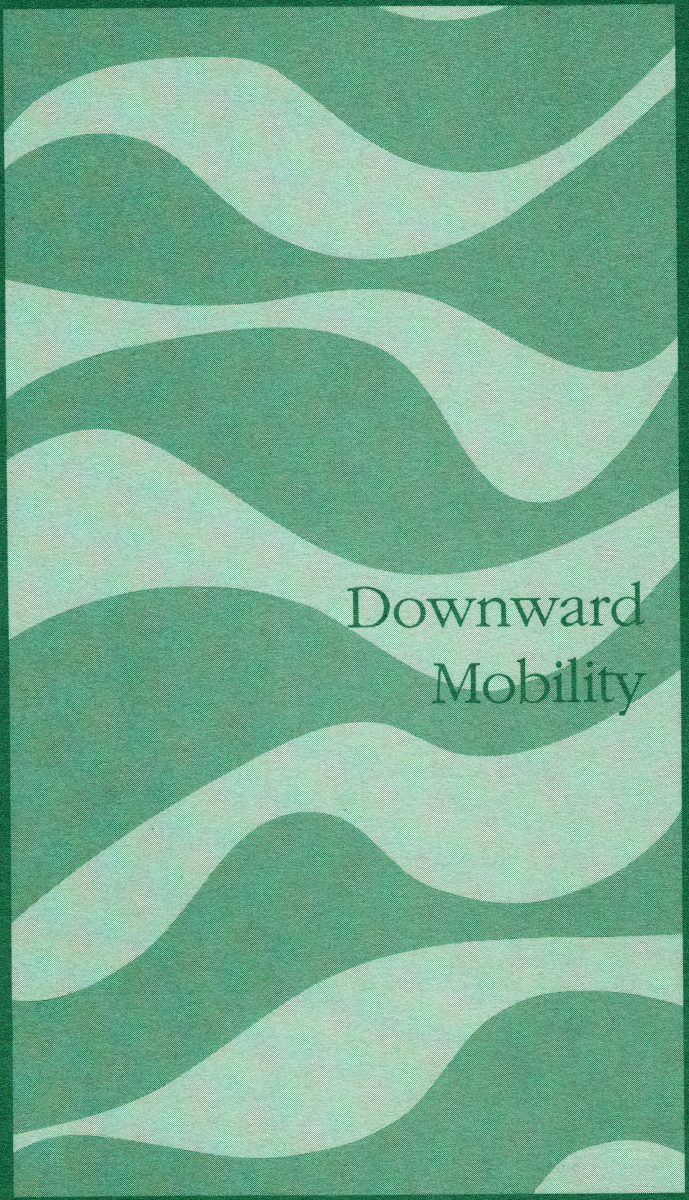
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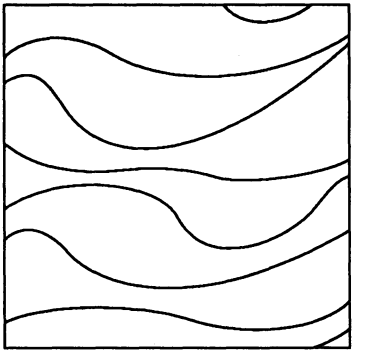
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Downward Mobility

A disciple must release control, be vulnerable, and refuse to resort to influence or status.

This quotation from our lead article is a very hard and penetrating word addressed to all who would be disciples of Jesus. A recent devotional reading on the rich young ruler, who had been ordered to sell all he had and give it to the poor, cut that gospel down to size: "Jesus always encourages us to grow."

Surrounded as we are by pension funds and health insurance plans, challenged by the expensive desire to get our kids into a good college, and flattered by the power of status and role, we late twentieth century Christians may find little good or comforting news in the announcement that we are to release control and renounce influence or status.

Anthony J. Gittins criticizes a definition of mission as the "extension of hospitality" because it focuses too much on the power and control of the host or giver. Rather, he argues that the missionary should be the stranger and should receive the hospitality. Jesus radically redefined status and encouraged a fundamental shift of roles. One of the more serious threats to the integrity of Christianity has been the relative respectability it has enjoyed for 1600 years. Weak and powerless disciples become empowered to help others who are weak. To ask, seek, and knock is to be committed to relinquishing our dearly bought, dearly wanted status so that we do not burden the recipient of the gospel message. Jesus seeks a 'one-down' position—the opposite of one-up—thereby disarming and affirming the host and refusing to engage in status seeking. Christian mission endeavor flourishes in situations of crisis and wanes where Christianity becomes domesticated and respectable.

Craig L. Nessan reports that the neglect of the Spirit has often been an allergic reaction to excessive claims for the Spirit. Luther's shrinking of legitimate discourse about the Spirit resulted in the extremely limited categories of Lutheran Orthodoxy. Despite Pietism's revival of talk about the Spirit, there is still a restricted understanding of the Spirit in

America. The book of Romans demonstrates how one ought to move from the objective reality of justification to subjective participation in Christ. In both Testaments, where the Spirit of the Lord is present, there is an increase of freedom. Each discipline in practical theology has as its aim the invocation of the living Spirit in the present. When theology becomes allergic to the Spirit, the church gets sick.

John Reumann provides the biblical, historical and theological rationale for a twofold office of ministry in the ELCA: the ministry of the means of grace and the ministry of service. This maintains the confessional emphasis on word-and-sacrament ministry while including ministry of service in the public office of the ministry. While the Task Force on the Study of Ministry proposed one ordination, serving all, or two ordinations for the two forms of ministry, the churchwide assembly demurred and limited ordination to the ministry of word and sacrament and created a lay-rostered diaconal ministry and lay-rostered Associates in Ministry. Hence the assembly approved a twofold office, but also maintained a unitary office by limiting ordination to pastors.

Walter H. Schuman reports on the recent flurry of interest in death and dying. This is a reaction to dying that had become technologically antiseptic—secret, compartmentalized, shut away from public view. The hospice movement, which arose in England, decided that when death is inevitable, it would neither seek to hasten it or postpone it, and the Christian model for dying focuses in Jesus' last act on the cross. The church must become a midwife for the dying, surrounding dying Christians with a faith community so they can surrender their life to God. Dying well is as important as living well.

Donald Dallmann tells a delightful story of a remarkable African-American pastor, the Reverend Franklin Green, and what he did with one word on a hot Sunday afternoon in August.

We are all camels vainly trying to crawl through the eye of a needle. But God, the tailor, threads us through and frees us for status as servants. John the Baptist had it right: Jesus must increase and we must decrease. But Jesus' own, paradoxical goal was to empty himself.

Kenotically yours,
Ralph W. Klein, Editor

Beyond Hospitality? The Missionary Status and Role Revisited

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Catholic Theological Union
Chicago, Illinois

Eleanor and Arnold Scherer Memorial Lecture, 1994
Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago

The Christian faith is "intrinsically missionary" (Bosch 1991:8), though as Stephen Neill pointed out, 'missionary' is "a theological concept unknown to the New Testament" (Neill 1980:512). Since realizing that apparent anomaly I have been tantalized by the notion of discipleship.

Enormous enlightenment (and some accompanying shadow) has been thrown on the missionary nature of the lives of Jesus and early disciples by studies on the social setting of the Gospels (Crossan 1991; Malina 1981, 1986; Malina and Rohrbaugh 1992; Neyrey 1991; Osiek 1992; Theissen 1992).

Parallel to this, reflection on recent centuries of mission history has alerted us to the scandal of certain approaches, and we have attempted to soften not only some harsh language but also a certain style of missionary engagement. 'Hospitality' and 'stranger' are now common missiological parlance, and we have tried to embrace a more gracious, listening, tolerant posture, ably depicted in last year's lecture by Kosuke Koyama entitled "Extend Hospitality to Strangers: A Missiology of *Theologia Crucis*."[1]

This represents a significant conscientization, not only for professional missionaries but (since 'mission' is a defining characteristic of church) for all committed Christians. But is it enough? Or is it simply the dramatic opening chapter of a 'novel' way of undertaking mission which is in fact as old as the way of Jesus? If so, we may need to pursue the deeper implications of hospitality to strangers (Gittins 1989, 1994; Kamperides 1990) and revisit the social setting of first-century Palestine and the texts which constitute a reference-point for our *Imitatio Christi*.

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[1] Reprinted in *Currents in Theology and Mission* 20:3 (June 1993): 165-76.

Written not by a professional theologian or biblical scholar but by a theological anthropologist and minister, this synthesis may need qualification and nuancing. Yet my quest is simply for a deeper appreciation of the call of Jesus to "come" and to "go," and for implications and applications for those who earnestly want to be counted disciples today. For two millennia the search for the Christian vocation has led through the highways of scholarship where scriptures and history are scrutinized, and the byways of people's lives where bread is broken and memories are forged; today's itinerary favors the low road.

According to Wilbert Shenk, recent theoretical insights on inculturation and contextualization (Hiebert 1987; Kraft 1981; Lingenfelter 1992; Schineller 1990; Schreiter 1985; Shorter 1988), have "not addressed the role of the missionary in any definitive sense. An important unfinished part of the contextualization discussion is to grapple with the role of the outsider [and] the marginal... as change agents in relation to the subject context" (Shenk 1993:2). Today's focus is on the missionary role.

Strangers, and hospitality

The temptation to define 'stranger' absolutely or out of context, though seductive, must be resisted: "there is no such thing as an autonomous person outside of a relational field": the interacting pair is critical (Carrithers 1990:222). "Nothing is self-contained; if there were such a thing as an unrelated individual, none of us would know it" (Harrison 1981:50). Similarly with 'hospitality,' which describes a *social* disposition.[2]

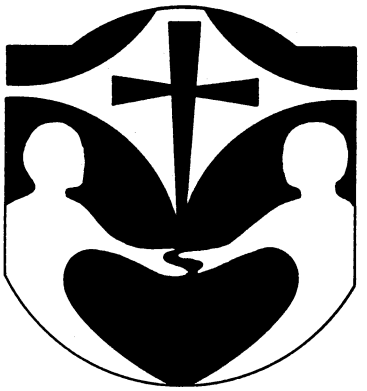
In spite of many helpful insights, much recent literature has seriously underplayed or overlooked the essentially dyadic nature of strangerhood and hospitality (Hauerwas and Willimon 1989; Keifert 1992; Steimle 1979; Willimon and Hauerwas 1992). But a stranger cannot be defined except in relation to someone else; and without a guest (stranger) as well as a host there is no hospitality. It would be dangerously naive to imagine that strangers may be treated legitimately by the automatic application of predetermined policy, and quite fatuous to define and defend hospitality simply by reference to a host's good intentions.

A "stranger-centered missiology" suggested by Koyama is not without problems for constitutionally self-important people: it might turn our focus on the stranger (which, though desirable, would be insufficient); or it might mean putting the stranger at the center (which is precisely where the 'stranger,' by definition, is not and should not be!). The problem lies in a tendency many of us have, to repent by lurching from one extreme to the other, when what is required is the grace of the true transformation of both partners: the *terminus ad quem* of mission—the point to which all is tending—is something quite new, not simply a swing of the pendulum; and in the Jesus society you repent, not by feeling bad but by thinking differently (Wiebe 1970:216).

If we speak of "extending hospitality" we speak from a social location centered upon ourself; we, the host, are subtly underscoring a position of power and the control of initiative. But unless we become very sensitive to the social location of the *other* as subject, we will remain impervious to the resentment we very easily sow in that person's heart. Unless we understand where

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[2] Hospitality implies at least a dyad, and thus a social context; a solitary who chooses to separate from society is not a 'stranger' in the usual sense, but rather an anomaly.



power and control are located, from the perspective of the person *receiving* hospitality, we will have signally failed to behave in a mutually responsive way. And unless we are actually privy to the ambivalence experienced by a recipient, we will never understand the withering force of these words:

> Charity wounds [the person] who receives, and our whole moral effort is directed towards suppressing the unconscious harmful patronage of a rich almoner [one who dispenses alms] (Mauss 1970:63; cf. Koran, Sura II).

Truly appropriate hospitality and honest attention to the stranger require flexibility and a genuine desire to be of service. Only when we missionaries face the interpersonal issues more squarely than has sometimes been done, can we say anything genuinely helpful for others engaged in the Christian mission. Only when we consider the missionary implications of receiving hospitality and of being strangers (1 Pet 2:11), can we claim to be engaged in truly mutual relationships. Unless the person who sometimes extends hospitality is also able sometimes to be a gracious recipient, and unless the one who receives the other as stranger is also able to become the stranger received by another, then, far from 'relationships,' we are merely creating unidirectional lines of power-flow, however unintended this may be. And that is quite antithetical to mission in the spirit of Jesus.

It is important that we learn enough not merely about mutuality but about true equality, so that we may go beyond a ministry of initiative-taking 'hospitality' and into a world in which the initiative may not be ours at all; we are sent, and mission is not undertaken simply on our own terms: God's Spirit (Acts 16:6) and the local people have something to contribute. We are sent, moreover, to be in relation (*communio, koinonia*) with people who are not merely receptive ears and willing re-actors, but speakers of words of life and conversations, capable initiators themselves, and ultimately agents under God, of our own ongoing conversion.[3]

It is fairly natural, and easy (at least in theory) to see the other as stranger, guest, outsider, needy, or outcast. But such astigmatism distorts, and may produce a theology of control, a 'magisterial' approach, and a tendency to indoctrinate. Not only would this be to misunderstand (or trample upon) the social, reciprocal character of human relationships, but it would be to miss the central challenge of radical discipleship; for at the heart of the gospel (exemplified in Jesus as much as in his instructions to the disciples) lies the invitation to put oneself in the position of the other and among the other (Koenig 1985). A theology of risk (Welch 1989), a 'ministerial' approach, and an attitude of vulnerability will be the fruit of such a perspective.

The person who is moving toward the world of another is more obviously 'stranger'

[3] See Costas 1980; Gittins 1993:36-52.

to the other's 'host'; if mission is movement from a familiar center,[4] it is the missionary who is, or should be, the stranger. Failure to acknowledge this, and the need to reposition ourself at the center and to recreate a home away from home, has dogged the footsteps of many a missionary and soured relationships between missionaries and local people. Harris Mobley powerfully described such insensitivity, and from an "insider's" perspective: Ghanaian Christianity was seen as the religion of unassimilated, non-mutual foreigners; missionaries were perceived not as servants but only as teachers; and instead of asking for hospitality, said Mobley, 'Christianity in its arrogance has driven the inhabitants out of their own house' (Mobley 1978:67-69). Yet it was not always that way; it does not have to be that way; and now is the acceptable time to attend even more to the example of Jesus.

Jesus, the disciples, and mission

We cannot understand the call of mission today unless we turn to the Gospels (Bosch 1991:22-23), bringing a 'critical hermeneutics' (:23) or the 'radical empiricism' (Jackson 1989) of the committed insider. Limiting ourselves to the Synoptic Gospels, can we sketch a profile of the missionary that would demonstrate the imperative to move beyond 'hospitality' as this culture constructs it, in order to follow where Jesus leads and points; not polarizing host and stranger but moving toward an engagement and integration? We will note at least ten examples of radical missionary discipleship that goes significantly beyond hospitality in this sense.

Koyama (1993:284) maintains that "the quality of religion is determined by its attitude towards strangers." But this again defines the stranger as 'the other,'[5] and the self as focal point. Rather, is not the special quality of the Christian religion determined first and foremost by Jesus's own attitude? He actually became a stranger,[6] and did not simply welcome others who were strangers. Only when we see Jesus in this role does it become feasible for us to adopt it as a missionary strategy. A "revolutionary displacement of the center" (:284) is at the very heart of Jesus' approach; unless it is at the heart of our own we are not yet engaged in the mission to which Jesus calls us.

It is in the role of outsider, recipient, listener and itinerant, quite as much as from the position of the insider, donor, speaker and settler, that Jesus creates and undertakes his ministry, and commissions others to do likewise. Far from gathering and sending disciples in a centrifugal drive only after the Resurrection, Jesus from the very

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[4] Not that mission is purely geographical; movement beyond one's personal boundaries is the critical starting point. Geographical movement does not, of itself, guarantee this.

[5] For a shift in perspective, Gittins 1989:111ff.

[6] The post-Resurrection stories show Jesus as stranger: Mary recognizes him by his voice; the disciples know him as they eat his broiled fish; the 'Emmaus' disciples recognize him in the breaking of bread. "The Emmaus account fits into a series of stories where Christ manifests himself in the person of traveling preachers" [strangers] (Stuhlmueller 1968:162; Robinson 1984). See also Mt 10:40; 25:35, and the implications of Lk 8:37; 14:12. In Mark's Gospel we get a picture of Jesus: stranger or guest to Satan's perverse host (1:12); estranged and staying outside the towns, where no one lived (1:45); a stranger to his family which rejects him (3:21); and refused hospitality by the Gerasenes who beg him to leave (5:17). Xenophobia is matched by ridicule when he actually followed Jairus (Mt 9:19,25). Clearly Jesus accepts to be a stranger and not merely a guest.

first days of his public ministry (Bosch 1991:30-31; Crossan 1991:265-283; Theissen 1992) was committed to a mission of outreach among, with, and even as the outcast, the stranger, the marginalized (Nolan 1992): a kenotic or self-emptying rather than a self-(ful)filling ministry.

Never did Jesus content himself with a position of dominance and superiority, or with merely inviting others to come and receive. He sat at other people's tables as a guest, he was a recipient, he allowed others to minister to him. The Gospels are filled with the urgency of his own journeys to the edges and among the needy; from the first chapter of Mark's Gospel we encounter one who resists the blandishments of power, whether brokered by Satan (v. 12) or by Simon (v. 37) (Crossan 1991:346). Nor does he hoard or surround himself with goods, prestige, or influence (Mt 6:19-21). So when he sends the disciples—and "calling, discipleship, and mission belong together" (Bosch 1991:36)—he has already shown what must be their attitude. But for us, here and now, to understand the radicality of the call, it is necessary to look briefly at status and role.

Status and role revisited

Status refers to a person's position in a social system: it defines who a person is (Merton 1957; Zelditch 1968). Status, or social identity, may be acquired or lost, may increase or decrease. In hierarchical systems, statuses are contrasted and contested by ambitious people, often with a perception of 'limited good' (Foster, in Potter 1967): resources such as honor or reputation are in short supply; the more one person has, the less is available for another (Malina and Rohrbaugh 1992:48-49; Crossan 1991:127). The ladder model of status-

Never did Jesus content himself with a position of dominance and superiority.

enhancement is illustrative: some people will be trampled or knocked off in the struggle to the top. Consequently it is important to assert oneself, to be 'one up' in relation to another: the only alternative is to be 'one down.'

Some statuses are "ascribed" or conferred automatically, such as oldest child, or monarch by primogeniture. Others are "achieved," usually by personal effort. Where achieved statuses are few, destiny is all; personal improvement is seen as almost impossible. Such of course was the case among outcasts and 'sinners': prostitutes, lepers and the rest. What they most needed was status, but this was precisely what they were incapable of achieving; they were captives, prisoners, permanently 'one down' (Nolan 1992:27-36; Crossan 1991:10ff).

If status describes social position and identity, a role (Linton 1936; Turner 1968) characterizes activity: it is what one is expected to do, a way of 'playing out' status. But a role is detachable from status. A person may be, like Lear, "every inch a king," yet play the clown; the status of king is laid down and the role of clown taken on. Yet the converse is illegitimate. A clown has no right to the status of king; clowns may play the role of kings, without thereby acquiring royal status. Status is all.

Associated with appropriate role-play are rights and duties, contextually defined

by a particular social system. A rabbi or teacher has not only acquired but also achieved status; such a person, when exercising the role consistent with such status, evokes respect, has responsibility, and is held accountable. But while most people cling to status, some few lay it down, and while some take knapsack, staff, and extra tunic, others leave all those things behind (cf. Lk 9:3,10:4), along with status. Jesus of course laid down his own status, becoming an outcast by choice and by contagion (Nolan 1992:34).

In first century Palestine, upward social mobility was possible, but downward mobility "was much more frequent" (Crossan 1991:46); loss of respectability and honor brought shame (Neyrey 1991; Malina and Rohrbaugh 1992:76). It would have been difficult, if not absurd, for a person of any social significance at all, to cultivate equality, mutuality and non-competitive relationships. Much more commonly, one would jealously guard the 'limited good' of whatever status one had, for it could be affected, and usually adversely, by the company one kept.

Yet there is another form of enhancement, and that is through "assumed" status, whereby one takes on or assumes responsibility, either by popular acclaim or by appointment. This creates the basis of 'brokerage,' the activity of an ambitious entrepreneurial go-between ("a double-dyadic alliance, one as client to a patron and another as patron to a client": Crossan 1991:60; see also 346-7).

Jesus radically redefines status, encouraging a fundamental shift of roles. Neither shame nor honor is of further account (Crossan 1991:262), disciples will be confused with sinners (Nolan 1992:29) just as Jesus is; and sinners will take heart from the upheaval. This innovative restructuring will create a countercultural challenge and a virtual social revolution, providing the missionary momentum which will last as long as the shift endures.

The New Testament scholar John Dominic Crossan describes the Jesus movement as 'itinerant radicalism,' glossed as 'unbrokered egalitarianism' (Crossan 1991:346-7). From the impression made on him by Jesus' healing of his mother-in-law, Simon seems to want to be broker between Jesus and all who need healing; he stands to gain status by 'contagion.' Jesus repudiates this idea. Itinerancy is opposed to brokerage, and ministry will become essentially 'atopic' (Crossan 1991:347, "let us go elsewhere... so that I can preach there too because that is why I came," Mk 1:38-9). In time, radical itinerants or wandering charismatics who follow Jesus will repudiate the dominant social-status system or simply evade identification with prescribed roles, by resisting a society which strives to impose itself by control and brokerage of various objective statuses.

Missionary call and missionary response

We turn now to a consideration of the premise that not only was Jesus quintessentially a missionary but that any contemporary understanding of mission requires us to revisit his own approach to ministry (Bosch 1991:88). His advice to those he chose and sent, and the way the early church heard and held on to that advice, will be particularly germane here. And whether we generalize from the Twelve, the seventy (two)—the commission given to the seventy is the same as that of Jesus himself (Malina and Rohrbaugh 1992: 346)—or all of the 'healed healers' who proclaimed the good news beyond their locality (Crossan 1994:108-9), we are attempting to identify

an inclusive and urgent invitation and mandate which holds the roots of our own missionary response.

The present undertaking is not specifically exegetical but missionary: that is, it seeks insight into the centrifugal nature of discipleship (and a fledgling church), and a 'missionary job description' which, it is argued, takes us considerably beyond 'mere' hospitality. Social upheaval or 'crisis' describes the contemporary world as much as the world in which Jesus lived; and a call to a radical and simple life is as apposite as ever it was. We will consider Jesus' own training of his fellow missionaries, in the form of two questions and two statements:

First question: *"Who is the greatest?"*
First statement: *"Unless you change and become..."*

Jesus set the tone for discipleship by confronting the prevailing status-consciousness. Almost every encounter offered an opportunity for gaining or losing social capital, and the disciples expected considerable gains through their association with Jesus. They were ambitious and competitive. Simon Peter is drawn like a fly into the web of status-enhancement. Immediately after his wife's mother had been healed, "the whole town came crowding to the door, and [Jesus] cured many" (Mk 1:33-34). Peter's own house looks like becoming a focal point for his 'celebrity'-status, and he seems anxious to capitalize. 'Everybody is looking for you,' he tells the reclusive Jesus (v. 37), evidently excited and sensing some brokered upward mobility, some 'greatness' (Crossan 1991:346ff.). But Jesus will have none of it and immediately moves on. Not only will he not set down in one place and become the center of attraction, but he will undertake an essentially peripatetic ministry (Crossan 1994:71, 102f.; Theissen 1992:33-59), which is very resistant to 'greatness'—a point we might remember.

The disciples, however, did not give up easily (Mk 10:35ff.; Mt 20:20; Lk 18:28; Malina and Rohrbaugh 1992:245). A major argument (Lk 22:24-27) concerns which of them should be regarded as [*dokei*]—should have the social status of—'greatest.' It is indeed an important question. Luke's Jesus crafts a 'job description' for disciples; but it is exemplified first and foremost in himself. Jesus says:

> the kings (high status) of the gentiles lord it over people [*kurieousin*] (role play), and those in authority [*exousia*] (status) are addressed as 'Benefactor'. But among you it shall not be so. Let the greatest/oldest (status) among you be as (role) the youngest, and the leader [*hegemon*] (status) as if he were (role) the servant [*diakonon*]. For who is greater, the one seated at table [*anakeimenos*] (guest-status) or the one who serves (status)? Is it not the guest? Yet here am I, one who serves [*diakonon*] (status) (Lk 22:24-27).

And there it is: Jesus is not the guest, the one seated at table; nor does he cling to the status of host. Rather, he is among them truly as the server, *diakonos*. This is not hospitality as culturally construed in America: initiative-holding and subtly marking superior status. The whole lesson is a reversal of that, and it takes us beyond hospitality, leaving both honor and shame in its wake (Crossan 1991:262).

The 'problem' with hospitality, already identified, lies in its situating the host as 'one up' relative to the guest. In relations of hospitality the host, in principle, is of superior social status: 'inviter' to the guest's 'invitee,' 'creditor' to the visitor's 'debtor.' In espousing servanthood and service as his hallmark, Jesus was undermining the dominant social patterning. At the Last Supper he dramatically goes 'one down' before his

disciples, by literally lowering himself to wash their feet. Systematic reversal runs through the entire teaching of Jesus and is incarnated in his life and that of his would-be followers. Where Jesus is cited as making contrasts between pairs of people, he invariably reverses the customary order of precedence and identifies with the inferior of each pair: with younger over older and with servant over guest.

Stuhlmueller says that the Lk 22:27 logion "is very archaic, echoing the sound of Jesus' speech quite distinctly... The apostles share in Jesus' mission... they must face trials" (Stuhlmueller 1968:158).

Now the statement: "unless you change." When he unmasks Peter and the others (Mk 9:33ff.; Lk 9:46ff.) yet again looking for influence (Luke says "he knew what they were thinking"), Jesus teaches them the meaning of discipleship, by demonstrating the principle of reversal even more dramatically (Neyrey 1991:297-98). Did they remember another occasion, when people were bringing children to Jesus (Mk 10:13ff.) and the disciples were brushing them off? They should have known he not only liked little children but liked them at the very center. Now he takes a little child, quintessentially lacking status and sexual identity (Crossan 1991:267; Malina and Rohrbaugh 1992:383), and thus socially quite irrelevant, and offers a dual challenge: first they are to welcome such children (Lk 9:48), though palpably they can expect absolutely no status-enhancement and perhaps some loss of face; but secondly, according to Matthew's Gospel Jesus declares: "I tell you solemnly, unless you change and become as little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven" (18:1-5).

Not only were children not cute, anodyne or innocent, they were insignificant (Malina and Rohrbaugh 1992:117-18); it was a clear insult to be compared to a child!

In espousing servanthood and service as his hallmark, Jesus was undermining the dominant social patterning.

In that time and place, "a child was a nobody: a kingdom of little children is a kingdom of nobodies" (Crossan 1991:269). That is not the end of it: Jesus says that welcoming a little child is equivalent to welcoming him (Lk 9:48), which is to say that he claims no status whatever! It will be a struggle, for status-conscious disciples, with both 'contagion' and 'brokerage' disallowed! So it is critical that in this world of reversals, change is considered not only necessary but possible (as Nicodemus discovered, John 3). It will be the foundation for the transformation of society.

Jesus refuses to confer status on the disciples, and instead calls them to make themselves the least of all, as he himself does. He declares that in his society to make oneself a child is precisely to discover the only correct answer to the initial question: who is the greatest? This is not a matter of play-acting or role-playing, but of truly accepting the status and the role (insignificance and virtual irrelevance) of a child. And far from seeing Jesus as a misanthrope who begrudged people their happiness, we may understand that God

> rearranged the lines of the... perceived map which indicated who enjoyed God's favor... so that those formerly excluded... were included, and those on

> the outer circles... were now closer to the center (Neyrey 1991:298).

What Mark understands by the kingdom stands as a direct "rebuke to the pretensions of the disciples who wish to assume first places in and thereby regulate access to" it (Crossan 1991:268).

The normal situation for discipleship is one of at least unpredictability and probably also of crisis.

Second question: *"What about us?"*
Second statement: *"Take nothing for the journey."*

The question is foundational for status-conscious people, especially in the face of risk. As missionaries we ourselves may be interested in the same question. Jesus' responses indicate that the normal situation for discipleship is one of at least unpredictability and probably also of crisis (Theissen 1992:86ff.), identified by Kraemer with the "abiding tension between (the church's) essential nature and its empirical condition" (Kraemer, in Bosch 1991:2). 'Crisis' in Japanese combines characters for 'danger' and 'opportunity' (Koyama 1980:4), which might make us feel better were it not that "for many centuries the church has suffered very little and has been led to believe that it is a success" (Kraemer, in Bosch 1991:2)—a point emphasized by those who note that one of the more serious threats to the very integrity of Christianity has been the relative respectability it has enjoyed for 1600 years (Hauerwas and Willimon 1989). But this was by no means the experience of the earliest disciples .

Disciples of Jesus will be struck on the cheek and forced to march: this is the fate of wayfarers and wanderers (Theissen 1992: 43). They will be persecuted and hated, and they are to offer love in return (Mt 5:38-44): this is the response of charismatic missionaries, dependent on people for food and shelter, and actually risking their lives (Mt 10:23,41;23:34; Crossan 1994:118-119). This does not resemble the urbane and congenial hospitality familiar to many of us! Jesus warns, and promises (Lk 21:12ff.; Mt 10:17ff.; Mk 13:9ff.; Mt 24:9ff.), that disciples will be seized and persecuted, handed over and hauled before authorities for this audacious message and the impudent witness to a gospel for outcasts and people with no status. Yet this is where true discipleship flourishes: they must stand firm and take the opportunity to bear witness, yet not by preparing a formal defense. The Greek of Lk 21:14 refers to worrying (actually 'meditating') about how to defend oneself (see Lk 12:12,22ff. on trust in providence), and about practicing gestures in the manner of a well-rehearsed stage actor. This would be dangerously close to 'role-playing' which is unworthy of a disciple, who must release control and contrivance, be vulnerable, and refuse to resort to influence or status. This is certainly beyond hospitality!

Such privation and suffering, *kenosis* and loss of status, answers the question: "What about us?" There is no mention of warm fellowship, approbation or gratitude, but only of opposition, vilification and execution (Lk 21:12ff.). Disciples are not greater than the master. Yet there will be neither capitulation, nor ostentatious, sta-

tus-seeking heroic death: if there is persecution in one town, those who escape will start the cycle again and take refuge elsewhere (Mt 10:23)—another round of risking and asking, seeking and knocking. Considerably more than simply offering hospitality to strangers, this is the expression of frustration and danger, unpredictability and risk.

"What about us?" It is a question we all ask. If we are not called to be heroes as our culture understands the term, what else is there? There is a touching scene in the early days when the apostles came to Jesus and "told him all that they had done and taught" (Mk 6:30). They were effective, and quite full of themselves in the first flush of their missionary lives. They had "cast out many devils, and anointed many sick people with oil and cured them"! They were caught up with giving, and with their own importance; and Jesus does two rather strange things. First he tells them to "come away to some lonely place all by yourselves" (effectively deflating their expanding 'status' bubbles); and then, having told them to take no bread for the journey, he challenges them, in a teeming crowd of 5000, to provide some instant food! For all the wonders they have recently accomplished, they understand their incapacity and inability to create simple bread; they realize how little they can accomplish without the one who *is* the bread.

Now the statement: "Take nothing for the journey" (Lk 9:3). What a striking reversal of our own familiar cultural code and mission tactics! How can people not bring gifts, if to fail to do so will make them indebted, and perhaps ashamed? How will they save face if they are indebted? How will they build up the community if their gifts are not used and they are not in charge? Clearly not in conventional ways, either in Jesus' time or today. There is an entirely new way of behaving contained in these empty purses and knapsacks (Lk 9:3, 10:4).

They were to take nothing (Mt 6:19): no thing but their very selves. They were to spend themselves in casting out demons, proclaiming the good news, and a ministry of healing: of 'being attentive to.' The missionary role was sufficiently fraught for Jesus to reiterate that they should not be afraid (why mention it unless it was particularly apposite!). Their only assurance was that if they declared themselves for Jesus in public, then he would declare himself for them—not by magic, nor by status enhancement or preferential treatment, but before God in heaven (Mt 10:33).

To take nothing for the journey is to go deliberately openhanded, as a wanderer. Others, especially followers of the Cynic philosophy, wandered too, and with very little, but they most certainly took knapsack and staff. The former symbolized their self-sufficiency, the latter their itinerant status (Crossan 1994:118), to which they evidently clung. But the missionaries of Jesus are expressly forbidden to take anything—and knapsack and staff are specified, thus emphasizing their "itinerancy and dependency" (Crossan 1994:119). This brings us to the 'radical itinerant' spoken of by some contemporary scholars. But what does it imply? I believe the implications are enormous, and worth pursuing here.

'Demand sharing' and radical reciprocity

There is a triple injunction placed on the lips of Jesus. As far as I can tell it is rarely discussed in the present context by the scholars most involved with the social context of the New Testament. Jesus says that people should 'ask, seek, knock' (see Mt 7:7 and parallels). It is direct, clear, and—to some modern tastes—embarrassing. We of the rich and powerful nations may have assimi-

> To take nothing for the journey is to go deliberately open-handed...

lated a subtle form of control, even within our Christianity; there is a philosophy of frugal self-sufficiency, canonized as 'The Work Ethic' and encapsulated in such apothegms as: "neither a borrower nor a lender be," "it is better to give than to receive,"[7] and so on. What shall we make of "Ask, and you shall receive, seek and you shall find, knock and it shall be opened to you"? Or are these instructions only for others? The self-educated and complacent 'know-alls' sometimes refuse to ask; the uncurious or sated, or those who have 'arrived' are unlikely to seek; and 'insiders' have no need to knock! So Jesus' message would seem to be for those who perceive themselves as ignorant, searching, and still outside, relatively speaking.

Jesus himself, of course, often asks for help, from Zacchaeus (Lk 9:5) to the woman at the well (Jn 4:7). He commends those who ask persistently: a blind man (Lk 18:35), a woman who shamelessly (Neyrey 1991:63; Malina and Rohrbaugh 1992:381) petitions the unjust judge (Lk 18:1-8), or the importunate friend at midnight (Lk 11:5). We who make a virtue of our independence might well re-examine the implications of a missionary call that leads directly to mutuality. There is evidence here of a way of acting which seems to take us far beyond hospitality. But what does it imply?

In his classic 1925 "Essay on the Gift" Marcel Mauss identified extraordinary "archaic" instances of reciprocity, mutuality, and gift-exchange (Mauss 1970).[8] Some of these survive, in attenuated form. But there are contemporary examples with prodigiously long histories. The Kalahari !Kung are a case in point; their history can be traced for more than eight centuries (Katz 1982; Marshall 1961). But recent work suggests that, over perhaps thirty thousand years, the Aboriginal people of Australia, struggling to manage in a world neither of superabundance nor impoverishment but of subsistence, have practiced a socially institutionalized form of behavior strikingly mirrored in the lives of Jesus and the first disciples. Labeled 'demand sharing,' it stands in stark contrast to unsolicited giving or beneficence. Generosity is a major social value among these Australian peoples, but it is often required that recipients demand it! This is not only legitimate but quite appropriate in a world without collateral or savings, with "no storage, and where provisioning is on a day-to-day basis" (Peterson 1993:865; Malina and Rohrbaugh 1992:359). Wanderers, people entering unfamiliar territory and relying on hospitality, have developed a system which facilitates relationships and redistribution. Evocative of Jesus, it is characteristic of egalitarian societies built on risk and uncertainty

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[7] Ref: Acts 20:35; but not recorded elsewhere.

[8] Among many instances in Mauss 1970: In the Trobriand Islands, "the rule is to set out with nothing to exchange or even give in return for food. On these visits one is recipient only" (20). In Fiji "there is a season when it is forbidden to refuse a man anything" (29); and among the Brahmins "food given away means that food will return to the donor in this world" (55).

(Peterson 1993:865). Demand sharing "extends well beyond exchanges between closely related people" yet "has been neglected because of the particular ethical construction that Westerners place on generosity—that of outwardly unsolicited and altruistic giving" (:861). It is commonplace and widespread, but quite unlike 'panhandling' or 'bumming' as constructed over here. Over there "it is rude to offer something unasked, as it puts people in a position where it is difficult to refuse, since refusing is even ruder" (:862).

Evolutionary biologists point out however, that "truly indiscriminate sharing is evolutionarily unstable and will be undermined by freeloaders: a system of generalized reciprocity is dependent on a way of monitoring reciprocity and a means of invoking sanctions against freeloaders" (Smith 1988; Peterson 1993:865). This is a striking endorsement for Jesus' reminder that the laborer is worthy of hire—or daily bread (Mt 10:10) (Crossan 1991:341-44; 1994: 112), as well as Paul's warning that those who do not work should not eat. The behavior of those sent by Jesus does seem very reminiscent of demand sharing as practiced in contemporary egalitarian societies, while demand sharing itself strikingly illustrates a value enunciated by Jesus yet practically forgotten by generations of Christians. It makes great sense where there is scarcity and where people are committed to meeting each other's needs; but it can only survive by becoming part of the 'habitus' and of moral education. It also constitutes a sixth example of behavior which extends somewhat beyond hospitality.

A letter in the Cynic tradition [Pseudo-Diogenes], perhaps a century before Jesus, reads:

> Be bold... in begging people for sustenance, for it is not at all disgraceful.... It is all right to beg, if it is... for the salvation of everyone; that is, to ask people for things that accord with nature.... Socrates used to say... that the property of friends is held in common. You will be begging for what is your own (in Crossan 1991:84).

This again resonates with examples unearthed by Mauss, and with what Jesus espoused. Among early missionaries though, begging appears as a "deliberate counter-cultural activity, a calculated repudiation of hierarchical social values" (Crossan 1991:85). But it is not, for all that, something purely spontaneous or invented: its roots can be found in human sociality itself, however counter-cultural this particular manifestation became.

Demand sharing most often concerns food exchange (redolent of Jesus' "take nothing: no bread..."). And it is quite common for the 'creditor' to visit the 'debtor' rather than vice versa—a subtle surrender of status which affirms rather than humiliates the recipient (Peterson 1993:867). For disciples, too, the call is both to ask for bread and to set aside superior status so as not to burden the recipient of the gospel message. It is an important warning.

Culturally speaking, demand sharing only works when unequal statuses are being leveled out; the person who 'lords it over' another will never be able to accumulate personal credibility with insiders.

So much for culture. The gospel, however, can be expected to relativize every culture it encounters, since no single culture is perfect. But at least the gospel can be spoken in a vernacular; and in the ensuing dialogue both parties can be brought to transformation. Jesus knew this, acknowledging that in debased forms of demand sharing there is less than a strong moral commitment. The case of the importunate friend comes to mind (Lk 11:5-8). But better is the story of the woman beyond shame

and the judge without scruple (Luke 18): the judge accedes to the 'demand,' not from a sense of moral obligation but essentially because of the woman's persistence. She, a (low status) widow, was too poor to offer a bribe and so insignificant that she had nothing to lose by alienating an 'important' citizen (Stuhlmueller 1968:151). But Jesus sides with her, promises that God will be more responsive than the judge, and continues to recommend the kind of demand sharing, albeit purified and morally responsible, that we encounter from as far afield as the letter of Pseudo-Diogenes and the contemporary Australian Outback.

Unilateral giving is no unmitigated blessing, and can so easily be construed as both rude and dominating.

The cultural value of demand sharing is also a gospel value, most desirable for open-handed yet message-bearing missionaries. Unilateral giving is no unmitigated blessing, and can so easily "be construed as both rude and dominating—even as an aggressive act" (Peterson 1993:869), and needs to be disengaged from the donor's clinging to status and power. Demand sharing relates directly to the social construction of authority; employing it may actually help us deal with the unwarranted appropriation of authority. It is a leveler.

Why then might demand sharing be perceived in a negative light or as a damper on generosity, if not because it also undermines pomposity and status-enhancement? But "if moral obligation and commitment to others is construed not [only] in terms of giving freely, but in terms of responding positively to their demands, the morality of demand sharing is as positive as that of [any other form of] generosity" (Peterson 1993: 870).

The principle of reversal, and being 'one-down'

There are two types of righteousness in the Synoptics, based on two different asymmetrical relationships. Matthew calls the strong to assist the weak, while Luke works to undermine the differences and move toward equality. But "both types of righteousness are transcended. Love of enemies—itself asymmetrical—is now expected of people who have very little power. [Though] it is the virtue of kings and the powerful to help the weak,... this axiom is now turned upside down: it is the persecuted person who takes over the royal role" (Theissen 1992:130-31). The weak and powerless disciple becomes empowered to help others who are weak! The follower of Jesus follows his example, goes 'one down,' becomes a servant. The Jesus society brings true and radical reversal: not only does Jesus do what a servant does, but servants of Jesus do what Jesus does. Honor and shame are deliberately confused (Nolan 1992:29).

This is no mere 'role-reversal,' which describes what a person does. Rather this is a true reversal of identity, of status, of who a person has become—in other words, of who a person really is. But such reversal does not come easy (Peter has to be cor-

rected often, Mk 10:13), and it is certainly not a simple matter of intelligence. It is hidden from the learned and clever but revealed, not surprisingly, to mere children (Lk 10:21). Disciples are forbidden to be called leader or master [*kathegetes*], and ordered to become servant [*doulos*], the unfreest, the lowest status of all. They truly lay down status until equality is realized. This is not even subtle, and it certainly calls both the early disciples and ourselves to move beyond hospitality.

But how is identity maintained, without status? By other means: within the all inclusive community of believers, and according to the example and promise of Jesus. And that is precisely why poor people, prostitutes, outcasts, and all kinds of sinners can have hope: their destiny is now 'unfixed' by Jesus, and they are offered a new identity (status)! (Malina and Rohrbaugh 1992:335).

Jesus wore honorific titles lightly, taking on servant-status (an oxymoron?), and not only the *diakonia* related to the service itself, but the *douleia* which identified an actual person in servitude: one of essentially no status. The hymn in Philippians is a *locus classicus*, describing the laying down of achieved and ascribed status, the self-emptying, and the acquisition of the form of a slave. Paul introduces it by the statement:

> there must be no competition among you, no conceit.... Always consider the other person to be better than yourself, so that no one thinks of personal interests first but everyone thinks of other people's interests instead. In your minds you must be the same as Christ Jesus: His state [status] was divine, yet he did not cling to his equality with God but emptied himself to assume the condition [status and role] of slave... (Phil 2:3ff.).

While explicitly referring to hospitality, Paul pushes beyond, using the theme of reversal: instead of the host arrogating to himself a status superior to the guest, Jesus espouses deference, service, responsiveness to the other. This is no host-guest dyad with host clinging to superior social status; here the guest is enhanced, raised in status by the attentiveness of the host-servant. The theme is pressed home throughout the Gospels, in recurrent reversals of first and last, host and guest, greatest and least, adult and child, and so on.

"The person who finds life will lose it; the one who loses life will find it" (Mt 10:34); "anyone who welcomes you welcomes me; and those who welcome me welcome the one who sent me" (Mt 10:40). This is particularly interesting: Jesus casts himself with those sent out, as the outsider, the stranger, not as the insider, the host. The same is true in the Matthean account of the last judgment, where the Son of Man says, "I was a stranger" (Mt 25:35). If Jesus casts himself in this role, accepts this status, then he is deliberately seeking a 'one-down' position of vulnerability and risk, thereby disarming and affirming the host, refusing to engage competitively in status-seeking, and then calling his followers to behave in a similar fashion ("as often as you did it to the least of my brothers or sisters, you did it to me"). This is, explicitly, something other than hospitality. Jesus is the exemplar and the one who invites others to generous responses; yet he is also the recipient, not the donor, the 'one-down' and not the 'one-up,' the one who asks and knocks and seeks: the exemplar of 'demand sharing.'

Implications and applications

If we do not speak the language of the poor and marginalized it is not because they speak a 'foreign' language: they know what

they mean, and it is we who are the foreigners. Our credibility as Christians depends on our learning a new way of speaking, of hearing, of communicating (Bosch 1991: 436). Can the followers of Jesus proclaim a life-giving word in an intelligible language? From what we have considered, here are some elements that might contribute to the discourse.

1. The theme of reversal, inversion, overturning, paradox, or tension runs through the entire life and teaching of Jesus. When he commissions his followers, he sends them out to be a healing presence, to call to repentance, to cast out demons and attend on those who are sick, to proclaim hope and salvation, forgiveness and reconciliation, reversal and transformation (Bosch 1991:86; Crossan 1991:334). We can all take this to heart.

Jesus instructs the wandering disciples that "if any place does not welcome you and people refuse to listen to you, as you walk away shake off the dust under your feet as a sign to them" (Mk 6:11). Is this a 'proof text' justifying missionary insensitivity and the scathing and premature judgment of others? Does it sound vindictive? (Malina and Rohrbaugh 1992:216). Or would that not be antithetical to the whole tenor of Jesus' instructions and modeling of mission? Three points in the text bear scrutiny.

First, the inference is that disciples should be received, which means the disciples are guests and strangers, not hosts. Hospitality is expected of the other, and patience and trust will be required of disciples (Gittins 1989:111- 36). Second, the tone seems more sad than vindictive: sad that hosts do sometimes fail in their social and moral duty. Those who would begrudge a welcome and a friendly ear would be likely to begrudge even their village dust; so let the stranger leave owing nothing and taking nothing from hosts, if they are impervious to need and to demand.

Third, disciples are to be gracious receivers: "stay in the same house, taking what food and drink they have to offer" (Lk 10:7). Only if hospitality fails—most unusual—should they move on. But they are still called to be 'one-down' and not vindictive, receivers and not unilateral almoners, for the reversals in Jesus' scheme of things will undermine the bases of civil society, ultimately bringing down the mighty from their thrones, raising the lowly (cf. Lk 1:52-53), and building God's realm where distinctions are of no account. This is only possible through persistence and humility, not by arrogance and vindictiveness. Such is the mission of Jesus, the mission to which we are called.

2. Demand sharing is not a matter of simple need, and it is most effective in situations of social change and upheaval. This describes today's reality. The question is whether we have the stamina and the simplicity to undertake the kind of radical discipleship which would lead us well beyond mere hospitality. We might also learn something theoretically, and with practical evangelistic implications, from what is designated "demand sharing."

We believers could appropriately become people who ask; and we shall receive, from a compassionate God and from those among whom we share the Good News. We could become people who knock; and those into whose homes and lives we would like to go may open to us, just as God opens many doors. We could stand alongside the people who seek; and then we shall find quite unexpected resources and responses wherever our pilgrim footsteps take us. To ask, seek, and knock, is to be committed to relinquishing our dearly bought, dearly wanted status, to emptying ourselves, and

We are invited to radical discipleship, not to honorary membership of a society or to a lifestyle of privilege.

to taking Jesus and other people very seriously indeed. The fundamental question is this: "Do we dare believe that if we set out with Jesus on the road of discipleship and risk losing our lives in the process, that somehow life will prevail, that we will find that 'fullness of life' that Jesus promises?" (McGinnis 1993:4).

3. Christian discipleship was born in crisis, and "its proportions can only be explained by a general crisis of society" (Theissen 1992:40ff.). Christian missionary endeavor flourishes in situations of crisis and wanes either in eras of social complacency or where missionaries themselves become mainstreamed and Christianity becomes domesticated and respectable: where its prophetic edge is dulled.

At the close of a century and the millennium, we face a panorama of the most profound social change. The colonial jewel that was Africa has become a tatterdemalion of bankrupt and warring nations and of dejected and dying peoples. Social change accelerated so rapidly over a single lifespan, as to throw adjacent generations into confusion and cultural values into chaos.

Meanwhile, the richer entrepreneurial nations were becoming richer and cynically leaving others to their fate. Even the symbolic dismantling of the Berlin Wall and the unimaginable deconstruction of the Soviet empire have not produced the anticipated political and social rearticulations; and while part of Europe consumes itself and neighbors look on horrified, impotent, or with detachment, so multiculturalism is transformed into rabid nationalisms, and 'xenophobia' and 'ethnic cleansing' become familiar neologisms.[9] Amid this chaos, many of the churches are in disarray, exposed in their double standards and hypocrisy, their credibility undermined and their doctrines treated as irrelevant, financially strapped and depleted in personnel.

The global situation, shot through with scandal, cynicism, and despair, is, sadly, a familiar one for the church. It is also, ironically or providentially, a moment of hope, risk, and grace: a moment for conversion and transformation: a missionary moment.

4. In such a world and at such a moment, the outsider or stranger may be ambiguous but is not insignificant: friend or foe, resource or thief, giver or taker. Where social change is increasing and where microcosms are collapsing, the stranger may bring truth or lies, hope or despair, life or death. Vultures gather above the terminally malnourished or wounded, while multinationals and the World Bank slowly suffocate the survivors. The missionary in the spirit of Jesus may still come as a stranger: gentle, challenging yet respectful, open-handed yet life-bearing, compassionate and vulnerable, provider of life-giving moral support and assurance of agapaic commitment. There is

[9] Philoxenia is the classical virtue *we* sometimes describe as 'hospitality'; but it is very different from 'mere' hospitality, and highly elaborated (Kamperides 1990).

no greater thing, no more human thing, no more Godly thing than this: to set out, to go forward, to take neither knapsack nor staff, to reach out and befriend, to speak a word of life and hope, and to lay down one's life for one's friend.

5. Of all that is needed in today's world, perhaps the most important thing is simplification. We have made a virtue out of complexification, and not even the idea of mission has escaped. But the power of Jesus' prescription for human survival lies in its utter simplicity. So simple is it, as to be blindingly clear; perhaps that is why we have sought shade and shadow, nuance and qualification. But the call is to nothing if not to conversion, countercultural witness, and radical egalitarianism. The movement is from 'me' to 'you' to 'us,' and it excludes no one. It may not be palatable, but it is certainly not complex.

In a highly institutionalized and professionalized church, it may be necessary to raise up 'reverse hospitality' and to give the lie to a 'woolly liberal' agenda.[10] But there have always been, thank God, unpretentious and simple people living and working and witnessing to the gospel at the margins, where reverse hospitality can be experienced! Reverse hospitality would offer us the way to unlearn some of our bad habits; but we will still need to go beyond even that if we are truly to discover the kingdom or realm of God, which is beyond social distinctions, and not limited to church-building or proclamation of a message. It is first and foremost about a real person, Jesus the Christ; second, it is about the limitless possibilities of God-with-us; and finally, it is indeed about ourselves.

We, missionaries because Christians, are the primary concern of this paper. As agents of momentous and life-giving change (Shenk 1993) and called and sent by Jesus, we are invited to radical discipleship, not to honorary membership of a society or to a lifestyle of privilege. Stephen Bevans (1991) recently considered some abiding images of the missionary. The list could be extended, perhaps by some of the images encountered in these reflections: the image of child, inquirer, servant, itinerant, outcast; of persecuted and faith filled disciple; of the nobody.

From hospitality to the stranger to being the stranger, and from one-up to one-down; these are the opening movements of a New Creation Symphony; and if they are to be well-orchestrated they demand that we "grapple with the role of the outsider and the marginal as change agents" (Shenk 1993:2). But the finale is something as yet unheard and unseen, something quite new: it is the experience of the equality of the realm of God, where "there are no more distinctions between Jew and Greek, slave and free, male and female, but all... are one in Christ Jesus" (Gal 3:28).

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[10] The 'woolly liberal' attempts to be completely open minded but only succeeds in being vacuous. By refusing to take sides in any discussion such a one betrays a lack of principle and commitment. This is antithetical to the Gospel which, while respecting persons, always confronts assumptions. The missionary should not be a proselytizer or enforcer, but should have a sense of 'the good,' is committed to people and to truth, and brings both a challenge and moral support.

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Allergic to the Spirit No More: Rethinking Pneumatology

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Theologians frequently bemoan the omission of the Holy Spirit as a locus on the standard theological agenda. While one might argue that all theology is permeated with implicit references to the Spirit's working, the failure to sufficiently thematize the meaning of the Spirit leaves lacunae which both haunt the history of doctrine and, in popular religion, are filled by bursts of enthusiasm.

The problem does not result from unfamiliarity with the biblical material. Many excellent interpretations of the scriptural references to the Spirit are available. Instead, the neglect of the Third Article is a consequence of an allergic reaction to the excessive claims for the Spirit which punctuate church history. One can cite as examples the claims for the Spirit which Paul confronted in Corinth, Luther's struggle against Enthusiasm in the sixteenth century, and the advances of Pentecostalism in the twentieth century. In reaction to the allergen's intrusion, theology has frequently attempted not only to limit through restrictive doctrinal formulations the conditions under which the Spirit is said to be present, but to expel the irritant of Enthusiasm by the charge of heresy.

An overly severe allergic reaction creates new health problems for the body, however. In the case of the Holy Spirit, theology finds itself reacting against that very reality which gives life and vitality to the church. When theology becomes hypersensitive to references to the Spirit, it is analogous to the case where one is allergic to one's very own body. On the one hand, theology must make reference to the Spirit in order to do justice to the living presence of the living God. On the other hand, excessive claims for the Spirit make theologians exceedingly guarded about what they are willing to say about the scope of the Spirit's activity. The danger to theology of neglecting or severely restricting the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is similar, however, to the malady of the person allergic to self: it can result in death.

After a brief summary of the range of meanings accorded the Spirit in the Bible and examples of the tendency to "object-

ivize" an understanding of the Spirit, this essay will explore the fruitfulness of a theology of the Spirit for addressing a variety of issues. A theology of the Spirit is indispensable for rethinking two unresolved issues stemming from the Reformation: (1) the relationship between justification and sanctification and (2) between faith and works. Likewise a theology of the Spirit has much to contribute to the contemporary discussion of God's liberating activity in history, and to the dialogue of theology both with science and with non-Christian religions. The essay concludes with a proposal for reconceptualizing "practical theology" under the rubric of a theology of the Spirit.

The living presence of the living God: biblical testimony

The meanings afforded the Spirit in the biblical literature range broadly. Alasdair Heron summarizes four meanings attributable to the *ruach* of God in the Hebrew Scriptures.[1] First, the Spirit is the power of God at work in the creation and maintenance of life. Life itself is created and sustained by divine "breath." Second, the Spirit of God is at work to inspire outstanding gifts, for example, discernment, knowledge, strength, and leadership. Third, the divine *ruach* is understood as the power bringing forth prophecy, whether by ecstatic possession (as in earlier Israelite history) or by oracles which address the particularities of a given historical moment (as in the classical and post-exilic periods). Lastly, an outpouring of the Spirit is connected to a future hope of fulfillment for the people of Israel, in some passages through the agency of an ideal Davidic king. Both the individual and the corporate body of Israel anticipate a salvation bestowed by the presence of God's Spirit.

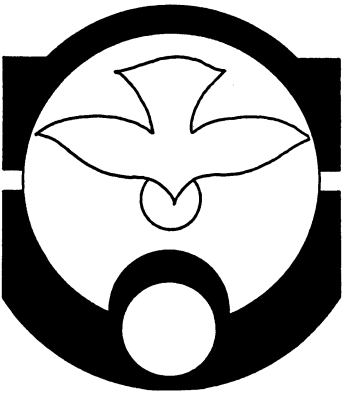
The New Testament consistently witnesses to the work of the Spirit in the person and ministry of Jesus and the Christian mission generated by him. The Synoptic Gospels variously highlight the activity of the Spirit in the conception, birth, baptism, temptation, and healing power of Jesus. Jesus promises the power of the Spirit will come upon his disciples. From within the context of mission to the Gentiles, Paul describes how the Spirit of Christ is engaged in conflict with the way of the flesh apart from God. The way of the Spirit is marked by baptism and establishes a privileged relationship between God as the Father of Jesus and the believer as God's child. For Paul, Spirit entails the totality of a life lived "in Christ." The Spirit raises up in the members of Christ's body, the church, a variety of spiritual gifts given for the common good. While those in Christ await the eschatological fulfillment of the Spirit's presence, the Spirit remains active already and offers a preliminary indication of future redemption.

In contrast to Paul, the Johannine literature stresses more forcefully Jesus' possession of the Spirit. The Spirit indwelling Jesus will flow forth from Jesus as Paraclete after the completion of his mission on the cross. This Spirit does battle with unbelief and those whose minds are clouded by the cares of the world. The reminder of the New Testament offers additional references which consistently connect the Spirit with the activity of Christ. The shape of one's systematic theology is defined by how broadly or narrowly one chooses to interpret the range of meanings given to the Spirit's work in scripture. A more restrictive interpretation concentrates on the

[1] Alasdair I. C. Heron, *The Holy Spirit* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1983), 10-22.

Spirit's connection to Christ in the New Testament. A broader interpretation, consistent with the Hebrew understanding, accepts the ongoing legitimacy of the claims for the Spirit's work in creating and sustaining life, empowering noble deeds, inspiring prophecy, and establishing the future age.

My preference will be toward the broader interpretation, as I define the Spirit as "the living presence of the living God" as normed by the entire scriptures, New and Old Testaments. It is proper next to investigate the reasons why some theologians choose to restrict a Christian description of the Spirit's work to that Spirit which derives from Jesus.



Objectivizing the Spirit

In a discussion of the Pauline understanding of the gospel, George S. Hendry makes a helpful distinction between two aspects:

> There is the (objective) fact of Christ, in whom God confronted men, and there is the (subjective) gift of the Spirit, by which men recognize and respond to the gift of God in Christ.[2]

Whereas God has been objectively revealed in the person and work of Christ, language about the Spirit refers to the work of God in the subjective apprehension of Christ by the believer. Spirit language is directly complementary to Second Article language about the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. The function of Spirit language is to point to the life-giving presence of the living God in the act of believing what Christ has accomplished. The Spirit is active in the experiencing of faith.

A primary symptom of theology's allergic reaction to excessive claims for the Spirit is a preference for objective language in describing the Spirit. Whereas Spirit language properly refers to the subjective experience of faith, an attempt is made to restrain enthusiast claims by carefully norming all claims for the Spirit's presence by reference to the objective work of Christ and the objective means of grace. There are many good reasons for such a reaction. Only objective norms can prevent unChristian or anti-Christian sentiments from being heralded as new inspiration. Yet, such norms may foster a dangerous alienation between theology and living faith. When Spirit language is limited to objective expressions of what God has accomplished, it becomes increasingly difficult to speak of faith as personal experience.

Luther's reaction to the "Schwärmer" over the proper interpretation of the Spirit's work provides a clear example of the tendency to objectivize. On the one side, Carlstadt appealed to the Spirit to justify a radical program which included iconoclasm and a spiritualistic reinterpretation of the mass. On the other side, Muentzer appealed

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[2] George S. Hendry, *The Holy Spirit in Christian Theology* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1956), 34.

to the Spirit to instigate revolt against the feudal order. Luther reacted strongly against all claims to immediate revelations from God which circumvented an external mediation of the Spirit. Against such Enthusiasm, Luther insisted on an objective norming of the Spirit's work:

> Now when God sends forth his holy gospel he deals with us in a twofold manner, first outwardly, then inwardly. Outwardly he deals with us through the oral word of the gospel and through the material signs, that is, baptism and the sacrament of the altar. Inwardly he deals with us through the Holy Spirit, faith, and other gifts. But whatever their measure or order, the outward factors should and must precede. The inward experience follows and is effected by the outward.[3]

The Spirit is to be normed by the external signs of the Word and sacraments. Ultimately, this objective norm is christological in character. Elsewhere Luther would write that "the Holy Spirit is not given except in, with, and by faith in Jesus Christ...."[4]

Regin Prenter argues that the root of Luther's controversy with the Enthusiasts is a profound disagreement about the nature of sanctification. Whereas the Enthusiasts established an *ordo salutis* (order of salvation) in which the believer was to take definite steps in order to prepare for the reception of the Spirit, for Luther the entire sanctification event occurs as a gift worked by God.[5] According to Prenter, this means that the Enthusiasts were advocating a definable process of *imitatio* which is a form of works-righteousness. For Luther, however, sanctification as observable, empirical piety is not humanly detectable, even to oneself. The Christian life is totally hidden with Christ in God (Col 3:3).

In his theology Luther maintained a lively sense of the Spirit's activity in the life of the believer.[6] Given the specific controversies in which he engaged, his stress upon a christological norm for the Spirit makes perfect sense. Similarly, the excessive claims for immediate inspiration by the Enthusiasts make understandable Luther's insistence upon the Word and sacraments as the proper vehicles of the Spirit's activity. Luther sought to concentrate the function of the Spirit on enlivening the gospel. Nevertheless, one detects in Luther a narrowing of the range of meanings afforded to the Spirit in the biblical material, not only with regard to the Spirit's work in creation and in history but also with regard to sanctification. The transformation of the tradition of Luther into Lutheran Orthodoxy further restricted a dynamic appreciation of the Spirit as the living presence of the living God.

Based upon a rigidly formulated doctrine of verbal inspiration, Lutheran Orthodoxy pushed an objectivized understanding of the Spirit's work to a new extreme.[7]

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[3] Martin Luther, "Against the Heavenly Prophets in the Matter of Images and Sacrament," in *Luther's Works* 40 (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1958):146.

[4] Martin Luther, "Prefaces to the New Testament," *Luther's Works* 35:368.

[5] Cf. Regin Prenter, *Spiritus Creator: Luther's Concept of the Holy Spirit*, trans. John M. Jensen (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1953), 247-54.

[6] Cf. Luther's explanation of the Third Article of the Apostle's Creed: "I believe that I cannot by my own understanding or effort believe in Jesus Christ my Lord, or come to him. But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with his gifts, and sanctified and kept me in true faith."

[7] Cf. Gottfried Hornig, "Lehre und Bekenntnis im Protestantismus. Kapitel I: Die altprotestantische Orthodoxie," in *Handbuch der Dogmen- und theologie-Geschichte: Die Lehrentwicklung im Rahmen der Oekumenizitaet*, ed. Carl Andresen (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1984), 3:71-86.

Where is the Spirit at work? The Spirit at one time inspired the composition of the Holy Scriptures by its authors. These scriptures, interpreted in conformity with the confessional writings, are the source for true and reliable knowledge about the Christian faith. Christian truth can be rationally deduced from these Holy Scriptures. Orthodoxy executes this elaborate program of expounding Christian truth through its precise definitions and qualifications. One limited role left to the Holy Spirit is that of "inner witness," by which the believer acknowledges the validity of Christian truth and so attains the basis for eternal salvation.

Besides the role of the Holy Spirit in the inspiration of scripture, the Orthodox dogmaticians confine their discussion of the Spirit to a single locus which details "the grace of the Holy Spirit in the application of redemption."[8] Under this heading, Orthodoxy described the elements which constitute "justifying faith." They include a divine call, illumination, regeneration, conversion, mystical union, and renovation. Renovation will in turn manifest in good works.

The tendency toward an objective understanding of the Spirit's work finds its logical extreme in Orthodoxy. The Spirit is objectified both in the verbally inspired scriptures and in a precisely defined and ordered process of "renovation." The range of meanings is narrowed far beyond the usage of Luther.

It is possible to chart a trajectory from Luther's initial shrinking of the realm of legitimate discourse about the Spirit to the extremely limited categories of Lutheran Orthodoxy. The revival of the more expansive notion of the Spirit in Pietism was a predictable consequence.

The various forms of Pietism shared a renewed and broadened affirmation of the Spirit's work in individual Christian experience and in movements for social renewal. According to Philipp Jakob Spener, the founder of Lutheran Pietism, the Spirit manifests itself in the converted lifestyle of the individual, in the close fellowship of those so-converted, and in charitable and educational efforts to convert society. Both Spener and August Hermann Francke criticized Orthodoxy for its rationalistic formalism and its failure to foster a lively sense of spiritual experience.

The tendency toward an objective understanding of the Spirit's work finds its logical extreme in Orthodoxy.

In spite of strong American proponents of Pietism like Muhlenberg and Schmucker,[9] since the last decades of the nineteenth century the heritage of Orthodoxy has dominated North American Lutheranism. Among the factors which abetted Lutheran Orthodoxy in the United States were: (1) the surge of conservative Lutheran immigrants from Germany, (2) the restoration of conservative Lutheran scholarship in reaction

[8] Cf. Heinrich Schmid, *Doctrinal Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, trans. Charles A. Hay and Henry E. Jacobs (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1899), 407-99.

[9] Cf. Paul P. Kuenning, *The Rise and Fall of American Lutheran Pietism: The Rejection of an Activist Heritage* (Macon: Mercer, 1988), 34-39 and 60-64.

Is it possible to retain an emphatic *solus Christus* and at the same time to affirm a dynamic understanding of the Spirit?

to efforts to unify Lutheran and Reformed churches in Prussia, (3) growing fear in North America about the loss of confessional Lutheran identity in the midst of a growing denominationalism, (4) growing sectionalist interests in America which gave impetus to Lutheran sectarianism, and (5) a reaction against Pietism's social activism, especially its advocacy of abolitionism.[10]

A century later, several contemporary Lutheran theologians continue to strongly advocate elements of a revived Lutheran Orthodoxy. And these rigorous Orthodox formulations still guarantee a severely restricted understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit. Rarely does a Lutheran theologian directly address the meaning of the Spirit for contemporary theology, apart from a repetition of the predictable formulations. Gerhard Forde, for example, in describing the Lutheran view of sanctification subsumes it totally under the objective category of justification.[11] Similarly, Robert W. Jenson, who does address "The Holy Spirit" as an individual locus of Christian dogmatics, carefully sets the parameters within which the Spirit is said to be at work. Jenson concentrates attention on the soteriological function of the Spirit, i.e., the subservience of the Third Article of the Creed to the Second Article. This leads to the curiosity of a lengthy discussion of the Holy Spirit which avoids the topics of sanctification and Christian experience in favor of a development of the objective categories of justification and, surprisingly, predestination.

Jenson emphatically insists that there is no Holy Spirit that is not the Spirit of Jesus. The exclusive purpose of the Spirit is to activate the Christian gospel. When writing about the "cosmic Spirit," Jenson therefore argues that the Spirit of God at work in "the freedom of history, the spontaneity of nature, and the beauty of all things," is "the specific Spirit of Jesus and his Father."[12] Does this enthusiasm for an objective christological norm for the Spirit not fail to do justice both to the wide range of biblical meanings and to the human experience of God's Spirit apart from Christ? Has not the Trinity been effectively reduced from three Persons to two?

Re-thinking pneumatology

Until theologians are prepared to reconsider pneumatology, incorporating a more expansive notion of the Spirit's activity, there will be many issues which evade resolution. Is it possible to retain an emphatic

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[10] Cf. Abdel Ross Wentz, *A Basic History of Lutheranism in America* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1964), 127-30. I am indebted to Paul Kuenning for these references.

[11] Cf. Gerhard Forde, "The Lutheran View," in *Christian Spirituality: Five Views of Sanctification*, ed. Donald L. Alexander (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, 1988), 13-32.

[12] Robert W. Jenson, "The Holy Spirit," in *Christian Dogmatics*, ed. Carl E. Braaten and Robert W. Jenson (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 2:165.

solus Christus and at the same time to affirm a dynamic understanding of the Spirit? This can only occur when the Third Article exists in a lively relationship with the Second, yet without being subsumed by it.

Justification, sanctification, and good works

Romans and Regensburg. One of the most intractable problems left unresolved at the time of the Reformation is the relationship between justification and sanctification. Luther rightly demanded a central place for justification over against the morass of late medieval piety. The theological context required a rigorous application of the forensic justification model. While Luther himself was able to hold in tension both an insistence upon justification by faith and the work of the Spirit in effecting good works, this tension dissolved in the formalistic categories of Lutheran Orthodoxy. In place of Luther's appreciation for the Spirit's dynamic leadership in calling, gathering, enlightening, and sanctifying the church, one finds in the Orthodox *ordo salutis* a conceptualization every bit as legalistic as those in medieval scholasticism. It comes as no wonder that the spiritual vacuum of Orthodoxy's formalism was filled by Pietism.

The healthy relationship between justification and sanctification in Paul's letter to the Romans demonstrates how one ought to move from the objective reality of justification accepted by faith to subjective participation in Christ. Paul accomplishes this movement by recognizing the role of the Spirit as the living presence of God in Christ. Romans 8 makes frequent reference to the Spirit. The "law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set free from the law of sin and death" (8:2). In the cross of Christ, God condemned sin and made it possible to "walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit" (v. 4). This life in the Spirit belongs to those who "set their minds in the Spirit" (v. 5). They obtain "life and peace" (v. 6). Paul goes on to write:

> But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you. (vv. 9-11).

The very Spirit of God indwells those who "are children of God" (v. 14). The Spirit bears witness in us when we cry out to God (vv. 15-16) and joins us to Christ's suffering (v. 17).

Paul continues his description of life in the Spirit by explaining that Christians at present have only "the first fruits" (v. 23). Nonetheless the measure of the Spirit in us "helps us in our weakness" (v. 26) and "intercedes for the saints according to the will of God" (v. 27). In chapter 12, in a passage analogous to 1 Corinthians 12, Paul employs the image of the church as the body of Christ, a body endowed with a multiplicity of gifts (12:4-8). A life sanctified by the Spirit is a life epitomized by love (12:9-10; cf. 1 Corinthians 13). The subjective experience of the Christian is articulated by Paul using the dynamic language of the Spirit. Justification flows by the power of the Spirit into sanctified living. Both justification and sanctification remain totally God's gift.

The compromise formula on the doctrine of justification hammered out at Regensburg in 1541 between the representatives of the Reformation (Bucer, Melanch-

thon) and those of the Catholic Church (Groper, Eck) provides a second point of reference for a renewal of a theology of the Spirit.[13] At Regensburg on May 2, 1541, after rigorous debate, the two sides came to an agreement not only on articles concerning free will, the fall, and original sin, but even on the doctrine of justification. Although the negotiations would eventually collapse over other topics (infallibility of Councils, transubstantiation, primacy of the pope), never before and never since have the two sides come so near agreement on this pivotal Reformation doctrine.

Commentators on the Regensburg meeting have given considerable attention to the finely nuanced explication of "twofold" justification (*Imputatio iustitiae* and *iustitia inhaerens*), yet the references to the work of the Spirit have been overlooked.[14] While stressing the role of faith in the appropriation of justification, the Regensburg text equally stresses the reception of the Holy Spirit as a gift in the life of the believer. When the text attributes the gift of love to the work of the Holy Spirit, it simultaneously affirms that it is justifying faith that is active in love. The emphasis upon faith ensures that justification is God's gracious gift. The close connection with the gift of the Spirit guarantees that the formula is dynamic, issuing forth in loving deeds, i.e., good works.

Constructive theology, building on the foundations of Paul in a passage like Romans 8 and a proposal such as offered at Regensburg, must undertake the task of rethinking the meaning of sanctification. Only by doing so can theology do justice to the significance of Christian experience. Exactly as Reformation theologians carefully crafted the parameters of the doctrine of justification, so too it is possible to reconstruct a doctrine of sanctification which admits the reality of Christian experience without falling into works-righteousness. This solution would be far more adequate than to merely bracket out the very topic of sanctification or to subsume it under the objective category of justification.

Toward an evangelical doctrine of sanctification. Several building blocks are available for the project of constructing an evangelical doctrine of sanctification, particularly from Paul. The first affirmation is that sanctification is always a gift of the Spirit, not one's own accomplishment. As Yves Congar concludes in his monumental *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, the Spirit always comes from God as "the absolute gift."[15] Every reference to God's Spirit in scripture indicates that the Spirit is not one's possession but entirely a matter of God's grace. To claim as self-accomplishment what God has brought about is to slip into works-righteousness. At the same time, it is proper to talk in terms of "fruits of the Spirit" that are apprehensible to Christian experience.

A second affirmation is that of the great variety of spiritual gifts. None of the lists in scripture (e.g., 1 Cor 12:4-11, Gal 5:22-26) is anywhere near comprehensive. Spiritual gifts are uniquely combined in each individual. Therefore the meaning of sanctification varies in the life experience of each person. For this reason there can be no

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[13] Cf. Bernard Lohse, "Dogma und Bekenntnis in der Reformation: Von Luther bis zum Konkordienbuch, in Andresen, *Handbuch*, 2:103-6.

[14] Cf. "Regensburger Religionsgespraech: Regensburger Buch (1541)" in *Die Kirche im Zeitalter der Reformation*, ed. Heiko A. Obermann (Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1985), 193-95.

[15] Cf. Yves J. Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, trans. David Smith (New York: Seabury, 1983), 3:144-51.

There can be no single model for the sanctified life that can be imposed on others.

single model for the sanctified life that can be imposed on others. Each individual is challenged to discern the work of the Spirit in the uniqueness of the gifts that have been given: "...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil 2:12).

A third affirmation is that the greatest of all spiritual gifts is love (1 Corinthians 13). Sanctification finds its prototype in the self-giving love of Jesus. The forgiveness of Jesus, the compassion of Jesus, and the death of Jesus on the cross set the standard for sanctified living. In baptism, one is initiated into the death and resurrection of this loving Christ. All of life entails becoming Christlike, i.e. becoming what one has been made by the death and resurrection of Christ.

A fourth and final affirmation is that spiritual gifts are given by God for the common good. Gifts of the Spirit are not for self-aggrandizement or personal gain. They are to be employed in humble service to the neighbor. "Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves" (Phil 2:3). It is the very nature of good works that they are done for the common good.

These Pauline guidelines provide a framework for an evangelical doctrine of sanctification. They allow for a legitimate discussion of the activity of the Spirit in Christian experience without reducing it to objective categories. At the same time they hold the work of the Spirit in sanctification answerable to the norm established in Jesus Christ.

The Spirit of freedom and history

Jesus exhibited an alarming degree of freedom. According to Ernst Käsemann, Jesus in the power of the Spirit demonstrated this freedom in his claim to authority in reinterpreting the Mosaic tradition. One can further discover Jesus' freedom in his declarations of forgiveness, his healings, his miracles over nature, and ultimately in his victory over death. Käsemann writes:

> Christ differs from other lords in that he effects freedom. He does not just call to it; that would be the law of which there are innumerable characteristic forms. Jesus gives freedom.[16]

Jesus is the giver of a freedom that makes one free indeed (Jn 8:36). Paul, too, testifies to the power of freedom unleashed by Jesus which liberates from the constraints of the Mosaic law: "Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom" (2 Cor 3:17).

While in the New Testament God in Christ is proven to be a God free to incorporate the Gentiles into the chosen people, already in the Old Testament Yahweh is revealed as a God of radical freedom. Yahweh's very name reverberates with freedom: "I am who I am" (Exod 3:14). It is on a mission of liberation that God sends the

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[16] Ernst Käsemann, *Jesus Means Freedom*, trans. Frank Clarke (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1972), 155.

prophet Moses, to set free the Hebrews from the shackles of slavery in Egypt.

Throughout the Hebrew Scriptures God filled with the Spirit those like Moses, Joshua, David, Elijah, Ezekiel, and other prophets to be agents of freedom by proclaiming righteousness and justice. When the Spirit of the Lord was to be poured out in the new (messianic) age, history would witness a blossoming of justice: "The Spirit of the Lord shall rest on him... with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth..." (Isa 11:2-4). In both Old and New Testaments, where the Spirit of the Lord is present, there is an increase in freedom, both outward freedom from historical bondage and inward freedom from psychic bondage.

In both Old and New Testaments, where the Spirit of the Lord is present, there is an increase in freedom...

In the modern period there has been a recovery and elaboration of the idea that the Spirit works freedom. The philosophy of Hegel is constructed around the concept of God as Absolute Spirit operative in the dialectical movement of history. Peter C. Hodgson, one of contemporary theology's most articulate interpreters of Hegel, writes:

> Freedom signifies not only the perfection of God but also the liberation of the world. This liberation of the world is, as we have seen, the reciprocal of God's love for the world. God loves the world toward an end, which is that of shaping scenes of freedom out of the repeated scenes of domination that make up world history.... Thus in scripture "Spirit" refers to that modality of divine activity whereby God indwells and empowers the forces of nature, the people of Israel, the ecclesial community, and the individual persons. The Spirit is the indwelling power of God that brings the natural and human worlds to consummation by bringing estranged and fallen beings back into everlasting, liberating communion with the one God, whose true and proper name is now Spirit.[17]

A similar interpretation of the power of the Spirit in historical liberation has arisen in contemporary liberation theologies, whether Latin American, black or feminist. The Spirit works freedom, not only for those enslaved to the power of sin in their personal lives, but also on the cultural and socio-political levels.

Instead of seeing a radical break between the Spirit at work in the Hebrew Scriptures and the Spirit of Jesus in the New Testament, it is necessary to recognize continuity between the two. The Spirit which worked freedom, righteousness, and justice throughout the history of Israel (e.g., the Exodus, the responsibility of the king to be just, the message of the prophets), is the same Spirit which anointed Jesus to bring good news to the poor, release to the captives, sight to the blind, and freedom to the oppressed (cf. Lk 4:17-21). It is this same Spirit of God which is alive in history today to accomplish freedom.

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[17] Peter C. Hodgson, *God in History: Shapes of Freedom* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1989), 110-11.

The Spirit of life and evolution

"In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while the Spirit of God swept over the face of the waters" (Gen 1:1-2). Even though today cosmologists may defend the "Big Bang" theory of the origin of the cosmos, there remains something alluring about the biblical claim that it is the Spirit of God which brings order out of chaos.

As one reads scripture in the light of contemporary evolutionary theories (cosmic, biological, cultural), one notices that biblically it is the Spirit of God which directs not only the emergence of order from chaos but the organization of life into ever higher levels of complexity. In the second creation story, it is the Spirit which God breathes into man to make him a living being (Gen 2:7). The Spirit which Paul sees engaged in conflict with the flesh is, according to Gerd Theissen, seeking the emergence of human life from the constraints of natural selection in order to be free to decide for love.[18] It is the Spirit proceeding from Jesus which makes possible a new way of being human "in Christ" (cf. 2 Cor 5:17). At Pentecost the Spirit was outpoured in the creation of a new community in Christ which overcame the barriers of language and nationality (cf. Acts 2). It is the Spirit who will bring the final consummation of life at the eschaton (Gal 6:8).

Given this biblical trajectory of references to the Spirit's work in bringing forth higher levels of organization, Ian Barbour, a scholar at the forefront of the dialogue between science and religion, believes the biblical image of Spirit is particularly helpful for developing a contemporary model of creation.[19] Theology might well propose that the name for the force which directs cosmic, biological, and cultural evolution is Spirit. The Spirit of God has been operative in the attainment of ever increasing levels of complexity. It has directed the evolutionary process through the transition from inorganic to organic matter, from organic matter to the origin of life, and the various forms of life to higher levels of complexity culminating in the emergence of human consciousness. Christian theology can furthermore argue for the emergence of a higher form of human consciousness in the person of Jesus Christ. It is toward the attainment of Christ consciousness that humankind is presently struggling to evolve.[20]

On the level of cultural evolution, the Spirit of justice in Hebrew thought can be understood as instrumental in the eventual development of the idea of human rights. Similarly, the Spirit unleashed at Pentecost continues to direct humankind beyond the divisions of language, race, and ethnicity toward the ideal of universal human community. The eschatological fulfillment of cultural evolution will include not only humanity but the entire ecosystem living in healthy symbiosis.[21]

A theology of the Spirit has much to contribute to the dialogue with contemporary science, particularly since the introduction of uncertainty and chaos as inter-

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[18] Cf. Gerd Theissen, *Biblical Faith: An Evolutionary Approach*, trans. John Bowden (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985), 134-36.

[19] Ian G. Barbour, *Religion in an Age of Science* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1990), 1:176-77.

[20] A pioneer in proposing Spirit as the driving force of evolution was Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *The Phenomenon of Man*, trans. Bernard Wall (New York: Harper & Row, 1961).

[21] Cf. Larry Rasmussen, "Ecocrisis and Theology's Quest," *Christianity and Crisis* 52 (March 16, 1992): 83-87.

pretive categories. Theological proposals about the Spirit exhibit explanatory power for building a cogent worldview out of fundamental points of consensus in modern physics and biology. The Christian proposals that Jesus Christ is the prototype for a higher level of human consciousness, and that community in Christ is the anticipation of a higher stage of cultural evolution, serve to introduce christological norms for understanding the future of humanity.

The Spirit of truth and the religions

In the Gospel of John, a primary function of the Spirit is to guide to the truth (Jn 16:13). This is a symbolic way of saying that the Spirit leads to Jesus who is the truth.

There are in the scriptures relatively few texts which speak in a positive way about the truth of other religions. In the Old Testament, perhaps the most positive inference is the way in which Hebrew thought *de facto* incorporated ideas from other religions into its worldview, e.g. the influence of Zoroastrian dualism and eschatology upon post-exilic apocalyptic thinking. In the New Testament, one might refer to Paul's speech at the Areopagus in Athens where he appealed in a constructive way to the religious belief in an unknown God (Acts 17:22-28) or to Paul's admission that a limited knowledge of God is possible apart from Jewish or Christian revelation (Rom 1:19-20). Admittedly the texts are few due to biblical religion's wariness of idolatry.

An increase in religious tolerance in the modern period and a growing pluralism in contemporary society have opened avenues of dialogue never before possible between religions. As one learns more about other religious worldviews, one discovers not only differences but striking similarities of meaning (e.g., the Christian understanding of sin as selfishness and the Buddhist understanding of desire as the fundamental human problem). Is it possible from a Christian perspective to interpret the truth that is encountered in other religions as nothing less than the work of God's Spirit?

> If God is a God of truth, then Christianity has nothing to fear from an honest engagement with the truth found in other religions.

Wolfhart Pannenberg has issued a call to develop what he calls a "theology of religions."[22] If the study of religion is to attain the status of a science, then it must engage in a rigorous study and comparison of the reality structures among the different religions. This comparison must include insofar as possible, a testing of the relative truth-claims by means of a scientific investigation. Through an analytical process the religions are to be subjected to a critical examination of their ability to interpret reality. It is Pannenberg's conviction that scientific method can render a judgment on the truth of religious claims. What survives

[22] Cf. Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Theology and the Philosophy of Science*, trans. Francis McDonagh (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1976), 358-71.

scientific examination best approximates what can be known concerning divine reality.

Pannenberg assumes that the truth claims of Christianity will be vindicated through this process. Even if one is more reserved about the capabilities of science, his proposal opens the door for serious dialogue among the religions. Such a dialogue would aim first at genuine understanding, but go beyond dialogue to affirmations (on the part of one religion) about the truth discovered in another religion. Were this kind of dialogue to take place, it would be appropriate from a Christian perspective to interpret the truth in other religions as the work of the Spirit of God. If God is a God of truth, then Christianity has nothing to fear from an honest engagement with the truth found in other religions. All truth will eventually lead to God.

Practical theology as the theology of the Spirit

As the Spirit fades, bureaucracy increases. So argued Max Weber in his classic description of what happens to groups when the charismatic leader is gone.[23] Under charismatic leadership a group is marked by spontaneity and vitality. In the absence of charismatic leadership, a movement is routinized into traditionalism or bureaucratization. All that remains are the forms, and even these become increasingly perfunctory. Without the Spirit to enliven an institution, it becomes emptied of content, a hollow shell.

Clearly the church as an institution and theology as the rationale of the church can become perfunctory, routinized, hollow shells. In every time and place, the church requires what Yves Congar calls "one long *epiklesis*," i.e. a continual invocation of the living Spirit of the living God to inspire its forms.[24] If theology is to serve an enspirited church, then theology too must facilitate an appreciation for God as living Spiritual presence.

One of the most neglected areas of theological reflection has been "practical theology." Critics such as Edward Farley have discussed the fragmentation of theology as a discipline.[25] Historical, systematic, and practical theology each follow peculiar methodologies without a sense of integration and connectedness. The various subdisciplines of practical theology, for lack of other alternatives, have tended to appropriate the models of secular counterparts, e.g. pastoral care from psychology or church administration from business. While increasing attention is being devoted to the problem of integrating practical theology with historical and systematic theology, current proposals are highly abstract and theoretical. They promise little for bridging the gap between academic theology and the "clerical paradigm."[26]

Why not rethink the meaning of practical theology as a theology of the Spirit? Each of the sub-disciplines of practical theology—homiletics, liturgics, pastoral care, etc.—would then have as their aim the invocation of the living Spirit in the Triune God in the present. The purpose of practical theology is to train and encourage ministers who in various ways engage in invoking the "one long *epiklesis*."

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[23] Cf. *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, ed. and trans. J. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (London: Routledge & Kegan, 1982), 51-55, 245-52.

[24] Congar, *I Believe*, 3:267-72.

[25] Edward Farley, *Theologia: The Fragmentation and Unity of Theological Education* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983).

[26] Farley, *Theologia*, 85-88.

When theology becomes allergic to the Spirit, the church gets sick.

Each sub-discipline of practical theology would be reconceptualized according to its particular contribution in summoning the Spirit to enliven the church. Borrowing categories from eastern Orthodoxy, each sub-discipline would engage in *anamnesis* (remembering and representing what the Spirit has done in the past), *epiklesis* (invoking the Spirit in the present), and *prolepsis* (anticipating what the Spirit will yet bring about, particularly at the eschaton). Applied to *homiletics*, the tasks would include: (1) witnessing to how the living Triune God has accomplished salvation in the past, (2) proclaiming the gospel as a living word from God in the present, and (3) expressing hope in God's future. With regard to *liturgics* the tasks would be: (1) representing in worship God's past salvific deeds, (2) nurturing a living spirituality which addresses present challenges, and (3) encouraging a walk along a path that will lead to future spiritual fulfillment. The other sub-disciplines of practical theology might be similarly reconsidered.

When theology becomes allergic to the Spirit, the church gets sick. We must seek healthy ways to articulate what the Spirit of God has been about in the history of Israel and in Jesus Christ, what the Spirit continues to do in the world today (in continuity with God's past activity), and what the Spirit will bring about in the future. Theology places itself in service to the church wherever it facilitates living faith in the living God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—who lives now and forever (2 Cor 12:13).

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The Case for Twofold Ministry*

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(1) The Report of the Task Force on the Study of Ministry to the 1991 ELCA Churchwide Assembly set forth three possible models for ordering ministry (*The Study of Ministry* ## 191-280): threefold, twofold, and unitary ordering. As in any document prepared by a committee with limited time, the case for each model was not necessarily presented in a parallel and equally forceful way.

In order to sharpen thinking in deciding for one model or other (or some combination thereof), it is appropriate to set forth the case for each option as clearly and vigorously as possible. This will be done here without much documentation, since the background material has appeared in the 1991 Report or is available elsewhere. (The case for the model of Threefold Ministry was argued at the Conference of ELCA Bishops, March 6 [1992] and that for the Unitary Office at the Maryland Synod "Doctrine of Ministry" Conference, March 15.)

The three texts were made available to the Task Force, and presentation in this slightly revised form may prompt others to examine, sharpen, refute, and define positions. (Much in this essay on Twofold Ministry was subsequently adopted by the Task Force and the 1993 Churchwide Assembly, but issues posed here will continue to be before the ELCA in connection with the Episcopal and Reformed-Presbyterian dialogues that are presented for action in 1997.)

(2) It was appropriate to take up the model of Twofold Ministry at the meeting of the Board of the Division for Ministry since this Board needed to comprehend not only the Unitary tradition among Lutherans and the Threefold option, but also the Twofold view, some version of which (or combination of models, perhaps employing none of these terms) would prove the ultimate rec-

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*Originally a presentation to the meeting of the Board of the Division for Ministry of the ELCA, March 19-21, 1992, this essay has been only slightly revised here and a Postscript added. Full titles of literature cited are given in a Bibliography at the end. A similar "Case for Threefold Ministry," presented March 6, 1992, has been published in *Pro Ecclesia* 2,3 (Summer 1993) 265-71. That on the Unitary Office of Ministry remains unpublished. The most difficult sections to write in any of these three studies were ## (16)-(21) in this essay, on "para-ministries" for the ELCA.

ommendation. In addition, this Board, which was charged with sending forward to the entire ELCA the Task Force report and recommendations and which alone could make changes in it prior to the 1993 Assembly, already had considerable experience with both pastor/bishop and rostered persons, to say nothing of ministry in daily life. But any twofold version of ministry, it may be noted, could be regarded by some as a step toward eventual threefold ministry.

(3) The arguments for twofold ministry involve historical, ecumenical, and practical aspects.

(a) Historically, while very many Christians over many centuries have worshiped and witnessed in churches with threefold ministry and Lutherans in the centuries since the Reformation have worshiped and witnessed in churches with a single office of ordained ministry, the trend among Lutherans has been to supplement the ordained ministry of word and sacrament with rostered groups of various sorts to meet needs in church and world. A unitary office of ordained ministry has, however, been emphasized again and again by Lutheran theologians, especially in bilateral dialogues (A. C. Piepkorn, W. Quanbeck, T. G. Tappert, in predecessor bodies) and in multilaterals, including the LWF statement, *A Lutheran Understanding of Ministry*, and in world Lutheran responses to *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* (see the Task Force's 1991 Report, ## 252-53).

(b) Ecumenically, a twofold model, while in reality sometimes having been exemplified in churches claiming a threefold or unitary ministry, may, if clearly developed, prove of help in breaking stalemates among churches that hold to some form of threefold ministry and the great variety of other structures among Christian churches (cf. Report #226).

(c) The practical arguments have to do with needs for service of increasingly varying types, for mission in church and world, above all in American society today, under leadership structures with which Lutherans are already familiar. While uplifting the means of grace and galvanizing the activity of all the baptized in their vocation, ELCA ministry structures are required to meet pressing societal concerns.

(4) Granted, Lutherans have been somewhat singular in holding to one office of ordained ministry, compared with catholic churches which stress bishop/presbyter/deacon and protestant churches which may likewise have "three offices"—e.g., deacon, ruling elder, and minister of the word (*Invitation to Action*, 94-97), but Lutherans in particular may have therefore the flexibility to expand the public office of ministry in ways that meet contemporary needs, for they are not locked in to three specific offices. Such multiplicity of traditional offices has not helped these churches accomplish unity, in protestant merger efforts, in catholic/protestant rapprochement, or even in ecumenical discussions among Anglicans, Roman Catholics, and the Orthodox. For mutual recognition of ministries it has often been not the number of "folds" involved but doctrine generally and, for some catholic churches, the lack by Lutherans of the "historic episcopate" or the papacy that has prevented closer fellowship.

(5) Lutherans have tended to define "one office" with elasticity, not rigidity. Structures of "para-ministries," alongside those persons ordained for word and sacrament, have abounded, such as deaconesses, lay associates, and other rostered groups. The intent and often the result have been a strong affirmation of both word-and-sacra-

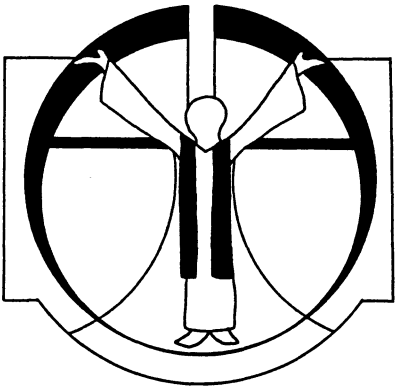
ment ministry and ministry in daily life, while seeking to meet new needs in other, often new ways. The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod has, for example, placed persons, ordained or commissioned, within the categories recognized by the U.S. government, for legal purposes, by including some twenty sub-categories under its "ministers of religion, ordained" and a half dozen more under "ministers of religion, commissioned," all in one public office. There is no need to cram various categories of needed church leaders into three traditional offices or into a single one of the means of grace, but simply to recover in new ways a portion of a heritage absent at the time of the Reformation.

(6) It is no mystery how Lutherans have come to hold so unanimously to a single office of ministry as a development of the presbyterate/episcopate of the New Testament. The Lutheran Reformation espoused a position that the ordained ministry is not only functional and a location for mission (as the 1991 Report argues even for threefold ministry), but rather views it, in light of the office which God instituted of the means of grace (i.e., the gospel, its proclamation and sacraments, CA 5), as those with regular call publicly to preach, teach, or administer sacraments (CA 14, *rite vocatus*). Those serving in this office stand within the community but, when proclaiming law and gospel, also over against (*gegenüber*) it (Malta Report, international Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue [1971] #50; *Lutheran Understanding of Ministry* #21).

(a) At the time of the Reformation the office of deacon was but a "vestigial" remain in the Western church; *diaconus* and *Diakon* referred in 16th century writings "to ordained priests serving as curates or assistants to the rector of a parish" (A. C. Piepkorn, "The Sacred Ministry...," *Eucharist and Ministry*, 109). At issue was the office of bishop. In a polemical situation, when Roman bishops claimed enormous rights for themselves and refused to ordain candidates holding the Lutheran understanding of the gospel, the Augsburg Confession (Art. 28) described those tasks of the office of bishop that are according to divine right in terms like those used for all ordained preachers of the gospel; the confessors were also willing to grant other powers to bishops but solely in virtue of human right. This position, where bishops and pastors form one group, was supported by appeal to Jerome, whose commentary on the Pastoral Epistles had set forth just such a view. Ergo, one has pastor/bishops but no deacons in the office of ministry. Technically the term "one office" is not found in the Confessions, but the later addition of the title *Predigtamt*, "the Office of the Ministry," to Art. 5 of the Augsburg Confession helped mould what became the characteristic Lutheran position, as did Art. 14 and the idea of the *Pfarramt*. Lutherans need to be aware of how consistently this view has been held by Lutherans and yet developed flexibly among them to meet new needs (cf. Reumann, *Ministries Examined*, 35-77).

> Lutherans have tended to define "one office" with elasticity, not rigidity.

(b) Since 1530 Lutherans have at times and increasingly employed the title "bishop,"



understood as "pastor of pastors" with oversight for churches and Christians in a given geographical or linguistic area. At times other titles were employed. The deaconess movement in 19th century Germany brought women into an office of service, often through institutions outside the structures of the state churches or Landeskirche. Today there are, as in many churches, a number of varieties of deacons and deaconesses. Traditionally, Lutherans with their view of one office of ministry have included bishops or other persons with oversight within that office as "pastors writ large," i.e., pastors of larger units than a local congregation. Deaconesses and deacons have usually been viewed as outside that office (because not engaged in word-and-sacrament ministry), but their role within the church's public ministry has been clear.

(7) In the New Testament there already appear various ministries of leadership, often twofold. The data ranges from the Gospel of John (where there is little such structure, though there is more in 2 and 3 John) to the Pastoral Epistles, where bishops, presbyters, and deacons are mentioned, with lists of qualifications (but not duties) for each. The opinion of much of modern scholarship is that in the Pastorals presbyter/bishops comprise one group and deacons another (see 1 Tim 3:2-7 and 8-13; 5:17-19; Titus 1:5-6, 7-9). Acts speaks of elders as "overseers" (*episkopoi*) at 20:17, 28, again one group. In both Acts and the Pastorals there is mentioned the laying on of hands, together with prayer, to set apart people for mission (Acts 13:3-4) and leadership (1 Tim 4:14, by the *presbyterion*; 2 Tim 1:16)—the basis for the development of "ordination." These and other references in the New Testament, to *diakonoi*, elders, and pastors, led to the creation of threefold ministry in the second to the fourth centuries, which increasingly became normal, but with many variations. In time, a number of other "minor orders" developed. However, deacons disappeared or became but a step on the way to ordination as priest (see 6a, above), and in the West the pope became a higher level of authority in a developed hierarchy.

(8) Lutherans have traditionally appealed to Jerome for patristic support for their view of ministry; he reflected the presbyterial structures of Alexandria and represents one understanding in the church fathers. It must be noted, however, that other patristic texts, especially from Ignatius and Hippolytus, have become known and emphasized since the sixteenth century. The letters of Ignatius in the early second century clearly argue for leadership by one bishop in each city, with presbyters, and deacons. The *Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus* provides liturgical texts for three separate ordinations of deacon, presbyter, and bishop and have been influential in many modern rites of ordination. For Lutherans these views are extra-canonical and post-New Testament and therefore represent developments *jure humano*, not divinely mandated.

Recent scholarship has stressed the social setting for such writings (for 1 Clement and Hermas, e.g., cf. Jeffries, *Conflict at Rome*). Ignatius has been assessed in a number of ways, from muddle-heated neurotic who suffered from "a psychic overcompensation for an inferiority complex" (Streeter, 168) to a charismatic "man of the Spirit" who claimed the voice of God told him the bishop should be obeyed as supreme (cf. Maier, *The Social Setting of the Ministry...*). The historical Hippolytus was a presbyter in Rome, a possible schismatic and anti-pope. He was seemingly a reactionary on social issues. More important, recent investigations trace the rise of bishops even in the New Testament to the *paterfamilias* (see next paragraph) in the house church. To this extent the rise of monepiscopacy is a sociological development countering the egalitarian tendencies in earlier Christianity.

The *paterfamilias* or "father of the family" was, in Greek thinking derived from Aristotle, the master of wife, children, and slaves, as is reflected in the *Haustafeln* or tables of household duties in later New Testament letters; in Roman law he held what was often absolute power. It was in such households that early Christian congregations or "house churches" took shape in the Greco-Roman world (Philemon 1). In Paul's day the head of the household was sometimes a woman (like Lydia, Acts 16:14-15,40). By the time of the Pastoral Epistles, however, women were, in conformity with societal standards, excluded from the role of *episkopos* (and eventually also of presbyter). This limited the office of bishop to older, wealthy, male leaders, a gender exclusion dropped only in the present century in some churches. Episcopacy in threefold ministry brought benefits in terms of order and orthodoxy, but at a cost to women and disadvantaged social classes.

(9) Lutherans could, of course, admit that their practice of an ordained ministry understood in the light of the gospel of justification by faith was a misstep and that ministerial office is what validates the gospel; but by such a move they would cease to be Lutheran in any recognizably confessional sense of the term. They could also move toward a two- or threefold understanding of ministry placed within one office, making clear that this is done for the sake of unity so as to provide accommodation with other views, but they would want to find a way to continue to assert that it is the gospel that "validates" church office, not vice versa. There is freedom to restructure the office of ministry, defining deacons in some of the many ways in which they have been understood over the early centuries—as agents in financial matters, distributing alms for the poor, providing service in the world, or possessing liturgical roles. But this expansion of public ministry must be done wisely and with great care, so as not to add to the ecumenical confusion about the office of (ordained) deacon at this time or to make Lutherans yet more singular in the practice of ministry. Restructuring could also include more emphasis on commissioned deacons and bishops but without making either into separate offices.

The upshot of this survey is to affirm in the Lutheran tradition the office of pastor/bishop—scripturally, developed from the apostles, particularly Paul (cf. Rengstorf, *Apostolate and Ministry*); historically, following a course of development through Jerome and the Reformers; confessionally (CA 5, 14, 28); and in light of several centuries of experience with such a structure—without elevating bishops to a new level or office. The gap in this position has to do with many of the things that "deacons" did in the early centuries, in terms today of church needs for work in its societal setting,

for persons who labor alongside those in word-and-sacrament ministry as a part of the ELCA's public ministry. Before developing this possibility in sections (16)-(21), several other aspects of twofold ministry must be addressed.

(10) Adoption of twofold ministry would continue the "apostolic tradition" or "succession"—in the sense of succession to the gospel, teaching, creeds, sacraments, and worship of the apostles—that Lutherans have consistently claimed. It would not involve the "historic episcopate," which is but one of the ways, like papacy, in which some churches claim to participate in apostolic succession. Participation in a historic episcopate (or renewed papacy) would involve negotiating with regard to ordinations a further relationship with churches that claim it, such as for historic episcopate the Church of Sweden and daughter churches, Anglicans, or Roman Catholics. In all such cases Lutherans would wish to assert it is the gospel which validates the ministry and not vice-versa.

(11) Traditionally Lutherans have held to one ordination to the ministry of word and sacraments, with separate installations upon each change of place and office, including that of bishop. This arrangement helps to assert the distinctive Lutheran position that the ordained ministry is divinely mandated, with promise of the continuing help of the Spirit.

(12) Ordination should be seen especially to have as its purpose, as in the Pastoral Epistles, to commit those who hold public office, in and for the church, to its gospel and teachings. Ordination calls upon these leaders to transmit faithfully that gospel to others and to the whole church (1 Tim 6:20; 2 Tim 1:13-14; 2:21). The term "consecration" has been employed among Lutherans especially for deaconesses but is now less used in many churches, for it applies to all believers as baptized and sanctified. "Commissioning" for particular tasks within the church's ministry is an appropriate term for those in public ministry other than word and sacrament.

(13) The teaching function of all those ordained and especially of bishops is to be understood as teaching in accordance with the gospel and doctrines of the Church and the standards of this church and as applying such teaching in local situations. It is not a matter of bishops or clergy alone making new teachings, for the highest teaching authority (or "magisterium") for the ELCA is constitutionally the Churchwide Assembly and, between assemblies, the Church Council.

(14) The conference of bishops—not a "council" or "house" of bishops—should continue to serve its present functions and others assigned to it by the church assembly or council. How long the term of bishops should be is a matter of pragmatic wisdom, though there is some analogy to the call as pastor of a congregation. Any answer to the question of whether retired bishops should be members of the conference of bishops is also a matter of pragmatic wisdom, though there is some analogy here to the place of retired pastors in the synodical assembly.

(15) Strong emphasis on an undiluted office of ministry of word and sacrament speaks to what is widely termed a crisis in ministerial leadership by providing clear expression and limits of purpose and authority. The terms "servant" and "serving" may well apply to all leaders and to the whole church, but recent studies of *diakonia* in early Christianity (by John N. Col-

lins) question the connection of the Greek term with "servant," putting the emphasis instead on "ministry (of the word)." What are needed are clearer definitions as to the specified fields of labor in and outside congregations for those in word-and-sacrament ministry; on the role of bishops in synods and the national church; and on tasks and spheres of those who are to be in what has been termed a diaconal office of public ministry.

It is appropriate now to make a fresh start with analysis of needs of this church...

(16) Usually proposals for twofold ministry have started with existing rostered groups and have sought ways to include or exclude these groups. Grandparenting recommendations for persons already in these groups have been provided elsewhere as an answer for those continuing to minister faithfully in various ways and with status designated by predecessor bodies. It is appropriate now to make a fresh start with analysis of needs of this church in light of mission hopes, the societal setting, and confessional and biblical understandings, as well as ecumenical awareness.

(a) Mission for the ELCA is mandated in its Constitution's Statement of Purpose (4.02) in terms of six ministries (this church shall proclaim the gospel, reach out in evangelism, serve to meet human needs, worship, nurture, and manifest unity). While the whole community, all baptized believers (10.10) are to participate in this mission, certain of these purposes are particularly the task of the ordained ministry (10.20), for example to proclaim justification by grace through faith, preserve and transmit the gospel faithfully, and preach the word and administer the sacraments (4.02 a, d). There is also provision for "other forms of ministry" alongside that of word and sacrament (4.03 c), presently described in the section on Associates in Ministry (10.40). A missing section (10.30 in the Constitution) looks to future expansion. The purpose that may particularly need structural expression in ministry today is 4.02 c,

> Serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, and standing with the poor and powerless and committing itself to their needs.

(b) The societal-cultural setting in the United States today still exhibits great needs for many traditional concerns such as the deaconess movement was founded to meet (e.g., service in hospitals), but concerns for which governmental funding is now often available. Yet there are also new needs for which the "private sector," including the churches, is asked to take responsibility (cf. Report ## 121-22). To meet many of these needs the ordained clergy have often been drawn away from their fundamental word-and-sacrament tasks, but amid a multitude of new demands they feel overextended. In addition, the number of pastors under call is declining (from 12,904 in 1989 to 12,442 in 1991), as are the number of candidates available for ordination (301 in 1989 to 240 in 1992) and also the number of Associates in Ministry (1,507 in 1989; 1,423 in 1991). The number of retired pastors is rising

Clergy are becoming fewer while needs for leadership in an increasingly complex and multicultural society rise.

sharply (3,299 in 1989; 3,866 in 1991). The greying of the clergy is readily apparent, and, given the number of second-career students, many of those being ordained can be expected to serve for a shorter span of years. While there is some increase in the number of pastors of color and/or language other than English (283 in 1989; 313 in 1991), this increase scarcely keeps up with needs, let alone hopes in a church that desires to become more multicultural. In short, clergy are becoming fewer while needs for leadership in an increasingly complex and multicultural society rise.

(c) Ecumenically the ELCA should strive to be a bridge among many church traditions, as other denominations struggle with similar problems from their heritages in ministerial structures. It should not erect ministerial structures that block future possibilities with churches in either the catholic or evangelical/protestant traditions. Flexibility but clarity about meeting its own needs should mark the next steps of the ELCA in ministry.

(d) Confessionally, it has been argued above, the Lutheran view of ministry allows for development of new structures. Biblically, it has been maintained there is no mandated solution beyond a God-given ministry of word and sacrament. While "deacons" have been a traditional answer to expanding church needs in different periods, use of the term *diakonos* in the New Testament is clouded by debate as to when it means "serve" and when "minister" and, more important, when it becomes a technical term ("deacon") in a twofold structure of ministry. It is such in the Pastorals, but unfortunately we are not told what such *diakonoi* did; the matter is no clearer in Phil 1:1. In the oft-cited passage in Acts 6 the noun is not used, and the verb *diakonein* in 6:2 may mean either "wait on tables" in food distribution to widows or "keep accounts" financially (NRSV); in any case, the seven Hellenists so engaged do in chapters 7, 8, and 11:19-21 what the twelve apostles were doing, namely preach, teach, and baptize. The New Testament is therefore of little help in defining "deacons." Their subsequent functions, through their "golden age" during the next five centuries, varied considerably (Barnett, *The Diaconate*).

(e) Because of the historical and ecumenical confusion about use of the term, the word "deacon" will not be proposed here for usage, except for the term "deaconess" which has long been in use for communities of women in predecessor bodies. "Diaconal ministry" is a possible term, as in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada proposals on ministry, but if "diaconal" means "serving," it could be applied to all Christians; and if it means "ministering" (Collins), it is redundant.

(17) In setting forth a Lutheran understanding of ministry, it is agreed that there is overarching all human structures "the Office of the Ministry" in the sense of God's ministry to us. By this is meant the gospel

and the sacraments that God instituted as means of grace (CA 5; Report # 70). The Confessions affirm under this divine office that persons are called aright for proclamation of this gospel and the means of grace, in what we have been referring to as the ministry of word and sacraments (CA 14, rite vocatus, following Art. 13 on the use of the sacraments to awaken and strengthen faith; Report # 72, cf. 81, 227-31).

Alongside this Ministry of the Means of Grace or of Proclamation we now propose, secondly, the Ministry of Service. The first stands in service to the gospel that effects justification by faith, as its ministers preach, teach, and administer the gospel word and sacraments. The second stands, supported by the gospel, to serve for the church in the world and its needs, bringing forth fruits and doing good works commanded by God (CA 6), including deeds and witness in the civil realm (CA 16). Both these ministries are public, speaking and acting on behalf of the church in public ways and held accountable to the church for that speech and action; they represent to the church its own fundamental identity and mission in Jesus Christ and in creation (cf. Report # 219). The Ministry of Proclamation or Means of Grace affirms a clear and traditional Lutheran emphasis on the essential nature of the presbyterate/episcopate of the New Testament. The Ministry of Service models for all Christians the consecrated or sanctified life that follows upon justification and illustrates applications of ministering in a complicated modern world; by its endeavors it supplements the central tasks of word-and-sacrament ministry, and by its example and leadership it equips other Christians for their witness in daily life. For such ministry as "liturgy after the liturgy," see Jaap van Klinken, *Diakonia: Mutual Helping with Justice and Compassion.* The term "word," as in "Word and Sacrament" and "Word and Service" ministries, has not been employed here because, on the one hand, it is a common denominator not only for both these types of ministry but also for all Christians (since every believer is sustained by the word of God and lives by it) and because, on the other hand, there is really a crucial difference between the two types of public ministry: the one proclaims it in preaching and sacraments, the other witnesses to law and gospel in actions of love and justice.

(18) The Ministry of Service in the Lutheran tradition has, under various names, often been organized around certain clusters of tasks, many of which continue today in the shape of new demands. Some reflect necessary emphases as this church in mission seeks to become more multicultural, serving in society.

(a) One concern had to do in the nineteenth century with hospitals and nursing and then with care for orphans, the aged, and the handicapped. Today, while some needs have changed (a shift from "orphans" to children from broken homes), others have grown (the elderly population); "congregational nurse" is a category now sometimes found; there are various homes of hospitality, beyond hospitals, including hospices for the dying, and vast needs in pastoral counseling, which is often performed by others than ordained pastors.

(b) A second area of concern had to do with care of the poor, in traditional terms "eleemosynary" endeavors, alms, works of mercy, or today "welfare." Such work, while done by the committed Christians in Christ's name and for the church, is often today supported by public funding. But trained persons are required, some of whom wish to be church-related in a ministry that is not word and sacrament. It may often involve justice and peace issues.

(c) A third example is Christian education, teaching the faith, clearly in the work of directors of Christian education, teachers of theology and religion, youth workers, catechists, and evangelists (though these latter terms stem particularly from mission churches in the "Third World" and sometimes overlap with ordained ministry of word and sacrament in some functions).

Other clusters can be proposed besides these three of healing, eleemosynary endeavors, and education (Report # 237), but a difficulty lies in how to sort out what functions should be in a Ministry of Service office and what in an Associates in Ministry grouping. In each case it is assumed that accountability, oversight, support, and discipline will be involved, but in different ways. Criteria are called for to aid decisions in such matters.

(19) Among the criteria to be considered with regard to existing and future types of ministering which this church may wish to structure in order to aid its mission are the following:

(a) education and training- requirements should be specific and formal so as to help persons meet professional standards in such fields as health care, welfare, and education and to reflect knowledgeably this church's heritage and positions in that field, but not so rigid as to exclude persons, particularly persons of color and whose language is other than English, whose forte is working in the community but not with full seminary training. Standards should be national, but education for such ministries will often have to be local, synodical, or regional.

(b) the needs to be met should be acknowledged by the church and the ministry ecclesially authorized as part of the mission of the ELCA. Here national standards but local application suggest themselves for this church's mission involvement within society beyond word-and-sacrament ministry.

(c) oversight, involving accountability and support, is most likely to be lodged in the office of bishop, the bishop personally or through a staff person; or through a local pastor or supervisor. That these elements are provided is more important than how, but not to say how may mean they go undone.

(d) funding—who pays for the service? When salary and benefits come from some expression of the ELCA, oversight will be clearer. When from other churches and agencies, governmental or non-governmental, or the position is non-stipendiary, greater effort is needed to insure proper oversight. In no case should persons who remain members of other churches be made ELCA Ministers of Service even though they work for an ELCA expression (they could, of course, be deacons or ministers of some sort in their own denomination, just as ELCA members could be part of its Ministry of Service while working for agencies of other churches).

(e) normally Ministers of Service shall be full-time and the rostering lifelong, within standards of this church that pay due attention to special needs, e.g. of women for part-time work at stages of their careers. Non-stipendiary persons are a special case (see below, #21b). For short-term tasks, see below (22c).

(f) legal concerns—for all who are rostered in the Ministry of Service or other categories of this church the ELCA bears certain legal responsibilities in a litigious age. This does not mean this church should pull back from structuring ministries beyond word and sacrament, but it does call for clear understanding of functions, standards, and oversight (support and discipline). All Ministers of Service, as part of

Establishing "appropriate boundaries" for any second type of ministry is difficult but must be done.

the public ministry of the ELCA, would fit the IRS category of "ministers of religion," ordained or commissioned.

(g) Ministers of Service do not normally preach or administer the sacraments without direct authorization (see further below, 22c).

(20) Discussion is needed as to whether Ministers of Service should be ordained or commissioned. The process and rite leading to either ordination or commissioning would for both groups of Ministers involve a relationship of the person, God, and this church.

(a) The surest argument for ordination is that ordination calls for adherence to this church's gospel and teachings (#12, above). It would conform to what one predecessor body did at points unilaterally but not to the practice for the great majority of persons in rostered groups in predecessor bodies. What ordination means for Ministry of Service in contrast to ordination to Ministry of Proclamation would require careful working out (would it be like ordination as deacon in some traditions, but not to presbyterate/priesthood?). Some would see ordination here as a step toward threefold ministry.

(b) The argument for commissioning involves the fact that it would make Ministers of Service a definite part of the public ministry of the ELCA but clearly distinguished from those ordained to word-and-sacrament ministry. Each would have a clear identity. It would result in a flexible position that could be changed, pending possible ecumenical agreements on ministry, but it would be difficult and unfair to "downscale" from ordination once the step to ordain was taken. Commissioning would have to be defined, something which would probably be easier than distinguishing two types of ordination or creating a "one size fits all" model.

(21) Establishing "appropriate boundaries" for any second type of ministry alongside that of word and sacrament is difficult with regard to existing groups and in anticipating future needs but must be done (Report # 234). With regard to the numbers of persons involved in present rostered groups (cited below from figures as of August 31, 1991), it must be remembered that rosters have been frozen since 1988. The total AIM roster has dropped from 1,507 in 1989 to 1,423 in 1991. The "call" is an important factor; all such persons may be assumed to have the "inner call" to special service; practice has varied in predecessor bodies as to whether there is an "external call" through the assembly of believers and the ecclesiastical procedures of the church involved. Where such calls and even ordination existed, this shall be recognized for incumbents by grandparenting, as has been proposed. At issue is what the future practice of the ELCA will be.

(a) Deaconesses (LCA, 99 sisters, 56 retired; ALC, 21, of whom 13 are retired) should continue as part of the Ministry of Service, for their functions clearly fit there. One deaconess community, possibly with

several centers, should sharpen its profile of tasks for the church's mission within the Service area. Graduates of the Lutheran Deaconess Association program at Valparaiso have often proven valued members of

Questions need to be clarified regarding members of the public ministry of this church who are also part of a community outside the ELCA.

various rostered groups in the ELCA; the Association itself might remain "free-standing" or seek relations with several Lutheran bodies. But questions need to be clarified, here and in other instances, regarding members of the public ministry of this church who are also part of a community outside the ELCA.

(b) AELC deacons (and deaconesses) (45, one retired, several in M. Div. programs for ordination as pastor) pose directly to the ELCA the question of non-stipendiary, part-time persons ministering in local situations. Since they are supported by secular jobs with health and pension plans or are retired persons, they pose no great financial expenditure for the church. They reflect and seek to meet local needs. The term "permanent deacons," used by Roman Catholics and Anglicans, is not an accurate one for the ELCA since we have no "transitional deacons," and some AELC deacons have decided to study for word-and-sacrament ministry. Such persons in themselves and by their diaconal office have not had word-and-sacrament responsibilities. They often assist in worship, but likely no more than lay persons, especially church council members, do. One option is to include them in Ministry of Service; another is to include them in the Associates in Ministry category. In either case national standards are required and some synodical or regional structure and oversight; at issue is how much local autonomy the ELCA wishes. My personal judgment is to expand the number of such "congregational ministers," located within the Associates category because they are not normally full-time and are oriented to pressing local needs which may not translate immediately to new places and other congregations.

(c) AELC Commissioned Teachers (122, 4 retired) stem from the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod heritage of parochial or Christian day-schools, the status of teachers in which was long debated, including the male-female issue; where it has been argued that ordination is not restricted to pastors and that women teachers too can be ordained (J. H. Pragman), ordination is usually regarded as an adiaphoron (peripheral matter). The AELC made both men and women teachers part of its public ministry; ordination was described as "the term used to set apart people for pastoral ministry. Commissioning or consecration are terms used to set people apart for teaching and diaconal ministry" (J. H. Tietjen, to the CNLC, 1984). There was a further necessary distinction between "called" teachers, those who met certain requirements in theological training and had "minister of religion" status with the IRS, and those who did not meet such criteria in theological studies

and therefore were "contracted" but did not have such IRS status (references in *Ministries Examined*, 68, 202, 207-8). Ecumenically Roman Catholics and others with large parochial school systems do not have ordained teachers for their schools but members of teaching orders or lay people; such teachers are not "deacons." In U.S. society there is currently great debate on governmental funding for non-public schools, though Lutherans would be but minor beneficiaries from such grants, compared to Catholics and other denominations. There could be debate over whether all Lutheran day school teachers, whatever they teach, should be in the same category. Those teaching religion could logically fit into Ministers of Service (cf. # 19c). Discussion is needed as to whether Commissioned Teachers should fall into the Ministry of Service or Associates in Ministry or some into one and some into the other. The distinction between "called" and "contracted" must be kept in mind. IRS concerns would dictate that those "called" be in the church's public ministry in one way or another.

(d) LCA Lay Professional Leaders (520) include persons in a great many different church vocations, including worship and administration. Some clearly belong in the Ministry of Service. Others, depending on function, training, and other factors noted in # 20, would continue as ELCA Associates in Ministry.

(e) ALC Commissioned Church Staff (528) was a category covering an even wider range of tasks, including support staff. Again, some would belong in Ministry of Service, but likely a larger number would continue as ELCA Associates in Ministries.

(f) ELCA Certified Associates in Ministry (143)—it has been assumed above that this group or something like it would continue, with exact parameters to be developed, for persons not in the Ministry of Service. Clusters of tasks not involving word-and-sacrament or types of Ministry of Service in church and world, as outlined above, would find support and oversight here (cf Report # 238). Care must be taken that those involved particularly in worship, administration, and other tasks see themselves in mutuality and interdependence with those in Ministries of Proclamation and of Service and with all the baptized people of God.

It must be a concern with Ministers of Service and with Associates in Ministry that this mutuality and interdependence reflect, nonetheless, distinct functions for the totality of mission and church life, and that in no way the suggestion of a "second-level clergy" be given.

(22) A twofold office of ministry, even with a great variety of related Associates in Ministry, will not, however, solve all the problems of declining funds, rising costs to support stipendiary clergy and associates, or needs in inner-city, rural, certain ethnic, and isolated situations. In particular, Ministers of Service and Associates in Ministry are no solution when their health benefits and pension costs, if not salary, will be similar to those of pastors.

(a) Nonstipendiary "congregational ministers" (see above, #21b) are of major help here.

(b) If a program of seminary education is adopted that consists of three years of study on campus, followed by two or three years in a parish, prior to ordination as pastor, the term "intern" or "vicar" should continue to be used for this period. At what point ordination should come requires further study; it is related to a call to a place of labor and to stipend questions.

(c) Since traditionally only those ordained to word-and-sacrament ministry have

publicly preached or officiated at celebrations of the sacraments, there exist often unmet needs for word-and-sacrament ministry in numerous isolated, ethnic, and economically marginal congregations. It is increasingly clear that sufficient ordained pastors and the financial support for them will not always be available. Ministry of Service, by its very nature, is not for such proclamation and the means of grace. Authorization will therefore be necessary in some cases for Ministers of Service, Associates in Ministry, or other persons not ordained, including laity, to preach and administer the sacraments; this should be limited to a specific place and be for a limited period, under careful supervision. In the New Testament, even in the Pastoral Epistles, there is no coupling of ordination with officiating at the Lord's Supper or Baptism or with preaching. The connection came about for the sake of good order (which Lutherans respect) and because of theories that ordination provides ontological change enabling the priest to confect the Eucharist (a view which Lutherans rejected). The need of congregations for word and sacrament transcends in some instances the norm that only those ordained as pastor or bishop preach and officiate.

(23) What is particularly Lutheran in such an understanding of a twofold office of ministry? It maintains confessional emphasis on word-and-sacrament ministry but, in its openness to further shaping to meet new needs in mission, now proposes to include Ministry of Service in its public office of the ministry. In this way it reflects the watchword *semper reformanda.* The proposal also takes seriously the place of all baptized believers in vocational expression of their faith through the modeling and leadership of Ministers of Service specifically assigned to work in tasks of relating church to world in a multicultural society. It thus sees expression of "the faith of the church through the ages" and its consequences for today (as *BEM* asks) in a new and fuller structuring for leadership that is drawn from the New Testament's variety, respects one patristic strand of interpretation among several, and above all reflects the Reformation's emphasis on gospel over church office, but allowing an office of Service to work in God's creation. Its answer to "the possibility of articulating a Lutheran understanding of the threefold ministerial office" to fulfill mission is a twofold one, restoring diaconal functions in a way to meet needs but not block possible ecumenical development later. In addition, the following themes are apparent:

–emphasis on the function of proclamation in preaching and sacraments, on pastoral care, and on outreach to those with needs of all sorts;

–new emphasis on service in the world for the church through commissioned leaders, meeting human needs, modeling involvement for all believers;

–leadership ordained and commissioned that is committed to the church's gospel and teachings;

–all rostered ministers as a sign but not a guarantee of unity and the truth of the gospel;

–the mandate as God-given to preach the gospel and serve the neighbor, for which task human beings are called as earthen vessels to bear this treasure.

Postscript: (24) The Task Force at its June and October meetings in 1992 opted, by majority vote, for ordained ministers of word and sacrament and ordained diaconal ministers (not "deacons" or "word and service"), with one ordination serving for all; the distinction as to diaconal ministry or word and sacrament would come at instal-

lation, as would also be true for ministers of word and sacrament elected as bishop. The entire draft of *Together for Ministry* was shaped to support this egalitarian vision of ministry. At the final meeting of the Task Force in January 1993, however, on the grounds that ordination in the Augsburg Confession was so tied to word and sacrament that diaconal ministers could not be fitted in here, the group by majority vote moved to two ordinations, one for word-and-sacrament ministers (instituted by God, biblically and confessionally based, CA 5 and 14) and the other for diaconal ministers. The latter was described in Task Force discussion as *usus ecclesiasticus*, that is, instituted by the ELCA. By majority vote the Task Force also called for "commissioning" the existing category of Associates in Ministry. The Board of the Division for Ministry declined to approve two ordinations, and the Church Council sustained this view, so that what went before the Churchwide Assembly in August were recommendations for an ordained ministry of word and sacrament, a lay-rostered diaconal ministry, and lay-rostered commissioned Associates in Ministry. The Assembly approved these and most proposals of the Task Force by 90% votes (2-1 against the attempt to substitute *ordained* diaconal ministries). The attempt to reopen the later issue had more to do with *whether* there should be diaconal ministers than that they be ordained.

(25) Subsequent implementation of Assembly actions rests with the Division for Ministry, at points together with the Conference of Bishops, Church Council, and other entities in the ELCA. Some feel the key issue will be what term shall be used for diaconal ministers, if they cannot be ordained; "commissioned," like Associates in Ministry? More important will be educational and

> The need of congregations for word and sacrament transcends in some instances the norm that only those ordained... preach and officiate.

other standards, and clarity of about function of diaconal ministers in relation to Associates in Ministry. The Task Force itself often spoke of them in a "continuum" between "laity" and ministers of word and sacrament. The principle of simplicity suggests combining diaconal ministers and Associates in Ministry; the name selected for such a group might be that of Associates (since this has by now an emerging identity in the ELCA) or diaconal ministers (as a new vision). Or the attempt could be made to differentiate by educational and other requirements, the standards already in existence continuing for Associates, and diaconal ministers reflecting alternate routes to practical service. Or Associates could be regarded as working *in* the church and diaconal ministers in the world *for* the church; such a distinction, however, does not match what the Task Force proposed, in that Day School Teachers and church musicians were thought of as diaconal ministries.

(26) Is what the Assembly approved to be regarded as twofold? Yes, in the sense that several categories of full-time rostered groups are recognized alongside ministers of word and sacrament in the ELCA's pub-

lic ministry. But only those doing word and sacrament are to be ordained, so is it unitary? Only time will tell how the ELCA and others will describe the results, *if* the ELCA has opportunity to develop its own patterns of ministering, even as consideration of the ecumenical dialogues looms on the schedule. In the Task Force there was never any interest shown in adopting the "transitionary diaconate" (whereby one is ordained as deacon on the way to ordination as priest/presbyter), and little in "permanent deacon" (in the sense of local, non-stipendiary persons so ordained). Whatever else emerges, the Task Force and the process opted for a national or churchwide understanding of ministry, including standards, rostering, and discipline, though synodically administered, in accord with local needs.

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Midwives for the Dying: The Role of the Church in Death Care

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Courses on death and dying are taught these days in most universities with students waiting in line to enroll. So many books are being written on the topic that there is a section on death and dying in most book stores. A night does not go by on television without a program on death and dying. There are even children's cartoons on the topic. Some observers have called it the "gloom boom." Millions of people have taken out living wills (advanced medical directives on dying), shopped for preplanned funerals, and are enlisting the services of doctors for physician-assisted death. What is this all about?

I asked my own students this question, and some said: "I need to bring the skeleton out of the closet, to look at my own fears; I feel helpless in going to funerals and unable to talk to people who are grieving." Others said: "My mother, or my brother, or my friend, is dying—and I just don't know what to say or do." It all adds up to a more honest confrontation with death, grief, and loss. People today are more willing to look at these issues because they want to take control of their dying. They do not want the last moments of their life abdicated into the hands of professionals; they want to participate, they want to bring the dying experience back into the realm of the family.

But I have a more personal interest in this topic—my father's death. It occurred in 1969 during a December blizzard. I had been a pastor for five years, visited hundreds of people in nursing homes, and witnessed death at bedsides in the hospital. I even had a summer of clinical training in one of the largest state hospitals in California. But when it came time to care for my own father, I was helpless. I did not know what to do with his anger; I did not realize it was a common emotional stage in dying. I fought with him for a while but then finally abandoned him to his own despair. I did not know what to say or how to act. I wanted to have meaningful human contact, to express my deep gratitude, but all that came out were stale platitudes. He died a death not much different than any other American of his generation—isolated, sedated, and abandoned. Neither his physical, nor emotional,

and certainly not his spiritual, needs were met. I saw his death as my defeat and failure.

It was then that I knew I had to pursue this topic of death and dying. Kübler-Ross was beginning her research on the emotional stages of dying. I read that. I went back to Princeton Seminary to take graduate courses on death and dying. I attended workshops and eventually developed my own course at Ashland University.

My specific concern has been the role of the church in death and dying. I think one of the most pressing issues facing us in the 21st century will be dying in a technological age. Medical science has made tremendous progress. It has increased our life span with open heart surgery, given us new freedoms with organ transplants, saved countless lives with respirators, and kept cancer in remission with chemotherapy; but in many cases, especially with the elderly, it not only has prolonged life but artificially delayed death. The new-found wonder drugs and medical technology have kept people alive, but at what cost? What is the price of human suffering when the dying process extends into months and years?

How will we care for the dying? This is a question we all must answer, and we must answer it as a community, not as a select group of professionals in medicine and ethics. Questions of living and dying are best addressed in the context of a caring community, the church.

What is the experience of dying like in America? How do Americans face death? First, let me tell you what it was like for my grandparents, or their parents, people who died around the turn of the century. Death was respected through ritual and custom. Most often death occurred in the home. Surrounded by family and friends, the dying were free to give their last farewells, free to bless and forgive. The family cried together and held on to each other as they watched their loved ones pass from this world. There was time to say good-bye. And the doctor was there, not to conquer disease, but as a comforter and friend. Death was not his enemy, disease was not the issue; the dying person was the ultimate concern, and all were there to help the patient have a good death. After death, the family washed and prepared the body for burial. A local carpenter or even a family member built a coffin, and it was set in the parlor of the home. Friends and family came to view the deceased in an open coffin in the ritual of mourning. Children even kept vigil with the body. Later it was taken to a family grave site where family members dug the grave and lowered their loved one back to the earth. Each person learned about death first hand. From caring for the dying family member through the disposition of the body into the ground, death was within the realm of the family. You were a participant in the final act of life, not a spectator at a show.

But things changed in America when it came to attitudes about death and dying, and it started in the 1960s. With the advances of modern technology, death was turned over to professional caretakers and removed from the home to institutions—to hospitals, nursing homes, and funeral homes. Ritual and custom disappeared, and in their place was the science of preserving life and prolonging death. Sophisticated health care techniques and high-tech medicine replaced the soft touch care. Family and friends of the patient were relegated to maintaining a death watch in the hospital corridor or in a waiting room down the hall, with family members one at a time squeezing into the patient's room to listen to beeps on the monitor, drips from the tubes, and the hiss of the ventilator. There was no private space for sharing your last moments to-

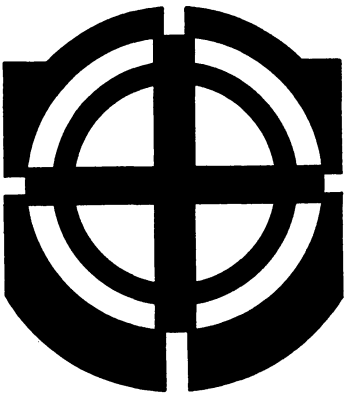
gether. There was no time to say good-bye, to bless and forgive. Disease was the issue. It was the enemy, and it had to be conquered. Death was treated secretly, compartmentalized, shut away from public view and family participation. It was death at a distance: detached, impersonal, and ugly.

Even burial customs took on a professionalism that treated death as something alien to life. Bodies were dressed up to make them look alive; people viewed these as mannequins on display. Strangers buried the "remains," and families paid not only a high financial price but a deep spiritual one. They lost their chance to personally surrender their loved one to the earth and to God.

But again things changed in America. This impersonal and dehumanizing way of dealing with death and dying gave way to a new movement, to return the care of the dying back to the family and the setting for care back to the home.

This new movement in America started in the 1970s but had a history dating all the way back to the Roman Empire under Emperor Constantine when he set up a hospice for the dying. In the Middle Ages, Christians provided hospice care in the monasteries for weary pilgrims. But it was not until 1968 that a doctor in England, Cicely Saunders, laid the foundation for dignified dying in a caring community. She insisted that medicine treat the whole person—the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs; that families take over the role of care givers, that this care could best be done in the home; and that palliative care (pain and symptom control) be established as a clinical goal in medicine. (Palliative is in contrast to curative; its aim is to provide tender loving care without seeking a cure.)

The Hospice movement in America expanded on this English approach and became a philosophy of care for the dying. It affirmed that death was a natural part of life, not alien or ugly, and when death was inevitable it would neither seek to hasten it nor postpone it. Its goal was to help a person live life fully until the end and to give them maximum freedom to choose how and where they wanted to spend their last days. This movement has changed the whole health care delivery system in America. It is a major component in the new health reform platform that President Clinton is proposing to Congress.



But what about the theological or spiritual concerns in dying? Doesn't our faith inform and guide us on approaching personal decisions about the end of life? Is there such a thing as Christian dying? Do Christians die any differently than non-Christians?

Well, let me ask another question. Does it make any difference how Jesus died? What if he died of a heart attack while fishing with Peter? The New Testament makes it quite clear that it does make a difference. It contends that Jesus' life was given, not taken; that it was an act of faith, not circumstance; that his death was the last act in the final drama of his life; that the act on the cross tells us everything we need to know about him; that he lived and died to

surrender his life into the hands of the Father. This is why the cross has become our symbol of faith—it is the symbol of unconditional surrender.

So Christians have a model for dying. The model is focused in Jesus' last act on the cross. It is an act of freedom, an act that we perform; it is an act that consummates and completes our life. As Christians, we believe we are not just children of the earth, like animals with a set time to live, but children of the spirit. Our life is a gift from God, and in the end we surrender it back to God.

Now here is a problem: Christian dying, dying as an act of faith, can only occur in an atmosphere free of dehumanizing medical procedures, in an atmosphere where pain is controlled and freedom and choice are honored. I think this is possible in a hospice setting where you are allowed to die with friends and family in the context of a faith community. If Christian dying is to take place today, the congregation must begin expanding its role in death care. As Lutherans, we do well with Baptism—we receive people in faith to be members of the Body of Christ, we instruct them into Confirmation, we nourish them in their spiritual journey with Holy Communion, but then what? Have we helped our people to die as Christians, surrounding them with a faith community so they can surrender their life to the Father?

We have a beautiful service in the Lutheran Church, "Commendation of the Dying," but have we used it to its maximum benefit? Listen again to one of the prayers: "Into your hands, O merciful Savior, we commend your servant. Acknowledge, we humbly beseech you, a sheep of your own fold, a lamb of your own flock, a sinner of your own redeeming. Receive *him/her* into the arms of your mercy, into the blessed rest of everlasting peace, and into the glorious company of the saints in light." (*Occasional Services*, 107; *LBW*, 211.) This Commendation of the Dying should not be with just the pastor but with the faith community.

When I was in Japan in May, 1993,* lecturing at the Japan Lutheran College and Seminary, I had an opportunity to speak at the Koisikawa Lutheran church on Christian dying, and one of the members there suggested we need "midwives for the dying." Midwives for the dying! That is what the church must become: a midwife for the dying.

Here are some suggestions on how to practice midwifery for the dying. There are many hospice programs today, especially with AIDS patients, that work with the "buddy system." My oldest daughter is in one of these, the Damien Society. You become a friend, a confidant, a resource to one person. You call every day to see how they are doing and see them through their struggle. This is the simplest and most practical system. The only difficulty is getting the right match.

Another approach is "burden sharers." You form a team of volunteers to relieve the family of the burden of care. It can mean household chores, letter writing, shopping, or just sitting with the dying and listening, responding to their pain and suffering.

Hopes change in the process of dying from the hope of biological miracles to the hope for peace and dignity. The Christian community should have something to say about hope, hope that is not simple optimism, but confidence and assurance in the future. This also needs to be part of midwifery for the dying.

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*An earlier version of this paper was delivered at the Centennial Celebration of The Japanese Evangelical Lutheran Church Convening Convention of Lutheran Doctors and Nurses, Kumamoto, Japan, August 7, 1993.

One of the greatest fears in death is that one hasn't lived. We all need to be free of false guilt and disappointment to help us die with grace. And again, the Christian community should have something to say about grace. We need to be surrounded with people that can help us have a "gracious death."

In her book *Death and Dying* Kübler-Ross tells one anecdote after another about the fear of dying with "unfinished business." I experienced this with my father; the dying need to express their anger, their frustration and resentments freely. They need to have time to forgive, to settle ancient grudges. They need to be surrounded by people who will listen to their confessions without judgment. They need soul healers. This is the business of the church!

And last, if we are going to be midwives, we need a medical eschatology. We need to treat the patient with a view toward the end, the *telos*. Death need not be an enemy to be fought with every weapon available, but the last chapter in the book of life that has integrity of its own. The real issue is what we can do to make the final chapter as rich and meaningful as possible. Dying well is as important as living well. Father Robert Kavanaugh said it best: "The unexamined death is not worth dying." Midwives for the dying must urge the health care professionals to see that helping a person die well is a legitimate and successful form of treatment. Christian eschatology extends beyond this life to a future with the crucified and risen Lord, for our treasure is not in earthen vessels but in a kingdom prepared for us in heaven.

Finally, I think it is only fair to tell you that there are problems in being with someone who is dying, as well as benefits. Most of us will feel uncomfortable in the presence of a person who has been diagnosed with a life-threatening illness. We may not know what to say or how to act. We may experience a pervasive sense of helplessness because we lack the power to make the situation better. We may fear a personal attachment and involvement because we know the person will leave us. Our faith will be challenged when we cannot answer the questions of inexorable suffering. We will have to carry on the normal business of living when our interests are in the care of the dying. We will be pulled and tugged in all directions and often feel at loose ends.

There are no pat formulas on how to behave with the dying. We can only be ourselves, accept our doubts and fears, and offer ourselves up to the other. Indeed, we need not do anything but be there and simply respond as the heart dictates; for dying, like birthing, is a natural event, often better witnessed than managed.

If we are there to help the person have a good death, a death that a person might choose for himself (had he a choice), it will be a time for reminiscing, a time for sharing, a time for laughter, a time to forgive, a time to cry and a time to love. We can make this happen; it is within our grasp. We need only the courage to do it.

There is one more benefit in caring for the dying. I personally have learned more from the dying than I have learned from any book I read, college course I took, or any conference I attended. When we are with someone who is dying, we have the rare opportunity to share the deepest part of ourselves. Our defenses are dropped, and we are given to the "otherness of the other." We also confront our own mortality in the presence of the dying, and it can awaken in us a greater appreciation for life. In the face of dying we see once and for all that life, all life, is precious and fragile; and we are called by God to do all in our power to protect, nourish, and love it.

And Now a Word From...

Donald Dallmann
Encino, California

He was known as the Reverend Franklin Green. He was not at all an impressive figure physically, at least not by the time I met him. He was slight—scrawny would be more accurate. His body was misshapen, his back permanently hunched forward, emphasizing his short, frail appearance, and permanently twisted several degrees to the right, accenting the impression of distortion. And yet, somehow, he radiated strength, not weakness, and his presence evoked respect, not sympathy.

He was, all in all, a remarkable person—a long-time patriarchal figure in the African-American community: the former pastor of the oldest, largest, and most respected A.M.E. church in town; respected civic leader; editor of the weekly newspaper of the black community; one of the first African-American men elected to the Louisiana state legislature in modern times. He was a man of impeccable integrity and of undeniable dignity. He was a man so thoroughly admired and respected that, after he died, folks began to tell Franklin Green stories, as if thereby somehow to gain a bit of reflected glory by virtue of their alleged relationship to this remarkable man.

The Reverend Franklin Green did not possess an impressive speaking voice, at least not by the time I met him. I am told that at one time his voice had been very fine, indeed, but when I knew him it was thin and reedy. At times it seemed to range from a squeak to a squawk. But the man *could* preach!

A tiny, dirt-poor congregation—which had, in fact, been started a few years previously as a mission station by the Reverend Franklin Green—was celebrating its anniversary. Congregational and/or pastoral anniversaries, observed every year, are major events on the annual calendars of such congregations. Visiting pastors bring their choirs; the quality and the quantity of food consumed following the services are legendary. A significant portion of the congregation's annual income is generated at such events.

It was a sweltering Sunday afternoon in August. Many of the details have, perhaps mercifully, fled my memory. What remains is an impression of a small auditorium of some sort, of considerable clutter, and of oppressive heat. I think I can see funeral home hand-fans swishing back and forth, and I think I can remember sweat trickling down my ribs inside my clergy shirt, but those recollections may be attributable to a fanciful imagination.

I was there, because the Reverend Franklin Green had invited me to go with him. I don't remember what I did on the program. Probably I read a scripture lesson or offered a prayer. I do remember sitting next to Reverend Green. And I do remember having been told that the program would last, at most, a couple of hours: we would start at three o'clock, and we would be finished around four thirty or five o'clock. We started late, very late. The program seemed to drag on interminably, and everyone on the program seemed to take more time than had been allotted to them. It was already very late—well after five o'clock, and the Reverend Franklin Green had not yet spoken, and he was the featured speaker!

I remember the bishop (or someone representing the local judicatory) getting up to introduce the Reverend Franklin Green and taking an incredibly long time to do so—ten or even fifteen minutes (although my impatience then may flaw my memory now). I remember the bishop concluded his introduction with words to this effect: "And now it is my pleasure to present to you the Reverend Franklin Green, who will speak a word to you. And"—looking pointedly at his wristwatch—"since we are running so late, and all of us are tired and hungry, and some of us have a ways to travel to get home, I hope the Reverend Green will have just that for us: a word!"

I remember the Reverend Franklin Green hauling his twisted body out of his chair and dragging himself a couple of steps to the pulpit and pulling down the flexible-neck microphone... and not saying a word. After all the sounds and all the words that had filled that long afternoon to overflowing, the silence was at first refreshing, then discomforting.

"The Bishop hopes I have only a word to say." (That softly.)

"Well, I have only one word to say." (That a little louder.)

"There *is* only one word to say." (A little louder.)

"We have only one word to say, when we come together in the house of our God." (Louder.)

"We have only one word!" (Shouted)

And then for several minutes the Reverend Franklin Green said only one word: "Jesus."

I can no more reproduce in syllables printed on a page what the Reverend Franklin Green did with that one word with his voice for the next several minutes, than I could reproduce a magnificent sunset over an autumn Alpine forest with an eight-pack of Crayolas, even if I had the skill of a Michelangelo.

I have no idea how long he spoke that one word, "Jesus," and I'm not going to attempt to describe the ways he spoke that one word. I will say that at first I was amazed at what he was doing, then amused, then impressed. Then he got past my cerebral reactions, and somehow he was touching my heart in a way I'm pretty sure I'll never be able to understand, and I felt things like deep, deep shame... and unspeakable sadness... and a peace that surpasses human understanding... and love beyond measure... and joy beyond words. I'm sure I laughed, and I know I cried, and I probably shouted too, but I really don't remember any of that. I will, however, never forget what the Reverend Franklin Green did with the one word "Jesus" that hot Sunday afternoon in August.

Book Reviews

The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation. By Jürgen Moltmann. Trans. by Margaret Kohl. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992. xv and 358 pages. Cloth. $24.95.

The locus on the Holy Spirit, perhaps more than the doctrine of the Trinity, has proven once again that elusiveness is its trademark. Its syntax seems to yield only difficult paradoxes, enlightened mumblings, and recurrent contradictions. Why is this so? Gregory of Nazianzus described well the dilemma: Is the Spirit a creature, an activity, or God? Our century has also noted what the doxological tradition has swept under the carpet; Yves Congar candidly recognizes the lack of a univocal biblical conception, and more recently Wolfhart Pannenberg points out the *aporia* of relating—and distinguishing—an alleged hypostatic event with the definition of the divine essence as Spirit.

With such stakes, expectations of new pneumatological works run high. Does Moltmann satisfy them? Hardly. In spite of the value of his heuristic insights and the importance of his eco-political hermeneutic, it becomes difficult to erase the suspicion that Moltmann is trading systematic consistency for timeliness. For the systematician, critical questions remain unanswered in his book: Why is the Holy Spirit *God*? What constitutes the personhood of the Holy Spirit? (though he attempts an inconclusive answer in the last chapter). How to maintain the proper christological referentiality of the Holy Spirit avoiding the alleged pitfalls of the Filioque? With satisfying answers lacking on these critical themes, much of his eco-political hermeneutic cannot but fall into a sophisticated rumination on the effervescence of life; is this the proper theme for a pneumatology biblically grounded?

Of course, a fair approach and evaluation of Moltmann's pneumatology should embrace more than this book—the fourth in his systematic series. The placing of the concept of the Holy Spirit as hermeneutical key in his dogmatic work on the trinity (1st volume), creation (2nd), and the work and person of Jesus Christ (3rd) has marked for much of contemporary theology the central biblical motif of the future-orientedness of the Spirit's work. These antecedents constitute the immediate background for this fourth installment, where he intends to expand on previous directions as to an "holistic pneumatology," that is, a non-dualistic discourse on the Spirit comprehending humanity in its total existence, as well as the wholeness of the community of creation (37). This "economic" perspective is catapulted in turn by the problematic that he now seeks explicitly to confront: the ecological crisis signified by the escalating "death of nature," and the ghettoizing of the Spirit's presence and activity into the ecclesiastical realm.

So far, so good. However, the starting point chosen, a phenomenology of experience (chap. 1), is what raises some misgivings. Moltmann wishes to assert that the experience of God's Spirit is, in principle, a reality graspable in, with, and beneath all things, preceding—and making possible—the phenomena of experience as such. Evidently, it is this conversation on experience which will serve as a point of contact with the eco-political experience, establishing thus a common platform from which to articulate the Spirit as the energy of life; hence the title. But while Moltmann's concern and emphasis upon the Spirit as transcendence in immanence is correct, he fails to explain why this experience is necessarily a transcendental one, and even more critically, a salutary one. In its nakedness, life and the experience of life may only spell the reality of "law." Perhaps this is why Paul prefers to speak about the Spirit *of Jesus*. Why this Spirit is the spirit of Jesus is the missing articulation that otherwise would have made of this book a memorable contribution.

The belittling of the ecclesiological theme is also a surprising—and disturbing—innovation in this work. Of course, we may also agree with Moltmann that the Spirit cannot be cloistered in the church. But then, what is the church?

Perhaps we shall have to wait for Moltmann's next and final installment on eschatology. Hopefully, it will be a work done in less haste.

Guillermo Hansen
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The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew. Volume I. א. Edited by David J. A. Clines. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993. 475 pages. Cloth. $80.

This dictionary provides definitions for all texts written in Hebrew before 200 C.E., including the Hebrew portions of the Old Testament, the fragments that have survived of Ben Sira (Ecclesiastes), the non-biblical manuscripts from Qumran, and all ancient Hebrew inscriptions, including seals. Based on modern linguistic theory, the dictionary makes no reference to cognate languages such as Arabic, Akkadian, and Ugaritic, but affirms that the meaning of a word depends on its use within the language. The dictionary states that meanings are determined by such factors as internal consistency within the texts, by the testimony of ancient versions, and by Jewish exegetical tradition. Hebrew is treated as a synchronic system; no distinction is made between early references or meanings and late ones.

In many ways this volume, covering only the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet, resembles standard dictionaries like BDB: it lists the number of occurrences (inclusive of the non-biblical literature), a basic meaning, and an identification of a word's morphology—all in a most user-friendly way (one can buy an electronic copy of the dictionary for use on a Macintosh computer). Even its semantic analysis—the various meanings that may be attributed to the word—is not dramatically different from its predecessors although it lists meanings in the order of their frequency and not in a trajectory ranging from the concrete to the metaphorical. This semantic analysis is freshly done, however, with modern translations, and with clear and reasonable division into categories of meaning. It also provides a meaning for every biblical reference; BDB avoided that for frequently attested words.

Its syntagmatic analysis marks a major innovation. The dictionary lists all the contexts in which a word occurs—what subjects and objects are used with verbs and what verbs are used with nouns. "Ears," for example, hear, attend, receive, tingle, and rejoice in the Bible. Or ears are mentioned for Pharaoh, Jerusalem, elders, dust, and even dogs. The generic word "eat" can be divided into categories in which individuals, kings, shepherds, and fools eat, whereas the same verb indicates that fire, famine, and enemies devour. The dictionary also lists biblical synonyms and antonyms. This volume closes with 13 pages of English-Hebrew references.

It has been nearly a century since there has been a major dictionary of ancient Hebrew in English. The Germans in the meantime have published the more traditional Koehler-Baumgartner lexicon, whose third edition will soon be translated into English, and an American Hebrew dictionary is also being worked on at Princeton.

The Clines volume is a first in more ways than one. It will be too long and too expensive for doing translation exercises at seminary—its eight volumes will total some 3,835 pages and cost in excess of $650—but it will be invaluable for those who want to ask fundamental questions about meaning: How are words used and in what kinds of sentences? How are these words related to other similar or opposite words? While traditional philological dictionaries were interested in original meanings and historical developments, this dictionary follows modern linguistics and finds meaning in sentences or other units of discourse. Its function is not to tell the meaning of words, but to organize the available data about Hebrew words so that the readers can make their own decisions about the meaning of words in the light of all the evidence. A dictionary in our post-modern era, according to the editor, should be short on authority and prescription and long on reader-involvement, open-endedness and uncertainty.

While I admit that etymology has been misused and overused in previous dictionaries, I believe this dictionary would have been well-advised to include the cognate occurrences to help advanced readers to make their own decisions about the meaning of the words. I am also

disappointed that there are no references to the hundreds or thousands of articles that have been published on Hebrew lexicography. Perhaps the team working on this dictionary could be persuaded to publish a supplementary volume that would list bibliography according to the order in which it has arranged the words in the dictionary. The editor admits that decisions about words are bound to change among the team over the long process of creating this work. One example stands out in this first volume: the three senses of the word "tent" given in the introduction are mirrored by only two senses for "tent" in the dictionary itself.

This dictionary will be the starting point for most word studies in the future and its presentation of data will stimulate fresh attention to the contextual meaning of biblical words. While one should not judge a book solely by its cover or a dictionary by its entries on the first letter of the alphabet, this is a major research tool that will be used by scholars and also by those who know almost no Hebrew—its layout and English-to-Hebrew references make that possible.

Ralph W. Klein

The Classical Foundations of Modern Historiography. By Arnoldo Momigliano. Sather Classical Lectures 54. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990. xi and 162 pages. Cloth. $24.95.

Don't let the title deceive you; this is a book of immediate relevance to all interested in biblical studies, church history, and theology. The University of California invites major scholars to give the Sather Lectures. Arnoldo Momigliano, a polymath of massive learning, in six lectures shows how different forms of ancient history influence later historiography. He begins with a brief sketch of Persian, Greek, and Jewish historiography. The Greek historians (Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, Polybius, and their Roman followers Sallust, Livy, and Tacitus) provided the model of political-military history, which influenced the Renaissance (Lipsius, et al.) and the nineteenth century Romantic historians (Shelling, Schlegel, Ranke), whose ideal it was to tell the truth based on accurate knowledge of details and a deep imaginative understanding of the human mind.

The rise of antiquarian research in Hellanicus, Diogenes Laertius, and the like took many forms: (1) editing and commenting on literary texts; (2) collections of traditions about cities, regions, sanctuaries, gods, and institutions; (3) descriptions of monuments and collecting of inscriptions; (4) the writing of learned biographies; and (5) chronological research. It finds its counterpart in modern times (Budé, the Maurists, Mommsen, Max Weber, Durkheim), while Quintus Fabius Pictor's writing of national history found successors in Manetho and Berossus in antiquity and many moderns. Tacitus wrote history with an edge to describe the evils of tyranny, followed by Lipsius and Pasquali. Finally, Momigliano discusses Eusebius, the founder of ecclesiastical history, who found an echo in the Reformation: Luther, Caspar Hedio (for whose universal history Luther wrote an introduction), Flacius Illyricus and the cen-turiators, Cesar Baronius, and many later. Sacred history is first dissolved in the nineteenth century.

Momigliano's style is graceful and clear, full of illuminating comments—too many even to give samples. The published lectures preserve the oral style, omitting footnotes. A bibliographic note on pp. xiii-xiv lists Momigliano's published essays relevant to each chapter, to which interested readers will need to turn for documentation.

Edgar Krentz
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Heirs of Paul. Paul's Legacy in the New Testament and in the Church Today. By J. Christiaan Beker. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993. 146 pages. Paper. $10.00.

How does Paul fare in the church after his death—both in the past and in the present? That's the question Prof. Beker of Princeton Seminary asks, not to demonstrate a fall away from Pauline theology, but to "appreciate the distinct contributions of Paul's early interpreters" (10). The answer is multifaceted. He exam-

ines Paul in the Pastoral Epistles, Ephesians and Colossians, 2 Thessalonians, and Acts as appreciators and modifiers of Paul's thoughts in new situations.

Chapter 1 describes the two sides of his approach: a comparative method to "determine the extent to which Paul's early interpreters were able to do justice to the claims of Paul's original gospel" (16) combined with a traditio-historical component that determines how they "adapted Paul's gospel as a living and relevant voice" to meet their own day. Chapter 2 describes the difficulty Paul's gospel raised for his early interpreters because Paul correlates his gospel with the contingent situation he addresses in each letter. Thus one cannot find a center of Paul's thought or a system—though one can identify aspects of his thought: passionate thinking related to a situation; shaped by his encounter with Judaism; theocentric on an apocalyptic substrate that leads to a radical dualism between the old world and God's new world in Christ; allows no mediating positions; formulates salvation in terms of a new creation.

Beker discusses "The Historical Paul and His New Testament Interpreters" through a comparative approach in chapter 3 and a tradition-historical approach in chapter 4. He shows how the Pastoral Epistles, Acts, Colossians, Ephesians, and 2 Thessalonians appropriate, modify, and excise aspects of Paul's thought. Each preserves essential aspects of Pauline proclamation, while losing or domesticating the sharpness of Paul's situation-oriented words. Beker argues that the process was necessary to meet new situations, arose out of a desire to be faithful to the Pauline message, and yet lost significant aspects of Pauline gospel proclamation. However, they did "sense that the essence of Paul's gospel is grounded in his hermeneutical method of conjoining the abiding truth of the gospel to situation-specific contingencies." (127)

A final chapter draws the implications for contemporary appropriation of Paul and other biblical witnesses. Adaptation is a necessary burden, if we are not simply to adapt Paul's thought uncritically. This book would stimulate an important discussion in any group of clergy. It is a fascinating book that reads like a novel, if you are interested in Paul and his gospel; it is a disturbing book as you recognize the dangers of putting Paul into an historical straight jacket; it is a challenging book as it calls us to do with the Pauline gospel for our world what Johann Albrecht Bengel said about the scriptures many years ago: *te totum applica ad rem; rem totam applica ad te* (devote your entire self to the subject matter; devote the entire subject matter to yourself). This is a book to start discussion and reflection, not end it. Let it have its way.

Edgar Krentz

The Toils of Scepticism. By Jonathon Barnes. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990. 192 pages. Cloth. $34.50.

Ancient Scepticism flourished as a philosophic school from the time of Pyrrho of Elis till the fourth century. It was still alive in the time of St. Augustine [see *Contra Academicos*]. We know it primarily from the writings of Sextus Empiricus, who wrote treatises against most dogmatic disciplines. Two works (*Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, and *Against the Dogmaticians* VII-XI) discussed logic, physics, and ethics, while a third argued the impossibility of dogmatic certainty in grammar, rhetoric, geometry, arithmetic, astrology, and music (*Against the Dogmaticians* I-VI).

The Sceptics developed a sophisticated arsenal of arguments to use against almost any dogmatic position. Jonathon Barnes, Professor of Ancient Philosophy in Oxford University, examines four forms of argumentation originated by Agrippa and used by Sextus: disagreement between philosophic doctrines that leads to suspension of judgment; infinite regression of proofs and criteria, reciprocity (a form of coherence theory), and hypothetical argument (balance by equivalence of opposing views). Barnes does not discuss the mode of relativity, the fifth mode Sextus inherited from Agrippa. Rather, in his final chapter, "The sceptic's net," he argues that the four modes he discusses form a system, a system he "invents" to show the success the sceptic Agrippan modes have. For Barnes finally concludes that these sceptic modes cannot be overturned by any dogmatist position.

This is a fascinating work on ancient epistemology, clearly argued and well illustrated by citations from many ancient Greek thinkers. Barnes translates all ancient sources with precision, calls attention to the key terminology and explains its significance. This work should aid in reviving interest in the ancient sceptics, a group of thinkers often dismissed as pedestrian or without interest.

Edgar Krentz

Jewish Law from Jesus to the Mishnah: Five Studies. By E. P. Sanders. London: SCM; Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1990. xii and 404 pages. Cloth. $29.95.

E. P. Sanders, Professor of New Testament at Duke University, gathers five immensely useful studies in this volume. The first, "The Synoptic Jesus and the Law" (1-96) considers what the legal issues between Jesus and his opponents might have been. Sanders works with two assumptions he does not in fact hold: that "all the material which is attributed to Jesus in fact goes back to him, and that he was a Rabbi who studied the law and intended to stake out his own position on numerous aspects of it" (1). He examines the topics Sabbath, food, purity, offerings, tithes, temple tax, oaths and vows, blasphemy, worship in home and synagogue, fasting, and interpretation of the law. He concludes that the Synoptic Jesus "lived as a law-abiding Jew" (90). Where he differs, he remains within the parameters of Judaism of the first century—with the possible exception of the food laws in Mark 7. While Jesus was executed, it was not for being non-observant. It was rather his inclusion of sinners and his attitude toward the temple, both of which implied claims to authority, that offended his contemporaries.

The second, "Did the Pharisees Have Oral Law?" (97-130) ultimately argues that they respected tradition, but did not elevate it to the level of the written law in the first century. Even *halakot* which seemed to go back to Moses on Mt. Sinai did not achieve parity with the written law. This chapter should lead to the revision of many popular descriptions of Pharisees.

The third, "Did the Pharisees Eat Ordinary Food in Purity?" (131-254) suggests that Pharisaism was essentially a purity movement. It is thus a corrective to the position of J. Neusner and E. Rivkin. They gave special attention to corpse-impurity and fly-impurity. They developed other prescriptions to clarify the Bible. However, the Pharisees did not observe purity laws to the degree that priests did and did not impose their views on the general population. Thus they were not "legalists"; one should assess their piety on the basis of the Shema and the Eighteen Benedictions to conclude that they stressed God's mercy and forgiveness.

The fourth, "Purity, Food and Offerings in the Greek-Speaking Diaspora" (255-308), concludes that Diaspora Jews felt strong community with Palestinian Jews, though they were very conscious that they could not participate as fully in Jewish cult as Palestinian Jews. They showed that community by sending "first fruits," monetary gifts. This essay is a valuable window into an aspect of early Judaism not often discussed.

And finally, the fifth essay, "Jacob Neusner and the Philosophy of the Mishnah" (309-31), clarifies both his appreciation of the work of Neusner and his differences with him in method and the use of sources for early Judaism.

The book is heavily documented from the ancient sources and from modern scholarship, as the notes (333-70) and bibliography (371-380) make evident. There are indexes of passages, names and subjects. All in all, a wonderful book that deserves careful perusal. The reader will learn much, certainly revise overly-simple generalizations about Judaism and about the Palestinian Jew, Jesus. To recall a *bon mot* of Cadbury, it shows how easy it would be to modernize Jesus—and how much that can distort our understanding of him.

Edgar Krentz

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Briefly Noted

Hosea. The New Century Bible Commentary. By G. I. Davies (Eerdmanns, $19.99). D. attempts to make this difficult book as intelligible as possible for the non-specialist. He admits that there are many mistakes in the Hebrew text and tries to show what is behind the highly divergent modern English translations. Wolff's classic commentary gets high praise, but D. himself has written a treatment that is a model of judicious judgment and clarity. "Knowledge of God" refers to recognition of God, his actions, and his demands and can be summed up in the word "loyalty." Although he comments on the RSV, he defends a number of alternate readings and refutes many of the conjectures contained in the NEB: D. proposes "I will not be on your side" for 1:9 and "Who is so wise that he can understand these things?" in 14:9. RWK

A Century of Biblical Archaeology. By P. R. S. Moorey (Westminster/John Knox, $14.99). This fascinating survey of the relationship between Near Eastern archaeology and biblical studies in the last century or so tells the story of such well known giants as Aharoni, Albright, de Vaux, Fisher, Glueck, Kenyon, Lapp, Reisner, Wright, Yadin, and many others. Along the way one hears of the excesses of Wooley at Ur (not the site of the flood and perhaps not even of the ancient city of Ur!) and of the rash judgments of several in the Albright school over the significance of the Ebla tablets. Perhaps the most important contribution of the book is the demonstration of how the biblical record has sometimes been correlated too easily with dirt archaeology, thus obscuring the significance of the evidence that was coming out of the ground. A Dominican background may have led de Vaux too quickly to call parts of Qumran a monastery, scriptorium, and a refectory. Franken and Dever were among the first to protest against the biblicizing of Palestinian archaeology though M. remains skeptical about the goals of the so-called new archaeologists. This well-told tale describes clearly the methodological issues that were at stake and the increasing role played by the natural and social sciences. RWK

Judaism from Cyrus to Hadrian. Volume One: The Persian and Greek Periods. Volume Two: The Roman Period. By Lester L. Grabbe (Fortress, $30 each volume or $57 for the set). These two volumes survey and evaluate the literary sources and the archeological data for understanding Judaism between the 6th century B.C.E. and the second century C.E. Grabbe also provides a synthesis of the current state of research for each of the periods, with copious bibliography, and he ably summarizes the positions of all major twentieth century scholars. Despite the abundance of sources, there are many knotty problems here, including the question of whether Ezra preceded Nehemiah or vice versa. G. complicates this discussion by suggesting at several places that Ezra never existed! These reference works will be of great value for all Christian scholars since it was in these periods that major portions of the Old Testament and all of the New Testament were written. RWK

Myth and Mystery: An Introduction to the Pagan Religions of the Biblical World. By Jack Finegan (Baker, $24.95). Finegan's survey of ancient religion is wide reaching, spanning the major movements from ancient Mesopotamia through the classical period up to Manichaeism. He has chapters devoted specifically to Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Zoroastrian, Canaanite, Greek, Roman, Gnostic, Mandaean, and Manichaean religion all discussed with the same attention to historical detail as is characteristic of Finegan's work. Each chapter is well annotated and provides a concise introduction to the religious movements which formed the milieu for the religions of the Bible writers. An excellent basic isagogic resource.

Stephen A. Knapp, LSTC

Preaching Helps

Ninth Sunday after Pentecost—Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost, Series B

Lively Poets Society

"Doers of the word of God" in Greek looks just like "poets of the word of God" (check it in James 1:22, *poiētai logou*). The word itself is quick, not dead, and seeks lively.... Lively what? Don't be mere hearers, says James. Be *poiētai logou.* Be doers and performers of the word. Be practitioners and incarnators of the wondrous content of the word. Be makers and workers full of the energy of the word. Be fabricators of the word, weaving it into the warp and woof of life.

And for all that to happen, preachers are called to be poets of the word. My brief spelling dictionary says that a poem is "a rhythmical, verse composition." Period. But that is too flat and prosaic. Poets and poems are craftier than that.

Jesus was a poet, offering God's good word in powerful human words, sometimes biting, sometimes bracing, never boring. Unforgettable parables fell from his lips, and his life with all its saying and doing and suffering was the ultimate parable of God. His life was his parable, his craft, his poem.

The preacher's craft is words and life, carefully crafting his own life and the life of a community addressed by God in Jesus Christ, in the Gospels, in the letter of James, in words from pulpits Sunday by Sunday.

In this issue **Bruce Modahl** (1977 M.Div. from Christ Seminary-Seminex and 1986 D.Min. from Union Seminary in Richmond, Virginia)

authors the First Readings. Bruce has been pastor of Our Redeemer in Temple Terrace, Florida, since 1988, after serving congregations in Virginia and Missouri. He is currently enrolled in a Master's program in homiletics at Princeton Theological Seminary. Bruce is a friend of long standing, and I am delighted to welcome him to these pages. (And I hope to see him here again some time!)

The author of the Pastoral Reflections is **Barbara Wills**, Pastor of St. Paul's Maple Leaf Lutheran Church in Elma, Iowa, since 1989. Her hobbies include writing, doing word games, and needlework. I suppose word games and writing are like needlework, adding word to word and paragraph to paragraph, enriching the design with texture and color until the story is told as economically and powerfully as possible. Barbara writes that she is "beginning to think our Christian faith needs to be understood in terms of story." We need to discern the ways God weaves the strands of our lives into the story God is writing. The pattern is given in the story of Jesus, and now we are seeing some of the infinite variations on that story.

Barbara has written for Preaching Helps before, and I hope she will agree to write again in a future issue.

Thanks to Bruce and Barbara, serving congregations in the middle of the continent and on one of its outer edges, for their poetics on behalf of all of us, wherever we have been placed in this tapestry of God. Tapestry? This started with poetry.

Let me close by invoking the blessing of our God upon all you poets and fabricators of the word.

Yours,

Robert H. Smith
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Ninth Sunday after Pentecost
July 24, 1994

Psalm 23
Jeremiah 23:1-6
Ephesians 2:13-22
Mark 6:30-34

First Reading

These readings are about the God who turns things inside out beginning with Zedekiah, the king in Jerusalem when Jeremiah delivers his "woe to the shepherds." Actually, Zedekiah's name was Mattaniah. Zedekiah was his throne name, given him by the Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar, who put him there. Zedekiah mean "My righteousness is Yahweh."

Zedekiah was the last in a succession of tottering kings who ruled in Jerusalem after the death of Josiah in 609 B.C.E. As the Assyrian hegemony weakened, Josiah was in open revolt. Pharaoh Neco marched his Egyptian armies northward to support Assyria against their main adversary, Babylon. Josiah led his armies against Neco and died in battle. His son Jehoahaz assumed the throne but was quickly deposed by the Egyptians who put another of Josiah's sons, Jehoiakim, on the throne. After Babylon won the contest for king of the hill, Judah revolted. Jehoiakim died and his young son, Jehoiachin, was made king. He surrendered, was deposed and was carried into exile in the first deportation from Jerusalem. His uncle, Zedekiah, another son of Josiah, was made king by the Babylonian overlord.

This is the succession of shepherds upon which Jeremiah declared God's woe. None of their scheming and alliance-seeking with Egypt will do any good. God will lead the exiles home. God will raise up for David a righteous branch. God, not Nebuchadnezzar, will put him on the throne. God, not Nebuchadnezzar, will give him his throne name, Yahweh Tsidkenu, Yahweh Is Our Righteousness, which is just the reverse of Zedekiah's name. Jeremiah turns Zedekiah's name inside out to indicate what God will do to rescue his people.

In the Gospel we witness a God who turns inside out "to raise up" (Jer 23:4) a shepherd for God's people. The Great Insider turns out in human form and is overwhelmed by the press and schedule which overwhelm us. He takes refuge in the open country, the sort of place where sheep might graze. The people, like sheep in search of a shepherd, find him. He has compassion for them and teaches them. He is ample grazing ground.

The good shepherding delivered by this Jesus turns outsiders in. So says the apostle in the second reading. Jesus has broken down the dividing wall of hostility (v. 14). He did so by his cross. He put the hostility to death in his own death. Raised from death, he came proclaiming peace as no one could before him. And after him we can too proclaim his peace, since in his wake outsiders are no longer "strangers and aliens" but "citizens with the saints and members of the household of God..." (v. 19). BKM

Pastoral Reflections

It's been a long week. There have been too many phone calls, too many emergencies, too many people needing something. You're exhausted. You put a relaxation tape on the machine, run a warm bath, get ready to unwind. And then the phone rings again. Someone just died.

Shepherding the sheep can be a tiring business. We need time to get away: to reflect, to rest, and to pray. Jesus and the disciples knew all about this necessity. They went away to a deserted place to rest. But when they got there, they were met by more sheep with more needs.

We have come to recognize that human bodies don't run in perpetual motion. They must stop sometimes for rest and refueling. Sometimes they require mending. They crave regular exercise. Occasionally they just need to lie inert. Shepherds need to exercise good stewardship of the body. It's the only option if we are to stay well and have strength for doing ministry.

But this isn't always an easy thing to do. As a pastor, I read this passage from Mark as a challenge. It reminds me that the hurts and pain of others don't always fit my convenience or my schedule. It encourages me to be patient and

compassionate when someone comes to my study wanting to talk when I'm in the middle of something "really important." It shows me that Jesus put people first and responded to their needs before his own.

But this passage doesn't just speak to pastors. The disciples also required rest, and they, too, had to put that need on hold for awhile. As the people of God, the members of our congregations also have to be reminded and encouraged to stir from their fatigue to reach out to those in need with the comfort of God's word of love: with the compassion of a listening ear or a warm blanket or a bank loan.

A man in the inner city of St. Louis refused to move away some years ago when things got rough in his neighborhood. Instead, he and his family live there, running a business, renovating houses, and remaining as a stabilizing influence with the local young people. They offer compassion and help to some sheep who are badly in need of a shepherd.

This is the example our Lord set for us. Our hurting world will continue to revert to chaos unless the people of God follow the example of our shepherd and exercise radical compassion—even when it is inconvenient. Just as the word of God brought order out of chaos at creation, so the Word made flesh can bring order out of the chaos of our modern world. God has spoken the Word. We are called to follow it. BMW

Tenth Sunday after Pentecost
July 31, 1994

Psalm 145
Exodus 24:3-11
Ephesians 4:1-7, 11-16
John 6:1-15

First Reading

The first reading describes a ceremony at the foot of Mt. Sinai which would put to shame the most elaborate rituals of the Masons, Lamdha Chi Alpha fraternity, and Sigma Chi sorority put together. An altar and twelve pillars are set up; sacrifices; blood swirling in basins, half of which is thrown sizzling against the altar, the other half thrown out on the people. How disgusting!

Barbara Brown Taylor describes the following scene. The cup bearer approaches a cherubic six year-old girl, tips the cup to her lips and says, "The blood of Christ." The little girl looks inside, pushes the cup away, and says, "Yuck, no thanks, I don't want any." It is rather unsettling after all. Until someone says, "It's just wine." Don't let them say that; better it be disgusting than that.

There must be something innate in blood ceremonies. Mark Twain in *Huckleberry Finn* describes the ceremony in which Tom Sawyer's gang prick their fingers to mingle their blood in order to sign the dark oath they took. I remember something similar from my boyhood. Whether we were influenced by a movie or book I don't recall. What I do remember is all of us boys in the neighborhood drawing blood on our fingers and then pressing them together to become blood brothers with one another.

The whole covenant ceremony in Exodus is capped by a meal. J. P. Hyatt in his commentary on Exodus in the New Century Bible series says that זבחים שלמים, rendered as "offering of well being" in the NRSV, would be translated better as "communion sacrifice." "In later times," he writes, "the characteristic feature of this type of sacrifice was that it was designed to create a union between God and the offerer. The fat of the animal sacrifice was burned upon the altar, part of

the animal was given to the priests, and the rest was eaten by those who made the offering" (256). The blood ceremony would have had the same effect of creating union between those involved.

A pattern of promise and fulfillment is established in the Exodus account: the promise of communion with God; its fulfillment in the covenant rites. The pattern is continued in the second reading and Gospel.

The Exodus reading ends with the promise fulfilled, "they beheld God, and they ate and drank." Certainly, that is how the Gospel reading ends as well. The crowd follows Jesus because they are hungry for God's presence. They end up eating together and beholding God in Jesus Christ. BKM

Pastoral Reflections

When the young boy left home that morning with his five barley loaves and two fish, he had no idea they would be used to feed five thousand people. He took his lunch with him when he went out for the day, much as a child today would carry a couple of sandwiches, some chips and fruit, and perhaps a few cookies. What would they be among so many people?

And who was this child who gave up his lunch so that Jesus could use it to make a miracle? We are told almost nothing about him, but anyone who has known a young boy can imagine the dirty knees, the tousled hair, the scuffed sandals. We can almost see the shy offer of bread and fish—such a little bit of food. What good could they do among so many?

Jesus picked up the loaves and the fish and held them in his hands. He lifted them reverently and gave thanks. And then he divided them into pieces and distributed them among those who were seated. They were plenty among so many. In fact, there were twelve baskets of fragments left over. How could five loaves and two fish provide such bounty?

Jesus said, "Gather up the fragments left over, so that nothing may be lost" (v. 12). Nothing was insignificant to Jesus: Not five thousand hungry people who interrupted his time alone with his disciples, not a small boy with dirty knees, not five little barley loaves and two fish, not even leftover fragments of food.

We can get sidetracked into wondering how Jesus did this miracle, or if he really did do it. But this tiny vignette gives us a glimpse of what the kingdom of God is all about. The greatest in the kingdom is a small child. The measure we give is the measure we shall receive. Nothing is too small or insignificant to be appreciated and respected. Compassion, generosity, and hospitality are more important than setting a fine table laden with enormous amounts of food.

In our affluent society we confuse quantity with quality. We think we must have large amounts of food available before we can invite a friend to dinner. We suppose that we must serve a variety of treats when friends come for an evening. We believe we can only give when we have an abundance, whether of money or things. But a cup of coffee or tea served with a smile and a listening heart are far more satisfying than a feast that honors only the host.

The love of God poured out for us in Christ Jesus multiplies as we share "insignificant" things with ordinary people in the common moments of everyday life. BMW

Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost
August 7, 1994

Psalm 78:23-29
Exodus 16:2-15
Ephesians 4:17-24
John 6:24-35

First Reading

It could be a standard Barbara Walters interview question: "If you were bread, what kind would you be?" That, more or less, was the question put to Jesus. He says, "I am the bread of life." What a claim he makes for himself! He is also being interviewed, not by Barbara Walters, but by the crowds he had fed just the day before with bread and fish on the grassy hillside.

The night after the feeding, Jesus' disciples cross the Sea of Galilee in a boat. Jesus follows in a more unconventional manner, walking on the water. The next morning when the crowds look around and realize both Jesus and the disciples are gone, they follow in boats which had come from Tiberias. We are not told why the boats came. Neither are we told how it is the crowds convinced the boat owners to take them. We are just told they went. Can you picture what a vast armada it must have been, even if all 5,000 didn't made the trip? And I suppose that would be right. Some of them would have walked back home, back to work and families. Even so, we have quite an armada crossing to Capernaum in search of Jesus. Why did they come? Perhaps that sounds silly. Jesus had just fed them. They were hungry again. Some of them didn't come for the right reason, no doubt about it. But they came to the bread of life.

When our family visited Norway we drove the little road up the mountain to visit the relatives in Modalsli and then went to Modal, the farm from which my father came, inhabited now only by sheep. But at one time those mountains and valleys were filled with people in farming communities. The road up that mountain is gravel, barely a lane wide. If you meet another car, one of you will have to back up to the occasional wide spot. What so impressed me was finding out that road was not built until 1957. Before that, for hundreds of years before that, there was no road in or out. The only way was by boat. A ferry traveled a regular route on the fjord bringing mail, people to and from town, farm produce out, other goods in, and people to church on Sunday. The families would dress up in their best, walk down the mountain to the fjord, board the ferry, and go to church, to the bread of life. Why did they go? They were hungry. No doubt some went for the wrong reason there, too. But they went.

We also are drawn. Not over lakes or fjords. Not a one in our congregations will come by boat. But we come to the bread of life. Why? Because we are hungry. No matter how much breakfast we have beforehand, or how well fed we are, we are hungry for life, yearning for it to be full and meaningful, and so we come to the bread of life. No doubt some of us come for the wrong reasons, too. But we come.

And coming, Jesus makes us a part of his bread distribution program on behalf of all those hungry for the life he gives. BKM

Pastoral Reflections

People in the crowd that sought Jesus out after he fed them in the wilderness are filled with questions. John records a dialogue between Jesus and these people that is similar to the ones he had with Nicodemus and the Samaritan woman. In each case Jesus is questioned and then gives an answer intended to draw the questioner into faith.

The crowd asks when Jesus came to this side of the sea. They know Jesus did not leave in the boat with the disciples. They themselves had only been able to sail across the sea when some other boats came from Tiberias. By what magic did Jesus arrive on this side?

But Jesus knows the motive behind their inquiry. They have eaten free bread, and they want more. The question behind their vocalization is, "What's in it for me?" Jesus is blunt. They are not interested in him because they understood the heavenly sign of the sharing of bread in the wilderness, but because they have filled their stomachs and now want more. He urges them to look beyond the material and seek the eternal.

So they ask, "What must we do?" Like us, they want a list, a job description, written directions. If it's all written out for us we don't have to take any real responsibility. We have an out if we fail. We can find a loophole in the law. But again Jesus points to himself. There is no list, only a person. Believing in him is the work that pleases God and leads to eternal life.

Still, that is not enough for these people. Who is Jesus that they should commit everything to him? They compare him to the renowned Moses who provided signs in the wilderness. Moses gave something of substance—not only manna, but a list. So what are you going to give us, Jesus?

Again, Jesus corrects their focus. It was not Moses, a mere human, who provided the manna. It was God. Even then, it didn't last forever. It had to be gathered each day or it would spoil. The people who ate it eventually died. Nor could their "list," the Commandments, save them. History had demonstrated that. Only the true bread, only the person of Jesus, can give the life that never ends.

"Sir, give us this bread always" (v. 24). Not Lord, but sir. The final verse of our pericope brings Jesus' assurance that "Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty" (v. 35). But to the crowd he goes on to say: "But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe" (v. 36). They have come out where they started: Give us more of the manna, the bread in the wilderness that gives temporary satisfaction, and leave us to our eternal starvation. BMW

Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost
August 14, 1994

Psalm 34:1-8
1 Kings 19:4-8
Ephesians 4:30-5:2
John 6:41-51

First Reading

Long about the time the *Lutheran Book of Worship* appeared with its updated version of the Lord's Prayer, a church periodical carried an article showing the evolution of the Lord's Prayer in English over the centuries. The point was that revising the Lord's Prayer was not so radical as it seemed. The prayer had changed as the language had changed. The fourth petition in a sixteenth century version read, "Glue us this day our supersubstantial bread."

Supersubstantial bread is the kind Elijah was fed in the wilderness. What makes it supersubstantial is not only that it was provided by an angel but "he went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights..." (v. 8). Supersubstantial bread is Jesus himself, the bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of it will go in the strength of it not forty days and forty nights but forever.

Supersubstantial bread is for those who have had enough of what life dishes out. Richard Nelson points out the word "enough" (רַב) frames this pericope (*First and Second Kings* [John Knox Press, 1987], p. 126). Elijah says, "It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life" (v. 4). God's answer to that is to send him on a long (רַב) journey. He must eat the bread provided or the journey may prove too long (v. 7).

According to Nelson and DeVries (*1 Kings* [Word Books, 1985], pp. 236-37) Elijah is a burned out prophet. He has had enough. And who hasn't had enough at one time or another? Ephesians spells out the sorts of things we do and feel when we have had enough: bitterness, wrath, anger, wrangling, slander, and malice.

God's answer is to give a purpose: a journey and a direction. For Elijah it is the journey on to

Horeb and then back to Israel and a meeting with Elisha, Jehu, and Hazael. For the Ephesians it is the life journey of imitating God by living in the love established by Christ. The purpose is to live as a part of that eschatological reality.

There are times when we have had enough. God's answer sounds harsh. It is reminiscent of the time Jeremiah complained to God about how hard his job was. He's had enough. God's response was, Are you tired of running with the footmen in the plain? How will you do against horse and rider in the thickets of the Jordan? (Jer 12:5-6).

It sounds harsh, but what matters is that God has not had enough. God is the source of our calling and the source of our strength. What makes it good news is that God has not had enough of us. We certainly cannot have enough of him. When put that way, it's a wonder people aren't doubling back into the line for communion. "Glue us this day our supersubstantial bread." BKM

Pastoral Reflections

Our Gospel text for today floods our minds with widely diverse images. There is the image of warm, fragrant loaves of rich, brown bread, fresh from the oven, drawing us like magnets to eat and enjoy. We may see in our inner eye the cannibalistic depiction of mutilated human flesh being eaten by other humans—a picture that appalls and sickens. Or perhaps Jesus' prophetic paint brush composes in our minds a view of the cross, where his tortured flesh is being consumed by human sin, so that we may gather at an immaculate table to ingest the bread and wine permeated with his body and blood.

Jesus had said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven." The "Jews" object. They murmur among themselves. They are those "insiders" who know Jesus' origins ("Who does he think he is, anyway? We know his folks. We know he came from Nazareth!"), who know the history ("The bread from heaven was the manna fed to our ancestors back in the time of Moses"), who know the Torah (The Lord God said, "I am the Lord your God; you shall have no other gods"). They know it all.

Maybe they know too much. Or perhaps they really don't know enough. A little knowledge is a dangerous thing, and it can lead us to the wrong conclusions. To know only a little, and to think that little is all, can be fatal. The "Jews" had some head knowledge about God, but they didn't know God by heart.

Jesus says to them, "Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me" (v. 45). The "Jews" knew some things, but their knowing was limited, and they let it close their ears, blind their hearts, and limit their vision. They were unable to hear and know what God was trying to show them. They had made up their minds and didn't want to be confronted with the facts that Jesus tried to show them. Like mules that refused to be led, they dug in their heels and resisted the guiding hand of God that tried to draw them to the bread of life.

Who are the "Jews" in today's church? Maybe "they are us"? Do we know too much about the Jesus of our traditions and not enough about the living Word God speaks to us now? Do we know too much about the history of the past, but close our eyes to the working of God in the present? Or are we looking and listening with open hearts, willing to be drawn to the Bread of life? BMW

Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost
August 21, 1994

Psalm 34:9-14
Proverbs 9:1-6
Ephesians 5:15-20
John 6:51-58

First Reading

The movie "Dead Poets' Society" and the hundreds of sermons which have referred to that movie have popularized a phrase from an old Latin poet. The phrase is "*carpe diem.*" "Seize the day" is what it means. Days are in limited supply. Make the most of each. "Seize the day. *Carpe diem.*" Sublime advice.

A "Hagar the Horrible" cartoon depicts Hagar's sidekick, Lucky Eddie, climbing the mountain to the wise man sitting at its top. "Wise man," says Lucky Eddie, "tell me your best advice for life." "*Carpe diem,*" answers the wise man to Lucky Eddie. Lucky Eddie relays the message down. "Hagar, he says to eat fish." Ridiculous advice.

Ridiculous, but that is not far from what the crowds heard from Jesus on the mountain side. He fed them fish. Bread and fish. It's still the crowd from the 5,000 whom Jesus fed, hanging around, waiting, most of them for another free lunch. Jesus gave them a sign; a sign, he claims, of a much greater and more satisfying meal. But the sign must have been as hard for them to decipher as it is for us to figure out the Latin. So, what they heard was, "Eat fish."

"Not 'eat fish,' you've got it all wrong," Jesus says. "What I said was, 'Eat flesh.'" *Manduca carnem meam.* "Eat my flesh" is the advice for life Jesus gives. And the advice goes from sublime to the ridiculous to offensive, scandalous at best. "What does he mean, 'eat his flesh'? How can he give us his flesh to eat?" Jesus is not sitting with disciples around a table with bread in his hands and a chalice of wine in front of him when he says what he says. He is just standing there in front of them in all his flesh and blood ordinariness. "The bread that I give for the life of the world is my flesh... whoever eats this bread"—and I picture Jesus here grasping himself, seizing himself, not *carpe diem*, seize the day, but *carpe carnem*, seize the flesh—seizing himself and saying, "whoever eats this bread will live forever."

Carpe Jesu. Seize Jesus. They did try to seize him after he had fed them. They tried to seize him on the Galilee mountainside and make him king to supply their free lunch, a fish king of sorts. Later they did seize him on another mountain, Golgotha, because he quit the free lunch program. They literally squeezed the life out of him.

And irony of ironies, that is exactly what God gives. Life. Jesus' blood is poured out and his body is broken in the squeeze so that his life might be released for us. By it we are seized. Seized by God. *Carpendi Dei.* And not just us. The cosmos, Jesus says. The whole universe is seized by God through the body and blood of this one. We are sinners in the hands of a God so in love with us he would do even this to get his hands on us. This is also what great lengths God will go to be held himself in our hands. That's what happens in the Eucharist. We seize him back, not by force, but in faith we grasp him back.

Connected so to the living God, seized by him, we are transformed. It's not necessary for us to seize the day and siphon off its life. We, rather, can give it, pass it on, as the folk song goes. Connected to God's life, *carpe diem* itself is transformed from "seize the day" to "enjoy the day'; God's gift in endless supply. BKM

Pastoral Reflections

Throughout this Gospel narrative Jesus admonishes his listeners to eat his flesh and drink his blood, for his flesh is true food and his blood is true drink, and the one who ingests Jesus will live. Those who heard these words found them repugnant. Jesus' admonition suggested cannibalism. Besides, the Jewish law forbade the eating of flesh with the life in it (i.e. the blood) as well as the drinking of blood (Lev 17:1-13).

However, the concept of ingesting Jesus, the Word made flesh, draws on ancient precedents. Jeremiah says, "Your words were found and I ate

them, and your words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart..." (Jer 15:16). Ezekiel, too, speaks of eating words. He was given a scroll covered with words of "lamentation and mourning" and told to eat it. "So I opened my mouth and he gave me the scroll to eat.... Then I ate it, and in my mouth it was as sweet as honey" (Ezek 3:2, 3b). And in Psalm 34:8 we find the psalmist inviting us to "taste and see that the Lord is good."

These various passages suggest that it is in taking the word of God into ourselves that we are enabled to experience first hand the goodness of the Lord. Jesus doesn't want his followers to merely stand apart and think about the things he said, or discuss the metaphysical aspects of his teachings, or agonize over whether or not our Christology is pristine. Such activities may have their place. But they are dry and barren, and to try to depend on them for our salvation is a fruitless effort.

What our Lord wants is for us to experience him, to chew him up and swallow, and in doing so to take him into ourselves. Our Lord wants us to feel the compassion he feels, to have his love touch us on the inside, to savor the sweetness of his mercy and forgiveness. Jesus wants us to sense the sorrow that tore at his heart over the unrepentant of Jerusalem. He wants us to know the gut-wrenching compassion he felt for those who were like sheep without a shepherd.

Jesus wants to be on our insides, at the center of our being. It is only here that he can give us the fullness of life that he so desperately wants to share with us. So eat, drink, and live. BMW

Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost
August 28, 1994

Psalm 34:15-22
Joshua 24:1-2a, 14-18
Ephesians 5:21-31
John 6:60-69

First Reading

The oak of Moreh at Shechem has a long history in Israel. It is a Canaanite shrine. Yet in the shadow of the Canaanite totem Abraham built an altar to the Lord God when he passed through the land (Genesis 12). His grandson, Jacob, would do the same after making peace with his brother Esau (Genesis 33). He bought a plot there to which his remains would be carried from Egypt for burial (Josh 24:32). Much later Shechem figures as the place Rehoboam went for his coronation following the death of his father Solomon. 1 Kings 12:1 records that "all Israel had come to Shechem to make him king." Shechem still had a part to play in the pact which bound the tribes together.

The act of putting away (סוּר), deposing the gods from before them, apparently involved burying the gods. The choice Joshua poses to the people turns Shechem into a graveyard for the gods. The Canaanite totem, the oak of Moreh, becomes the grave marker. Gen 35:1-4 refers to a ceremony in which Jacob buried (טָמַן) all the gods of his household "under the oak that was near Shechem."

Martin Noth (*The History of Israel*, p. 92) thinks the biblical evidence indicates a ceremony was observed regularly at Shechem. The people came to the graveyard of the gods to confirm the burial and to pledge renewed faith to Yahweh and to each other.

In another graveyard, centuries removed, a place called Golgotha, we believe God in Christ was buried by those who chose other gods. We believe he was buried by our choosing other gods.

The ceremony at Shechem reminds me of the ceremony we perform at regular intervals, every Sunday in fact, in which we face the baptismal font and by confession put off our idolatries

and confirm our burial with Christ. Then from the depths of that confession, as though in the midst of a watery grave, we hear the words of forgiveness, the words of God's choice of us. We affirm our resurrection with Christ. Later in the service we pledge our renewed faith to God in the words of the creed. The covenant ceremony is sealed with a meal in which we are fed Jesus' own body and blood. God's graveyard becomes the place where we are born.

The reading from Ephesians gives an opportunity to deal with a text many of us studiously avoid or joke about for weddings. In an article in the April 1986 *Currents* entitled "Beating the Wedding-Sermon Blues: A New Look at Intimacy," Pastor Margaret Gary acknowledges she always assumed the text affirmed stereotypical roles for men and women. "In fact," she writes, the apostle "encourages Christian marriage partners to do just the opposite: to become intimate with each other and to strengthen the marriage by sharing in each other's approach to life, to bond by entering into and experiencing the gender-assigned characteristics of their spouse...."

Gary's approach is thought and sermon provoking. If you have your old issues of *CTM* on the shelf this one is well worth getting down. (Reread Paul Bauermeister's "The Lazarus Lesson" while you're at it.) BKM

Pastoral Reflections

It was a Saturday in spring, and my dad was taking me shopping for a new Easter outfit. How exciting! I was seventeen or eighteen, and for my father to help me choose an outfit made me feel very grown up. Usually we went shopping as a family with my mother and perhaps my younger brother along. Or my mother and I would go together. But to have my dad to myself for the day, and to have him interested enough to help me choose clothes—well, it was special.

The only fly in the ointment was that Dad was dressed for working in his basement workshop—old flannel shirt, stained slacks, shoes that had paint spatters from bygone projects, and an old floppy hat. We were going to a nice department store, and Dad's choice of clothes didn't quite project the sophisticated impression I felt was so important. I remember a sense of embarrassment that overshadowed this otherwise joyous event. But we went, and I decided it was in my best interests not to make an issue of his clothes. I have lived to be thankful. My father died several years ago, and this time we spent together remains as a cherished memory. The clothes he wore and those I bought are long gone. But the love we shared as father and daughter lasted and grew stronger over the years.

Reading the Gospel lesson for today reminded me of this incident from my youth. Some of Jesus' disciples were offended by his teachings, and "because of this many of [them] turned back and no longer went about with him" (v. 66). How many times are we offended by Jesus, or by those who are his beloved children? How many times have we put appearance before compassion, prejudice before repentance? Perhaps another person's politics causes us to recoil. Maybe their theology is too conservative. We just don't want to be seen with a person whose looks or ideas aren't sophisticated enough.

Appearances and politics change with the generations. Theologies and ideologies will come and go. But the Word of God remains forever. When Jesus asked the twelve if they, too, wanted to leave because of his words, Peter answered, "Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life" (v. 68).

We may find Jesus' teachings hard and sometimes offensive. We may not be comfortable with all those who are our neighbor and whom we are called to love. But it is only through following this Holy One of God that we can come to eternal life. We will live to be thankful when we remain faithful. Our relationship with our Lord will grow stronger as the years pass. BMW

Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost
September 4, 1994

Psalm 15
Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-8
Ephesians 6:10-20
Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

First Reading

The juxtaposition of first reading and Gospel is striking. In Deuteronomy 4 Israel is urged to observe all the laws "for this will show your wisdom and discernment to the peoples...." Mark's description of those who keep the law makes them sound ridiculous. And if that is not Mark's intention, that is still how Christian interpreters and preachers have made them sound if by nothing other than the tone of voice used in reading about all that washing.

Donald Juel in his commentary, *Mark* (Augsburg New Testament Commentary) argues persuasively that the issue of washing hands was not ridiculous. We slander our Jewish neighbors when we give that impression. Moreover, we miss an opportunity for a clear statement as to the difference between Jew and Christian and the new claim being made by followers of Jesus Christ. It is not an issue of the written law over against the oral law. As Juel points out, "The tradition of the elders was not an attempt to bury the commands of God in trivia but to apply the Torah to every facet of life.... Washing of hands is a mark of respect for every aspect of God's created order; it signals the desire to bring mealtime under the sacred canopy of the Torah" (102-3).

Jesus' followers believe the sacred canopy is cast over life by Jesus Christ. That is necessary, according to Jesus, because the resistance to the sacred is greater than can be overcome by ritual or traditional washing. In fact, human nature being what it is, we people will find a way to turn the law against the purpose for which it was issued. Hence Paul's conundrum in discovering himself to be covetous of obedience to the law and by that a law breaker (Rom 7:7-12). The problem is greater than what can be addressed by such a washing. Ours is a heart problem, a *cardiosclerosis* and worse. As the apostle points out in the second reading, our struggle is with "the cosmic powers of this present darkness."

We need a new heart. Jesus is the *cor Dei*, the heart of God that is *pro me*, for me. The cosmic powers are dethroned and our hard hearts are transplanted by a washing in Jesus' death and resurrection. Our baptism is the washing which goes to the heart of the matter, for in it we die and are reborn. In the power of that baptism we go to the heart of the matter daily in the ritual of confession and forgiveness, drowning our sins by repentance and rising forgiven. As we cling to Christ by faith, his righteousness, or heart if you will, is imputed to us. BKM

Pastoral Reflections

Some scribes and Pharisees "noticed" that some of Jesus' disciples were eating without first washing their hands. What was going on inside the hearts of these people that caused them to "notice" a fault in others? Jesus told them that the defilement was not on the hands of the disciples. Instead, it was within their own hearts. It was the defilement that caused them to "notice."

In fact, Jesus states unequivocally that all defilement comes from within a person; all sin starts in the heart. There is an old saying that "beauty is in the eye of the beholder." We can turn that around to state that too often "evil is in the eye of the beholder" as well. The thing that enters a person is neutral until translated by the mind and the heart. Some people always see the glass half full. To others it is always half empty. Some people see demons behind every tree. Others see only angels.

The Spanish Inquisition and the Salem witch hunts were historic episodes in which people who claimed to be of God noticed "evil" within others that were reflections of their own fears and misjudgments. Their stated intention, like those of the scribes and Pharisees, was to keep sin and defilement at bay. But the result was the killing of many innocent people. Judgment belongs to God alone. Our task as God's people is to love and forgive and to set our hearts and minds on

God. The pure in heart shall see God (Mt 5:8), but those filled with jealousy, pride, fear, and other evil motivations will see only sin.

We live in a time when we know that certain viruses and bacteria entering our bodies can cause disease. We know that much that goes into a person through the eyes and ears seems to plant the seeds of evil within some people: pornography, television shows that celebrate immorality, news broadcasts about violent and degrading events. It is important that we protect the young, whose minds and hearts are not yet formed, and that we fill their minds and our own with beautiful and wholesome things. But we also need to recognize the truth of Jesus' words. Evil comes from within our own hearts when we have a misplaced trust in something other than our Lord, and when we project our own fear, jealousy, greed, and a host of other sinful motivations, onto others. When our focus and trust is on Jesus, our motivations will be pure and there will be no room in our hearts for hate-filled judgments. BMW

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost
September 11, 1994

Psalm 146
Isaiah 35:4-7a
James 1:17-22 (23-25) 26-27
Mark 7:31-37

First Reading

A uniting theme for these three readings is suggested by James' admonition, "be doers of the word" (*poētai logou*).

Onomatopoeic words do what they signify. Words like moo, gobble, cock-a-doodle-do, and buzz are onomatopoeic. But beyond "sounds like" words, words are onomatopoeic when they do to us what they say. Edgar Allen Poe has a poem entitled "The Bells," much of which is a repetition of the title. When the poem is read aloud with the proper cadence and inflection one begins to feel caught up in the ringing of some great cathedral bells, only they are too close. You're right in the bell tower with them and will go mad if they don't stop soon. Onomatopoeic words do to us what they say.

God's word is onomatopoeic. It does what it says. In the beginning when the earth is formless and void God says "let there be light and there was light." Marvelous! But God's people couldn't bear to hear the word directly from God (Deut 5:25-26; 18:16). Maybe it is because God was laying down the law at the time—and we should know from talking to children, if from no other source, that laying down the law is always unbearable, always sounds like yelling, whether the voice is raised or not. God's bare-knuckled word is too much for us. God, therefore, gloves his word in the flesh of a prophet. God does that so he might grasp us. The prophet's words in the first reading continue to grasp us with hope, continue to give encouragement to exiles. The words themselves unstop eyes and ears, are waters breaking forth in the desert.

God gloves his word in the flesh of his son. He is the one who remains obedient, doesn't try to wiggle free of God's grasp even though the cross is a situation to try to wiggle out of. He endures cross and resurrection in order that he might be for us God's kid glove. He is the one sacrificed so that we might be gently handled. He is not God's kick to get us back in line but God's kiss to woo us into God's embrace. His word of endearment is "'Ephphatha,' that is, 'Be opened.'" He speaks that word to stopped up ears and blocked up graves. His word does what it says. They are opened.

Trusting him, we are onomatopoeic, doers of the word. James makes clear that means living according to the ethic, the lifestyle of the kingdom of God in contrast to the old order surrounding us. That ethic means ridding ourselves of certain behaviors, and on the positive side it means caring for those in need. BKM

Pastoral Reflections

"Loose lips sink ships." This old military phrase came to mind as I read Jesus' warning to those who had brought the deaf man to him to be healed. He ordered them to tell no one.

But apparently Jesus' healing of the man loosened more tongues than his, because "the more he ordered them, the more zealously they proclaimed it" (v. 36).

Jesus didn't want news of his power to spread because it wasn't yet time. People didn't understand what his ministry was really about. They were looking for an earthly king to give them bread and make life easy. The more good Jesus did for them, the greater their expectations became, and the more eagerly they sought his help. News and gossip no doubt intermingled and spread like wildfire.

The great irony is that now is the time for tongues to be loose. Now is the time for us to spread the word of God's love. Yet the church in the northern hemisphere, the church in the "west" in particular, is declining for lack of zeal in this important area of ministry. We hold workshops on evangelism to try to stir the dead, dry bones of apathy. We study the problem and write books and articles about it. We use our best minds to develop strategies that are implemented "from the top down" upon those who sit in the pews.

Perhaps what we really need is not a new strategy or another workshop, but a revival. Perhaps if we encountered Jesus again as those did who witnessed Jesus' first miracles, there would be no stopping the loose tongues. If people experienced Jesus as alive in their lives there would be no stopping the spread of such news!

What we need are not so much new techniques as renewed faith. The first Christians didn't have telephones, televisions, fax machines, or expensive curricula, yet they turned the globe upside down as the fire of faith raced through their world. What they had was conviction and the power of the Holy Spirit burning in their hearts.

Our task is to stir up faith, to call to the Breath to breathe life into the dry bones, to preach a living Christ who is still at work in the church, and the world, today. BMW

Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost
September 18, 1994

Psalm 116:1-8
Isaiah 50:4-10
James 2:1-5, 8-10, 14-18
Mark 8:27-35

First Reading

There is no other place to start than with the scandal presented in what Luther called the epistle of straw. "What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you?" (James 2:14 NRSV) *Mē dunatai hē pistis sōsai auton* is the Greek. "Such a faith is not able to save him, is it?" The NRSV version states it more blatantly. "Can faith save you?" Well, of course. That's what we've always believed and proclaimed. "Apart from works of law lest anyone should boast." In one sermon or another I heard about the old Lutheran pastor from Iowa, who, on his death bed, professed certainty of his salvation because he couldn't remember having done a single good work. Here James is telling us otherwise.

James goes on to detail the problem with a faith which has no impact on the way a person lives. Casey Jones, when he was a professor of Old Testament at Seminex, preached a sermon in chapel in which he made the bold assertion (and I hope my memory does his statement justice) that while we cannot justify ourselves before God we must justify ourselves before one another. We are accountable to one another and responsible for each other. Faith must create some sort of "therefore" for the way a person shall now live. Something that shows.

What shows does seem to be the crux of the matter. "Show me your faith apart from your works, and I by my works will show you my faith," James concludes. The word translated "show" is *deiknumi*, which in this context means explain or prove something (BAGD). What sort of showing do we get from the servant in the first reading or Jesus in the Gospel? Or we might ask, Is there nothing showing?

There is something sad about the fact that U.N. General Secretary Dag Hammarskjöld's friends and co-workers were surprised by the poignant faith revealed in his journal *Markings* when it was published after his death. Did none of that show through during his life? Or was it only apparent after his death, after it was pointed out to them? But before you think I'm being harsh, I am well aware this is how it was with Jesus. It is only after the cross that people understand.

What shows is the crux of the matter. What shows at the crux is a crucified and risen savior. In him the redemptive reign of God is at hand. It is only at the cross disciples finally understand what he was trying to show them all along. Before that Peter got himself on the wrong side from Jesus. He plays Satan's part, tempting Jesus to be the Son of God in some way other than the cross. What would show then? Not our salvation. Jesus places Peter in the spot occupied by disciples, behind him. In that spot we occupy by faith (God's faithfulness first and foremost) what we show is the cross by our actions undertaken in Jesus' stead for the sake of others. BKM

Pastoral Reflections

A couple of things grab my attention in this text. The first is the broadening of Jesus' audience from Peter (who names him Messiah and then rebukes him for his "negative" forewarnings), to the rest of the disciples (whom he sternly warns not to reveal his identity and then tells of his coming sufferings, death, and resurrection), to the crowd (who are told that to follow him will mean taking a path of sacrifice and suffering).

At each level, Jesus shatters the fragile bubble of expectation held by those to whom he speaks. For the disciples, who want a Messiah of glory and seats of honor, there will be the darkness of rejection by those in high places and the death of their hopes for a new government under their management and control. For the crowd, who want bread and fish and a life of ease, there will be danger, persecution, and struggle. In each case there is the promise of life (his resurrection in v. 31 and the finding of life in v. 35), but not the glory of earthly kings nor the ease of universal convenience and gratification.

The second thing that forces itself upon me is that finding life (living in faith, being followers, going the way of Jesus—however it is we name this life with God) requires the struggle. There must be that walk through the darkness. Like the crowds, we want to deny that and try to find a way around it. But we can only walk by faith when we enter the valley. It is in the "valley of death" that God is with us.

Jesus could not have been God's Messiah if he had avoided the rejection and the cross. Without his death, there could have been no resurrection. The ones who want to follow him must also embrace the suffering: "For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it" (v. 35).

This was not a new idea that entered the scene with Jesus. The ancient prophets all lived with threats to their lives and the disfavor of those in power. Isaiah also suffered and affirms God's presence in the darkness: "Who among you fears the Lord and obeys the voice of his servant, who walks in darkness and has no light, yet trusts in the name of the Lord and relies upon his God?" (Isa 50:10)

This is faith: The trust that allows us to walk boldly into the dark places of life, knowing that our Lord is beside us, and trusting against all evidence to the contrary, that God holds our hand. Without such faith, there can be no life. For without such faith, we will continue to cower in the dark. BMW

Making New Maps

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Map-making is a distinctively human activity. We want to know, as best we can, the shape of things around us, where we can go and how we can get there. Early explorers and pioneers made primitive maps that were out of shape and defective in scale, but they were a start. Cartographers today make highly sophisticated maps using advanced satellite photography to produce detailed representations of physical space.

More recently, "mapping" is a term used to describe the process of determining the shape and character of any unknown area of life that is being explored. It is in this sense that I am thinking of myself these days, together with my colleagues in theological education: as map makers.

The goal of our seminaries is to prepare pastors, teachers, and laity to be effective leaders for a church in mission. Our surroundings have changed dramatically. The church today urgently needs pastors and other leaders who are able to nurture congregations in the gospel, and who are also able to gather the people of God and to equip them for mission. The seminaries in the ELCA, in order to engage these tasks, are learning to work together to identify priorities, assign responsibilities, and work at ways to raise and distribute resources.

Mapping theological education for the whole ELCA is a complex project because there are many map makers and we are all relatively new at the task. If these maps are to serve the church well, they need to fit together like a series of overlays that each add detail to one unified map.

The Task Force on Theological Education, appointed by the Division for Ministry of the ELCA, is the over-all map-making group for us. In its report to the 1993 Churchwide Assembly, the Task Force proposed that the eight seminaries of the church form an "interdependent theological education network... working cooperatively to provide a full range of theological education... for the mission and ministry of the church." This Task Force vision was further sketched out with two major actions of the assembly. One was the adoption of eleven "imperatives" which describe the "full range of theological education needed in this church." The second action called on the eight seminaries to form three to five clusters by the fall of 1994, and begin to map out how each cluster will work together to conserve resources, coordinate programs, and consolidate organization and governance in the years ahead.

Clusters are the newest map-makers on the scene. For the past six years, Wartburg Theological Seminary and LSTC have cooperated in several program areas. Since the church action last summer, a Joint Committee on Clustering has been formed by the Boards of the two schools, and mapping has

begun in earnest. The faculties are currently working on feasible ways to cooperate, complement, and consolidate educational programs. Each of the eighteen synods that relate to the two schools are being visited, and selected leaders are expressing their priorities for this cluster and its service to the congregations and the synods of their region. A rough map is already being drafted. A final first map overlay for the LSTC/ WTS cluster will be presented at synod assemblies in the spring of 1995.

LSTC is, of course, the primary focus of our map-making efforts in Chicago. For more than two years, the Board of Directors, administrators, faculty, and consultants have been engaged in various phases of the task. Last November the Board adopted, in principle, a set of "core strategies" for students, faculty, facilities, and the management of our seminary, together with preliminary funding goals to increase current revenues and build endowment resources. Last January, we launched the advanced gift and feasibility phase of what we are calling "Leadership 21," a five year major gift initiative to prepare pastors, teachers, and lay ministers for spiritual, caring, and strategic leadership for the church in the 21st century. Visits are being made, the story is being told, the strategies are being tested, commitments are being made: the map of the future is being drawn. Based on the results of this initial phase, the Board of Directors will complete the LSTC overlay for Leadership 21 and move forward with our new maps in the fall of 1994.

Mapping is both anxious and exciting work. So much is at stake. But map makers in the church never work alone. The author of the letter to the Hebrews made that clear when he wrote, "Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses... let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfector of our faith...." That pioneer and perfector is also our map maker.

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