August 1986
Volume 13
Number 4

CURRENTS in theology and mission

Unfinished Agenda

CONTENTS Page

Unfinished Agenda 194
Ralph W. Klein
Winding Downward to a Disturbing Sense of Grace 197
Warren Rubel
Healing: Mission and Ministry of the Church 205
Paul Bauermeister
Modern Dogma and Liturgical Renewal 214
Patrick Keifert
The Heart of Worship:
A Contemporary Narrative Eucharist 228
Mark P. Bangert
God-Talk or Baby-Talk: More on "Abba" 232
James A. Rimbach
Poverty: The Biblical Witness
and Contemporary Reality 236
Craig L. Nessan
Preaching Unity 239
Travis DuPriest
A Book Worth Discussing: *God in Creation* 241
Ted Peters
Book Reviews 244
Seminaries as Shapers of Faith 256
Roger W. Fjeld
Drawings by Stacy Boorn

Staff

Editor: Ralph W. Klein

Printed In U.S.A.

Associate Editors: Duane A. Priebe (Wartburg, Dubuque)
Robert Smith (PLTS, Berkeley)
Jay Rochelle (LSTC, Chicago); Book Review Editor

Assistant Editor/Circulation Manager: Dawn Hoy

Editorial Board: Christopher Becker, Glenn Blackwelder, Arthur Constien, Lydia Kalb, Robert Klonowski, Carl McKenzie, Tecla Sund Reklau, A. Craig Settlage, John H. Tietjen.

CURRENTS IN THEOLOGY AND MISSION is published bimonthly, February, April, June, August, October, December by Christ Seminary – Seminex, a non-profit organization, 1100 East 55th Street, Chicago, IL 60615, to which all business correspondence is to be addressed. Annual subscription rate: $10 in the U. S. and Canada ($11.50 overseas). Two-year rate: $18.50 in the U. S. and Canada ($21.00 overseas). Three-year rate: $26.00 in the U. S. and Canada ($30.50 overseas). Second Class Postage Paid at Chicago, IL and at other mailing offices.

CURRENTS is indexed in Elenchus, IZBW, NTA, OTA, Religion Index I (formerly IRPL), Religious and Theological Abstracts, and Theologische Literaturzeitung.
(ISSN: 0098-2113)

August 1986
Volume 13
Number 4

CURRENTS in theology and mission

Published by
Christ Seminary — Seminex
in cooperation with
Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago
Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary
Wartburg Theological Seminary

Note: Address all business correspondence to: *Currents in Theology and Mission,* 1100 E. 55th Street, Chicago, IL 60615.

Unfinished Agenda

"God intends his church to be 'an outward, visible and united society,' and the unity he wills requires that 'all in each place who are baptized into Jesus Christ and confess him as Lord and Savior are brought by the Holy Spirit into one fully committed fellowship' and at the same time are 'united with the whole Christian fellowship in all places and all ages.' And I am sure that, while obedience to this vision calls for immense patience, it does not permit any slackening of prayer and effort." From the autobiography of Lesslie Newbigin.

A founder of the Church of South India and a star ecumenist for the World Council of Churches, who sometimes chaired small, tumultuous groups made up of trios like Barth, Brunner, and Reinhold Niebuhr, Bishop Newbigin offers much to think about for all of us who wait and hope, with patience, for the formation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. From now until the end of August, when the three uniting church bodies will meet to vote on the plan of union, there dare be no slackening of prayer and effort. The ELCA is not a proposed corporate merger, with pros and cons; it is a gift from the risen Lord and, I dare say, his demand.

In the meantime, **Warren Rubel** offers an appreciation and first response to two recent books by Walter Wangerin, Jr. The stories in *The Book of the Dun Cow* and *The Book of Sorrows* make the pain of human life bearable because they lead to the divine foolishness that goes beyond our tears and laughter. The author describes, according to this review, the destructive forms of evil and invites us to participate in the story's temporary and limited possibility that love need not be a deception in the human community. The point is that the artist is really the voice that brings together the bright and the dark sides of experience of our human rehearsal. Welcome to the world of Chauntecleer and Wyrm. Take this essay along on your summer reading as a roadmap.

Paul Bauermeister discusses healing in general and the Service of the Word [for Healing] with the Laying On of Hands and Anointing in particular. Proper use of the service for healing can deepen the understanding of God's gracious presence with people and his care for them. Planning for such a service includes recruiting and training a core of compassionate volunteers to provide support services for all who attend. Our primary mandate is to offer Jesus and thereby the Father to the world. And the only way we do that is by offering ourselves to others, as he did.

The modern dogma, according to **Patrick R. Keifert,** relegates all matters religious and especially worship to the private sphere of sentiment and taste; it distinguishes sharply between fact and value. The effect of this dogma on liturgical renewal can be seen in the Red Current (embodied in the *Service Book and Hymnal)* and the Green Current (embodied in *The Lutheran Book of Worship),* as well as in the Yellow Current (the folk worship revival). The Red Current was characterized by clerical leadership, and emphasis on sacred space, worship as the gathering of individuals, and a focus on the whole community rather than the faithful alone. The Green Current focused on the church as the people of God, emphasized baptism and the activity of the laity, proposed a corporate conception of worship, replaced sacred space with the holy people, and employed non-verbal sybmolic language. What remains to be renewed is the critical dialectic between theory and practice.

To aid in such renewal, **Mark P. Bangert** has written a narrative eucharist keyed to *The Lutheran Book of Worship.* He proposes an analogy between Sunday worship and the work of our heart and circulatory system that helps a worshiper picture what is really happening. There are many insights along the way, but one really struck me: We are God's first answer to our own prayers. When we pray for the life of the parish and the world, we find that God uses us to bring that life. We discover ourselves as life-bearers.

Did Jesus call God Daddy? We have all heard — and/or used — this understanding of the word Abba so many times that it may come as a shock — and a new insight — to find this view challenged by **James A. Rimbach.** Why is this equation so popular? Did its purported author (Jeremias) really say it? Was he right? In addressing God as Father Jesus spoke of himself and us as adoptive children who honor and obey God, and he referred to God as the one who dispenses mercy, protection, love, and authority.

Craig L. Nessan argues that liberation theology mediates between the biblical witness and contemporary reality. According to the Bible, poverty can be a curse, a blessing, and a challenge. While the church functions to activate the poor in their own struggle against poverty, the poor remind the church of who Christ is and where he reveals himself in the world today. In another short essay **Travis DuPriest** offers tips on preaching and, specifically, on how we can announce Christ crucified locally, in time and place, not vaguely and in generalities.

As we go to press, the church papers are full of a series of last minute questions addressed to the Commission for a New Lutheran Church, while the public media have picked up — probably out of context — a series of statements by leaders in the church that appear to throw sand in the gears of unity. To some these are causes for worry and alarm; for others they are signs of the frenzy that always comes with crossing the t's and dotting the i's. For all of us they should be a reminder that unity is always a precious gift, that is ours without any merit or worthiness on our part. Today's agenda is not complete until we have prayed for that gift of unity.

Yours, for the vision,
with immense patience,

Ralph W. Klein
Editor

Winding Downward to a Disturbing Sense of Grace*

Warren Rubel
Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, Indiana

"Whatever happened to Wyrm?" asked a student who recently noticed Walter Wangerin, Jr.'s *The Book of Sorrows* lying on my desk. Like many others, he had read the earlier *The Book of the Dun Cow,* which won an American Book Award and quickly became a national best seller. The question of Wyrm's end prompted an obvious equivocation, "He was destroyed, but . . ." For although the two stories may be read and enjoyed separately, their larger fictional and religious significance, it seems to me, depends on our seeing the narratives in tandem, the latter text a necessary sequel, a second panel in a kind of sacred diptych that, when joined to the earlier text, stands the work upright. In what follows I develop primarily an appreciation both for what Wangerin has accomplished in these related texts and for the way he has done it by gently urging the following thesis: These works, separated by some seven years, complement one another by placing before us in the forms of a bestiary, a series of deepening and moving paradoxes about what it means to be human. *The Book of the Dun Cow* takes us through near mythic contests between the powers of life and death, order and chaos, purpose and meaninglessness. The story ends in a triumphant but qualified victory for Chauntecleer and the Community of the Coop in its struggle against Wyrm. The battle has been won, but the battle is not done. Because powerful love is not the same thing as forgiving love and because the struggle against evil is both without and within us, *The Book of Sorrows* leads us to forgiving love, a love acutely felt in the song of bereaved Pertelote, a compline song that closes in the quiet but limited triumph of mere being. Chauntecleer has lost his life. He has not lost the battle. Common to both works is the voice of author as narrator. That voice sings the scales of rejoicing and speaks the ordinary and outrageous pain of the little and important people in the Community. It is a voice annealed to what Chauntecleer does and undergoes as actor and patient in the two works. But before we deepen our regard for the stories, we need to summarize quickly, if inadequately, the primary conflicts in the works as a means of entry into their respective complexities, energies, and forms.

I.

Although the major conflicts in *The Book of the Dun Cow* take place on several levels in the Community of the Coop, the terms of the conflicts are sharply defined and dramatically focused. The perpetually encroaching enemy

*A Review Essay on *The Book of the Dun Cow* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978) and *The Book of Sorrows,* (New York: Harper & Row, 1985), by Walter Wangerin, Jr.

The community of the ordinary ... is held together by common care.

---

is Wyrm. Ancient Wyrm, with his terrible stench and great "Nay-saying" power, is accompanied by his fecund cohorts Cockatrice and Toad. Both cooperate in a plot to hatch the dreaded Basilisks, licorice-length black and poisonous snakes. As they are hatched by the obedient hens, Cockatrice scoops them up and vomits them into the surging waters that threaten the Coop community. That community of the ordinary — Pertelote, Beryl, Chalcedony and the twenty-eight or twenty-nine hens plus one and many others — is held together by common care. So long as their lives are banded in peace, in "goodly love" and in "righteousness, which was iron against his will," the community locks Wyrm beneath them in earth. The representative keeper is Chauntecleer, proud, powerful, sympathetic, and handsome cock of the Coop. His crowing the canonical hours, a gift he has received and disciplined out of the memory of his own history and the grace of God in it, sustains the community. And his central male consciousness, filtered through the author's selective grid, provides us with a way for participating in and understanding the terms and struggles of the Coop community against Wyrm. That Chauntecleer should love and be loved by Pertelote of the lovely flaming throat and obscure past and that he should embody the strengths and vulnerabilities of the community heightens our sense of Chauntecleer's tragic predicament. His interior cry is "How can the meek of the earth save themselves against the damnable evil which feeds on them?" His and the community's response is that desperate situations require desperate means. Thus Chauntecleer will eventually use calculated force and violence to defeat Cockatrice. The apparent small victories in the hopelessness of the struggle also deepen our sense of irony for Chauntecleer's situation. The self-sacrificing Chauntecleer, for all the splendor in his tragic isolation and for all the humiliating pain and public ignominy he endures in that sacrificial battle, will not save the community from Wyrm. That redemptive and heroic act will be Mundo Cani's through the mysterious passive agency of the Dun Cow.

Mundo Cani is an absurd, lovable and loving dog, a harbinger of the wise and comic incongruities that Wangerin brings together in the characters and events of the story. Mundo Cani's desolate howl outside Chauntecleer's Coop opens the story. At the end of the narrative he runs along the edge of the chasm in which Wyrm of the lidless eye twists and turns in his fury. His only weapon the lost horn of the Dun Cow, Mundo Cani plunges into the black hole of the eye of Wyrm and plunges the horn into that eye. The cataclysmic earth closes up, leaving a thin scar where an "angry seam closed." What we hear before and after the silence, however, is Mundo Cani at the beginning of the tale in a crescendo



"like a mudslide" howling "Marooned!" And we hear at the end of the story Chauntecleer speaking the same word in quiet despair to Pertelote.

Guilt and resentment haunt Chauntecleer at the end of this powerful story. Pertelote, in a coda to the telling, leads Chauntecleer to the liquid rim of penance and forgiveness and loving memory. Her doings are the last things done, the teller of the story reminds us. But her word is not the final word. Pertelote sleeps peacefully while John Wesley Weasel and Chauntecleer keep talking. Yet, we might say, there is more in the writing here than in the talking. The talking in words is the presentness in the story that brings it to closure. The writing in words will go on because there is another beginning in this ending.

II.

In other words, Chauntecleer's story is unresolved in *The Book of the Dun Cow.* Chauntecleer is filled with guilt and resentment at the sacrificial death of Mundo Cani. As Dr. Samuel Johnson observed of the fold upon fold of human ego that covers the core of human pride, "resentment is a union of sorrow with malignity." Chauntecleer feels guilt because the dog he despised did what he wanted to but could not. His genuine sorrow mixes with malignity because he envies the dog he once scorned. Pertelote knows her husband, moreover, better than he knows himself. She had once screamed on the shore of the river where she met Chauntecleer because she saw Chauntecleer as the evil Cockatrice. Thus in *The Book of Sorrows* her silent suffering mirrors proud Chauntecleer's. She sees him become what she feared without knowing it as he becomes what he hates. In the spiritual perversion that entangles him in despair, Chauntecleer almost completely destroys himself. There is, consequently, a blackness to the darkness in the artistry of *The Book of Sorrows.* The form that evil takes in this sequel to *The Book of the Dun Cow* is especially threatening because it sweetly parodies the sacrificial love that keeps any human community a community. Chauntecleer's particular *causa sui* project—to find Mundo Cani's bones and to give him an honorable burial—becomes his obsession and at the same time masks his spiritual pride. It drives him to the end of the wasteland and to the depths of the earth, into Wyrm's vast and decaying corpse, to Mundo Cani's rotting nose and empty skull nesting within. That achievement does not relieve the gross imperfections of Chauntecleer's desires, however. Wyrm has died only to resurrect in the thin, green, threadlike worms that eventually dribble from Chauntecleer's beak and gradually form a writhing serpent within his entrails. Wyrm also remains as the appealing and destructive song of chaos for Chauntecleer. Chauntecleer becomes an agent of chaos then in an ice-bound world of brittle creatures increasingly in-

The grace of sense ... informs and shapes the stories.

capable of love. Or, in Wangerin's image, the web is shredded. The constituting value becomes "Everyone cut, cuts back again—and double." Chauntecleer cannot escape being a victim in the victimage he generates with this ancient *lex talionis* or law of revenge. And so his almost last act is his own disembowelment before the outrage of gratuitous forgiving love from Ferric Coyote, whose mate Rachel and whose son Benoni have been killed in an act of Chauntecleer's irresponsible obsession. Is there no way out of the soul's sickness that does not lead to damnation in pride in this vast wasteland that Wangerin renders for the contemporary reader? Well, we might say, Wangerin's bestiaries prepare us for a way out, but to assert what it is would be to subvert in words what the author in words seeks to gain from us and for us without force. In this strangely exhilarating sequel to *The Book of the Dun Cow,* Wangerin's gyres wind downward to a disturbing sense of grace.

III.

What one neglects by attending to the sense of grace that hovers over and moves through the two stories, however, is the grace of sense that informs and shapes the stories. For by this time strong disclaimers arise: Haven't these books been written and marketed for younger readers? Aren't they marked by whimsy and comic delight and many giggles from sundry and tiny folk? Isn't there a family of remnant mice, a Montag, Dienstag, Wodenstag, and one special wit Freitag? Aren't they step-fathered or "uncled" by Lord Russel the Fox, an obsessive talker, entertainer, and trickster? Don't golden Chauntecleer and lovely Pertelote have three little offspring named Ten Pin, Five Pin, and One Pin? And wasn't the marriage of Chauntecleer and Pertelote celebrated by snowglyph angels mirroring the beauty of the wintery night in a kind of joy beyond the singing of it? And isn't there a Hare whose ears fairly shout "like exclamation points Bang Bang" because he is so nervous before Lord Chantecleer? Why this initial dwelling on the ancient pain in the skull? Does the author pluck primarily the old Augustinian, sick-souled, Kierkegaardian strains? The rejoinder is that one can recommend these books because Wangerin manages to do a number of things well here in this set of stories and in the subsets of stories within the stories that build to a cumulative effect for the reader. These books can and should be read with delight and even diligence by young readers. In *The Book of the Dun Cow* Wangerin drops a stone into a deep well. In *The Book of Sorrows* the stone plummets downward. We can follow the stone or we can delight and reflect on the play and patterns in the surface ripples. In short, the books may be read as one reads and rereads Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* or George MacDonald's *The Gift of the*



Child Christ or C.S. Lewis's Narnia Tales or even an E.B. White's *Charlotte's Web.* These stories delight ear and eye and the reins of common sense and they make the pain of human life bearable for the older reader because the stories lead us to the divine foolishness that goes beyond or perhaps undergirds our tears and laughter as young and old alike.

Yet there is an important distinction here. Wangerin's two works are related by the single but increasingly complex if ordinary metaphor of the journey from exterior to interior world. Like Dante's journey from the *Inferno,* where, from one perspective, we learn appropriate hatred for the evil outside of us, through the *Purgatorio,* where we gradually understand the hierarchies of evil in us, Wangerin's *The Book of the Dun Cow* moves from the overcoming without to the overcoming within in *The Book of Sorrows.* Regrettably, that difference will perhaps mean that Wangerin's *Book of the Dun Cow* will remain the more popular of the two works, just as Dante's *Inferno* remains more "fun to teach" on the undergraduate level or, as T.S. Eliot reminded us, it has made John Donne's devotional piety more interesting and attractive than Lancelot Andrewes because one can read Donne without really caring about the subject matter.

The redeeming qualities of Wangerin's perspective lie in his using the medieval bestiary to render for the contemporary reader once again the power of participating in a common tradition that continues to raise basic questions of what it means to be. Because the works are grounded in the bestiary, they share in a genre sharply distinct from the many directions and some of the formlessness of modern fiction. But the artist in the telling and the reader in his or her reflecting gain from the limited perspective. We get a specific angle of vision from the stylization the bestiary offers us. Like the pastoral vision in poetry, the contemporary bestiary distances us from our own dislocated humanity so that we can see our distorted values in productive tension with the norms in the non-human community. A different kind of necessity rules in the community of the Coop. There are no economic laws at work, none of the complex technologies of a post-industrial society, little of the daily anxieties that plague our media-formed consciousness. Rather, there is a reduction in scale and proportion, a kind of grand metonymic move that isolates and highlights another set of enduring problems. One quick example from what I take to be my own misreading of the text may help illustrate the point.

My first response to the plenitude and variety in the characters that inhabit the two works raised a problem. If we consider closely the major female "characters," they are simply too good as types and individuals, too passively wise in their capacities to endure and survive their male counterparts. Even their womanly faults seem mere peccadilloes

Effectiveness as Storyteller

compared to their male counterparts. Pertelote, for example, though she knows Chauntecleer's pride, never directly rebukes him. There is no bitter accusing or whining or even occasional nagging (I think). I remember Pertelote primarily for her providential and tender waiting for Chauntecleer to make his own mistakes, to come to some kind of revelatory self-knowledge. My initial reaction then was to consider her too ideal. The trouble is that she is a complex, sensitive, enterprising and caring "woman." I asked in my curiosity one friend who had read both works how she responded to what I took to be the more or less ascendant male viewpoint of the works. She responded quickly, "That's easy. One quickly recognizes that although the works are about Chauntecleer, the women folk are the genuine saints and heroes!" That may well be the case. But I think that a further word can be said for Wangerin's Pertelote. By shaping her character as he does he keeps us aware of his *not* writing a piece of realistic fiction. And I think he wishes us to see the deep contrast between her sacred and loving respect for Chauntecleer's person and for his freedom despite his decaying spiritual pride. She always loves with a kind of prevenient grace that we recognize more and more as a central theme in the two works. (Whether Pertelote is a figure of the Church one leaves to future scholars.) Fortunately, because the teller's pace skillfully moves us from one episode to another as he builds his stories and his characters, we can make valid assessments only retrospectively. The spokes of the Coop community converge around a central hub—Chauntecleer, Pertelote, Chalcedony and the hens and others in procession and in assembly, and with their families as they sojourn from one place to another. Yet the hub moves on a great axis, giving us turning wheel and stillpoint. That motion is momentarily arrested for our meditation, a meditation that includes both confirmation and disconfirmation of earlier insights.

IV.

There is, furthermore, another word that can be said for Wangerin's effectiveness as storyteller. Giving added resonance to the two volumes is not only the author's pondering in dramatic form the basic values of love and justice and forgiveness and sacrifice. Because he draws on what Northrop Frye speaks of us our "Singing School," the literary voices of our tradition, Wangerin's allusions enhance and complicate the apparent simplifications and stylizations of the bestiary. That Wangerin deploys and amplifies Chaucer's Nun's Priest's Tale from the *Canterbury Tales* is simply one of the more obvious dependencies. Softening the comic sexual play in Chaucer's Chauntecleer, Wangerin intensifies and broadens the question of Providence in his treatment. He deepens



the tragic and epic dimensions in Chauntecleer's and Pertelote's relationship by further humanizing their histories and internal quandaries. And Wangerin reawakens in us a love and regard for the spoken word, a love sounding through Chaucer's tale, a love of the intricacy of sound almost, one might say, inaccessible to the contemporary reader unfamiliar with the baroque elaborations of medieval rhetoric.

Wangerin's images of evil, furthermore, are as multiform as the imagined shape of evil itself, from the malevolent will purposely opposing human life and goodness in Wyrm, through the fatal attraction of the Siren sounds of the same Wyrm that remind us that the powers of Thanatos are as appealing to our immolation of self as they are frightening to our loss of self, through the cruelty of dominating and oppressive force, to the banality of evil in the random death of the innocent: Ferric Coyote's mate Rachel and son Benoni just happened to be in the wrong place, wrong time. The victims of evil are as multiform as its agents, moreover. One of the more compelling and disturbing is the plain broad bird in the thornbush who, like T.S. Eliot's bird in *The Wasteland* and the "Jug, Jug, to dirty ears," has a strange inverted intercourse with Wyrm, her hard peak penetrating his fleshy, soft stench in kisses that, prompted by her loneliness and need, answer Wyrm's predatory and destructive enveloping song. She pays for her secret knowledge by losing her tongue and speech. That "mythic" image of the victim has its counterpart in mouse Freitag's rejection by Chauntecleer when Freitag walks behind Chauntecleer, therapeutically mimicking Chauntecleer's gloomy preoccupation with himself. The author does not seek to solve the problem of the origin of evil in either of the two related stories. Rather he describes and addresses its destructive forms, placing before us both a story and an invitation to participate in that story's temporary and limited possibility that "love need not be a deception" in the human community.

These emphases come together in the image Wangerin depicts of Chauntecleer as artist. So far I have suggested that Chauntecleer is primarily the central character in the story, and, with certain qualifications, he is. But I conclude this appreciation and first response to these works by equating Wangerin as artist with Chauntecleer, not as victim of and for the community of the Coop, but in Chauntecleer's more or less original vocation when he founded the community of the Coop near the Terebrinth Oak and finally moved with that community to the Hemlock by the waterfall. Chauntecleer's Canonical Crows are the clock of the community. Really more than clock. In his true vocation as crower, Chauntecleer interpreted "their moments and their experiences to them." He recollected "the past to weave it into the present" and he called them to a "hopeful future." The narrator con-

The deepening of Christian belief is sometimes entrusted to poets

tinues, "He used to, by praising them or fussing at them, assure them of importance; and because he did it with such variety and skill...he was the glory in their homely lives." The narrator goes on, however, after claiming that Chauntecleer supports and sustains the community, to suggest that Chauntecleer really cannot separate his vocation as artist from what he is as brooding agent and sufferer.

The point is that the artist as man in the community is really the ampler voice that brings together the bright and dark sides of experience for our human rehearsal. "The deepening and revivifying of Christian belief is not always achieved by theologians or philosophers," concludes the late J.A. W. Bennett in a study of twelve centuries of English verse and fiction devoted to the person and passion of Jesus Christ. "It is sometimes entrusted to poets."[1] Often these poets draw us beyond literary genres and beyond systematic theological formulation to something like Wangerin's Dun Cow, the sacred and loving presence in the two works.

[1] J.A.W. Bennett, *Poetry of the Passion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), p. 183.



Healing: Mission and Ministry of the Church

Paul Bauermeister

Christ Seminary—Seminex Professor of Ministry (Pastoral Care and Counseling), Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago

The New Testament records many acts of healing in the ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ. His acts of healing crisscrossed the present day understanding of the disciplines within the healing arts with an abandon that many deans of medical schools and chairpersons of medical review committees would find unnerving if not horrifying. This informs us that healing of all kinds has been a central part of the mission and ministry of the church from the very beginning. The mission and ministry of the church and the business of healing are not something you and I are finally bringing together. Healing and the mission and ministry of the church have been linked all along, and you and I have to sort it out from time to time because the world keeps changing, while the Lord of the church and his mission do not.

It is no quick and easy sorting task, as we shall see. At least two major difficulties confront us. On the one hand the scientific revolution brought enormous changes to our world view and also has brought and continues to bring enormous changes to the healing arts. As an infant I came near death from pneumonia. The treatment at that time had four parts to it: "push fluids, keep 'em cool, keep 'em calm, wait and see." No antibiotics. And that is just one among many more dramatic changes in the business of healing. A second reason for difficulty with our task is that the churches have not spoken with one voice regarding healing. They have spoken with many voices and those voices have been contradictory and often competitive and all too often clamorous and contentious. And they still are.

Faced with this kind of difficulty and a term as broad and inclusive as the term healing my impulse is to avoid abstractions as I would avoid the plague and to deal carefully with whatever objective and concrete data we can get hold of. Let us see where the church is involved concretely and objectively in the business of healing.

We begin with the obvious. There are numerous people of the church who do their daily work in some relationship to the healing arts. There are physicians and nurses and attendants and kitchen and custodial employees in health care institutions. There are teachers and counselors and researchers and administrators whose daily tasks bear on the business of healing. Is the church involved in the business of healing? Obviously it is in its sons and daughters, many of whom rejoice in the fact that the church has taught them to think of their daily work as one expression of the mission and ministry of the whole people of God.

And while we are being very concrete, remember also that there are many institutions of healing that are owned and operated by the institutional church, church owned hospitals and agencies and schools.

So far the linkage between church and healing has been clear and concrete, but

Where there is the action of compassion ... there is healing.

you know that our discussion cannot proceed with this kind of clarity and concreteness if we intend to deal with the entire spectrum of the church's involvement in healing, because both healing and the church are bigger than the interface we have so far described.

The church, led by her Lord and his holy Apostles, continues to emphasize compassion, the self-giving action performed on behalf of others in need. This compassionate action, all by itself, leads to healing and greater wholeness for both giver and receiver, whether this takes place between mother and infant, pastor and parishioner or two strangers at a bus stop. Where there is this action of compassion, and compassion is the church's business, there is healing.

If you were paying close attention to definitions, you noticed what happened to our definition of healing in that last paragraph. It did not move from a tight medical context to something as big as all outdoors. But it did go from the usual medical understanding of healing as the removal of disease, which we might call the cure model, to a broader meaning of healing as contributing to the health and wholeness or even the well-being of people.

So far we have succeeded in connecting healing rather closely to the church's mission and ministry by pointing to the many church people active in the healing arts and by pointing to the centrality of compassion in the mission and ministry of the church. We have only one more step to take in this walk, but it is a big one, so hang on tight!

In addition to her sons and daughters in the healing arts and in addition to her emphasis on compassion, both in the establishment of institutions where healing of some kind is a main task, and in the emphasis on compassion in human relations, the church also prays for the sick and burdened. This also she does following historic tradition, the leading of our Lord and of his holy Apostles.

And, as you may have noticed, when the church prays for healing, as when the church prays for other things, the church sometimes touches, that is lays hands on, and sometimes the church anoints, that is, puts oil on. These additions to the spoken or thought or sung prayer, this touching and this oil comes to us out of ancient traditions that are, again, as old as the church. Our Lord's healing was also associated with washing, and with anointing with mud made from earth and saliva. To my knowledge, the church has not followed either one of those customs, but has confined itself to touching and anointing with oil.

Now we need to deal with another difficulty that appears in our discussion of healing. The entire discussion takes place in a very over-heated arena. People want to be healed, which means there is a ready market for healing and healers. If you are in the United States, turn that knob three more clicks to the right and remember that we Americans do not just want to be healed. We tell ourselves that



we *must* be healed, it is our *right* to be healed and therefore we *will* be healed, come snake handlers, laitril, CAT scans, hell or high water. Be advised, when we talk about healing we are not talking about something that many people can discuss with detachment.

You may have noticed that the series, snake handlers, laitril and CAT scans moves from the unscientific to the somewhat scientific to the super scientific, or if you prefer, from no tech to low tech to high tech. This little series represents the range of healers and healing. Every method and practicioner along that entire continuum have their cadre of followers, and in every cadre there are some noisy ones, who promote and yell and rabble rouse on behalf of their person or system. It is enough to make anyone who would analyze and think clearly about this business go to bed early with a headache, and not know whether to apply aspirin or TM or a prayer cloth.

For starters, in the church we have a serious language problem. The word healing has been grossly abused by a segment of the church in the recent past, and in my opinion it is so contaminated that we should avoid its use. In the minds of people both inside and outside the church, the word healing, when associated with things religious, has come to mean a sweaty, so-called faith healer in a tent or cavernous auditorum who shouts "Jeeeesus! heeeeallll!" and pounds people on the forehead with his right hand while pushing them past him with his left hand. All this, of course, goes on under the watchful eye of several TV cameras, and millions of viewers, many of whom do not think clearly about the faith or about life. Most of us have had our credulity stretched to the breaking point by the shenanigans of some of these alleged healers and want little to do with them, and the best comfort we can find in all this business is the Pauline one mentioned in Philippians 1:15-18, namely, that Christ is proclaimed.)

A solution to one of our many ecclesiastical, theological and pastoral problems in this area might be found in avoiding the word healing altogether. The effort necessary to rescue this word and to reconfigure its meaning and the images it evokes hardly seems worth while, and may not even be possible.

We Lutherans have a fine new service in the *Occasional Services* book, published in 1983, called the "Service of the Word for Healing." Similiar books which had been published earlier contained no such service, which meant this part of the ministry of the church was either going on in other ways, for example in the quiet, private ministry of pastoral care, or it was not getting the attention it deserved in Lutheran circles. This is a service we need, but I am suggesting that we change its name, in order to signal more accurately how we intend to use this service. With a changed name this Lutheran service could serve as a model for others to consider as they strive to

Laying on of Hands and Anointing

develop a corporate rite as one expression of their healing mission and ministry. The name change can be done by simply describing what we *do* rather than describing some hoped for outcome of our doing.

We can call this fine service a "Service of the Word with the Laying on of Hands and Anointing." There we have it! We have described what we intend to do, rather than giving people expectations about outcomes. We have also avoided all the negative and confusing baggage that rides with the word healing.

Having made the bold move, let us deal with several objections that might be raised.

"Ah ha!" says my first detractor, "you are going to try to do a healing service, you just don't have faith (or guts) enough to say so out loud!"

"No," says me, "the difficulty is not with my trying to weasel on what I am up to, the difficulty is your trying to shove my behavior into your too tight boxes." You see, healing for some folks means only a dramatic, instantaneous cure that comes in response to a direct request of the Lord. I think the Lord's healing is a whole lot bigger than that. The Lord heals all kinds of people who do not even know his name. Some he heals and the medics, who have to call it something, call it a spontaneous remission. Some he heals and the medics take credit for it and claim it as their victory, and they are partly right. Some he heals and a witch doctor gets the credit because he applied the proper salve made of cat tears and crushed butterfly wings. There even are some whom God heals, graciously and completely, and they never even knew they were sick! Now who has the little tiny faith in this healer God of ours? The point is that God does not need our prayers in order to know what to do next.

"OK," says my second detractor. "We will let you get away with your fancy little ploy of describing what you *do,* rather than describing your intended *outcome* if you will be so kind as to tell us what your intended outcome is. What is it you hope to accomplish by your "Service of the Word with the Laying on of Hands and Anointing?"

Good question! With this service we intend to demonstrate Christian care and foster Christian growth. We intend to broaden and deepen both the person's understanding and the believing community's understanding of God's gracious presence with people and God's care for them.

Here comes detractor number three, "Growth? Care? These are loose, slippery words. Do you expect people to *really* get healed?"

Of course I am ready to say that some people may be healed and that they may discover that healing during or following our service. When such a wonder occurs we will all praise God together for his goodness.

Others may come to our "Service of the Word with the Laying On of Hands and Anointing" and then go later to a



physician or psychotherapist or some other practitioner of the healing arts and not know for sure which human instrument to credit for the improvement, but give thanks to God nonetheless. Most who come desperately hoping for a radical instantaneous cure of their disease or a dramatic reduction of their symptoms will be disapppointed in their expectation, but many of them will receive the less dramatic, but nevertheless valuable blessing of the support of a caring Christian community. They will no longer be bearing their burdens in the same isolation as earlier.

By not saying healing in the title of our service we have avoided all that instantaneous, on-demand character often associated with the healing of the faith healers, and again instead of narrowing and minimizing the possibilities of God's action, we have opened the possibilities to whatever God chooses to do. If it pleases God to cure a physical problem, God may do so. If, on the other hand, God chooses to ignore the physical problem and cure an attitudinal or a spiritual or a psychological problem the person has, is that any less a healing? Or God may choose to cure an interpersonal problem, one even quite unrelated to the physical illness the person has. Would that be any less a healing?

By avoiding the term healing and all its restricting and constricting meanings we hope to be opening to people a new awareness of the breadth and depth of God's goodness to them. We are also allowing God the right to cure nothing for this person, which may be God's intention. It is no surprise to learn that the sickness, suffering and disability of God's people can be used by God to further his Kingdom. One quick look at the cross ought to convince us all of that.

A major theological problem emerged earlier that almost escaped our attention. My detractor was mocking my faith, saying that it was not big enough or strong enough. Sorry, detractor, but that is not allowed. Quantifying faith and measuring it, saying somebody's faith is big enough or not big enough is the Lord's business, not ours. This quantifying heresy is a bad one and gets us into all kinds of other theological problems. Some people want to quantify faith and others want to quantify grace and stack it up somewhere and thereby assure themselves and others that they have a better "in" with God. Not so! The Pauline notion is that faith and grace are both God's gifts to us. They are not prizes that God hands out in little packages tied in various colored ribbons to those who manage to believe in the required number of biblical or latter day miracles.

Instead, faith and grace describe the two sides of the relationship that exists between us and God. God's side of the relationship is grace, made perfect and revealed most fully in Jesus Christ. Our side of the relationship, which, please notice, is also God's gift, is faith. Without God's initiation of grace, faith

Faith is faith and grace is grace and God is God.

is merely foolishness. But with God's grace, that is with God relating to us as he does in and through Jesus Christ, faith can happen on our side of the relationship.

So, please do not talk about much faith or little faith or about much grace or little grace. When you do that you are stomping with your synergistic boots all over God's *sola gratia,* and you should not do that! Of course you and I can tell some differences in people's behavior. We see some good behavior and are tempted to label it as good works and we see some bad behavior and are tempted to call it sin and try to root it out. Those are fine, worthy human undertakings. They may even have some bearing on faith and good works that we might want to examine pastorally.

Faith is faith and grace is grace and God is God and does not really need some collared cleric or other healer to tell him what to do, whom to heal and when to heal and how to heal in order to get appropriate credit for the home office.

By avoiding the word healing we also avoid a major pastoral difficulty of having people's expectations for miraculous, instantaneous, supernatural cure run aground and having them therefore conclude that they do not have God's favor. Such a conclusion leaves them interpreting their lack of cure as God's rejection of them. Their continued symptoms are not only a burden, they have now become a curse, a sign of God's abandonment of them.

People who interpret their lack of healing in this way often feel they are on the outside of the church, looking in. Generally the minister does not agree, but has a terrible time convincing these persons that they are indeed inside the church and in God's Grace, despite the fact that their hoped for cure has not occurred. Having painfully lost a few of these pastoral arguments leads me to conclude that the heresy which leads some to quantify faith is alive and well in the church and needs careful containment! I strongly suspect that one of the reasons this heresy stays alive is that it serves an explanation of why some so-called healer failed to heal. Crassly put it is a way the healer can say, "If ya don't get healed it is your fault, not mine!" and get away with it.

A disturbing trend has appeared in the church among those who make considerable use of the word healing in their descriptions of their ministries. It is the theology of "Jesus and...." These brothers and sisters seem simply not to feel comfortable offering only Jesus Christ to the world. So they add something to the package that they think will make it more attractive. This gives them "Jesus and ..." to offer. Jesus gets packaged with happiness, with success, with making more money, with having a better marriage and family life, and of course, with having good health, and sometimes with the healing of whatever disease one might have. The idea is as American as apple pie and advertising.



The tug in the "Jesus and ..." direction is as old as the church. Jesus came to Cana offering himself and the Father. But at Cana they wanted wine, so Jesus gave them wine and they were amazed. He came to Capernaum offering himself and the Father, but at Capernaum they wanted healing. So he gave them healing and they were amazed. Jesus always came offering himself and the Father, but they wanted everything imaginable. At Nazareth they wanted national pride. On the mountainside they wanted bread and fish. At Bethany they wanted a resurrection. Often they got what they wanted and were amazed. Finally he came to Calvary where he gave himself, himself, himself and nothing else, so that he might continue to offer the Father to the world. And finally after his resurrection it became clear enough that a few caught on. What he had come to offer us was himself and thereby to offer us the Father.

That same offering is our primary mandate, to offer Jesus and thereby the Father to the world. And, of course, the only way we do that is by offering ourselves to others, as he did. Whether there is any other "and" to be tacked on to the Jesus we offer is up to him.

"Jesus and ..." theology is troubling when it gets translated into the ministry of the church because it usually seems to detract from the offering Jesus always offered, which was himself and the Father. Do we need to get recentered on what is central in our task? At the center is not healing, not success, not even success at the mission and ministry of the church as the world would count success. What is central is God, as revealed in Jesus Christ, and all the rest is secondary and derivative.

There is one more pastoral issue that needs to be addressed. If one were to announce a service of healing, or a "Service of the Word with the Laying on of Hands and Anointing," and do it the way lots of good Lutheran (those two words can be used together!) clergy do it, that is, once a week or one or two times a month, the good pastor is running a big risk that he or she needs to know about. The risk is being swallowed whole by dependent people.

If there ever was an invitation that is going to bring out lots of dependent people, it would be an invitation to such a service, done on a regular schedule. Dependent people need and deserve such a ministry of the church, but they do not need and cannot have all the pastor's time.

So before announcing such a service, it may be well to ask some hard questions and do some careful planning. How many people in the parish need to have their understanding of God broadened? How many people need to have a way to expand their faith to include all kinds of growth and nurture? How many long for some direct, personalized interaction with the ministers of their church, but could never sustain a dialogue with any of them, let alone anything that might

Baptism ... is being recalled.

be called pastoral counseling or spiritual direction?

If you have been coming up with solid numbers to those questions, and the numbers are over five, the planning called for should include not just the service we have been talking about, whatever you decide to call it. Your planning should also include recruiting and training, enabling and supervising a core of sturdy, compassionate volunteers to provide support services to those who come to the service. These people can serve as drivers or escorts, providing transportation and assistance, as visitors to shut-ins, and in general as friends and companions to those who are attracted to the service, and they would, of course, attend and assist in the service. See how close *diakonia* and *leitourgia* can become? Call those folks Befrienders if you like, and recruit empty-nest couples if you have some. They will be glad to help. Very important connections could begin to form, and a vital ministry emerge, one that would proliferate in many directions.

Look at the possibilities for learning as the news of this ministry begins to travel around the parish. The laying on of hands with anointing is a highly personalized action involving touching, and a very good preparation for the same action when it will be used in other situations. How often has the pastor stood beside the bed of a semi-comatose person and wished the person had been introduced to the laying on of hands and anointing! They might be reached by such a touch now, reached when consciousness comes and goes, when words and ideas are difficult to grasp, and impossible to hold.

When introducing the "Service of the Word with the Laying on of Hands and Anointing" the entire liturgical action can be understood to take place inside the person's Baptismal covenant with God. Look at the theological connections we have managed to make for people! Baptism, God's fundamental, primary individualizing of Grace to us, the action, sign and seal of God's bond with us, the one which empowers us to begin to feebly open ourselves and reach back to him, and to our neighbor. Baptism, the fundamental miracle, is being recalled in our laying on of hands and anointing.

The "Service of the Word with the Laying on of Hands and Anointing" is not some new breakthrough that promises to bring us Lutherans into an electronic promised land complete with piles of discarded crutches, braces and wheel chairs. It is instead a very old practice of the church, by which she sought to instruct and remind her children of God's grace, while broadening and deepening their love for the One who reached toward them in the flesh and blood of his Incarnate Son, the same One who touched them personally with water and oil and gave them both a name and an assured place at the Table and in the Kingdom by means of their Baptism.

Healing, something as old as the church, something near the center, something always a part of the mission and ministry of the church, is now recovering an old expression which the Lutheran Church had lost for a time. In the "Service of the Word with the Laying on of Hands and Anointing," a mislaid piece of the ministry of the Sacrament of Holy Baptism gets revived and gets new life breathed into it.



Modern Dogma and Liturgical Renewal

Patrick Keifert
Luther Northwestern Theological Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota

A modern dogma,[1] a set of unquestioned assumptions, makes public conversation regarding worship difficult. This modern dogma, which passes for common sense, relegates all matters religious, especially worship, to private matters of sentiment and taste. Since the contemporary American common sense holds that worship is made up of private values which are not subject to public and rational conversation, we can, at best, share only our irrational values and feelings about it. The result is dreadful. We cannot engage in thoughtful and soulful arguments which change one another's minds regarding these topics. If we cannot intelligently discuss worship in civil society, we cannot respond adequately to new and diverse situations.[2]

This modern dogma affects liturgical renewal. Its acceptance by most Americans leads them to reject ritual as, at best, a curiosity and, at worst, superstition. As a result, much modern American worship is directed to the mind only, either the intellect or the heart, and omits the body. The modern dogma affects liturgical renewers as well. Those liturgical renewers who value ritual and have tried to restore it to contemporary worship have in several cases fallen prey to the same "common sense" which they believe they are fighting. This article briefly describes this modern dogma and its affect on contemporary liturgical renewal.

I. Worship and the Modern Dogma

The distinction between what is and what ought to be, between fact and value, is at the heart of the modern dogma. One of its most prominent proponents, Karl Popper, summarizes the view this way:

> It is impossible to derive a sentence stating a norm or a decision from a sentence stating a fact; this is only another way of saying that it is impossible to derive norms or decisions or proposals from facts.[3]

Reality, according to this commonly held view, is divided unequally between facts and values; a very small number of indubitable facts and a very large number of values constitute reality.

---

[1] Much of the material which follows depends heavily upon the work of Wayne C. Booth, especially his delightfully insightful book, *Modern Dogma and the Rhetoric of Assent* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974).

[2] What follows in this essay is intended to clarify the nature of this challenge. It is a part of a much larger project which seeks to engender a critical conversation designed to nuture a kind of public worship which meets this challenge.

[3] Karl Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1947), 53; Interestingly enough, one of Karl Popper's students, William Warren Bartley III, has completed Popper's argument regarding the developments in theology as this modern dogma has gained acceptance. See his *The Retreat to Commitment* (London: Open Court, 1984), esp. 35-62.

This modern dogma fosters a debate between a scientismic view and an irrationalist view. The scientismic group favors the factual and portrays the world along the lines of the following two column chart:

Scientismic

GOOD	BAD
known facts	asserted values
objectivity	subjectivity
reason	faith, prejudice
science	opinion, rationalization
proof	assertion, emotion, rhetoric, propaganda
neutral universe	invented values
empiricism	idealism

The irrationalist, the person who accepts the fact-value split, makes the same distinctions but from the opposite normative point of view favoring values:

Irrationalist

BAD	GOOD
mere facts	important values
things	persons, subjects
cold reason	faith, commitment
materialism, mechanism	mind, spirit, the soul, personhood
scientism	wisdom, real knowledge
the provable	the significant, knowledge of the heart
human reduced machine	the "self," the "soul"
reductionism	holism

Anyone familiar with this debate can continue these lists indefinitely.

One's religious experience and the expression of it, according to this schema, remain for the most part private and a matter of sentiment, nostalgia, or ignorance. Ignorance regarding one's own religious experience and reticence to discuss it in public are the order of the day. There is a high inverse proportion between a person's formal education and their ignorance regarding religious experience and expression.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the area of liturgy. Many Christian ministers, and even more so, parishioners, are woefully ignorant regarding the liturgy. They have modest theological, much less anthropological, sociological, and psychological, understanding of it.

Liturgy, of all the theological disciplines, is placed squarely within the value category according to the modern dogma. Liturgical concerns are just matters of taste, not really important or central to human experience or divine reality, according to the dominant wisdom on liturgy. "To each her own, since liturgy is not subject to public conversation." Or from the irrationalist flip side of the modernist debate comes a romantic assertion about the divine mystery or a nostalgic repristination of the 4th or the 16th centuries. This is hardly a helpful contribution and too much of liturgical scholarship has taken this route. The teaching of worship, especial-

The challenge to go public requires a major change

ly in most Protestant seminaries, is lodged in the practical department where it runs the risk of reduction to practical techniques. The challenge to go public requires a major change in liturgical scholarship, the teaching and practice of worship.

Liturgical Renewal and the Modern Dogma

Liturgical renewal in this century reflected this modern dogma far more than is generally appreciated. Where the scientismic group rejected tradition, ritual, sacred space and time, the liturgical renewers reveled in these same things, only differing on the appropriate century upon which to model their renewal. When the liturgical renewers entered into public argument (the "factual" side), they did so dressed primarily as historians. Since their facts were historical, contemporary use fell on the side of values and taste. The critical portion of their work, then, focused more on the accuracy of their historical work than on the contemporary context within which liturgical renewal needed to take place.

Making the historical into the primary critical moment hampered local ownership of liturgical renewal and caused more conflict within the church membership than was necessary or helpful. While the retrieval of our liturgical heritage was necessary following the Enlightenment, many of the renewers did not adequately distinguish between tradition, "the living faith of the dead," and traditionalism, the "dead faith of the living."[4] Traditionalism obscured the critical force of the gospel to which Jesus calls us and which he embodies. The life, creativity, and sense of local indigenous worship were discouraged.

Four sections follow, three exposit my contention and the fourth summarizes and makes a proposal. I first sketch the three major liturgical renewal currents in twentieth century Lutheranism. Then, second, I describe the effect of the modern dogma upon these currents. Third, I note the surface eddies resulting from these currents and the hidden undercurrent of the modern dogma and give an example of its effect upon one area of contemporary church life.

I. Three Currents in Liturgical Renewal

I have already stated the major undercurrent I wish to trace in twentieth century liturgical renewal, namely the American modern dogma. My colleague, Henry E. Horn, has described three surface currents[5] which I am suggesting are

[4] This is a favorite saying of Jaroslav Pelikan, most recently published in *The Vindication of Tradition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), 65.

[5] My debt to Henry Horn, not only in this article, is insufficiently addressed by a footnote. If the truth were known, he would be a co-author; he, however, has better sense than to put these comments into print.



profoundly directed by this major undercurrent. For easy identification of these currents, imagine that the twentieth century liturgical renewal is a large body of water and, further, that we put some dye into the water to trace its currents.

The first current is marked by red dye; it is red because it is the most influential force in the *Service Book and Hymnal.*[6] The second current is marked by green dye because it is the current most affecting the *Lutheran Book of Worship.* The third current is yellow: it is the folk worship revival of the sixties which died quietly, more or less, in the early seventies, but which in very important ways represents a very strong counter-cultural liturgical renewal. It, also, reveals the more obvious influences of the modern dogma's effect on liturgical renewal.

Liturgical renewal, which began in Europe, faced a great challenge in restoring physical rituals to American Lutheran worship practice. There was not an organic tradition readily available to the mid-nineteenth century restorers. In order to restore physical ritual, to integrate mind and body, they chose to retrieve the most available heritage which happened to be based upon late medieval worship. The subsequent liturgical renewals in this century also retrieved a previous liturgical practice which was not organically continuous with the contemporary experience. In an overly simplified way, one might think of all three movements, Red, Green, and Yellow as attempts at romantic retrieval.

The argument for the retrieved worship pattern usually took on a romantic tone. As one liturgical scholar put it at the beginning of a session introducing the *Lutheran Book of Worship,* "One must choose one's century. It is time Lutherans stopped making the sixteenth century their norm and chose the fourth! That is what the LBW does."

The Red Current

Henry Horn speaks of "the throes of a liturgical movement," often called "the Philadelphia Movement," in full swing during his seminary days in the 1930s. This movement, under the leadership of Luther D. Reed, is the Red Current.

This first liturgical renewal current of the twentieth century grew out of the revived historical consciousness in nineteenth century Europe. During the 1840s, in England with the Oxford and Cambridge Movements and in Germany under Wilhelm Loehe, this renewed historical vision fastened on the late middle ages as a sort of ideal time for Christianity.[7] The church then was integrated

[6] I use LCA and ALC service books for several reasons. Most of my audience is familiar with these. LC—MS Lutherans will recognize in the Red Current most of the characteristics of *The Lutheran Hymnal,* a product of this same liturgical current.

[7] Prominent names connected with the Oxford Movement, also called the Tractarians, are John Keble, Edward Pusey, and the convert to Roman Catholicism, John Henry (later Cardinal) Newman; Louis Bouyer, *Newman: His Life and Spirituality,* trans. by J. Lewis May (New York: Meridian Books, 1960).

During these times holy space was emphasized.

with culture; this was the time of Christendom. Those in the movement turned toward a recovery of Gothic church buildings. Authorities were set up who would answer questions about vestments, ecclesiastical arts, paraments, and architectural details taken from Gothic plans. During this time holy space was emphasized.

A major force toward Lutheran liturgical recovery was the king of Prussia, Friedrich Wilhelm III, who produced a liturgy for his newly united church.[8] Although the king's liturgy was affected by Restorationism, its major effect for our purposes was the reawakening in Lutheranism that it provoked. Most significant for Americans is the *Agende für christliche Gemeinden des lutherischen Bekenntnisses* by Wilhelm Loehe, published in Noerdligen (Bavaria) in 1844 primarily for the benefit of Lutheran missions in the Frankenmuth area of Michigan.[9] An English translation, *Liturgy for Christian Congregations of the Lutheran Faith* appeared in 1902.

Along with Loehe's revival of liturgy came the romantic retrieval of Lutheran Confessionalism under the leadership of Claus Harms (1778-1855).[10] Some of the Lutheran Confessionalists, who opposed the king's church union, would leave for America to escape his power and bring with them the seeds of liturgical reform. Among these are the immigrant groups which founded the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and the Buffalo Synod.[11]

Along with these recent immigrants, following the Civil War in America, the Southern church of the more established East coast Lutherans began seeking a liturgical renewal through a restorationist policy.[12] Without rehearsing further detail, these forces eventually produced the Common Service of 1888 which became standard by 1917 with the *Common Service Book with Hymnal* of the ULCA and the English Synod/Evangelical Lutheran Hymn-Book, 1912. This version of the Common Service was slightly revised and issued as *The Lutheran Hymnal,* 1941.

---

[8] Luther D. Reed, *The Lutheran Liturgy* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1947), 162; George Muenich, "The Victory of Restorationism—The Common Service, 1888-1958 (Unpublished article in Worship Textbook at Luther Northwestern Seminary), 9; Paul Graff, *Geschichte der Aufloesung der alten Gottesdienstlichen Formen in der evangelischen Kirche Deutschlands* (Goettingen, 1937-39, "History of the Dissolution of the Old Worship Forms in the Evangelical Church of Germany").

[9] Carl S. Meyer (ed.), *Moving Frontiers* (Concordia: St. Louis, 1964), pp. 90-124; hereafter, *Moving Frontiers;* George R. Muenich, "Der Hauptgottesdienst in der Lutherischen Kirche Amerikas" (Unpublished dissertation, Erlangen, 1973), 6-12; Reed, 153; Wilhelm Loehe, *Three Books Concerning the Church* (Reading, PA: Pilger Publishing House, 1908).

[10] Robert C. Schultz, "The European Background," in *Moving Frontiers,* 47, 66-69.

[11] *Moving Frontiers,* 90-141.

[12] Reed, 183f; Muenich, "Restorationism," 15.



The Service Book and Hymnal is also the product of this liturgical renewal. In the words of George Muenich, "(It) does not represent a radical departure from the Common Service, but neither is it simply another, or more refined, restoration liturgy."[13] In fact, in certain places one can begin to see the effects of the second great liturgical renewal movement of the twentieth century, the Green Current. Many of these influences move beyond the Restorationism of either German Lutheranism or medieval liturgy on the eve of the Reformation.

What follows is a simplified description of the Red Current's basic characteristics.

1. The rubrics or general directions were all important. The object was one standard liturgy which was protected by rubrics saying when one *shall* or *may* act in certain ways. The *shalls* protect the integrity of the liturgy; the *mays* allow for some freedom and experimentation. But many clergy were always confused and stuck to the *shalls*.
2. There was always clerical leadership in this movement. The laity had only responsive parts in liturgy.
3. The emphasis was on sacred space.
4. Since late medieval worship had a strong individualistic bent, this same individualistic bent fit into the modern period's focus upon the individual. The result for corporate worship was the gathering of individuals who more or less worshiped individually in a public setting.
5. Finally, the general assumption underlying worship in the Red Movement was that worship took place within the idea of Christendom. It was assumed that worship was *public;* that it was aimed at the whole community rather than the faithful alone.

The Green Current

The Green Current, the second great liturgical renewal movement in the twentieth century, also has its roots in nineteenth century scholarship. However, some basic changes in the world of theology and liturgical thought following the First World War brought the Green Current about; these changes, which I describe as four factors, intensified in the 1930s and 1940s.

The first was the breakthrough in biblical studies. Since the turn of the century, biblical studies have been more and more ecumenical.[14] Especially following Pius XII's encyclical, "Divino Afflante Spiritu," in 1943, the efforts of Catholic biblical scholarship have increased and joined arms with Protestant and, to some extent, Orthodox scholarship.

---

[13]Muenich, "Dissertation," 33.

[14]Eugene L. Brand, "Worship in the Perspective of World Lutheranism," *Currents in Theology and Mission* 8:3 (June, 1981): 132-140.

The churches tried to bring their traditions together.

The result of this ecumenical biblical scholarship on liturgical renewal is multifaceted. First, it puts scholars from traditionally anti-liturgical churches in contact with contemporary Catholicism. This eroded many unfounded prejudices previously held by them. Much of the historical retrieval led to a growing appreciation of Christian liturgy as the Christianization of Israel's worship.

Ecumenical work brought traffic from the Far East which affected liturgical renewal as well. Take for example, the ecumenical work of Protestants in South India. Here many denominations, separated by European history, were portraying their separation before Asian converts who did not care about European denominational divisions in their Asian setting. The churches tried to bring their traditions together through a new approach to liturgy, namely, by choosing the early church eucharist as a model. The liturgy of the Church of South India is the result.[15] It was influential in the Green Current among Protestants.

The place of patristic studies in ecumenical liturgical renewal cannot be ignored. Perhaps most significant in this development is the work of Gregory Dix. In his book, *The Shape of the Liturgy,* he set the tone for how liturgists would use patristic scholarship.[16] One passage, in particular, reveals the rather romantic turn this use of patristic scholarship took. He describes the early fourth century liturgy in terms of a Victorian gathering in a wealthy middle-class home. Although he explicitly tries to avoid romanticizing this time period, the tone of this passage is patently romantic.[17] Dix's tone, as much as anything else in this book, shaped the liturgical renewal of the Green Current.

A third factor in the Green Current is the worker-priest movement. Between and following the two world wars, the Catholic Church of France realized that it had missed contact with the working class. A number of younger priests offered to give themselves, at subsistence pay, to live among the workers, say mass at their factories, and carry on a mission to them where they lived and worked. Thus started about ten years of heroic work. However, it did not go as planned: the workers could not make the cultural jump that the mass demanded, and, as a result, they did not attend. Instead, the priests through their concern for the worker's lives, made common cause with their grievances and became the vocal proponents of their cause, joining the Communists in their protest. This embarrassed the established church, and the work was terminated. But this effort of work and worship had a profound effect

---

[15]Stephen Neill, *A History of Christian Missions* (Narmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books Ltd., 1964) 553.

[16]Gregory Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy* (Glasgow: University of Glasgow Press, 1945).

[17]Dix, *Shape,* 142.



on congregations nearby, and social action was tied to a renewal of eucharistic action.[18]

Finally, a momentous change had come upon the consciousness of European Christians and on their mission outposts around the world. The nineteenth century produced missionary enthusiasm which counted the whole world as territory for the expansion of the Christian Church. It stirred up so much enthusiasm that a journal was renamed at the turn of the twentieth century predicting *The Christian Century*. Two world wars and the accompanying disillusionment with Western culture, together with the completely unexpected reappearance of world religions in force, brought discontinuity to the idea of a Christendom, a melding of Christ and culture. In place of the Christian century, a very different world evolved, one in which Christians were in the minority and probably would always be so.

The idea of Christians as a permanent minority and the loss of missionary zeal profoundly affected the conception of Christian worship. The emphasis moved from the melding of Christ and culture to significant discontinuity between them. Sunday morning, no longer Christendom at worship, became a small, highly intentional community of the faithful, the people of God. The liturgy became less a public act and more a peculiar act of this small but faithful few. This is, for the purposes of exposition, overdrawing the distinction. However, the contrast is clearly present between SBH and LBW.

The result of these four factors (biblical studies, ecumenical work, worker-priest movement, and minority consciousness) on the liturgical practice of the church is the Green Current. In the U.S.A., this current built up in the fifties, just when the Red book was coming out, but was too late for major inclusion. A few additions to the Red book, the Deacon's Litany and Eucharistic Prayer, indicate the growing effect of the Green Current. Immediately after the Red book was out, the Commission on Liturgy and the Hymnal (ALC and LCA) invited the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod to join in new work on the liturgy, in order to harness for Lutherans all the experiences taking place around us. When the InterLutheran Commission came together, the model of worship had already changed to that of the early church; the Green Current had arrived.

To keep our discussion parallel, allow me to make some simple characterizations of the Green Current:

1. The Green movement refocuses concern upon the image of the church as the people of God.

---

[18]Gregor Siefer, *Church and Industrial Society* (Darton, Longman and Todd: London, 1960); John Petrie (trans.) *The Worker-Priests: A Collective Documentation* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1956).

Holy people replace sacred space.

---

2. The movement emphasizes a self-consciousness of one's called, baptized state as bringing one into this people.
3. The activity of the laity in worship in leadership and actions is greatly increased, even emphasized.
4. There is, then, a more corporate conception about worship. Worship is thought of as what the people of God do in God's presence.
5. Holy people replace sacred space.
6. Non-verbal, symbolic language comes in with gestures, visible signs, etc.

The Yellow Current

This movement affected Lutheranism primarily through its youth departments, Walther League, Luther League, etc; it also showed itself in campus ministry. Songs were produced with secular tunes popular with youth, which could be used in place of liturgical chants, not so much to replace them but to give a bored younger generation some incentive to join worship.

It worked for some of us. As a teenager in the late sixties, I was attracted to the liturgical renewal which was at the center of both Catholic and some Protestant youth groups in my hometown. It was only natural that when I attended Valparaiso University, I would become active in the experimental liturgies common on that campus in the late sixties and early seventies.

I mentioned the local Catholic parish in passing but the youth liturgical renewal was timed perfectly for the results of the Second Vatican Council. During this time, Catholic parishes were moving from the Latin Mass to a more dialogical and congregationally oriented vernacular service. And at least in several parishes I know, the youth liturgical renewal became its own ecumenical bridge in many Catholic parishes. The Catholics during this time provided what Henry Horn calls, "a folk mass avalanche." For me, it was more like riding the crest of a wave.

What I could not see then, but what is clear to me now, is that the youth movement was really a new pietism. It majored in small group psychology and methods. The guitar, an intimate, small group instrument, became all pervasive. When amplified with a leader at the mike it imposed a new dictatorship of liturgical action. Small group singing accompanied the guitar. The texts identified with the oppressed as over against the establishment. The movement was certainly opposed to the Red Current which had bored its young worshipers to death. Its relationship with the Green Current is more complicated, for both are basically small group movements in recovering the early church; and it is no accident that campus ministries were the sites of experimentation by both the folk advocates and the experimenters with Inter-Lutheran material.

For better or worse, the youth



liturgical movement has been swallowed up by time. Nothing passes faster than nostalgia, especially when it is nostalgia for a time and place which the nostalgic never experienced and which, in the eye of the critical historian, probably never existed.

It was more like a child's ideal of the people of God than a ritual practice which can sustain the public worship of the church. The youth liturgical renewal, for all its strength, only intensified the privatization and sentimentalization of public worship. That brings us back to the main thesis. The liturgical renewal movements of the twentieth century have been drawn along, without our noticing it, by the strong undercurrent of the modern dogma: the fact/value split. Each of the three currents, Red, Green, and Yellow, illustrate the effect of the modern dogma on liturgical renewal.

II. The Modern Dogma as Undercurrent

What characterizes all of these liturgical currents is an attempt to retrieve an earlier moment in the life of the church. They differ, of course, in the century they choose and the way they construe the basic ingredients of public worship. Their basic commonality will be explored in this section before turning to the eddies which their differences create.

The liturgical renewers have tried to put into our congregations the traditions of various centuries but have not attended adequately to the new context. They rediscovered tradition but did not recover it. Instead of discovering a new experience, related to the first, but more appropriate for their present situation, they have handed the contemporary church a series of choices with little theological, anthropological, and socio-psychological criteria for evaluating those choices. Recovery is hampered.

The primary method of retrieval was through romantic historical methods. These historical methods understood the process of retrieval primarily as the retrieval of the genius and experience of the original text and situation.[19] Critical scholarship focuses on the analysis of past biblical and liturgical texts, rather than the constructive moment in the present. The major gap to be conquered, according to this method, is the gap between history and dogma. History, in this model was the lived experience of the faithful; and, since most of the liturgical reformers had a strong irrationalist bent to them, they preferred this to what they perceived to be rationalistic dogma. The much used Latin tag, *lex orandi, lex*

[19]Richard Palmer, *Hermeneutics* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1969) 75-79. This method predominates as well as biblical criticism under the title of the "historical critical method."

Where is the focus of attention to God's presence?

credendi (literally, law of praying, law of believing), became the battle cry for this romantic retrieval.[20]

III. Eddies and the Parish

Even the surface eddies which result from the meeting of these three currents illustrate the effect of the modern dogma on liturgical renewal. The most evident of these eddies result from the meeting of the Red and Green Currents. Those eddies show themselves in problems of orientation immediately: where is the focus of attention to God's presence, toward the East, or among God's people? Secondly, from this, what attitudes should we adopt in gathering in his presence: awe and mystery or the meeting of the people of God in his presence? Third, what is the relation between a predominantly verbal approach to worship and one of actions and nonverbal expressions? Fourth, whereas we had been used to leadership by the clergy, do we now have more lay leadership than we are ready for, at least in many cases?

The majority of parishes are caught "betwixt and between" the Red and Green Currents. The Red Current with its retrieval of late medieval worship focuses the presence of God spacially to the East, the altar and, because of their location, the clergy. Congregations worshiping in buildings designed for this construal of the presence of God are confused when they try to follow the rubrics (a habit fostered by the Red Current) of the Green Current. Since the Green Current attempts to retrieve the ideal of the fourth century with its focus on the people of God as a small, but highly intentional group gathered in a home, the style of the congregation must change substantially to follow those rubrics. Confusion and conflict are a common result.

The "initiation crisis" is an excellent example of the conflict between the Red and Green Currents and how the liturgical renewal currents have only exacerbated this crisis. By "initiation crisis" I mean major critical questions regarding Christian initiation. "Questions are being asked, and answers given, about the right age for confirmation, about how best to catechize parents of infants brought for baptism, about whether infant baptism itself is a good thing, about first confession for children baptized as infants, and so on."[21]

For Lutherans, the role of the rite of confirmation in relationship to Baptism and Holy Communion has become a

---

[20] Geoffrey Wainwright, *Doxology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 218, notes that "from a grammatical point of view it is equally possible to reverse subject and predicate" leaving, in my opinion, a happy ambiguity which is seldom noted.

[21] Aidan Kavanaugh, "Christian Initiation: Tactics and Strategy," in *Made, Not Born: New Perspectives on Christian Initiation and the Catechumenate* (Notre Dame: U. of Notre Dame, 1976).



neuralgic point in this initiation crisis. The Green and Red Currents have two different responses to this point. Under the Red Current, confirmation was attached to First Communion, and functioned primarily as a rite of passage from childhood to adulthood. For example, in my grandmother's generation, confirmation came at the end of eighth grade; so did formal education, if one had stayed in school that long. When she and her siblings were confirmed they were young adults both in the eyes of the Church and the general culture around their place of worship. Aside from certain areas of the country, this easy melding of Christ and culture, the rite of confirmation and the rite of passage to adulthood, no longer coincide; significant discontinuity exists between Christ and culture.

The Green Current focuses on a small, highly intentional community, and places higher strictures on initiation. Baptism becomes far more important under its influence. Confirmation, then, becomes attached primarily to baptism, not Holy Communion. Confirmation, we are told by patristic scholars, was the affirmation of this baptism by the bishop through an act of chrismation. Subsequent history, while noted, is rejected by the Green Current liturgical reformers. Instead, the early church is chosen as the model for facing the challenge surrounding confirmation and baptism. The way it was in the fourth century is clearly superior to the "disintegration of confirmation" in the medieval and reformed period.[22] Out goes the tie between confirmation and Holy Communion. First communion is moved to a younger age, in some cases, as early as infancy on the grounds that it was done that way in the fourth century.

Both liturgical renewal movements fail to attend the significant discontinuity with the previous communal faith experience in America. Neither take seriously enough new ingredients dictated by the contemporary context in their proposals. For example, neither re-evaluate their entire proposal in light of the prolonged adolescence in contemporary America or contemporary rites of passage. Here the Green Current's choice of the fourth century simply does not address part of the contemporary crisis. New rituals need to be found which more carefully integrate Christian rites of passage with the experience of the people.[23] Something besides the "disintegration" of the ideal, namely the fourth century, might be learned in the history of confirmation in the West. New questions and a different model of liturgical scholarship and renewal are needed to face the initiation crisis.

---

[22]Frank W. Klos, *Confirmation and First Communion* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1968).

[23]The wealth of ritual studies available is evidenced in Ronald L. Grimes, "Bibliography: Sources for the Study of Ritual" in *Religious Studies Review* 10:2 (April, 1984): 134-45.

Summary and Proposal

The three major liturgical renewal currents (Red, Green, and Yellow) have been unconsciously affected by the undercurrent of the modern dogma. These movements, in their reaction to the scientismic/rationalist view of ritual and tradition, reveled in them. Liturgical scholars of the first two movements, the only two which are taken as the subject of most serious liturgical scholarship, focused their critical energies on the historical retrieval of the intentions and experience of the original congregation. The choice of century and the place of contemporary practice and application were relegated to secondary status in the public conversation. Remember the advice of our liturgical scholar, "One must simply choose one's century." A critical use of theological principles is rare. A full blown examination of contemporary anthropological ritual study, or socio-psychological and cultural studies, is becoming more common but usually poorly integrated with theological and historical studies.[24] In short, the main battle line in both academically based liturgical movements in this century is on an axis between history and dogma *(lex orandi, lex credendi)* with no small amount of animosity against dogma and critical theology.

However, if historical analysis is the only critical moment, the temptation is to impose upon the contemporary church a romanticized historical description of a past liturgical practice. The phrase *lex orandi, lex credendi* can easily fall prey to this pattern. In principle, Prosper of Aquitaine's formulation of this principle in the axiom that "the rule of prayer should lay down the rule of faith" is a necessary but not sufficient moment in liturgical renewal.[25] Liturgical scholarship and its use in liturgical renewal is appropriately interested in history, especially the history of prayer.[26] The evocation of the principle *lex orandi, lex credendi* requires a more complex relationship between liturgy and theology than is often the case among the liturgical renewers. To say that the principle is necessary but not sufficient is not to continue what has been basically a fruitless struggle between history and dogma, liturgy and theology, which has been perpetuated by parts of liturgical and theological scholarship.

In contrast to this either/or logic of history vs. dogma, systematic theology vs. historical theology, I want to emphasize a dialectical relationship between them. Furthermore, my overall impression agrees with Johannes-Baptist Metz' observation that "the fundamental hermeneutical problem of theology is not the problem of how systematic theology stands in relation to historical theology, how dogma stands in relation

---

[24] Frank C. Senn's new book, *Christian Worship and Its Cultural Setting* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983) fits this category; cf. Henry E. Horn's review in *Dialog* 24 (Spring, 1985): 157-8.

[25] Cited in J. Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine,* vol. 1, *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100-600),* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), 339.

[26] Adolf von Harnack's opinion regarding liturgy in the history of Christianity is too severe. He argued that "another instance of the exceptional nature of Christianity" was that "for a considerable period it possessed no ritual at all" and that therefore "the history of dogma during the first three centuries is not reflected in the liturgy"; cf. *History of Dogma,* vol. 1., trans. Neil Buchana (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1901), 33; for further discussion with a very different opinion see J. Pelikan, *Historical Theology: Continuity and Change in Christian Doctrine,* (New York: Corpus Instrumentorum, 1971), 88.

to history, but what is the relation between theory and practice."[27] In general, the liturgical renewal movements of this century have not attended to the dialectic of theory and practice.

In parishes all three liturgical renewal options keep worship basically in the category of taste and sentiment, both of which are thought to be irrational and private. New liturgies are handed down from above, from people who have done their homework and are said to have good taste. It is no matter that the taste is formed out of a romantic notion of some supposed golden age of the church and that no theological argument has been made for this liturgy. Never mind that it is severely discontinuous with the experience of the people, both in the pews and outside them.

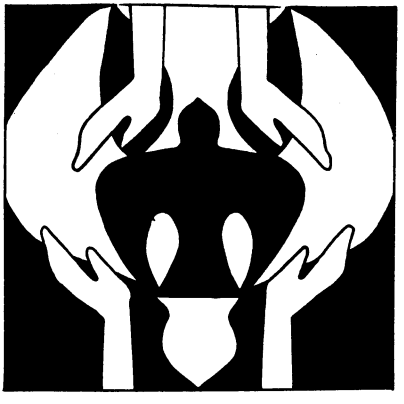
If my analysis regarding the effect of the modern dogma on these liturgical movements is at all accurate, two major changes need to be made. First, a more critical dialogue between history and dogma, along with contemporary critical theology, needs to take place. Second, a major effort of liturgical scholarship should be placed upon the axis and dialectic occuring between theory and practice. Such a refocusing of energy would take into account in an integrated manner the particular context of the worshiping community and would see critical theology, dogma, anthropology, and sociology as ancillary disciplines to liturgical scholarship.

On the parish level, this same shift of emphasis would lead to the development of local theology and worship which, while remaining faithful to the tradition, would feel far less obliged to some universal ideal of the liturgy handed down from some committee. This would commit parish clergy to a major overhaul of the place of ritual competence and theological critique in the education and practice of ministry.[28] Liturgical renewal in this century has been more influenced by the modern dogma than is normally realized and more than is healthy for the life of the church.

---

[27]Johannes-Baptist Metz, "Relationship to Church and World in Light of Political Theology," *Theology of Renewal* 2. *Renewal of Religious Structures,* L.K. Shook, ed. (New York: Herder & Herder, 1968), 260.

[28]Cf. Patrick R. Keifert, "Truth and Taste on Sunday Morning," *Dialog* 25, 3 (Summer, 1986).



The Heart of Worship: A Contemporary Narrative Eucharist

Mark P. Bangert

Christ-Seminary—Seminex Associate Professor of Worship, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago

The following narrative Eucharist attempts to guide worshipers toward the heart and core of weekly worship. Like all worship aids, it may need to be adapted to the local situation, with its particular experiences, background, and level of knowledge. Readers should feel free to use it in whole or in part, to reproduce it or to rewrite it.

I. Before the Brief Order for Confession and Forgiveness

You can expect the next hour to be out of the ordinary. In order to make our worship more meaningful Sunday after Sunday, we will insert a few interpretive paragraphs at crucial points in our liturgy today. While we will stop occasionally to talk about what we are about to do, we hope that this will not keep you from praying, praising, and embracing our Lord.

We seek meaning, the kind of meaning one finds in a long-term relationship. Occasionally we take the time to sit down with someone we love, to talk about ourselves, and to put into words all that we regularly feel and do instinctively. The meaning we seek might be compared with a love affair with a favorite lake, a prized piece of art, a treasured piece of music, or an especially admired building—we keep coming back to see, to hear, or to smell; we look for a deeper meaning through reading or conversation so that our normal experience becomes filled with more profound meaning.

If you are like me, the meaning of liturgy keeps changing, partly because our expectations keep changing. Each of us comes with different needs ... on different Sundays and in different years. Some come to find release from guilt and sin. Some come to pour out requests to God. Some come to hear an encouraging word about life and this world. Some come looking for celebration. Some come to hear the old Bible stories one more time. Some come to be close to God. Each of us looks for and finds different meaning in the liturgy; and yet the liturgy embraces all these needs and offers the full and varied love of God in Christ Jesus. Our Eucharistic liturgy is an event whose meaning we are continually striving to embrace, and which always exceeds our grasp.

Because it is central to our needs, the liturgy of Holy Communion serves as the heart of the Christian community. In fact, because the world apart from Jesus Christ lacks real meaning, the liturgy is the heart of all of life, it is the heart of the world. In a human heart blood is drawn in and pushed out, and so it is also in Holy Communion: we are drawn to God from the farthest reaches of life only to be pushed back out again. Through the expansions and contractions of our hearts in and following worship we are fed with the oxygen of the presence of Christ and then pushed out to bring that life to starving flesh. Expansion takes place in this hour; contrac-

tion often sets in as we leave. Our cells fill up with life here and then carry it out to the world. This liturgy is the heart of the church.

If you wish to press the analogy farther, we might say that we were made a part of a holy circulation system through Holy Baptism. It was in Baptism that Jesus Christ claimed us as his own. Through Baptism he sets us free from paths of self-destruction. Luther said our Baptism is to be remembered every day. That is why many of us begin our day by tracing upon our forehead and breast the sign of the cross. Any time we remember and confess our old ways and are brought back to baptismal forgiveness, we are set on Christ's path once again. Such confession and such forgiveness should happen often so that we get practice in our baptismal struggle. They need not always happen in connection with Holy Communion, however, because Jesus' giving of himself does not depend on our Confession. For this reason the Brief Order for Confession and Forgiveness is an optional part of the service.

II. Before the Entrance Hymn

It all began hours or even days ago when we made a deliberate decision to be here at this moment. We have been drawn here like blood which is pumped back to the heart. Lacking life, we have come seeking it. Burdened with the cares, the problems, and the guilt of life, we were brought here by the Spirit to rid ourselves of our hunger and our poverty. But it is also true that we came here because we *decided* to come here. Now that we are here, we need what could be called "attitude adjustment." We need to be shaped into the body of Christ. We need to adjust our minds, hearts, and souls so that we can see clearly that we are in the presence of God. We need to renew our vocation as those who praise God. We need to be shaped into the body of Christ. We are a community of worshipers seeking life.

What we are about to do in the next part of the liturgy gathers us together and "adjusts" us. The music of the Prelude began that process. The Entrance Hymn serves to corral our thoughts and to provide a time for the leaders to enter. A greeting (The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all) makes it clear that it is God our parent, God's Son Jesus, and the Holy Spirit who have come into our midst with great love. From the outset we know that we gather in peace to speak with God in prayer. And so the words sound out: "In peace, let us pray to the Lord." In the process of gathering we pray for general, but important things: for peace and our salvation, for the whole world, for the church, for unity, and for the worship building itself. Then we move quickly to praise in order to get us breathing as the body of Christ. Prayer and praise are the instinctive actions of God's people. The final act in our gathering together gets specific. This is not just any old gathering. This is a gathering on (such and such a Sunday), whose keynote is sounded in the prayer for this day. With the completion of this prayer, our preparation is over. The Prayer of the Day is the signal that we are ready to hear the Word of God.

Let yourselves be gathered and formed, people of God!

III. Before the Lessons

Because gathering differs from time to time, certain elements from the opening pages of the liturgy can be deleted without any significant effect. Hearing the Word of God is no option. If we are

drawn here to receive life, we are now ready to expose the inner chambers of our hearts and we should be prepared to receive rejuvenation. The giving of God himself in his Word can be compared to the giving of oxygen to our physical hearts.

Three kinds of readings follow—one from the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament), one from the Apostles, and a final one which we have come to know as the message of our Lord himself. In the Holy Gospel we hear of his life or we hear his words.

Because the Gospel makes the rest of Scripture meaningful, the Old Testament reading usually forms a parallel to the Holy Gospel in some way (Take the opportunity to point out a parallel or related theme in the First Lesson and the Gospel for the day). The First Lesson is the memory of God's gracious activity for the people of Israel. Following this lesson, we use the church's oldest hymnbook, the book of Psalms, to respond to the reading with a biblical prayer appropriate to the theme of the day. It is fitting that the whole congregation sings this Psalm—and not just the pastor or the choir—for the Lesson itself was intended for all.

From the Second Lesson we hear ways of living out the faith. Both the First and Second Lessons are read from a reading desk or lectern. Since the Gospel offers us Jesus himself, the Bible is often carried into the midst of the congregation before it is read, and we rise to greet the Lord with shouts of Alleluias and Praise. We stand when we are in the presence of Jesus, not only for respect but also for attentiveness: from these words comes life. We reach for that life, not always able to grasp it, not always ready to use it for ourselves or for the world. The words of the Gospel are empty or dead unless they become ours inside, unless our own cells are filled with oxygen. To help that process of internalizing the Gospel comes the final word, which we call the Sermon. Today the Sermon is replaced by the words of this Narrative Eucharist.

In order to show our own commitment after the sermon, we all sing together a hymn which summarizes, internalizes, and expresses the Word of the Day.

We are cells sent to carry life to all that is dying. We find death in ourselves and in the world around. In the prayers we chart out the places in our lives and in our world where the Gospel can bring life. We bring before God those needs and those places where his life is needed. Since we have just been fed and revitalized, we know ourselves as life-bearers. We are God's first answer to our prayers: he uses us to bring life to the world. Seek now, my sisters and brothers, the life that is yours through the Gospel.

IV. Before the Peace

Just as the Service of the Word began with a greeting, so now the service of the Table also begins with a greeting—The peace of the Lord be with you always—and our reply—And also with you. So far we have been given the life of the Word—oxygen for our cells. Now it is time for the revelation of our true identity as the body of Christ. Our Lord knew that in order to give us true nourishment, he had to be himself food for us.

The ultimate purpose of the hour of liturgy is to eat the bread of life and to drink the cup of salvation. Just when we thought it was enough to hear of his life and his deeds, he surprises us with what we wanted all along but for which we were afraid to ask. He comes so close as to be himself the food: the body and blood of Christ is for us and in us. As we eat and drink, the scales fall from our

eyes and we see in one another the body of Christ. This is the gift he wants to give us each Lord's day. That is why we bring ourselves and all that we have—our money, time, possessions, and the bread and wine which our hands have made or bought—and, miracle of miracles, all is transformed. In and through the bread we receive his body; in and through the wine we receive his blood. We who seek nourishment become bodies filled with life. First we gather the gifts and bring them forward, ourselves with them. We lift our hearts. We bless God as at a meal. We give thanks and suddenly we realize it is God who is blessing us. Amen, Come Lord Jesus. And he does come.

It is this moment which is higher than any other. On tip-toes we seek life and we are—together with the whole host of heaven—given a morsel of what life is. On tip-toes we let go with accolades and praises because all that was dead is alive. The heart beats strongly once more. Life comes to each of us. The body of Christ is for each of us. Each of us is the body of Christ. We sing hymns to acclaim the presence of life or to accompany the gathering of the fragments after the meal has been served.

Come, the feast is to begin. Come to the innermost chamber of the heart of God, there to find the food of angels.
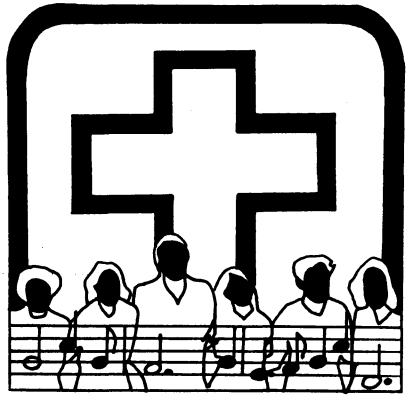
V. Before the Post-Communion Prayer

We have been drawn into the presence of God, but only for a time. The heart has expanded about as far as it can. It is time to be pushed out of the chamber where we have seen our very Lord Jesus Christ, who is himself beyond the walls of space and time. This chamber is the place where we have been unveiled as the body of Christ even as that body was given to us. Now we are that body for the world. A prayer helps get us on our way. Then comes a good word, the Lord's benediction. And a final cheerful exhortation: "Go in peace. Serve the Lord."

The intensity of these final words is magnified by how quickly they come after we have been nourished and by their own brevity. Do you feel pushed out into the world? You should.

Go! Go! Go!

Thanks be to God.



God-Talk or Baby-Talk: More on "Abba"

James A. Rimbach
Concordia Seminary, Hong Kong

Currents 12/1 (February '85) contains the excellent and persuasive discussion of Ralph Quere, " 'Naming' God 'Father.' " What follows is, in part, stimulated by Quere's remarks (p. 9):

> The importance of Jesus' addressing God as "Abba" has been stressed by Jeremias. The intimacy implied by such a name—like our term, "Daddy"—shows Jesus' unique relationship to God and opens the way for us to enter that relationship as children.

The acknowledgement of the work of Joachim Jeremias has become commonplace in virtually all contemporary discussion of the Lord's Prayer, The Sermon on the Mount, and N.T. Theology. As an example (offered without prejudice) let me cite R.H. Stein, *The Method and Message of Jesus' Teaching* (Philadelphia, Westminster, 1978), 82:

> It is evident ... that *abba* was the word of a toddler whose first words were "Daddy" *(abba)* and "Mommy" *(imma)*. No Jew dared address God in such a manner.

On p. 87 he adds:

> The amazing fact is that Jesus bids us through him to come to the Creator of the Universe and as babes call him "Abba—Daddy!"

It is not necessary to adduce numerous examples in the same vein from other works, for they are one and all dependent on the study of Jeremias.[1] My purpose here is to deal with three questions: 1) What accounts for the popularity of this kind of citation? 2) Is the popular reference to Jeremias actually representative of his conclusions? and 3) Is Jeremias compelling in his assessment of the development and meaning of *abba?*

1. Why Should We Want to Call God "Daddy?"

My remarks here will be unabashedly personal and speculative, but I beg the reader's indulgence with the promise that more objective material is coming later. The notion that the typical prayer address of Jesus might be "baby-talk" may take some of the "patriarchal edge" off the tone of Jesus' teaching about the fatherhood of God, and thus is admirably suited to a popular theological enterprise in many circles. In other cases, known to me from campus ministry circles, "baby-talk" theology fits very well with presentations of "child-like" faith which quickly degenerates into

[1] The studies of Jeremias on the prayers of Jesus have been printed in almost identical form in numerous places. English readers may most conveniently consult: *The Prayers of Jesus* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1978); *The Lord's Prayer* (Facet Books) (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1964); *The Central Message of the New Testament* (London: SCM, 1965).

"childish belief systems." What may be a legitimate concern not to over-intellectualize the faith has close relatives among those who are systematically anti-intellectual and who substitute raw emotionalism for even the most rudimentary efforts at understanding and intelligibility. The suggestion that "even scholars" now have come to see Jesus instructing his disciples to use the "language of infants and toddlers" in prayer, is, so to speak, "music to the ears" in such circles.

Thirdly, the softening of patriarchal language from the NT is very well suited to certain feminist agendas by shifting the emphasis in the idea of the "fatherhood" of God into the "parental" sphere: Jesus does not present us with a stern, patriarchal father-God! Jesus teaches us instead that God "is into parenting!" Current usage of the word "parent" and "parenting" functions in such a way as not to be a simple combination of "fathering - mothering," but instead gives a slight edge to the *maternal,* while allowing this to be predicated of males.[2]

2. What Did Jeremias Really Say?

Those who consult the writings of Jeremias will quickly discover that he is a very frequent victim of selective citation. He has a great deal to say about *abba* that is not reflected by popular writers and speakers of our day. I quote here only a short statement which clearly indicates his train of thought and just as clearly indicates that it is indeed widely misrepresented:

> One often reads (and I myself believed it at one time) that when Jesus spoke to his heavenly Father he took up the chatter of a small child. *To assume this would be a piece of inadmissible naivete* (emphasis added). We have seen that even grown-up sons addressed their father as *abba.* So when Jesus addresses God as *abba* the word is by no means simply an expression of Jesus' familiarity in his converse with God. At the same time, it shows the complete surrender of the Son in obedience to the Father (Mark 14.36; Matt. 11.25f.) ... Jesus' use of *abba* expresses a special relationship with God ... (it is) an expression of obedient trust but also at the same time a word of authority. *(The Prayers of Jesus,* p. 62f.)

If one reads Jeremias in his entirety on the prayers of Jesus, a very balanced view emerges. Note that contemporary appeal to the use of the word "Daddy" hardly takes up notions of obedient trust and authority that Jeremias posits for *abba* on the lips of ancient Palestinians. Indeed, "Daddy" in common American parlance more often than not moves *in exactly the opposite direction* of OT/NT teaching on the fatherhood of God.

3. Jeremias and the Meaning of Abba

Why does Jeremias place such strong emphasis on the alleged peculiarity of the word *abba* as used by Jesus? This is not at all difficult to discover. His commitment to the *criterion of dissimilarity* in isolating the authentic words of Jesus is well known. I do not suppose that I am by any means alone in considering this criterion unnecessarily minimalist, but that is not at issue here. In line with his

---

[2] Jeremias writes *(The Prayers of Jesus,* 11): "For orientals, the word 'father', as applied to God, thus encompasses, from earliest times, something of what the word 'mother' signifies among us." This can be maintained only by relegating "tenderness" to an exclusively female quality, which is questionable to say the least.

commitment to dissimilarity, Jeremias is eager to demonstrate something unique about *abba* which will separate it from Israelite (OT) and Jewish teaching on the "fatherhood of God." That is why the discussion is at times put in terms of, not only what was Jesus' usage in prayer, but what Israelite and Jewish usage *was not.*[3] Here is a statement of Jeremias' position, via Norman Perrin:

> The reason for the avoidance of *abba* in address to god in the ancient Jewish piety is that this is the form of the word used by a child in first learning to speak to his earthly father. Aramaic, unlike English, does not have an onomatopoeic word to be taught to children (Dadda or the like) and then a quite different root for the formal word. In Aramaic, the root *ab* has to serve for both. Thus, the ancient Jews maintained the dignity of God, in so far as they addressed him as Father at all, by scrupulously avoiding the particular form of the word used by children.[4]

Now, Perrin has the argument "right," but many others who cite Jeremias' work do not appreciate that it is a peculiar combination of philological and semantic observations. In other words, what he claims for Jesus is the uniqueness, *not* of addressing God "(My) Father," but of using the form *'abbā* as opposed to *'abā* or *'abî*. So, his argument about the "meaning" of *abba* rests ultimately *not on contextual indicators, but upon morphological peculiarity,* or, to be even more exact, upon *supposed remembered causes of morphological development.* He expressly says that the notion that *abba* in any way reflects "child/infant" speech results from its morphological peculiarity: "The gemination is modeled on the way in which a child says *imma* to its mother."[5]

When Jeremias surveys the actual usage of *abba,* he finds that it is by no means a word confined to infants and toddlers, but ... is attested as a respectful address to old men" and "... grown-up children, too ... used *abba.*"[6] To overcome the tension created by these observations, he then adds, "despite the degree of the extension, *it was never forgotten that abba derived from the language of small children"* (emphasis added).[7] This is a difficult argument to counter, since it is completely without evidence. The case is further weakened by the attempt to strengthen it with an additional argument from silence, namely, the absence of address to God using the form *abba* in Jewish prayer. On the latter point B. Gerhardsson comments:

---

[3] See *The Prayers of Jesus,* 57. Jeremias' argument is perhaps weakest at this point. Apparent examples of the vocative "Father" in Jewish prayer are too easily dismissed. See *The Prayers of Jesus,* 15, and notes 3, 4. 3 Maccabees 5:7; 6:3,8; 7:6; Wisdom of Solomon 2:16; 11:10; 14:3 are, according to him, from material "not composed in Palestine." This leaves four others (Tobit 13:4; Sirach 51:10; Sirach 23:1,4). From these four, J. contends that with two (Sirach 23:1,4) there are "translation problems."

[4] *Rediscovering the Teachings of Jesus* (New York: Harper, 1976), 41.

[5] *The Prayers of Jesus,* 58, with reference to T. Nöldeke, "Ausgleichungen in den semitischen Wörter für 'Vater' und 'Mutter,'" *Beiträge zur semitischen Sprachwissenschaft* (Strasbourg, 1904). Even if we accept the development posited by Nöldeke, which is by no means unlikely or unreasonable, it is still very much to the point to note that the speakers of a language are almost universally ignorant of the causes of morphological peculiarities. A quite different explanation for the development of *abba* is given by Gustav Dalman, *Grammatik des jüdisch-palästinischen Aramäisch,* 2nd edition (Leipzig, J.C. Hinrichs, 1905; Reprint Darmstadt, 1960), 90 and note 1.

[6] *The Prayers of Jesus,* 59-60.

[7] *The Prayers of Jesus,* 59.

> Jeremias is too bold when he asserts that the Jewish milieu of Jesus' time it was unthinkable to address God as "Abba" (Father). Our source material related to the way contemporary Jewish groups addressed God in prayer is too limited to enable us to say with certainty what was *not* done.[8]

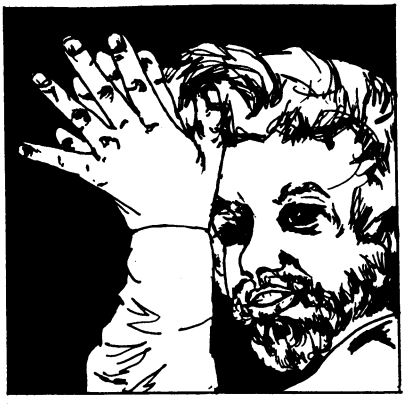
Where does all this discussion lead us? Two very general remarks are in order at this point: 1) we need to appreciate that there is a big jump from the hypothetical origin of gemination in noun forms of Aramaic to the NT theology of prayer; and 2) the *meaning* of words is derived from their use, and not from their morphological origins. When these distinctions are blurred, unfortunate conclusions arise.

In actuality, Jeremias' surveys of the contextual meaning of the fatherhood of God in the OT, Judaism, and the NT give adequate "meaning" to Jesus' use of *abba,* with its accents on adoptive sonship, honor and obedience, on the one hand, and mercy, protection, love and authority, on the other.

My hope is that those who wish to cite the work of Jeremias do so with understanding and discretion. His study on the prayers of Jesus is immensely informative and stimulating, and I do not wish to denigrate it by these few critical remarks.

---

[8] Birger Gerhardsson, *The Origins of the Gospel Traditions* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979), 55.



Poverty: The Biblical Witness and Contemporary Reality

Craig L. Nessan
University of Regensburg, West Germany

Blessed are you poor, for yours is the kingdom of God." (Luke 6:20) Since the emergence of Latin American liberation theology in the late 1960s, considerable thought has been devoted to the meaning of this and the many other passages of Scripture that speak of the poor. This essay summarizes how the Latin American theology of liberation has sought to mediate between the biblical witness and contemporary reality.

Three steps are required in order to interpret the biblical witness regarding poverty. These three steps are concisely summarized in the title of an article by Jose Miguez Bonino: "Poverty as Curse, Blessing and Challenge."[1] Although different terminology has been used by other liberation theologians to describe these three steps, the content of their contributions has been strikingly similar.

The *first step* in interpreting the biblical witness regarding poverty is recognition of the dominant biblical judgment that poverty is a "curse." Others have described this aspect of the biblical witness by calling poverty "a scandalous condition" (Gutierrez)[2] or simply "evil" (Barreiro).[3] In this first step a host of biblical texts can be cited—from the Mosaic law, the prophets, Job, the teaching of Jesus, and the New Testament epistles—which testify to the biblical fact that poverty "is a scandalous condition inimical to human dignity and therefore contrary to the will of God."[4] Poverty is not a condition which occurs by chance, but rather is the result of human injustice and as such is to be rejected and condemned, as happens frequently in the prophetic writings.

When the theologians of liberation speak of poverty as a "blessing," as a *second step* in understanding the biblical witness, they do not mean with a former Archbishop that "poverty is the most certain road to eternal felicity."[5] Gutierrez interprets the blessing of poverty on the basis of several prophetic texts and especially from both the Matthean and Lukan versions of the Sermon on the Mount. The blessing of poverty exists, first of all, in that the poor are free of material obstacles which limit their ability to be open to God. Barreiro, with a slightly different emphasis, speaks of poverty as an "ideal" that allows the individual, freed from material en-

---

[1] Jose Miguez Bonino, "Poverty as Curse, Blessing and Challenge," *Iliff Review* 34, (Fall, 1977): 3-13.

[2] Gustavo Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics and Salvation,* trans. Caridad Inda and John Eagleson (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1973), 291-296.

[3] Alvara Barreiro, "Grass-Roots Ecclesial Communities and the Evangelization of the Poor," *Foundations* 23 (Oct.-Dec. 1980): 314-316.

[4] Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation,* 291.

[5] Archbishop Pedro Pascual Farfan as quoted by John William Hart, *Topia and Utopia in Columbia and Peru. The Theory and Practice of Camilo Torres and Gustavo Gutierrez in their Historical Contexts,* Ph.D. Dissertation (New York: Union Theological Seminary, 1978), 184.

cumberances, to become more able to love. Poverty allows one to become more sensitive to those who are in need. Especially exemplary for Barreiro is the poverty of the church in Acts.

Going behond this insight, Gutierrez furthermore affirms that the poor are blessed because in Christ the kingdom of God has already begun. In Christ the forces have been released which will ultimately lead to the elimination of physical poverty.[6] Thus the poor are blessed wherever the kingdom of God becomes manifest. Similarly, Miguez Bonino emphasizes that the poor are privileged recipients of the gospel; in fact they have an epistemological privilege in apprehending the gospel. As the poor claim the gospel as a gospel for themselves, they receive its blessing and begin to live in the power of the kingdom of God by which physical poverty is to be overcome.[7]

The *third step* in interpreting the biblical witness regarding poverty sees poverty as a "challenge" which yet remains to be overcome, and which requires a change in the present order. The biblical witness points toward a transformation of the conditions of our life, by the creation of a new world and a new day for all mankind. Poverty is a challenge to those who are not poor to join in the struggle of the poor and to be transformed by the encounter with them. It means to participate in the sufferings of the poor as one struggles to bring about the construction of a more just society. Solidarity in poverty means choosing to be poor not in an attempt to idealize poverty but in order to *protest* against it and to struggle to *abolish* it.

Whereas many contemporary theologians have emphasized the futurity of God's kingdom and minimized its significance for the present, the theology of liberation, like the earlier Social Gospel, stresses the implications of the kingdom of God for the present struggle against poverty, yet without claiming that the kingdom can be achieved by mere human effort. Especially relevant for the theologians of liberation are those biblical texts which point toward a systemic understanding of the causes of poverty. Likewise bearing special significance are those passages which encourage the church to assist in enabling the poor themselves to become agents in overcoming poverty and oppression.[8]

The theologians of liberation recognize *the role of the church* in activating the poor to become participants in the struggle against poverty. Ignacio Ellacuria pleads to the Latin American Church to see that its primary charism is to be the "Church of the poor."[9] Barreiro declares that the church must announce liberation to the poor in order to be faithful to "the mission of Jesus, the Messiah of the poor."[10] Miguez Bonino meanwhile speaks of the Church needing to be transformed by the witness of the poor and their struggle against poverty.[11]

The theology of liberation by no means understands the relationship between the church and the poor as a one-way street. There is a deep awareness of the need for the poor to evangelize the church. Liberation theologians claim

---

[6] Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, 298.

[7] Miguez Bonino, "Poverty as Curse, Blessing and Challenge," 10.

[8] Cf. Leonardo Boff, *Church: Charism and Power. Liberation Theology and the Institutional Church*, trans. John W. Diercksmeier (London: SCM, 1985), 10.

[9] Ignacio Ellacuria, *Freedom Made Flesh. The Mission of Christ and His Church*, trans. John Drury (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1976), 146.

[10] Barreiro, "Grass-Roots Ecclesial Communities ...", 316.

[11] Miguez Bonino, "Poverty as Curse, Blessing and Challenge," 12.

that the poor reveal the presence of Christ to the church in a way which requires recognition. The poor remind the church of who Christ is and where he reveals himself in the world today; they serve to reveal the identity of Christ in a living way. The interpretation of Matthew 25:31-46, the parable of the Last Judgment, has played a major role in shaping the consciousness of the theology of liberation in this regard. The poor virtually become a sacrament of Christ's presence in the modern world.

Together these liberation theologians witness to the living tradition of the biblical word as it relates to the contemporary situation of poverty in Latin America. A living hermeneutical circle exists as biblical texts inform the contemporary reality of poverty, and the contemporary reality poses new questions to the biblical texts. In Latin America the biblical witness speaks a word to the church about its mission in the face of a continent overwhelmed by poverty and physical want. By listening to the biblical witness regarding poverty and by examining the contemporary reality of poverty in the world, North American churches are likewise called to a new attitude and to active measures on behalf of the poor both at home and abroad.



Preaching Unity

Travis DuPriest
Associate Professor of English at Carthage College, Kenosha, WI

Aristotle noted in the *Poetics* that plays he had seen faithfully observed the unities of time, place, and action. The plays took place in one place, in one day, and around one major event in the protagonist's life. It was not until later that plays such as Shakespeare's spanned months and years as well as the globe. And even later in the 20th century playwrights such as Satre have returned to the concept of unity (in such a place as "No Exit," for example).

This concept of unity in oral, dramatic literature—a concept both ancient and modern—is also applicable to preaching. A good sermon, like good, classical drama is anchored in unity.

First, the unity of place. If the sermon is to be thematic in that it picks up the thread or dominant theme or themes of the three lessons and Psalm, no doubt it will still be anchored on one story, parable or verse, in which case we preach *that place:* we put Deuteronomy or Isaiah in context; we keep in mind the situation or problem addressed in Paul's Epistle; we do not veer from the Gospel which is being used in a certain year. John the Baptist in Luke is different from John the Baptist in Matthew. No advantage is served by soft-pedaling John the Baptist of Matthew; no advantage by borrowing from Matthew to put more spice into Luke's John. Each personality has, as do events—compare, for example, the birth of Christ in Matthew with the birth in Luke—a context, a narrator, a specific audience.

A sermon is not the time for comparative or composite studies. The preacher is not trying to recreate (historically) a biography but rather to preach the gospel of the day. The challenge is to place the story or event in context and ask how it can be a living piece of the good news in the 20th century and in the lives of the people listening.

The preacher who tries to pull from Matthew, Mark, Luke, pointing up differences here, similarities there is more likely to distract the listener than to build up an imaginative impact from *one* Gospel. While it is true that our Christmas and Easter "pictures" are composites of the synoptic Gospels, even one picture focuses a detail, sparks the imagination. Herod's plot going on behind the scenes during Jesus' birth, for example, in Matthew focuses the perspective—Christ, small and weak, born to bring abundant life, is born amidst power, plots of death, anxiety and destruction—of the Christmas story.

Second, unity of time. Sometimes, as the hymn says, "times makes ancient good uncouth," yet the good news, true for all time, is to be found in every selection of a given set of periods. More obvious in some than in others is the tie that binds, that is, the thread which runs throughout Old Testament, Epistle, Psalm, and Gospel. Take for example, the lesson for Pentecost: The theme is obviously forgiveness, throughout all time. Preaching unity of time is to

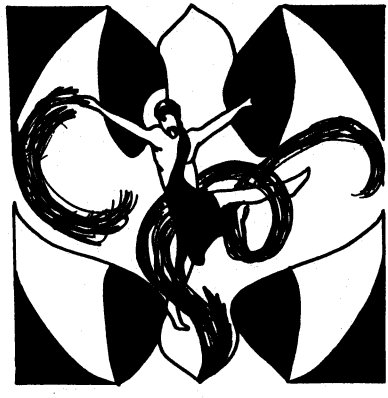
spotlight a thematic thread, be it deliverance, forgiveness, reconciliation, sacrifice, repentance. To be sure, one can spotlight differences between concepts in Old and New Testament; but often the new fulfills the old and does not radically change as many preachers claim.

Third, unity of event. Often sermons are too single-text grounded, stick too rigidly to one lection, when the creative challenge might be to ferret out the unity inherent in biblical events. The ascension serves as example. One of the most moving, informative meditations I have heard was given by the vicar of little St. Mary's Church, Cambridge, England.

The meditations, focused initially on the ascent of Mary (Mary's yes) and Christ's ascension (Jesus' yes), then showed the unity of plan, action, and meaning of the annunciation, the incarnation, the crucifixion, the resurrection, and ascension. Yes, a lifetime of work, but work no lifetime can comprehend. The thread was ultimately humankind's ascension to God—a reminder of the incompleteness of our own creation until the incarnation and the completedness of our new creation as relatives of the Christ who is one-with-the-Father.

Finally, the sensitive homilist preaches unity of worship and unity of season. Whichever unity is preached—time, place, event—the theme or thesis can incline toward the worshiping context, be it the praise of morning or evening prayer or the sacrifice of praise and Thanksgiving of the Eucharist. And likewise, the theme or thesis can be related to the liturgical season. Most unified subjects will naturally incline toward advent's theme of "Awaken," or the Christmas "Come," or Epiphany's "Manifest," or Lent's "Prepare," or Pentecost's "Abide."

To preach unity is to preach the great themes: creation, affection, and deliverance, Christ crucified and resurrected, Christ's perfection through suffering, but to do so locally, in place and time, not vaguely and in generalities. The universal comes alive in time and place and event. The writers of the narratives, poems, songs, letters, visions, prophecies, and gospels of scripture knew this lesson. Their revelations and dreams and stories are alive with specificity and detail, and they are attentive to structure and unity. Those of us who would proclaim the recorded news benefit from the same lessons which vivify the very literature which records God's mighty acts and deeds.



A Book Worth Discussing: God in Creation*

Ted Peters

Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary and Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, California

In the title, *God in Creation,* Jürgen Moltmann wants to emphasize the word 'in.' Moltmann means three things by using the word "in:" first, God is immanent or present within the creation. It is not enough to think of God as transcendent. Second, the person of the Trinity Moltmann identifies as "in" creation is the Holy Spirit. The Spirit who proceeds from the Father and shines forth in the Son is the very spirit of the universe, its continuing creator, its cohesive structure, its energy. Evolutions and catastrophes of the cosmos are also the movements of the Spirit of creation. Third, if we emphasize the word 'in,' we sense that God as Spirit is *right now* engaged in creating. Creation is not simply a single event which occurred once upon a time in the past. God is engaged in creating the world in the present moment and will continue his creative work right up until the cosmic sabbath—right up to the advent of the eschatological consummation—at which point God can rest. The book has an apt subtitle: *A New Theology of Creation and the Spirit of God.*

Moltmann believes our struggle with the ecological crisis drives us toward a "new" theology of creation. Like many contemporaries who yearn for the emergence of a *post*modern way of looking at things, he attacks the modern way of thinking. Today we are beset with an ecological crisis because ours is a culture of domination that wantonly destroys our natural environment. This is due to the modern mind which, beginning with Descartes' split between subject and object, turns nature into an object to be mentally manipulated. The manipulation in thought soon turns into manipulation by technology, and we begin to separate ourselves from nature and, hence, claim no responsibility to nature. Moltmann's antidote to the disease of modernity is a new form of integrating consciousness he calls "participatory" or "communicating" knowledge. This integrating knowledge acknowledges that we humans are both the products of nature and the means by which nature comes to consciousness and articulation. Nature speaks through us. This means that it is nature which is the subject of activity and we human beings are participating subjects in this grand natural movement.

Particularly protean is Moltmann's integration of *creatio ex nihilo* with *creatio continua* in the context of the eschatological sabbath. We still live in the six day period of creation. The sabbath rest is yet to come. When it comes, it will mark the completion of God's creative work. This viewpoint sets us right now amidst the dynamic move-

By Jürgen Moltmann. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1985. xvi and 365 pages. Cloth. $25.95.

ment of God's epigenetic work and makes us participants—created co-creators (to borrow Philip Hefner's helpful term)—and hence creatures who are inescapably responsible for the world around us.

I heartily agree that our ecological crisis calls for a move toward integrating consciousness. But I suggest a caution. It may be premature to leave the modern world behind because it is the modern world which has produced the great achievements of science. Here we run into a bit of trouble with Moltmann's "new theology of creation." On the one hand, he says theologians must take cognizance of the knowledge gained through the natural sciences—he says that he seeks a *"community* of scientific and theological insights" and he argues that "it is not merely possible" to relate biblical testimonies about creation to new insights about nature; "it is actually necessary to make this connection, and to reformulate the biblical testimonies in light of these things" (pp. 192f). On the other hand, he neglects this knowledge in his own theological construction, which leaves his own proposed agenda unfulfilled. For the most part the book is filled with biblical testimonies examined in light of the church fathers, the reformers, the German enlightenment, and with discussion of Karl Barth. But the world of natural science, whose daily business is that of gaining knowledge of God's creation, receives neither equal nor adequate time.

In the important chapter, "The Time of Creation," for example, Moltmann makes no mention whatsoever of Darwin's theory of evolution and of emergent life forms, of Einstein's time-space relatively, of Gamow's big-bang theory of the origin of the universe, of Hoyle's concept of continuing creation, of Eddington's notion of time's arrow, or of the dramatic implications of the second law of thermodynamics for the future of the cosmos in the studies of Prigogine and countless other scientists. Yet Moltmann proceeds to carry on a dialogue with pre-Darwinian theorists such as Plato, Augustine, and Kant under the misguided assumption that his conclusions apply automatically to our situation. Later on he can suggest that the theory of evolution reenforces his idea of temporal openness (pp. 202f), but he has drawn conclusions in this matter apart from dialogue with any resources since Kant.

In one of his very few cross-disciplinary discussions, he offers a brief criticism of biblical creationists and argues that they should be open to Darwinian evolutionary theory: "... there is in principle no contradiction between creation and evolution," he says, and adds that 'creation' refers only to the existence of the world per se, whereas 'evolution' refers to creative activity within the world. Although this seems to fly in the face of his position taken elsewhere that God's Spirit is "the principle of creativity on all levels of matter and life" (p. 100), Moltmann is content to settle the issue by saying that the concepts of creation and evolution "belong to different levels" (p. 196). To say, however, that these two ideas co-exist on different levels falls far short of his own assignment "to reformulate the biblical testimonies" in light of new insights.

When Moltmann moves toward a synthesis of scientific and theological thinking—i.e., when he proffers his idea of the creation as an "open system"—he navigates perilously close to two fallacies, the Scylla of equivocation and the Charybdis of composition. First, we must ask: from where does he borrow the idea of an open system? "From physics," he says. Well, *where* in physics? If it comes

from Einstein's theory of relativity and the concomitant concept of cosmological openness, then we are working with the idea that the universe will simply go on expanding forever. The term 'open' here is used to distinguish an infinitely expanding universe from one which is 'closed,' i.e., one which will eventually collapse or even oscillate. In this sense the term 'open' is trivial to the theologian. It does not mean what Moltmann wants it to mean when he says that the creation is open to new creation, to new events. Hence, if Moltmann borrows the definition of 'openness' from relativity physics, then he equivocates because 'openness' in physics does not mean what he wants it to mean for theology.

The other possibility is that Moltmann borrows the term 'open' from thermodynamics. He even mentions thermodynamics in his discussion. The concept of the open system in non-equilibrium thermodynamics refers to an unstable system which has an open window for receiving or exchanging energy from outside the system. It refers to a far-from-equilibrium system which interacts with the wider environment, which fluctuates; and this fluctuation opens the system to randomness and chance. Now we might ask, can we turn this into a metaphysical principle and apply it to the cosmos as a whole? Moltmann seems to assume we can. But how can one conceive of the cosmos as a whole interacting with a wider environment? How can the whole interact with something outside the whole? If it could, then it would not be the whole. Moltmann's problem is in grasping the nature of the part-whole dialectic. Even though a system *within* the whole can be open to its wider environment, it does not follow that the whole, which is inclusive of all systems, can itself be open, at least in the same sense of the word. If it is from thermodynamics that Moltmann borrows the term 'open,' then he commits the fallacy of composition, according to which the qualities of the part cannot be univocally ascribed to the whole.

What is Moltmann after here? He wants to affirm that things change over time, that God can create new things. "... The future is not completely inherent in the present. The future also includes randomness, because it can bring something new" (p. 201). Of course this is true, both scientifically and theologically; but this assertion stands in Moltmann's work solely on the basis of theological support. Although he mentions what is going on in the sciences, he cannot claim that he is employing scientific knowledge without either equivocating or committing the fallacy of composition. Therefore, we must credit Moltmann in this instance for attempting "to reformulate the biblical testimonies" in light of scientific concepts; yet we need to caution him regarding a serious pitfull in logic if he claims a scientific warrant for applying the term "open system" to the creation as a whole.

What we need is a theology of creation which maintains continuity with the originary symbols of our faith found in the Bible, but which is open to patterns of reconceptualization on the basis of serious dialogue with the current frontiers of scientific research. This dialog is by no means easy. The dominance of mathematical discourse and the variety of technical vocabularies, as well as the competing theories which exist among the multiple disciplines of the natural sciences, all conspire to make the task awesome. Nevertheless, if we are serious about understanding the natural world as God's creation, we must be serious about sorting through what is now known about nature. There are in our society in our time theologians who are

in fact tackling this difficult assignment—Ian Barbour, Philip Hefner, Ernan McMullin, Wolfhart Pannenberg, Arthur Peacocke, Thomas Torrance, H. Paul Santmire, the Center for Theology and the Natural Sciences in Berkeley, the Institute for Theological Inquiry at Princeton, etc.—but only a few of these rate even a scant reference, and then only in Moltmann's endnotes.

Apart from this criticism, *God in Creation* proffers many protean ideas well worth our pondering, especially the ideas of Spiritual presence and of the eschatological sabbath. It is good reading.

Book Reviews



JEWS AND CHRISTIANS: GETTING OUR STORIES STRAIGHT. By Michael Goldberg. Nashville: Abingdon, 1985. 224 pages. Paper. $12.95.

The author's thesis is that Jews and Christians base their respective faiths not on images or concepts but on narratives or "master stories." Jews and Christians share the assertion that God is agent in the drama of redemption, but Christians hold that their vision of God grows out of the covenantal faith of the Hebrew Bible, while Jews can find no warrant for that belief.

Why? To answer, Goldberg covers the master story of Judaism from the Exodus text and the master story of Christianity from the text of Matthew (though only the infancy narratives, the perplexing chapter 13, and the cross and resurrection are included) and then draws his conclusion.

Salvation for Jews occurs by a conjunction of the action of God and the action of the Jews. "Faith might be best expressed as firm reliance on the God who relies so heavily on human beings" (p. 215). The Christian salvation, however, assumes human inability; thus, "the good news that nothing can deter the Lord from saving his creatures—not even those creatures themselves."

The issue is not "Could God become incarnate?" but "Would God become incarnate?" Jews would say "no" because they see this as an inconsistency on God's part: "God would have in essence been playing both parts—his own and that of humanity—thereby usurping the role previously accorded, for better or for worse, to humankind alone. And in the process, he would have revealed both himself and his promises to be far from dependable, but on the contrary, inconstant and untrue" (p. 217).

Two more differences stem from the differing master stories: first, Jews see their lives "primarily as trusts" and Christians see their lives "essentially as gifts," and these postures occasion different sentiments toward life. Second, since Jews are saved as a people and Christians by one person, the point, for Judaism, is freedom from oppression while, for Christians, it is freedom from inner strife.

In the end, the way we act is intertwined with the stories we tell. Jews are called to lives "shaped deeply by Sinai's vision of mutual obligation," and Christians to lives "marked profoundly by the cross's image of unconditional self-sacrifice." Here is the only validation for each story.

And these are the main points of the book.

Jay C. Rochelle
Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago

JESUS IN TWO PERSPECTIVES: A JEWISH-CHRISTIAN DIALOG. By Pinchas Lapide and Ulrich Luz. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1985. 174 pages. Paper. $6.95.

With so many books printed on Jewish-Christian dialogue, why read this one?

1. It is a good piece for novices. The major arguments are crisply and simply stated, with few scholarly footnotes and no reference to Talmudic tracts in particular.

2. Lapide's comments are of interest because he has told us that he accepts the possibility of the resurrection of Jesus.

3. The three theses are biblical, not dogmatic, in origin; this makes the book interesting to a lay audience.

4. Here we have clear-eyed, responsible dialogue in which Christians are willing to examine the biblical testimony as prelude to anti-Judaism.

5. The authors basically agree on the three theses:

— Jesus did not declare himself to his people as Messiah

— The people of Israel did not reject Jesus

— Jesus never repudiated his people

Jewish-Christian conversation is here to stay. It is *essential* that pastors understand what is at stake. Many students in the seminary know *nothing* about Judaism and this is due, in part, to pastors who have remained similarly ignorant. You are not allowed to remain ignorant any longer. If not this book, then another one; but you must begin.

Jay C. Rochelle

THE RISE OF CHRISTIANITY. By W.H.C. Frend. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984. 1042 pages. Cloth. $49.95; Paper. $24.95.

W.H.C. Frend, Professor of Ecclesiastical History at the University of Glasgow, has been a leading interpreter of the history of the early church for many years. Through his numerous publications he has provided both the specialist and the general student of church history with penetrating and scholarly insights into the life and thought of the Christian community in its early, formative stages. *The Rise of Christianity* marks the crowning achievement of Frend's lengthy and productive career, though one hopes that it will not be the last work to flow from the fertile mind and facile pen of this eminent historian. There is little question that this prodigious volume will remain a standard resource for years to come and will take its place as a classic study of early Christian history.

Although the reconstruction of the first six centuries of the church's life and thought is a formidable task, even in a work of this magnitude, Frend's effort is both sound and effective. In a masterfully woven tapestry of data and interpretation he traces the history of the Christian community from its Jewish context through its relationships with Hellenistic thought and cultures, the Constantinian revolution and the conciliar period to its confrontation with and conquest of the Germanic tribes. This multifaceted and complex reconstruction concludes with a discussion of Gregory I's papacy and the beginnings of the medieval period. Personalities, schools of thought, opposition forces, social and political realities all take on precise shape as the story unfolds.

Frend concentrates especially on the contextual, institutional, and social aspects of the Christian experience. Particular foci of attention are the missionary outreach, the structures, and the liturgical practices of the church. The cultural and social context of the Mediterranean world and the Christian community's response to and relationship with that context are also investigated with precision. While the reader might desire a more extensive and intensive examination of the church's theological heritage, certain methodological limits must be set, even in a comprehensive work such as this. Nevertheless, substantial light is shed on major intellectual systems and on the thought patterns and theological formulations of the early shapers of the Christian tradition. The Christological debates of the fourth and fifth centuries, in particular, are discussed in some depth.

Frend's study reflects a thorough acquaintance with both primary and secondary sources. The bibliographic sections

at the end of each chapter are substantial and useful resources, not only for clarifying Frend's interpretations but also for further research and study. Maps, photos and a Synopsis of Events clarify the historical account and serve as helpful didactic tools. The author's literary style is eminently readable. The material is precisely and carefully articulated, and interesting anecdotes serve to enliven the text.

Kurt K. Hendel
Christ Seminary-Seminex
Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago

EVANGELICALS ON THE CANTERBURY TRAIL. By Robert E. Webber. Waco, TX: Word Books, 1985. 174 pages. Paper. $12.95.

The book is appealing: well written, lucid, often lyrical, and above all a clearly reasoned display of how those we know as conservative evangelicals move into liturgical churches. The author writes his own story and adds to it that of six other folks who have become Anglicans, as he has done. Lutherans and especially Lutheran pastors will find the book useful to learn how our patterns of worship, centered in Word and Sacrament, may become logical steps for those of conservative evangelical background.

The story really began, for Webber, when his rationalistic faith in the God of doctrinal purity collapsed and he was delivered into the hands of the God who is mystery. "I was met by an awful silence ... of mystery—a silence that closed the door on my answers and broke the system in which I had enslaved God" (p. 29). From this point, Webber tells us the six aspects of liturgical churches which he found inviting and satisfying: the proclamation of mystery, the God-centeredness of worship (he speaks of being *saved* by the Easter Vigil and the house church!), the sacramental realism, the sense of spiritual identity (a history), the sense of the whole church (the breadth of the saints), and a holistic spirituality. He speaks warmly of worship as our ministry *to* God, as Christocentric, scripturally-centered, and thoroughly evangelical. The author suggests that "personal faith and a deep commitment to orthodoxy result in evangelicals being good worshipers" (p. 168).

Webber's early belief in the proclamation of the Word as an event filled with the real presence of God has been, he says, simply expanded into a full sacramental life. He has outlined a pattern for ministry for those who come from the conservative evangelical wing of Christianity. This is a book worth discussing in pastoral conferences.

Jay C. Rochelle

SEEKING GOD: THE WAY OF ST. BENEDICT. By Esther de Waal. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1984. 160 pages. Paper. $4.95.

Esther de Waal's *Seeking God* will appear as a godsend to those interested in encouraging and deepening the Protestant rediscovery of monasticism that has taken place over the past few years. It is an appreciation and exposition of the Rule of St. Benedict undertaken, in the spirit of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, from the middle of existence.

One of the great strengths of the book is the connection it forges between the way in which "the pattern of the day was established by the *opus Dei,* the work of God, the purpose of the monastic life" and "the mingling of the enclosed life with the life outside the walls." The Protestant rediscovery of monasticism is intrinsically connected with a recovery of spirituality, a renewal of the Church that is also a transformation of the world. Whether St. Benedit foresaw the mingling or not, his rule became a vehicle by which that mingling took on profound political as well as spiritual significance.

In an age that must concern itself with the politics of spirituality as well as the spirituality of politics, this has revolutionary potential. "The Rule," de Waal says, "continually points behind itself to Christ ..."; and, in the pointing, it becomes a catalyst by which Christ informs the world. Christians whose ecclesiology, ethics, and politics have been profoundly influenced by spiritual guides who forsook the monastery need to hear this: This

Order is evangelical, not legalistic. "Christ is the beginning, the way and the end."

It should probably not surprise us that a Rule composed by one convinced of the presence of God and God's work in the midst of a crumbling world should appear relevant in our time. The contemporary concern with spirituality is itself a struggle for wholeness in the midst of fragmentation. Benedict's great insight is that the wholeness is *there,* even in the midst of fragmentation, because God is there. St. Benedict, she tells us, hopes that our whole lives will become "prayer in action." This image is most clear in the treatment of the Benedictine vows: obedience, stability, and conversion. Those vows recognize that, as creatures called by God, we exist in the creative tension between stability and change. Nothing could be more dependable than God; and it is precisely that dependability that makes flexibility possible. The point, to borrow an image from Kierkegaard, is to "be like the bird who, feeling the bough give way beneath her feet, is not afraid, because she knows she has wings to fly."

At a time when the ground seems particularly shaky, this book is a reminder that we have wings—and a good picture of a forerunner who gave practical advice on using them.

Steven Schroeder
Calumet College
Whiting, Indiana

THE BASIS FOR CHRISTIAN ETHICS. By John Gallagher, C.S.B. New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1985. vii and 237 pages. Paper. $8.95.

If the reader wishes to gain insight into Roman Catholic ethical thought, this book will be of some value. If, however, one desires a more helpful introduction to general Christian ethics, one would be better served by George Forell's *History Of Christian Ethics,* Dietrich Bonhoeffer's *Ethics,* Paul Althaus' *The Ethics of Martin Luther,* James Gustafson's *Christ and the Moral Life,* or Helmut Thielicke's *Theological Ethics: Foundations* (which provides a concise explanation and critique of Roman Catholic ethical thought). There are numerous Roman Catholic ethicists whose works are of general value, including Hans Küng, *On Being A Christian.* The National Conference of Catholic Bishops' Pastoral Letter entitled *The Challenge of Peace* actually provides better insights into ethical discussion than does Gallagher even though it, too, is built upon a philosophical basis of ethics.

My preference is that Christian ethics be a biblical, theological enterprise. Gallagher begins with philosophy and is sustained throughout by philosophical underpinnings. It is a perspective on the basis for Christian ethics with which I do not agree. The book is filled by circular logic, vague illustrations, an arrogant and pedantic tone, and the use of the royal "we."

Carl W. Mangold
Lutheran Campus Pastor
Northern Michigan University
Marquette, Michigan

All books reviewed in *Currents* can be obtained through Fortress Church Supply Stores — LSTC. 1100 East 55th Street, Chicago, Illinois 60615; (312) 752-1766.

COUNSELING LESBIAN WOMEN AND GAY MEN: A LIFE-ISSUE APPROACH. By Elfin A. Moses and Robert O. Hawkins, Jr. St. Louis: The C.V. Mosby Company, 1982. 263 pages. Paper. $19.95.

It is somewhat unusual to review a book that is four years old; however, this valuable tool may have been overlooked, since it was not specifically addressed to the pastoral counselor. *Counseling Lesbian Women and Gay Men* is for those in helping professions, including clergy, to whom lesbian/gay people might turn for help. The book has two basic objectives: to educate and to suggest various counseling approaches. An underlying premise of the book is that homoeroticism is as valid an orientation as heteroeroticism. The authors encourage counselors who cannot accept that premise to refer a lesbian/gay client to someone else.

The first part of the book discusses historical and current cultural attitudes toward lesbian women and gay men, providing the helping professional with in-depth, but succinct, information. The authors conclude that lesbian/gay people as a group are as well adjusted as non-gays, and in some cases, even better.

The book extensively examines "The Gay Experience." In addressing the development of sexual identity and sexual preference, Moses and Hawkins conclude that orientation is not a simple, single concept. "The most appropriate model of psychosexual development is one that incorporates biological, sociological and psychological factors and the interrelationships among these." They note that, contrary to popular opinion, homosexuality cannot be said to have an etiology; sexual preference is not a condition for which there are specifiable "causes." Those looking for such a "cause" all too often do so in order to effect a cure; a concept that this book flatly rejects. Lesbian/gay clients must be allowed to affirm their sexual orientation and to discover lifestyles that are viable, potentially productive, and fulfilling.

Other chapters speak frankly about lesbian/gay lifestyles. They discuss "coming out" and its consequences, which must be carefully explored before a decision to "come out" is reached. Lesbian and gay sexual activity is examined in explicit detail. They carefully address lesbian/gay relationships, pointing out the difficulties and possibilities for maintaining such relationships.

The third part of the book looks at special issues in counseling lesbian/gay clients, such as ethnicity, rural living, legal matters, aging and parenthood. Numerous counseling approaches are suggested throughout the book. Each chapter is carefully documented and footnoted. A comprehensive bibliography provides a valuable resource for additional research and study.

Unfortunately, the book was written prior to recent information on AIDs (Accuired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), and therefore does not address this important issue. Nor does the book address theological concerns surrounding lesbian/gay lifestyles. That is not its purpose. Such concerns will have to be addressed by the church in open and honest discussion, something that many in the church, at least up until now, seem unwilling, and perhaps unable, to do.

David E. Deppe
Christ Seminary-Seminex
Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago

THE SECOND LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS. By Rudolf Bultmann. Edited by Erich Dinkler. Translated by Roy A. Harrisville. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1985. 272 pages. Cloth. $16.50.

Based on Bultmann's final lecture series at Marburg, this book is a last testament of this century's most influential exegete. We are indebted to editor E. Dinkler for working selflessly with his aging and ailing teacher to produce the 1975 German edition. Roy Harrisville is to be complimented for offering a readable translation and for an appreciative introduction to Bultmann's work and its abiding legacy. Thanks are due also to Augsburg for making this important work accessible at a reasonable price to a wider audience, though limiting its

usefulness by leaving Greek quotations untranslated.

Second Corinthians is translated and exegeted by Bultmann as the composite of two separate letters which appear as the last two in a series of four. Following the letter opening and thanksgiving (1:1-11) as Introduction, chapter one deals with 1:12-2:13 and 7:5-16 as part of the fourth letter. Chapter two deals with 2:14-7:4 as part of letter three. 6:14-7:1, an interpolation, is treated scantily. Also belonging to the third letter is 2 Cor 10-13, treated in chapter three. The fourth and final chapter deals with 2 Cor 8 as part of Paul's fourth letter, and 2 Cor 9 as part of Paul's third letter. The 5-page bibliography is of limited use since it ends with 1975. Significant work has been done on Paul's collection and the Fool's Speech in 2 Cor 11-12 in the last decade. The commentary's usefulness is enhanced, however, by four indexes: of Greek terms; of literary and historical-critical concepts and questions; of theological themes; and of history of religions concepts and references.

On the whole, the book is well edited, with only a few typos in the English and Greek texts. The book is a monument to a whole era in whose shadow we will live and work for some time. It is a valuable resource to everyone interested in theology and exegesis, or in Paul and the Paulinist redactor of Paul's letters, or in understanding Bultmann's total work.

Wilhelm Wuellner
Pacific School of Religion
Berkeley, California

THE BOOK OF REVELATION. JUSTICE AND JUDGMENT. By Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza. Philadephia: Fortress, 1985. xii and 211 pages. Paper. $11.95.

The Apocalypse has come into its own in recent New Testament scholarship. Popular commentaries appeared frequently, but scholarly research seemed to reach a plateau with the major commentaries of Bousset, Lohmeyer and Charles. That has changed; the publication of articles and books has widened and deepened in recent years. Two American Roman Catholic women, Adela Yarbro Collins and Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, have been in the forefront of that renaissance. Each recently has published a popular commentary that harvests the fruit from a series of significant scholarly articles.

This volume reprints Schüssler Fiorenza's articles; they provide a framework within which to interpret the book. The Introduction, titled "Research Perspectives on the Book of Revelation" (pp. 12-32), presents a brief typology of contemporary interpretations. The eight essays which follow are put under three headings: 1. "Theological Perspectives and Frameworks"; 2. "Revelation in the Context of Early Christianity in Asia Minor"; 3. "Literary Vision and Composition." An index of passages completes the book.

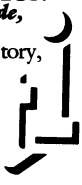
The whole is an impressive corpus of research. Revelation stands in continuity with Jewish apocalyptic, but is totally "Christian" because it reflects a "new" experience. Its author is not of the "Johannine school," but comes from the prophetic-apocalyptic school of Asia Minor. It responds to a stress on "realized eschatology" that arises out of both Pauline and Johannine prophetic-apocalyptic circles. In one sense, Revelation is an attempt to counter Johannine theology. The author does not think historically, but in a "conic spiral," reflected in the structure of the book. The book has relevance today in its cry for justice and in its attempt to alienate its readers from the seductive persuasion of the imperial cult. Thus Revelation is a resource for exposing the demonic character of a political-religious collective's drive for institutional power.

Revelation recovers force when the church is confronted with oppressive power. It had currency in Germany under National Socialism; it has a powerful message for the hard-ball politics of the present. The careful reading of this text will underscore the relevance of the Apocalypse. For that Schüssler Fiorenza deserves our thanks—and our attention to her message.

Edgar Krentz
Christ Seminary-Seminex
Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago

EERDMANS...

WITNESS TO THE WORD
A Commentary on John 1
Karl Barth
Edited by Walther Fürst
Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley
"Although *Witness to the Word* is a relatively early work, it offers an excellent introduction to some of Barth's lifelong theological convictions. . . .
—*George Hunsinger*
Paper, $10.95

TEXT AND INTERPRETATION
A.S. van der Woude, General Editor

Practical and expository, this new series of paperback commentaries aims to provide the reader with clear and concise explanations of every book in the Bible. Each commentary begins with an introduction, which discusses the origin of the book of the Bible under consideration, as well as its author, composition and related matters.

ECCLESIASTES
by J. A. Loader
Paper $6.95

FOOLISHNESS TO THE GREEKS
The Gospel and Western Culture
Lesslie Newbigin
Unlike the many theological studies of the gospel and culture that look at Western culture from within, or studies of cross-cultural mission that emphasize mission from the First World to the Third World, this book treats the First World as mission field, offering a unique perspective on the relationship between the gospel and modern culture.
Paper, $7.95

RESURRECTION AND MORAL ORDER
An Outline for an Evangelical Ethics
Oliver O'Donovan

"*Resurrection and Moral Order* in a wonderful way reclaims central Christian convictions for ethical reflection. . . . I know of no book that so helpfully draws on the classical Christian tradition to illumine our contemporary situation. At the very least, it is going to be a book that many will see as indispensable for the teaching of Christian ethics."
—*Stanley Hauerwas*
Cloth, $18.95

JAMES
The Man and His Message
James B. Adamson
This book thoroughly investigates the intriguing questions surrounding the Epistle and its author and offers some fresh solutions. Adamson concludes that this fiery epistle reveals a tremendous personality who still speaks to the whole church, and whose words, when heeded, will not only revolutionize its life and action, but also guarantee its far-reaching renewal. Paper, $16.95

THE NEW CENTURY BIBLE COMMENTARY
Edited by Ronald Clements and Matthew Black
Balanced and up-to-date in both its scholarship and its reflection of the contemporary relevance of the biblical text, the *New Century Bible Commentary* is now being issued in paperback, with some volumes revised and others entirely rewritten.
JOSHUA, JUDGES, RUTH
by John Gray Paper, $12.95

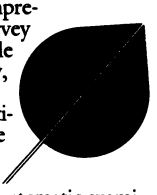
CITIES OF THE BIBLICAL WORLD
The *Cities of the Biblical World* series provides an introduction to archaeological methods, descriptions of excavations and finds of particular sites, and an explanation of the way archaeological evidence can help in our understanding of the Bible. Each volume contains numerous illustrations and maps, as well as a chronological table and indexes.
UGARIT, ***by Adrian Curtis***
Paper, $8.95

THE INTERNATIONAL STANDARD BIBLE ENCYCLOPEDIA
Fully Revised
Volume III, K-P
Geoffrey W. Bromiley, General Editor
With the publication of this volume the ambitious revision project of the classic *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* is three-quarters of the way to completion. This volume, which covers the letters K-P, includes such key articles as "Paul," by F. F. Bruce; "Person of Christ," by Colin Brown; "Psalms," by Peter C. Craigie; "Mark," by Ralph P. Martin; "Parousia," by Leon Morris; and "Palestine," by William Sanford LaSor. Other contributors include David E. Aune, Otto Piper, Gordon J. Wenham, and Donald Guthrie.
Cloth, $37.50

MINDING GOD'S BUSINESS
Ray S. Anderson
Anderson explores the theological and biblical bases for understanding the unique characteristics of Christian organizations and discusses what it means to manage such organizations in a Christian way. Paper, $9.95

spring/ summer 1986

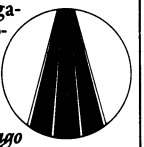
CHRISTIAN FAITH
An Introduction to the Study of the Faith (Revised Edition)
Hendrikus Berkhof



In this comprehensive survey of the whole of theology, Hendrikus Berkhof articulates the Christian faith through a systematic examination of its doctrine. This revised edition is translated from the new Dutch fifth edition.
Cloth, $29.95

THE EVANGELICAL —ROMAN CATHOLIC DIALOGUE ON MISSION, 1977-1984
Edited by John R. W. Stott and Basil Meeking
Born out of a desire to find a common ground between Evangelicals and Roman Catholics in their endeavors to be more faithful in their obedience to the church's mission, *The Evangelical — Roman Catholic Dialogue on Mission* was a series of meetings held from 1977 to 1984. This book represents a faithful record of the ideas shared in the meetings and gives a substantial idea of how the dialogue developed.
Paper, $4.95

CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE
Anthony A. Hoekema

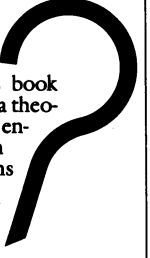


"This investigation of anthropology employs rigorous biblical analysis of its topics: the *imago Dei*, human sin, common grace, human destiny. Along the way, it provides a compendium of information about contemporary and traditional disputes on the subject, viewed from within a classical Reformed perspective."
—*Gabriel Fackre*
Cloth, $19.95

SPEAKING IN TONGUES
A Guide to Research on Glossolalia
Edited by Watson E. Mills
Few other aspects of the Christian faith have been examined in as microscopic detail as the tongues phenomenon. In this volume, Watson E. Mills has brought together typical examples of the methodological approaches, arranged under the headings of exegetical studies, historical studies, theological studies, psychological studies, and sociocultural studies.
Paper, $24.95

A GUIDE TO CONTEMPORARY HERMENEUTICS
Major Trends in Biblical Interpretation
Edited by Donald K. McKim
Drawn from a variety of sources and written by a diverse group of contributors, these essays describe methods of biblical hermeneutics, assess current hermeneutical approaches, and offer representational viewpoints from a variety of contemporary biblical interpreters.
Paper, $13.95

DYNAMICS IN PASTORING
Jacob Firet



"A classic in the theology of pastoral ministry, this book vibrates with a theology of God's encounter with human persons through the mediation of the pastor as preacher, counselor, and agent of change. No seminary student should be without the opportunity to wrestle with the implications of this book in preparing for pastoral ministry."
—*Ray S. Anderson*
Cloth, $24.95

Prices subject to change.

For more information on these and other recent Eerdmans titles, write for a copy of our latest catalog. Examination copies of most publications are available to qualified professors.

At your bookstore, or write:

625J WM. B. EERDMANS PUBLISHING CO.
255 JEFFERSON AVE. S.E. / GRAND RAPIDS, MICH. 49503

THE APOCRYPHAL OLD TESTAMENT. Edited by H.F.D. Sparks. New York: The Clarendon Press, Oxford University Press, 1984. xxii and 990 pages. Cloth. $44.50.

English speaking students of early Judaism and the early Church are in a fortunate position today. Accurate translations of significant ancient documents based upon responsibly edited critical texts are available for those without the many requisite ancient languages (Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Ethiopic, Coptic, Armenian, etc.). The present volume is a welcome new member of this elect group of translations.

For almost three quarters of a century the standard English text for students was provided by *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament.* Its two handsome folio volumes were produced by a distinguished group of British scholars under the editorship of R.H. Charles in 1912. *APOT* provided translations, introductions, and critical notes (almost a small commentary) on the OT apocrypha and a group of other works grouped under the convenient, if inaccurate, name "pseudepigrapha." *APOT* was reprinted a number of times.

But like all human products the work aged. The "Revised Standard Version" provided new translations of the Apocrypha. They were edited with explanatory notes in a number of English study Bibles. The second volume did not fare as well. Oxford University Press decided in the 1950s to keep *APOT* in print; at the same time it commissioned a smaller, hand edition of the material contained in the second volume on the scale of M.R. James's *The Apocryphal New Testament* and appointed H.F.D. Sparks as editor. That volume *(AOT)* now lies before us as a welcome resource.

But not quite as welcome as it would have been ten or fifteen years earlier. In the meantime another two volume work, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha (OTP)* edited by James H. Charlesworth (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983-1985), appeared and has pride of place. A comparison of the two will justify that judgment. *AOT* contains twenty five documents, *OTP* fifty two, plus the first collected translation of the fragments of Hellenistic Jewish authors. Both collections include texts that are clearly Christian, though ascribed to an Old Testament figure. *AOT* has a brief introduction to each work, which describes the textual tradition, something of the modern history of its study, dates the work, and provides a bibliography of modern text editions, translations and studies. The translations are provided with notes about variant textual problems, but no historical or explanatory comments. *OTP* has all of that, but adds a summation of the theological content of each work and also gives (minimal, to be sure) comments that explain historical allusions or provide some interpretive aid. *AOT* drops the term "pseudepigrapha" as inaccurate; *OTP* preserves the term. Sparks' decision is defensible in terms of accuracy; Charlesworth has preserved the term because of its general use.

Both works give translations into contemporary English. *AOT* was able to use the translation of 1 Enoch by M.A. Knibb, the editor of the most recent critical text. That is a plus. But in general, both collections have clear and accurate translations. It is difficult to prefer one over the other. Both works are adequately indexed.

Had *OTP* not appeared first, Sparks' edition would have been greeted with exclamations of joy. But now it is only a welcome addition to the literature, but the larger coverage and the relatively more favorable price compel the evaluation that *OTP* is to be recommended as the primary resource for the theological student's library.

AOT is a typical example of Oxford University Press' publication skill. It is printed on quality paper, in easily read and attractive type fonts, with typical Oxford accuracy. I detected only one misprint, a wrongly placed accent on the Greek word *Hikanos* on page 817. And that is small beer indeed.

Edgar Krentz

A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY

TO PURCHASE THIS VALUABLE SERIES

"This collection shows conservative evangelical scholarship at its most professional —*Heythrop Journal*

First-rate conservative scholarship . . . Throughout the approach is a positive one —*Churchman*

A series that is proving itself to be indispensible to evangelical students of the gospels —*Themelios*

One must unreservedly praise this enterprise"
—*Expository Times*

Editors of the series are David Wenham, Dick France and Craig Blomberg

JSOT

GOSPEL PERSPECTIVES

With the completion of the Gospel Perspectives series, JSOT Press is able to offer you a special discount on the whole set of six volumes:

35% off the retail price

		Retail Price	
1	Studies of History and Tradition in the Four Gospels I	£7.50	$14.75
2	Studies of History and Tradition in the Four Gospels II	£8.95	$14.75
3	Studies in Midrash and Historiography	£8.95	$14.75
4	The Rediscovery of Jesus' Eschatological Discourse	pa £8.95	$13.50
		cl £16.00	$24.50
5	The Jesus Tradition Outside the Gospels	pa £8.95	$13.50
		cl £16.00	$24.50
6	The Miracles of Jesus	pa £8.95	$13.50
		cl £16.50	$24.50

No question in biblical studies is more important than the question of the historical reliability of the gospels. The Gospel Perspectives series is a significant attempt by an international team of scholars working under the auspices of Tyndale House in Cambridge, England, to throw light on the question and to help liberate gospel scholarship from needless scepticism.

Available from *JSOT Press, The University, Sheffield S10 2TN, England*
and *Eisenbrauns, POB 275, Winona Lake, IN 46590, USA*

SAYINGS PARALLELS: A WORKBOOK FOR THE JESUS TRADITION. Edited by John Dominic Crossan. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986. 233 pages. Paper. $14.95; Cloth. $24.95.

This is a delightful, startling, and possibly dangerous book. Crossan has done a simple and, therefore, profound thing: he has arranged for us the sayings parallels of the Jesus tradition in four categories: parables, aphorisms, dialogues, and stories.

We take delight as we read through the variata from a host of sources: Bible, Early Fathers, Nag Hammadi papyri, Oxyrhynchus papyri, other fragments. The book is designed like a Gospel Parallel, with all the offerings numbered and titled throughout the book consecutively, so that one can refer to citation 462, say ("Supper and Eucharist"), and later consult the literary genre in which it is placed.

Startling are many of the aphorisms, which locate Jesus in the wisdom tradition. Possibly dangerous is the reading of all these texts in an unprejudiced light, since there are many which doctrinal theology would want to excise from our consideration, e.g., nos. 375 and 397.

Look them up for yourself.

Jay C. Rochelle

THE GODDESS OBSCURED. By Pamela Berger. Boston: Beacon Press, 1985. 213 pages and 59 illustrations. Cloth. $19.95.

The sub-title tells the tale: "transformation of the grain protectress from goddess to saint." Berger has given us a lavishly illustrated, well-researched document. In it we not only hear in words, but see in images, the subversion of the Great Mother, common to most ancient mythologies but known by different names, to the Christianizing of the Church, by which she was transformed into such well-known saints as Macrina and Brigid, ending with her reapotheosis in the Virgin Mary.

Pagans are, with no judgment implied in that term, the country folk. As such, an agrarian faith was natural to them. Berger shows how the Christian art of the medieval country parishes incorporates the miracle of the grain under the aegis of the protectress into Christian myth, usually locating it between the Nativity and the Flight into Egypt.

Berger's book helps us draw an interesting conclusion: if men truly worshiped the goddess, women would be free to become women, but we must worship the *goddess unobscured*—not the defeminized Virgin Mary. The goddess, unlike the Virgin Mary, is sexually equipped, heterosexually oriented, openly alluring, accessible to love and *latreia,* but with no loss of mystery. Berger helps us to reassess our loss when that goddess is obscured.

Jay C. Rochelle

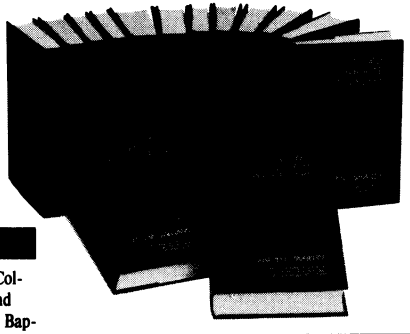
CHANGE OF ADDRESS

If you are moving, please attach your mailing label and send it to *Currents in Theology and Mission,* 1100 East 55th St., Chicago, IL 60615.

PASTE MAILING LABEL HERE

The Word Biblical Commentary

- *Current critical scholarship*
- *Clear, accessible format*
- *Extensive bibliographical data*
- *Detailed grammatical, structural, and stylistic analysis*
- *Interpretation in the framework of biblical theology and canon*



NOW AVAILABLE:

NUMBERS (vol. 5), Philip J. Budd, Westminster College, Oxford and Ripon College, Cuddesdon, England
JOSHUA (vol. 7), Trent C. Butler, formerly of the Baptist Theological Seminary of Ruschlikon, Switzerland
1 SAMUEL (vol. 10), Ralph W. Klein, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago
1 KINGS (vol. 12), Simon J. DeVries, Methodist Theological School in Ohio
2 KINGS (vol. 13), T.R. Hobbs, McMaster Divinity College, Hamilton, Ontario
EZRA-NEHEMIAH (vol. 16), H.G.M. Williamson, Cambridge University
PSALMS 1-50 (vol. 19), Peter C. Craigie†
PSALMS 101-150 (vol. 21), Leslie C. Allen, Fuller Theological Seminary
ISAIAH 1-33 (vol. 24), John D.W. Watts, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary
MICAH-MALACHI (vol. 32), Ralph L. Smith, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary
2 CORINTHIANS (vol. 40), Ralph P. Martin, Fuller Theological Seminary
PHILIPPIANS (vol. 43), Gerald F. Hawthorne, Wheaton College
COLOSSIANS-PHILEMON (vol. 44), Peter T. O'Brien, Moore Theological College, Sydney, Australia
1 & 2 THESSALONIANS (vol. 45), F.F. Bruce, Professor Emeritus, University of Manchester
JUDE, 2 PETER (vol. 50), Richard J. Bauckham, University of Manchester
1,2,3 JOHN (vol. 51), Stephen S. Smalley, Coventry Cathedral, England

TO BE RELEASED IN 1986:

EXODUS (vol. 3), John I. Durham
1 CHRONICLES (vol. 14), Roddy L. Braun
EZEKIEL 1-19 (vol. 28), William H. Brownlee†

FUTURE VOLUMES:

GENESIS, Gordon J. Wenham
LEVITICUS, John E. Hartley
DEUTERONOMY, Duane L. Christensen
JUDGES, Carl E. Armerding
RUTH, SONG OF SONGS, ESTHER, Frederic W. Bush
2 SAMUEL, A.A. Anderson
2 CHRONICLES, Raymond B. Dillard
JOB, David J.A. Clines
PSALMS 51-100, Marvin E. Tate
PROVERBS, Ronald F. Youngblood
ECCLESIASTES-LAMENTATIONS, David A. Hubbard
ISAIAH 34-66, John D.W. Watts
JEREMIAH, Peter C. Craigie†
EZEKIEL 20-48, Leslie C. Allen
DANIEL, John E. Goldingay
HOSEA-JONAH, Douglas Stuart
MATTHEW, Donald A. Hagner
MARK, Robert A. Guelich
LUKE, John Nolland
JOHN, George R. Beasley-Murray
ACTS, S. Scott Bartchy
ROMANS, James D.G. Dunn
1 CORINTHIANS, James A. Davis
GALATIANS, Richard N. Longenecker
EPHESIANS, Andrew T. Lincoln
PASTORAL EPISTLES, William D. Mounce
HEBREWS, William L. Lane
JAMES, Ralph P. Martin
1 PETER, J. Ramsey Michaels
REVELATION, David E. Aune

General Editor: David A. Hubbard,
President, Fuller Theological Seminary

Old Testament Editor: John D.W. Watts,
Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

New Testament Editor: Ralph P. Martin,
Fuller Theological Seminary

WORD BOOKS, publisher
P.O. Box 1790 • Waco, Texas 76796

INTERNATIONAL DISTRIBUTORS: Australia, Word Books Australia • Canada, G.R. Welch • England, Word (U.K.) Limited • New Zealand, Christian Marketing (N.Z.) • South Africa, Sunday School Centre Wholesale

Seminaries as Shapers of Faith

Roger W. Fjeld
President, Wartburg Theological Seminary

Two recent events have prompted me to think about the special way in which seminaries are shapers of the faith. The first was a call from a young pastor in regard to the New Lutheran Church. He and his congregation identify themselves with an especially conservative mindset and are therefore approaching this unification of churches with special caution. They read the progress reports and other materials describing that new church, searching for answers to their particular questions. But then it became clear to them that the structures of the church are not the primary shapers of the faith of the church. They have concluded that the faith of the church is much more shaped by what is taught and learned at the church's seminaries, so they decided to take their questions to the seminaries, instead.

The questions were not particularly new. They have become the standard inquiries of those who fear the church is moving away from the faith once delivered to the saints. In this case, they were asked carefully and graciously. But the point is that they were asked of the seminaries because this pastor and congregation believe the faith of the church is shaped by what seminaries teach to future pastors and lay staff workers.

At about the same time, a former professor and president of Wartburg Seminary was being laid to rest. In his 91st year, Julius H. Bodensieck passed away. At the very beginning of his ministry and again in retirement, he served as a parish pastor. For ten years he edited church papers. For three years he served as Protestant liaison between the U.S. Military Government and the Evangelical Churches of Germany, helping those churches recover, after the Second World War. He edited *The Encyclopedia of the Lutheran Church.* But for 28 years his life and ministry centered in teaching New Testament, nearly all of that at Wartburg Seminary. To put that another way, he taught biblical studies to one-fourth of the present clergy roster of the American Lutheran Church! For many of us, Dr. Bodensieck was the professor who most shaped our understanding of the Bible. Since the understanding of the Bible is supposed to be the key to understanding the Christian faith, it is not too much to say that Dr. Bodensieck was a chief shaper of faith for the church. His life and ministry confirm what the young pastor and his congregation have concluded—that the faith of the church is greatly shaped by what is taught at the seminaries. For those of us who had the privilege of studying under Dr. Bodensieck, that is cause for rejoicing. He made the word live, both as ancient texts and as current authority in matters of faith and life. The church did well to choose him as one to help shape the faith.

What is said of this sainted professor can gladly be said of many others who teach theology and help give contemporary form to the faith once delivered. What is taught and learned in seminaries

becomes what is taught and learned in the church for a generation and more. It is not that pastors stop learning when they graduate—at least the church does not want that to happen. But it is that basic approaches to the Scriptures, basic understandings of the confessional theology of the church, basic models for the ministry of pastors and congregations, all of these are formed during those crucial years of seminary preparation. It is simply a powerful fact that seminaries greatly shape the faith of the church!

That powerful fact provokes a number of responses. One is gratitude on the part of those who are called to teach at these seminaries. To be a "teacher of the church" is an awesome responsibility. The call of the church is not just to train people for certain jobs in the church; it is to transmit the faith to those who will, in the thousands of congregations and other ministries of the church, transmit that faith to believers and to those who are just coming to faith.

Another response is to remind ourselves as a church that the Christian faith is not something shaped by each believer to suit his or her needs; that it is rather a body of understanding and belief which the church gladly embraces and which it expects to transmit from generation to generation. As Lutherans we expect that faith to be both timeless and contemporary; expect that it will always grow out of the Scriptures and be faithful to the Confessions; yet will always be shaped by contemporary understandings for current ministry opportunities. Seminaries are only one agency for that task of transmitting and shaping faith to contemporary circumstances. All of us have that task together, in every setting in which the faith is taught and learned.

A third response is to underscore the need for church-wide support of the work of the seminaries. That need is obvious with regard to financial support. The seminaries of the church cannot do what they are called and expected to do, unless that support is substantial and sustained. That need is also obvious with regard to the search for students. Seminaries are not free to "recruit" students for the sake of institutional needs or for a set of independent educational goals. We receive those whom the church sends, in order to prepare them and send them out into the church. But beyond those obvious needs, there is the equal need for prayer and spiritual support for the work of the seminaries. The young pastor used the right pronouns when he said, *"We've* decided to find out what *our* seminaries are teaching." The church joins with its seminaries in shaping faith for our day. We welcome the task and the partnership!



CURRENTS IN THEOLOGY
AND MISSION
1100 East 55th St.
Chicago, IL 60615

Second Class Postage
Paid at
Chicago, IL and at other
mailing offices