3.) Powers has tried in an original and interesting way to find the balance between the exacting and exciting rigour of the biblical teaching on the one

hand and its compassion on the other. He makes many sensible points in the course of his discussion, but it is not clear that the weaknesses of his own position are less than those of other positions that he criticizes. His openness on the issue of remarriage will be attractive to many in today's situation, but the crucial question is not whether his view seems attractive, but whether it is a reliable interpretation of the NT teaching.

David Wenham

Trevor J. Saxby, **Pilgrims of a Common Life: Christian Community of Goods Through The Centuries** (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1987), 207 pp., \$17.95.

Charles Avila, **Ownership: Early Christian Teaching** (Maryknoll/London: Orbis/Sheed & Ward, 1983), 214 pp., \$9.95/£5.00.

Throughout the history of the church there have been movements which have sought to restore the purity of early Christian practices. In our day we hear much of a call to a simple lifestyle that will release more resources for the work of the church. This is based on an understanding of the Bible that emphasizes our role as God's stewards. There is another stream of economic understanding running through church history which holds that the biblical way to live as Christians is through joint ownership of goods. The most common example is the communal life of the church in Jerusalem after Pentecost (Acts 2:44-45; 4:34-35). Saxby has provided a study of not only the biblical base for communal living, but also a brief historical survey of the major experiments in putting this system into practice.

In surveying the biblical material, Saxby finds the case for communal living in the OT by reference to the provision of manna in the wilderness and the Jubilee. But these are really hints, the main argument being from the example of Jesus and the disciples. The principles of the common life and the common purse are seen as foundational. 'All alike must obey and renounce all things, following the example of the Lord who owned nothing but lived out of a common purse, relying on the promise of a faithful God to bestow on his people (corporately) all that he knows they need' (p. 49).

As Saxby further explores the biblical material he confesses that 'while community of goods is indeed difficult to trace textually, it is nevertheless apparent spiritually and theologically' (p. 52). This seems to be no solution since it is difficult to see how something as central as this is not mentioned textually. Saxby finds a Pauline principle of liberality in stewardship the dominant theme of the epistles. Here there is no common purse but rather private ownership that recognizes the need to share with others. The reason Saxby gives for this theological deviation is the real threat of persecution which made communal living impossible.

In the historical survey, the Constantian solution is seen as a disaster for true religion. Saxby then chronicles the dissenters who sought to follow the Lord in wholehearted obedience. Naturally the monastic movement features prominently up to the Reformation. This reviewer found the descriptions of the communal groups very interesting, but sad because in every case the initial impulse faded after time and the purpose turned from the initial aims. Saxby is to be commended for his honest portrayal of the problems these groups faced.

He concludes his book with a section that this reviewer found to be the most useful part: an analysis of why so many communal settlements failed to survive and how communities need to be organized to avoid the pitfalls that doomed others. This section will be useful to those planning a communal experience, but it is also a useful tool for researchers who would study these social experiments.

While the exegetical base that would find this the pattern for all Christian living is decidedly lacking, nevertheless, the communal experience has been a positive force in both the history of the church and in the lives of many who participated in it. Like many other facets of church history, the problem arises when the form continues but the impetus (often a strong leader) and power have disappeared.

Avila's book arises out of his experiences with the poor peasants in the Philippines. His arguments revolve around the evolution of large

estates owned by one family and worked by tenant farmers. Avila identifies this problem arising in the Roman Empire. By using a historical example, he defuses the resistance that might be felt when one discusses current situations. It also provides him with the opportunity to cite extensive patristic quotations dealing with the subject. Respected theologians like Chrysostom and Augustine are used to condemn the abuses of wealth and privilege.

The texts (which are reproduced in the original Greek or Latin in a 35-page Appendix) are very powerful and well worth studying for the church today. The texts reproduced and commented on by Avila are mainly sermons and one wonders how these words would be received today. In terms of the distinction discussed above between community of goods and liberal stewardship of possessions, the latter is mostly evident. However, the witness of communal life is not missing, being very strongly attested in the works of Basil the Great, Augustine and Chrysostom.

The overall impression is that Avila has proved his point that the church fathers quoted indeed call for sharing and even restitution of wealth to the poor. Avila then goes on to make a case for the need for sweeping social reforms which would restore not only land but all means of production to the ownership of all. While it is clear that he has proved the first half of his thesis, that Christians have a duty to share the blessings they receive from God, it is not quite so clear that all society can be equated with the people of God and that the reforms he seeks, while good and indeed in many cases necessary, are the fulfilment of the gospel.

A comparison of these two books demonstrates the different conclusions that can be derived from essentially the same body of evidence. Saxby specifically warns against trying to reform the whole world. This he sees as a reason for the failure of some of the communal societies. On the other hand Avila specifically extends the patristic formulations to cover all societies. Those interested in the question of the Christian and property would do well to read both these books.

James J. Stamoolis.

M. Charles Bell, *Calvin and Scottish Theology: the Doctrine of Assurance* (Edinburgh: The Handsel Press, 1985), 211 pp., £10.50.

In this revision of his 1982 University of Aberdeen doctoral dissertation, Bell traces what he regards as the decline and fall of Scottish Calvinism, constricted by the rigid legalism of federal theology. Calvin's doctrine of universal atonement enabled Christ to be the ground of assurance and assurance to be of the essence of faith. He placed grace prior to law and faith before repentance. However, covenant theology soon adopted legal and mercantile concepts, transposing the covenant into a contract with promised benefits and legally binding stipulations. The fresh air of Calvin was replaced by the putrid stench of limited atonement, assurance divorced from faith, introspective self-examination and a voluntaristic emphasis on repentance. With the introduction in the late 16th century of a pre-fall covenant of works, grace was made subordinate to law. Assurance became problematic, for the faithful were exhorted to examine themselves rather than to look in faith to Christ. In short, Scottish Calvinism lost its grasp of the gospel. The Marrow controversy, from 1717, almost righted the pendulum as Thomas Boston and Ebenezer Erskine detected the endemic legalism of federal theology and contended for the unconditional freeness of God's grace, teaching one unconditional covenant of grace and maintaining, with Calvin, that assurance was of the essence of faith. However, their continued commitment to limited atonement prevented a universal offer of Christ in the gospel and removed the basis for assurance. It was left to John McLeod Campbell (1800-1872) to be the true heir of Calvin and consequently to be deposed from the ministry of the Church of Scotland in 1831. For Campbell, God's basic attribute is love, not justice. The incarnation of Jesus Christ pre-eminently displays the love of God to all men. As God, Christ reveals the nature of God as pure unconditioned and unconditional love. As man, he offers the perfect response on our behalf to God. The Spirit enables us to

participate in the vicarious humanity of Christ. The filial has priority over the judicial. The atonement is therefore the unconditional manifestation of the love of God to all men. Assurance is of the essence of faith. Legalism is exorcised. So was Campbell!

The broad outlines of Bell's argument are not entirely new. R. T. Kendall, in his *Calvin and English Calvinism to 1649*, has argued along roughly parallel lines in the case of English Puritanism. James B. Torrance, in various writings, has suggested a broadly similar thesis for the Scottish scene. The reviewer's own Aberdeen doctoral dissertation focused on 16th-century Reformed theology, both Continental and British, the emergence of diverse notions of covenant and their impact on the doctrine of assurance. Nevertheless, the Scottish terrain has not been described in such detail before. The research is impressive, the style lucid and the argument may be appealing to some. The analysis of the increasingly subjective anthropocentrism of Scottish Calvinism, with its concomitant separation of nature and grace, is well done.

However, one has a number of reservations. Historically, Scotland is considered in isolation from the rest of Europe, whereas in the century and a half after the Reformation there was widespread theological interaction with the Continent, especially in the formative years of the covenant theology which is so integral to the book. As it is, we are given a somewhat misleading and parochial impression. From where did these legalistic notions come? Why did Rollock frame his federalism the way he did? These questions are not explored or even mentioned, yet they are certainly germane.

Theologically, one has more serious questions. Bell's stress on limited atonement as destructive of the evangelical Christocentrism of Calvin appears as a symptom of a deeper concern. After all, in itself it merely begs the question, for if the universal proclamation of the gospel is hindered and assurance of salvation undermined by the question of whether Christ has died for one, does this not also apply to election, which raises the question of whether one is elect? Bell admits this and Calvin comes under his stricture for 'his unbiblical stress on the hidden will of God' which 'runs counter to the biblical truth that God has fully . . . revealed himself to us in Jesus Christ as our loving Father' (p. 32). His agenda is seen to be the removal of particularity and the eclipse of eternity *sub specie temporis*.

Additionally, Bell's criticism of the rise of self-examination as a means of assurance would have been more cogent if he had asked how this might have related to the Holy Spirit. If sanctification was seen in pneumatological terms inherent safeguards would have been provided against anthropocentrism. Indeed, if the Spirit in sanctification cannot attest the work of Christ or the Father then has not a pneumatological docetism emerged? Bell does not consider this.

Even more significantly, Campbell's scheme produces universal election, universal atonement and limited application by the Holy Spirit. The Father chooses all, Christ dies for all but the Spirit applies salvation to some. This is disruption in the doctrine of God. Again, as Bell argues, for Campbell particularity in God's love would be arbitrary and could not reveal his character (p. 187). Does this not indicate that, for Campbell and for Bell's analysis, there is a radical disjunction between God's love and justice, that his will is seen as arbitrary and detached from his love and goodness? One wonders what this does for assurance!

Finally, since Campbell disavows full universalism, in the last analysis the decisive moment of salvation is pushed back onto man's appropriation of grace, his 'participation' in Christ effected by the Spirit. Is this a return to Calvin? We are compelled to suggest that, despite its helpful criticism of legalistic and subjectivistic tendencies in Scottish Calvinism, the theological underpinning of Bell's interpretation is less than satisfactory.

Robert Letham, London Bible College.

John Painter, *Theology as Hermeneutics: Rudolf Bultmann's Interpretation of the History of Jesus* (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1987), xiv + 265 pp., £10.95/\$16.50 pb; £25.00/\$37.50 hb.

The fact that interest in Rudolf Bultmann is in decline in both North

America and England is perhaps indicated by the difficulties the author of this work had in finding a publisher willing to accept it. Bultmann is unquestionably one of the most important theologians the 20th century produced, if importance is judged by the influence he exercised over the theological agenda of his time. His programme of demythologization established him as an important force in both NT study and systematic theology. In the last two decades, however, there has been a growing reaction against Bultmann's views in many circles. The rise of the so-called 'New Quest of the Historical Jesus' (associated with Käsemann and Bornkamm), and the new interest in the history of Jesus (obvious in the works of Pannenberg), point to a growing dissatisfaction with Bultmann's approach to both the NT and history. Although Bultmann is no longer the theological force which he once was, some of the questions he addressed are still of relevance. This book provides a helpful guide to a selection of such questions.

Dr Painter (who is head of the Division of Religious Studies at La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia) provides a useful guide to Bultmann's approach to the history of Jesus. He provides a careful study of Bultmann's understanding of the theological relevance of existentialism (and criticizes those who interpret Bultmann solely in terms of Heidegger); his hermeneutical presuppositions underlying his NT exegesis; his account of the resurrection of Jesus; his understanding of the significance of Jesus Christ; and his views on the relation of faith and understanding. In every area we find a workman-like and generally reliable account of Bultmann's views, and useful references to the secondary literature. Painter is no uncritical admirer of Bultmann, and has little hesitation in pointing out at least some of the obvious weaknesses of his approach (for example, his strongly subjective understanding of the resurrection).

This book is not suitable as an introduction to Bultmann. It is likely to be of interest to the reader who is already familiar with Bultmann's position, and wishes to extend both his own understanding of the intricacies of that position and gain a familiarity with the secondary literature on the subject. It should be noted that Painter does not deal at length with Bultmann's works of NT scholarship, such as the *History of the Synoptic Tradition* and the concept of 'form-criticism' which it developed. The prime concern is Bultmann's understanding of Christian theology as it is related to the history of Jesus. For this reason the book is likely to be considerably more useful to those concerned with NT interpretation and systematic theology, rather than those primarily interested in the text of the NT. Such readers will already be familiar with Robert C. Roberts, *Rudolf Bultmann's Theology: A Critical Interpretation* (London: SPCK/Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), and will find this book a useful counterweight to Roberts at points. Although Painter's contribution to our understanding of Bultmann is not particularly exciting or original, merely adding one further work to an already burgeoning list of books and articles on the subject, and is unlikely to lead to a revision of his importance, it ought not to be overlooked.

Alister McGrath, Wycliffe Hall, Oxford.

Peter Hocken, *Streams of Renewal: The Origins and Early Development of the Charismatic Movement in Great Britain* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1986), 288 pp., £7.95.

Peter Hocken is an English Roman Catholic priest who is now a member of the Mother of God community in Maryland, USA. This book represents the conclusions of his doctoral research under Prof. Walter Hollenweger at Birmingham University and reflects the particular interest in Pentecostalism and the charismatic movement for which that centre is becoming known. Hocken's theme is fascinating both in its contemporaneity and the informal nature of its sources — conversations, diaries, prayer letters, popular publications and the like. It comes as something of a surprise that events through which some of us have lived are the subject of doctoral research. The fact that all this can be researched by a Roman Catholic priest is itself a reflection of the changes that the last 25 years have seen.

Hocken sets out to chart the origins of charismatic renewal up to the end of 1965. His first intention is to uncover the facts of what

actually happened and this is done by listening to the witnesses of those events. The emerging pattern roots the origin of the charismatic movement in the influence of certain independent figures who were influenced by Pentecostalism but did not see themselves as Pentecostals. Cecil Cousen, David Lillie, Arthur Wallis, Edgar Trout, Campbell McAlpine and Denis Clark are the most prominent among these. Through these individuals the renewal began to spread to the denominations and at this point Hocken gives great weight to the prophecy delivered in 1936 by Smith Wigglesworth to David du Plessis, the South African general secretary of the Apostolic Faith Mission. Wigglesworth prophesied a movement of the Spirit which would surpass the Pentecostal revival and which would take place in the denominations. Du Plessis was to be used to this end and this proved to be precisely the case. A growing swell of charismatic experience within mainline churches led, through Michael Harper, formerly of All Souls, Langham Place, to the formation of the Fountain Trust and to what Hocken sees as the third stage of the renewal, the emergence of one movement across the denominations. This emerging pattern is filled out by Hocken with detailed descriptions of the main figures in the events, some of whom have become well known, while others have remained in the background.

Having laid bare the facts, Hocken attempts to interpret their significance. The heart of it all is the experience of baptism in the Spirit and the charismata, although this unifying experience he shows to have been variously interpreted. Hocken sees a clear discrepancy between the early claims that baptism in the Spirit was a baptism of power for the church and the emerging testimony that what was in fact bestowed was a deeper, more intimate relationship of the believer with Christ. Though this may have led to more effective Christian living it is not quite the same thing as charismatic rhetoric may lead us to suppose.

Hocken sees a further characteristic of the renewal in its thrust towards unity and at the point at which he leaves us this is clearly to be seen. At the same time he identifies in the very roots of the movement a distinction which would emerge in the seventies as that between the 'renewalists' and the 'restorationists'. At the heart of the distinction is a difference of ecclesiology. The prevalence of a 'Brethren' ecclesiology in some of the early independent pioneers would later assert itself to create a tension within the renewal movement itself, one which does much to explain the current British church scene.

Peter Hocken offers us a fine piece of research in this publication. In so doing he reminds us that despite rumours of its imminent demise, the dynamic of the charismatic movement has a long way to go before it has run its course.

Nigel G. Wright, Spurgeon's College, London.

Willem Zuidema, *God's Partner: An Encounter with Judaism* (London: SCM, 1987; from 2nd edn. of Dutch original, *Ontmoeting met het jodendom*), 217 pp. + notes, £8.50.

This book, by the then Study Secretary for Jewish-Christian relations for the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, shows the appreciation of Judaism that one might expect and welcome from a Dutch scholar, and is well suited to students in their first year of theological study. John Bowden's translation flows with characteristic clarity. The notes and bibliography are very good and representative of their areas of study. But one major criticism must be made at the outset, namely that the book only deals with orthodox Jewish life, thereby neglecting the full range of world Jewry today. However, this review will deal with the book as an introduction to normative Orthodox Judaism.

Zuidema has built this book up from years of teaching seminars to Christian groups, and suggests that the book could be used profitably in this way by Christians today. This reviewer would endorse that suggestion, having used the sections on the Sabbath, the Festivals, Torah and ethics, and the State of Israel.

The book has two goals. Firstly, to give an introduction for Christians to (Orthodox) Judaism as it is lived by Jews today, an introduction which will be empathetic and correctly fair. In the light

of the strongly negative way that Christians have presented Jews and Judaism down the centuries this is especially welcome. He is quite familiar with the rabbinic sources and with modern Orthodox thought, and quotes liberally and well. In particular he seeks to expose and do away with the Christian myth that Judaism is a sterile, crippling legalism. These Jews love God and delight to worship him and obey his commandments, seeing it as a duty and pleasure. In this goal he does very well indeed, and evangelicals will learn a great deal about what it means to see oneself as a member of a covenant community, with a personal relationship to the God and Father of Jesus, rooted in the Hebrew Bible, and testifying to the providential care of that God in history, yet without being a Christian.

Secondly, his goal is to help Christians in 'recovering that original and authentic way of thinking' of the NT church (p. xi). His underlying thesis is that the first generations of Christians (who were of course mostly Jewish ethno-culturally, built on the foundation of Jesus himself and the apostles) were not Christians in spite of their Jewish heritage, but that they fully incorporated that heritage, and indeed that God intended and used that heritage. There is of course a growing consensus in Christian scholarship of the need to appreciate the Jewish roots of the NT and church liturgies, and Zuidema's book will be welcomed in this tradition.

However, evangelicals will be cautious in this part of Zuidema's work, more precisely in his section 3, 'The Parting of the Ways' (pp. 29-48). He accepts the description of Christianity and Judaism as 'sister religions' deriving from a common mother religion, the Judaism of Israel in the period of the Second Temple, and adds that: 'Of the two, Judaism has remained more faithful than Christianity to its origin' (p. 29). This statement begs two questions: (a) By what criterion are we to judge this faithfulness to our common origin? Evangelical Christians, including Hebrew Christians, will claim that they are actually part of the faithful community of God, faithful to God's purposes and promises as found in both Testaments, and as centred in the promised Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth. Orthodox Jews will claim this biblical integrity for themselves, and even Zuidema admits that in large part both communities have developed by repudiating each other.

(b) Why assume that the Judaism which survived the Babylonian Exile (and here is another weakness of the book, in that he hardly deals with the fertile, creative milieu that was the Jewish people at the time of the birth of Jesus) was the true daughter of the OT faith? There was no monolithic Judaism then, certainly not the developed rabbinic Judaism which lies behind modern Orthodoxy, and it is not enough to state that the eventual leading understanding of how God's ancient people should relate to God and Torah and the world after the destruction of the Temple in AD 70 was the true 'daughter' of the 'matriarchal' faith of the OT. It is without doubt true that Christians need to appreciate the richness and importance of Jewish life between the Testaments and, further, to appreciate the continuing and present-day value of Judaism (again, richer than the Orthodoxy we see in this book), but it is also true that Christians have a right to question who has been more faithful to the OT faith.

Zuidema is especially attracted to what he sees as a central conviction of Judaism, namely that God expects his people to be partners with him in bringing creation to its fulfilment according to the grace and purposes of God. This theological persuasion is interesting to follow throughout the book. It is a very worthwhile book to read and have in your library.

Walter Riggans, All Nations Christian College, Ware.

Book Notes

Donald A. Carson, *A Student's Manual of the New Testament Greek Accents* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1985), 167 pp., \$8.95.

For all of us who learned Greek without having studied the accents, Carson's book opens for us a world of real Greek. He takes us step by step through the rules of accenting, and for exercises has us accent Greek text! Divided into 37 lessons, the book could be easily worked

through by the student on his own. Indeed, Carson has written it for the inquiring student who is eager to learn. Clearly written, well organized, and with a set of exercises (and answer key), this reviewer is pleased to be able to commend this book to others who also want to learn more about Greek.

Joel W. Lundeen, *Luther's Works: Vol. 55, Index* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), xi. + 462 pp., \$24.95.

This reviewer was involved in preparing a study on Luther a month before he received this book. He could have saved a considerable amount of time by using the indices provided. Two thirds of this volume is a very comprehensive subject index, the final third is a Scripture index. It is an essential reference tool to the 54 other volumes of the American edition of Luther's works. Readers not acquainted with this edition published by Concordia and Fortress are missing an important part of their theological education. Luther reads well and is still relevant to our situation today. Every theological library should have the complete sets of Luther's works. This index will open up the treasure house of Luther's thought and is worth examining before writing an essay.

Millard J. Erickson, *Concise Dictionary of Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1986), 187 pp., \$9.95.

Erickson has provided us with a very useful little book that every student of theology should have. He gives simple yet complete definitions of theological terms and concepts which often puzzle the student. The *Dictionary* also contains brief biographies of important theologians from Irenaeus to F. F. Bruce. Inexpensive and useful, one can only wish for a wide circulation and perhaps the appearance of an even less expensive paperback edition.

Robert P. Lightner, *Evangelical Theology: A Survey and Review* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1986), 303 pp., \$15.95.

This survey of theology is written at an introductory level for non-theological students to interest them in theology. As such, it in itself is of little interest to readers of *Themelios* who have more detailed books to turn to. However, because of its textbook format complete with discussion questions, it could be used in the Christian education programme of a local church. Clearly written, with a fair presentation of differing evangelical viewpoints, the book may prove useful in increasing the theological literacy of the church.

Karl Barth, *Witness to the Word. A Commentary on John 1* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), xii. + 163 pp., £8.85.

Karl Barth, *Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 60 pp., £3.50.

Eerdmans are to be congratulated for making these works available to the English reader for the first time. The lectures on John 1 are delivered at Münster in 1925-6 and at Bonn in 1933. The four short pieces of Mozart were first published in German in 1956, the 200th anniversary of Mozart's birth. Both of these volumes appeared in 1986, the 100th anniversary of Barth's birth. Both books are handled in the UK by Paternoster.

Kenneth T. Aitken, *Proverbs* (Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press/Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1986), x. + 264 pp., £4.25.

Robert Davidson, *Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon* (Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press/Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1986), viii. + 162 pp., £4.25.

These volumes are both additions to the *Daily Study Bible* series of commentaries. The New Testament volumes by William Barclay are well known. The level is suited to the needs of the intelligent layman or to the preacher.

BOOK REVIEWS

- Robert P. Gordon* **1 and 2 Samuel. A Commentary** (Jean-Marc Heimerdinger)
A. G. Auld **Amos** (John J. Bimson)
J. D. Kingsbury **Matthew (Proclamation Commentary)**
J. D. Kingsbury **Matthew as Story** (Akio Ito)
Gerd Theissen **The Shadow of the Galilean** (Dick France)
Dieter Georgi **The Opponents of Paul in Second Corinthians** (Alan G. Padgett)
N. T. Wright **The Epistles of Paul to the Colossians and to Philemon: An Introduction and Commentary** (Max Turner)
Pedrito U. Maynard-Reid **Poverty and Wealth in James** (Peter H. Davids)
L. T. Johnson **The Writings of the New Testament: an Interpretation** (Dick France)
Christopher Tuckett **Nag Hammadi and the Gospel Tradition** (Edwin Yamauchi)
D. A. Carson and John D. Woodbridge (eds.) **Hermeneutics, Authority and Canon** (Estevan Kirschner)
Alan S. Duthie **Bible Translations: and how to choose between them**
Kenneth L. Barker (ed.) **The Making of a Contemporary Translation: New International Version** (Tony Naden)
G. O'Collins **Jesus Risen** (John Wenham)
Mary Hayter **The New Eve in Christ** (Mary J. Evans)
Ward Powers **Marriage and Divorce: The New Testament Teaching** (David Wenham)
Trevor J. Saxby **Pilgrims of a Common Life: Christian Community of Goods Through The Centuries**
Charles Avila **Ownership: Early Christian Teaching** (James J. Stamoolis)
M. Charles Bell **Calvin and Scottish Theology: the Doctrine of Assurance** (Robert Letham)
John Painter **Theology as Hermeneutics:**
Rudolf Bultmann's Interpretation of the History of Jesus (Alister McGrath)
Peter Hocken **Streams of Renewal: The Origins and Early Development of the Charismatic Movement in Great Britain** (Nigel G. Wright)
Willem Zuidema **God's Partner: An Encounter with Judaism** (Walter Riggans)



IFES

ἐποικοδομηθέντες ἐπὶ τῷ θεμελίῳ τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ
προφητῶν, ὄντος ἀκρογωνιαίου αὐτοῦ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ.