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CURRENTS in theology and mission

Marty, Bernardin
On Luther

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The Holy Catholic Church

We thank you that your Church, unsleeping
While earth rolls onward into light,
Through all the world its watch is keeping,
And never rests by day or night.
LBW, 274, stanza 2

Hymn 274 is vintage 19th century: optimistic, romantic about the world-wide mission of the church, tinged with triumphalism. At the close of day it celebrates the way in which the sun never sets on God's kingdom, and how sisters and brothers around the globe pick up our prayers and praises as we fall asleep. Rarely do I sing this hymn without crying at the beauty and holiness — and incompleteness — of it all.

Similar thoughts surged through many hearts a year ago when Lutherans and Catholics, lucky enough to own one of the four tickets allotted to their parish, crowded Holy Name Cathedral in Chicago to celebrate the 500th birthday of Martin Luther. Homilist that evening was **Martin E. Marty,** who began his address with a striking set of eight contrasts between the unecumenical then and the remarkable now. The God who acted mightily (while Luther, Philip, and Amsdorf drank beer) is the same one who calls us now to repent and to work together wherever our communions have collided, now coexist, and are coming to cooperate and coinhere.

In a sermonic response at that same service, **Joseph Cardinal Bernardin** proposed that the 16th century separation need never have happened if the mutual charity and openness of our dialogue today had existed then. Why *did* it happen? So that we would learn of the need for total dependence on God. Need we fear that the prayer for the church to be one will go unfulfilled?

Still, the ethical dilemmas we face today do not come with the clear laws, analogies, and precedents that guided our parents. **Joseph Sittler** puts it epigrammatically: We are absolutely required to make an absolute decision between absolute options ('to live or let die'),

and these absolutes must be obeyed with absolute indeterminacy. He points to the parables of Jesus as resources for fresh modes of moral reflection on such words as deterrence, verification, peace, and love and justice. The church needs a continuing community of moral reflection as a kind of compost heap within which the modes of thought sharpened by dealing with one issue can penetrate and illuminate another.

Richard Lischer explores the interaction between Luther and the modern, scientific view of the human being or between Luther and Feuerbach and Marx. Freedom for Luther is not the essence of the human condition since people become free only in Christ. Only in the cross do men and women discover their true identity, for only there do they see God. This theocentric view of freedom need not lead to a depreciation of human action *(pace* Feuerbach) because such freedom from leads inevitably toward freedom for new and creative modes of serving the neighbor.

Anti-Semitism is Christianity's most disturbing legacy to the Western world. **Ralph W. Klein** traces the roots of anti-Judaic feelings among Christians and documents their awesome consequences throughout the last two millennia. Even after the secularization that came with the Enlightenment, an anti-Jewish tradition, nurtured in and, to an extent, by Christianity, was the determining factor in discrimination against Jews. The article calls Christians to rethink their theology and the curriculum used in parishes and seminaries, and spells out the implications of our sorry record and of the Gospel for contemporary attitudes toward the state of Israel, a Christian witness to the Jews, and ecumenical dialogue.

Included in this issue are in-depth reflections on books by **Steven Schroeder** and **J. Jeffrey Zetto.** We hope that those who appreciate poetry will welcome the work of **Jay C. Rochelle** and **Elizabeth-Anne Vanek. Michael Hoy** writes a thoughtful response to a recent article, which, perhaps I should add, has proved to be quite controversial in some circles.

Hymn 274 concludes by affirming that God's realm shall stand and grow and rule forever and that, at the end, all creatures shall own its sway. The promise of these words becomes evident in our experience of an inclusive and ecumenical church; the peril in the hymn emerges when our own faith claims cause us to trample on the integrity and the rights of others. So we must continue to believe in and hope for the holy catholic church, the evidence to the contrary notwithstanding. Those old beer drinkers, Luther, Philip, and Amsdorf, were right after all: God must do it all — for us, in us, and through us.

Cheers!

Ralph W. Klein
Editor

Homily Commemorating the 500th Anniversary of Martin Luther's Birth Holy Name Cathedral, November 30, 1983

Martin E. Marty

Fairfax M. Cone Distinguished Service Professor of the History of Modern Christianity at the University of Chicago. The text for this homily was Jeremiah 1:4-10.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy spirit.

Times change . . .

+ Luther, it is said, used a great Catholic church door to post his Ninety-five reform theses.

Today, Lutherans pass through a great Catholic church door to enter the sanctuary for common prayer with Catholics.

+ Others say that Luther never nailed, he only mailed those theses to the Archbishop of Mainz.

In Luther's 500th year Lutherans opened their mail from the Archbishop of Chicago and found an invitation to worship together.

+ 450 years ago as part of his reform program a verbally violent Luther called the Pope the very Antichrist.

In 1983 Pope John Paul II, in Christlike spirit, urged Catholics to recall Luther as God's servant, a reformer of the church.

+ For almost 150 years the Catholics here, in what became the nation's largest archdiocese, largely ignored Luther's spiritual heirs.

This evening, after almost as many years of churchly presence in this, their Western hemispheric metropolis, these Lutherans are noticed, welcomed.

+ Once upon a time in this strategic heartland city the Catholics did not know Lutherans and Lutherans feared Catholics.

Now on Sundays at Lutheran altars people pray for bishop Joseph and Catholics can pray for bishops Paul and Ehme and their faithful.

+ For decades of cacophany Catholics and Lutherans raised separate songs from competing sanctuaries.

Now tonight, but not only tonight, aided by God's servants like Paul Manz and blended choirs, there can be harmony, with trumpets, under banners.

+ Until the Second Vatican Council Lutherans and other Protestants used autumn Sundays for anti-Catholic Reformation observances.

Now Catholics co-host celebrations for "Renewers of the Church" and creatively coopt Luther and Protestant reformers in their calendars.

+ Ever since Augsburg and Trent in the 16th century the two communions have formally divided over the teaching and reality of "justification by faith."

In Luther's 500th year responsible theologians of both traditions speak to and for us: we have deep differences still, but we agree on grace and faith.

How smug these eight contrasts can sound. How triumphalist is this trumpeting from the ruins of the tall towers of total Christendom. How hollow they sound if they are claims, not celebrations. I cannot recall having done much of anything to bring about the changes. Did you? Had the Holy Spirit and faithful women and men through four centuries nothing to do with it? Is the task finished, are we truly together, is justice done, do rats no longer threaten slum children, or criminals the innocent,

We are saved by repentance and faith and the gracious activity of the living God in Jesus Christ.

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or are the corrupt and unmerciful silenced, loneliness in our highrises, overcome, people found in community, said hearts gladdened, guilts gone, sins overcome, unity restored? There is a word for where we are:

+ Luther's first thesis: "When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ, said 'Repent,' He called for the entire life of believers to be one of penitence."

Last month Pope John Paul II convened the World Synod of Bishops around the themes of penitence and penance and reconciliation in Christ.

Now, we are not saved by theses of old or synods today, by councils of old or theologians' statements on justification. We are saved, if we are saved, by repentance and faith and the gracious activity of the living God in Jesus Christ. In that spirit, we have gathered.

After the trumpets have been quieted, the banners, furled, the lights dimmed, and the doors locked, it may be that the text of scripture will remain in our minds. Jeremiah 1:4-10 is the *Lutheran Book of Worship*'s first reading for days when we remember "Renewers of the Church," who appear on our calendar. There are Catholics Teresa of Avila and Francis of Assisi, ancestors of mainline Protestants like John Calvin and John Wesley, black Baptists like Martin Luther King and Lutherans like Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and on that calendar are John XXIII, Bishop of Rome, and Martin Luther, Renewer of the Church. What does this text say about them and to us?

I. The Call

Here is the call of Jeremiah of Anathoth in 627 B.C.E. to become a prophet and thus a renewer. Prophets must have calls if we who follow are to see them empowered by the Spirit and the Word. The Lord says four things: "I formed you, I knew you, I consecrated you, I appointed you . . . ." Naturally, prophets-to-be, renewers, respond diffidently.

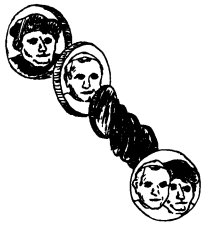
Jeremiah: "Ah, Lord God! Behold I do not know how to speak, for I am only a youth."

Luther, to himself: "Thou alone art wise? Shall all the rest have been in error, and for so long? Suppose *you* are in error, and have seduced so many others into error, to be damned in eternity?"

John XXIII, still pondering decades after his first call, in the first sleepless night he had been called to be Pope: "Giovanni, why don't you sleep? Is it the Pope or the Holy Spirit who governs the church? It's the Holy Spirit, no? Well, then, go to sleep, Giovanni!"

If we are to be renewed and to renew, we dare not think of our Christian movement as old, our calling remote, our missions declining, our monuments alone left. Physical years do not matter, but the response of young and old must be adventuresome, youthful. Hans Urs von Balthasar said it well:

> To be a Christian means not only being a child, but also, in a supratem-



poral and completely human sense, to be young . . . The Word of God imparts substantially that Spirit which makes all things new. It is, inseparably, also the Spirit of Jesus who was always young . . . What keeps him young is the youthfulness of the Word of God.

So the Lord says to the child, the youth, Jeremiah: "Do not say, I am only a youth; for to all to whom I send you you shall go, and whatever I command you you shall speak. Be not afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver you, says the Lord." Be not afraid, Martin Luther, when you stand to be civilly disobedient to "emperor and all the empire" at Worms, for your "conscience is captive to the Word of God." Be not afraid, John Paul II, when you encourage the civilly disobedient in "solidarity." Do not fear, any of you tonight.

II. The Word and the Charter

Jeremiah, ungifted, prophecies and we are left a prophecy in his name. Luther, a man of sometimes violent and often eloquent speech, turns his words over to the Word, and leaves us 110 volumes — "I deliver as soon as I conceived!" — saying, "The Word did it all. Had I wished I might have started a conflagration . . . But while I sat still and drank beer with Philip and Amsdorf, God acted mightily." To Jeremiah, in this text: "Behold," says the Lord, "I have put words in your mouth."

There are good reasons to be fearful. Jeremiah suffered often, from attacks by others, and uncertainties within. If Luther did not worry about his call and his word, he had his father to keep jabbing about his response to the lightning which led him into religious vocation: "But what if [the storm] were only a ghost?" Yet renewers are given little time to indulge self-doubts. There is work.

"See, I have set you this day over nations and over kingdoms." In 1983 we cannot, do not, should not, seek literally to be over nations and kingdoms. Chicago is not waiting for any combination of religious leaders to lord it over the city, nor is America, nor are the nations. That's all been tried. Jeremiah's power came with exile; Luther was most eloquent in the Wartburg and Coburg Castles, away from it all. Stalin sneered in our time, "How many divisions has the Pope?" Jesus did say, "My kingdom is not of this world," and "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto but to minister."

The most astute and applicable comment on these lines is by Gerhard von Rad:

> [Prophets] were called to abandon the fixed orders of religion which the majority of the people still considered valid — a tremendous step for a man of the ancient east to take — and because of it the prophets, in their new and completely unprecedented

Not all that is old has to be demolished; there is sorting.

situation, were faced with the need to justify themselves both in their own and in other people's eyes.

Jeremiah had to abandon the fixed system, but he worked for renewal of the people in a new vision. Jesus respected the Sabbath, but still had to say that the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. St. Francis had to turn the word of the Church against the practice of the Church. Luther was a conservative reformer, which is precisely why he is useful in so much of the church Catholic today. They abandon not for their own ego's sake, but to seek renewal in the light of a covenant.

III. The Program

First, . . . *pluck up and break down.* The Lord speaks of a weeding operation and urban renewal, penitence and penance. Not all that is old has to be demolished; there is sorting. At Birmingham jail Martin Luther King plucked up and broke down, and threatened: "Perhaps I must turn my faith to the inner spiritual church . . . as the true *ekklesia* and the hope of the world." Yet he stayed and worked with the great big messy church. There must be selective weedings; some derelict buildings of the cityscape must go.

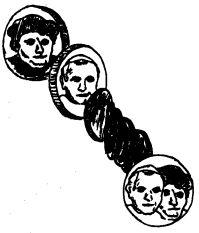
Second, . . . *to destroy and to overthrow* . . . Churches in our time have had to face totalitarianisms and total lies in this spirit. Renewers have to be ready to destroy and overthrow what stands in the way of the Word. The late Hannah Arendt liked to quote this revolutionary potential in Luther, who said:

> The most permanent fate of God's word is that for its sake the world is put into uproar. For the sermon of God comes in order to change and revive the whole earth to the extent that it reaches it.

I can find similar words from Dom Helder Camara, and Dorothy Day, and Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and Steve Biko of South Africa, in our day.

Third, . . . *to build and to plant* . . . Here is the real mark of the renewer. Jeremiah, as the rest of the book shows, knew this. Jer. 31:10: "He who scattered Israel will gather him, and will keep him as a shepherd keeps his flock." Luther: "The Holy Spirit first leads us into his holy community, placing us upon the bosom of the church, where he preaches to us and brings us to Christ." Cardinal Karol Woyjtyla looked inward and outward, "The church possesses a special interiority and a specific openness."

So in this metropolis we think of builders and planters in *Church* and diocese and synods and, most of all, parishes, using resources at hand. We recall lay apostles and just plain folk who for a century have let the wintry cold guillotine their toes as they make their way to church, or swelter in summer dullness to work the works of God. We



think of nuns and deaconnesses and nurses, theologians and scholars, people who help witness the witness of the full church parking lot, teachers at Catholic and Lutheran and other institutions, people planting kisses of peace and building peace, many of their names forgotten, but their works in response to Christ remain.

So, too, in *society.* Jeremiah 33:15: "In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring forth for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land." Luther, remembered this season: "Christians should be taught that one who gives to the poor, or lends to the needy, does a better action than if he purchases indulgences." And heirs of indulgence purchasers, build and plant, I repent as I admit it, better than most heirs of Luther. Where have we been in society, where working for justice?

Renewers plant and build the *city,* not just Babylon or Jerusalem, Wittenberg or Rome in times past, but Chicago now. The immigrant peoples who lived in separate wards and ghettoes and suburbs and worshiped in hostile churches today have heirs who are grateful for their love of this place. Jeremiah prodded them, and us: (Jer. 29:7) "But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare." Luther almost gave up: Of Wittenberg, "My heart has grown cold, and I don't like it there any more." He dreamed of the country. But he stayed, knowing that Wittenberg had come to symbolize the limits of world and flesh – yet it called him as the arena in which he would be faithful. And we are called through our love/hate relationship with this city to seek its welfare, to build and to plant, and thus to love.

Finally, the prophet and the renewer reach the *heart.* Not one of us believers would be here tonight for a mere program. the call and the charter ask us to build and plant in the fearful, evil, shattered heart. That came up later in Jeremiah, too, the Lord speaking (Jer. 29:11-14): For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope . . . You will seek me and find me; when you seek me with all your heart." That was the plot of Luther's life, until he found that he had been found by grace. He only responded in faith to the living Word of Christ condemned, crucified, risen, living, loving.

This building and planting in hearts goes on at bedside and graveside, in confessional booth and at altar rail, around catechisms and in marital encounter, on the lips of the ungrammatical and from the pens of the poetic, wherever the heart's deepest yearnings are to be met with the limitless grace of God. This we celebrate. And if many could not get in to make history tonight, let this be the pattern for history to be made and hearts to be gladdened in 450 Catholic and 450 Lutheran churches, linked two by two, or

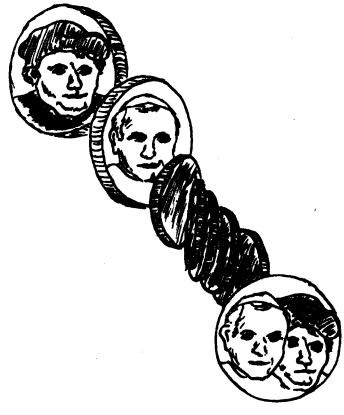
We are not "home" yet.

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more by more, throughout the metropolitan area.

We are not "home" yet. There is more repenting, earnest and joyful repenting and expecting ahead — and work, in response to the call. That work goes on wherever in the world our communions have collided, now coexist, and are coming to cooperate and coinhere. The old system remains. It will always need prophets and renewers, who will be refreshed, in words that one renewer cherished, because "God's Word forever shall abide."

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.



Reflections for the Lutheran-Catholic Vesper Service Holy Name Cathedral, November 30, 1983

Joseph Cardinal Bernardin

Archbishop of Chicago

It is a very great honor for me to welcome all of you, Lutherans and Catholics, to this convocation commemorating the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther's birthday. In a particular way I wish to welcome Bishop Ehme Osterbur of the American Lutheran Church, Bishop Paul Erickson of the Lutheran Church in America, and Pastor Victor Brandt representing the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches. I would also like to thank Dr. Martin Marty for his fitting homily.

We have come together this evening not simply because we believe that it is good for all Christians to witness to their common faith in the Lord Jesus, but because we sincerely believe that it is God's will that we work toward the restoration of Christian unity.

My dear brothers and sisters in the Lord! In the eighteen years since the close of the Second Vatican Council, a great deal has occurred in the ecumenical field. Several years ago I made a rather detailed study of the Lutheran-Catholic dialogue, and I have continued to follow the progress of these talks with great interest. This study has made the pain of disunity and the need to take seriously the Lord's desire for ecclesial unity a greater and more urgent reality for me. Part of that spiritual experience is the growing realization and conviction — not only intellectually, but in the very depths of my being — that the sixteenth century separation need never have happened and probably would not have happened if the mutual charity and openness of our dialogue today had existed then.

Tonight is an occasion for remembering Martin Luther and what he started, as well as the progress we have made in the past two decades in Lutheran-Catholic dialogue.

As Christians, none of us can ignore the person and the message of Martin Luther. Historical and theological research in recent years has brought all of us to a clearer understanding and deeper appreciation of the man and of his basic message. We have become more keenly aware of the reform which was needed and which he sought to address through his witness of the gospel. May this celebration motivate us to continue the good work we have begun. For only in this way will we find the sure paths leading to the unity of our churches.

One of the tragedies of the past is what happened to the dialogue between Luther and Rome. Both the Augsburg Confession and the Roman Catholic reply, which was known as the Papalist Confutation, were in response to a summons given in 1530 by the Roman Emperor, Charles V. He intended to end the schism which had divided both the Church and his kingdom. The Confession and the Confutation were quite moderate considering the cirumstances — indeed more so than some of the principal spokesmen on both sides would have liked. The two documents in themselves could have provided a basis

Christian Unity is God's gift to us.

for a dialogue which might have led to greater understanding if not reunion. But the temper of the times was such that this did not happen.

Regrettably, there followed more than four hundred years of mutual recrimination. During that time the record suggests that neither side heard what the other was saying. Instead of focusing on the Lord Jesus, who would have been able to help us rise above our human weakness and failure, we looked only at ourselves, at our own prejudices, whims and hurts — both real and imagined. And the result was that the chasm between us became wider.

Fortunately, this has changed, and much has been accomplished since our dialogue began. Even though the two churches have not as yet responded officially to the results of the bilateral consultations, a giant step has been taken in finding a common ground. In many areas there is substantial agreement. But it is also true that we have a distance to go before all the doctrinal differences are resolved.

Because I came to the conclusion some years ago that the divisions of the sixteenth century need never have taken place, I have wrestled with the question of why the Lord permitted it to happen. Perhaps it was that we might have a better appreciation of our Christian heritage and the need to witness to that heritage in a united way. Given our human weakness, perhaps it was that we might better appreciate the need for total dependence on God to maintain that unity. Sometimes we do not really value something, or we feel no compulsion to treasure and maintain it, until we have lost it.

Christian Unity is God's gift to us. God bestows his gifts in sovereign freedom. In sharing his freedom with us, God gives us the power by abusing our freedom to frustrate his plan and block his gifts. He also gives us the capacity for relating to one another in such a way that we can be a source of ongoing strength and support for one another. In this way, we may also become more effective witnesses to the teaching of Jesus and the love of God.

Martin Luther has taught us that we are called to constant renewal by the word of God. It is this same Luther who today calls us to listen anew and attentively to the Gospel. He invites us to recognize and acknowledge that at times we are unfaithful to the Gospel message. He also challenges us to witness to it in a credible way in our lives.

My prayer this evening is that, inspired by God's word and led by the Holy Spirit, one day we may again be the One People of God.

An Open Letter by Joseph Sittler

Distinguished Professor in Residence, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago

I have before me the amended draft of the proposed LCA statement "Peace and Politics," which statement is to come before the several synods and before the general convention of the Church in Toronto.[1] I have attended to this document throughout its development and am gratified by the advance disclosed in the revision. My initial reflection created a series of critical and constructive comments upon the details of the statement, but I have laid aside my earlier disposition to articulate these. For I now see that the central and necessary task is to bring the entire tradition of moral discourse as represented in this statement under fundamental question. The following paragraphs constitute a kind of open letter to anyone who wishes to read it and are a response to many of my concerned fellow Lutherans who asked me to set down and make available to them the substance of my own reflections.

On the one side of our Lutheran effort is the large and superbly crafted statement of the Roman Catholic Bishops. Natural law categories are therein presupposed and reinterpreted with extraordinary force and clear recognition that fresh facts demand fresh interpretations of that tradition. On the other side is the large and various company of those who, rightly excited into protest by the monstrous possibilities of nuclear war, rearticulate the considerable Anabaptist tradition in both its fundamentalistic and liberalistic forms.

An earlier draft of the LCA statement invited comment and has received it. Such comments have certainly been helpful to the amended draft. Central to the draft is an ardent desire more clearly and firmly to root the structure of the paper into our Lutheran theological tradition. What I shall attempt in the following paragraphs will be an admittedly tentative and probing effort to discern how a fresh mode of moral reflection, both realistic and open to the indeterminate possibilities of God's will and our faithful obedience, may be brought to expression.

I understand the difficulty of this task. The terms 'tentative,' 'probing,' and 'indeterminate' in the foregoing paragraph are components of that difficulty. The effort will be tentative; there are other approaches and other ways. It will be probing for a fresh possibility, not a confident articulation of something completely clear — even to me. And the term 'indeterminate' refers to the nature of the entire situation of modernity amidst which fresh ways must be found.

Ethical issues in each succeeding generation demand ever deeper insight. Our parents knew as well as we that the Christian obligation is to hear the will of God and do it. In most circumstances of their lives they could find laws, biblical precedents, comparable instances, analogies, etc., whereby to guide their steps. They could ask with a certain ad-

[1]At the convention in Toronto, the statement was accepted though there was significant debate about it.

What does the Word of God teach concerning these matters?

mirable directness, "What does the Word of God teach concerning these matters?" We must ask the same question, but we cannot with equal clarity discern a guiding counsel for many problems of our time. Neither Scripture nor the body of Christian tradition can be transposed with adequate clarity into the tangled web of contemporary life.

Our grandparents could discern the will of God and obey it. Their grandchildren are forced to make equally crucial decisions about issues which neither Scripture nor church tradition were required to ponder. For instance, the problems related to population, conception control, the duty of the creature toward the environing creation, the obligation to seek peace and advance justice. What spiritual consolation is available to the contemporary person who, faced with the undecipherable will of God, must nevertheless make a judgment? Neither scripture, nor church tradition, nor our Lutheran confessions unambiguously tell us what we ought to do about the genetically-damaged fetus, or what decision to make about continuing treatment for a terminally ill grandparent. Fresh approaches are needed.

A dramatic instance of the need for such fresh approaches is the issue of death and dying. Contemporary medical knowledge makes possible the deferral of death by various available means. The circumstances within the family of a critically ill member are both clear and pathetic. They wish to obey the will of God, and they look to both Scripture and church traditions to furnish them with guidance, but neither Scripture nor tradition knew about the techniques of contemporary biological science. That concrete situation can be unfolded into a statement which characterizes a multitude of issues in contemporary life. That general statement may be put into an epigram: We are absolutely required to make an absolute decision between absolute options ('to live or let die'), and these absolutes must be obeyed within absolute indeterminacy.

How Shall We Proceed?

As we proceed from ethical issues thus described toward an appropriate theological center, our own tradition requires that that center be rooted in our center. If we were to specify the most large, historically continous, and theologically central affirmation of the characteristically Lutheran identity, one would, so it seems to me, specify that focal point as the doctrine of the Word of God. From the deepest energies of the Lutheran Reformation, by an examination of that to which we have given the most assiduous attention, and by the perception of how we are regarded by all other Christian communities — that doctrine is our center. And that center has been sustained, not in ignorance of or defiance of the enormous productivity of historical and literary criticism but, on the contrary, by a church whose con-



tributions to biblical, archeological, textual, historical, and hermeneutical disciplines has been a distinguished one.

Lutherans are in continuity with catholic tradition and also formally in agreement with fundamentalist right and liberal left when they affirm that "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us," and this dwelling of the Word within human experience has in the gospels a single, clear, and eloquent theme: the kingdom of God. The meaning of that ancient term has both its most comprehensive symbol and compressed expression in the parables of Jesus.

The parables of Jesus have been critically established as being the closest we can possibly come to the eventful reality of Jesus himself — what he intended, what he purposed, what he determined to be and to say. Most of the parables begin "Now the kingdom of God is like . . .", or "The Kingdom of God is, as if . . . ," and this opening is followed by a narrative. These narratives, often understood as illustrations or exemplary stories or moral lessons, have through the centuries exuded inexhaustible invitations to reflection and even bewilderment. That inexhaustible vitality of these stories is precisely the secret of their allure and the threat of their judgment. They are not, as we might wish, "perfectly clear!" They invite trouble, they judge, and they promise; and they do all this with a continuing energy and pointedness which leaps beyond the details of a narrative of past time to grasp us in every present situation.

The parables of the kingdom are a kind of surgical exploration of those modes and postures of sin which blind, corrupt, and pervert the entire human relationship to God. Unless our Christian moral discourse permits the power of the parables to question and then correct that central perversion, we will continue to regard them merely as interesting illustrations, and in the process, pull the teeth of their intention. For they all say that the absolute permeation of our human condition by the power of sin, which all of us are loath to acknowledge, is the only acknowledgement whereby our redemption can be envisioned and received. The parables shock the mind open to the unenvisioned possible; they madly exaggerate in order to jolt the minds of the religiously secure; they are an assault upon the obvious. The entire momentum of conventional piety is brought under question: the man sells everything for the one thing; the shepherd leaves the ninety-nine undefended for the lost one; the woman in defiance of common sense takes the house apart to find the lost coin; the Lord commends the unjust steward for his uncanny perception of the truth. Is it not possible that the accounts of the miracles are enacted forms of the parables? The parables are spoken miracles; the miracles are enacted parables.

Inasmuch as the efforts of the people of God to discern the will of God in

Power . . . always invites a bigger power.

every situation and to pray for the gifts of grace to do it, and inasmuch as this will of God in the teaching of Jesus is most succinctly spoken of in the parables, may it not follow that a Christian mode of ethical discourse might be most fruitfully suggested by a never-ending attention to these parables? This way of inquiry is particularly apposite as the church probes for a proper response to the immensely complex issue of 'peace-keeping' and 'peace-making.' For here the problematic of a right obedience is projected on a huge scale onto precisely the same tormenting problems we confront on the small scale when we ask the bedside question, 'to live or let die?'

To illustrate more concretely what may be suggested by the term "fresh modes of moral reflection," we may bring under scrutiny several terms central to the problem of 'peace and politics' which occur in every sober discussion of the issue. Such a bundle of terms could be very large; this discussion will concentrate on four.

Deterrence

Deterrence by guaranteed threats of unacceptable harm between conflicting nation-states, it is alleged, averts actual fighting among the superpowers, diverting attention into other means. Deterrence is seen as holding in check the violent impulses on both sides. The term deterrence has achieved a strange reputation for cool rationality. Our confidence in the idea and the policy of deterrence is soberly maintained against all the evidence to the contrary. For in fact, deterrence does not deter. The madness of trying to avert death by the multiplication of the means to cause it only evokes ongoing escalations of the arms race. Power, believed to be a deterrent, always invites a bigger power. The invention of the stirrup gave more power to a mounted warrior; the fabrication of armor the warrior's rejoinder. Big guns could sink wooden ships; iron plate the rejoinder. The machine gun multiplied fire power; tanks were invented. Aircraft begot anti-aircraft. Big bombs became the superbombs at Hiroshima. Moral generalities are perilous, but this one is clear: angry and prideful people will envision, devise, and use whatever will destroy the enemy. There is no ground for confidence that current speculation about a transfer of our earthly obscenities to the celestial realm would accomplish anything but an equivalent rejoinder, and thus infect with our evil the unoffending stars.

The uncritical continuation of the self-deception implied in the term 'deterrence' and the clear history of the failure of such a policy suggest that the terms 'rational' and 'realistic', which are often used with Olympian confidence to dismiss all who would suggest radically new possibilities for human communities, have lost all 'rational' meaning. In fact, a strange and parabolic reversal has occurred in our time. Until



recently, notes fellow Lutheran Paul Johnson in a recent article (*The Christian Century,* December 21-28, 1983), it has been the 'dreamers' and 'idealists' who opposed war and held out visions for a peaceful world, and the 'realists' who accepted war as tragically inevitable for the human species. Now, writes Johnson, the tables have been turned. It has become the starkest 'realism' to acknowledge that the world will be blown up if we do nothing to stop nuclear madness, and the thinnest 'dream' to suppose that anything short of nuclear disarmament can avert this catastrophe. If two angry persons were to confront each other with weapons of mutual assured destruction, and if one of them were a so-called utopian dreamer who mused "There must be some other way . . . ," the term 'rational' might more becomingly be used of the dreamer than of his opposing 'realist'.

The possibility for a fresh mode of moral reflection is exactly the same which haunts us in the parables of Jesus. In those stories the new, the possible, the mad reversal of our expectations constitutes the enduring promise and mind-tormenting power of the biblical Word. Such theological pondering of the Word is methodologically more appropriate than the proof-text snippers marshalled as evidence to nail down conventional moralities.

> "Nothing can save us that is possible. We who are about to die demand a mircale." (Auden)

Deterrence also implies that the other side is evil and cannot be trusted, whereas our side is good. To postulate a dichotomy such that the evil is primarily the character of the "other" is the sly and fateful way our self-deception operates. The evil is never more quietly powerful than in the assumption that it resides elsewhere. The term 'evil empire' is a description of *all* empires. The internal empire of every person's egocentricity is the template of historical evil.

Verification

The word is currently used to say that if I make a contract with my neighbor to follow agreed-upon procedures, the contract must be secured by our mutual ability empirically to check compliance. In such a contract the term is clear and the necessity obvious. When, however, the term is transferred to the realm of moral discourse, the adjective 'moral' both indicates and describes a radically new context. That context is one in which a quandary is recognized. A way to move into reconciliation is inferred. Human beings in longing and in hope, and not impersonal nation-states, are the talking parties. In such a context it is both presupposed and required that the element of trust decisively modify both the spirit and the expectations of the conferring persons.

What I cannot trust I must verify. But if I must verify in order to converse, I do not have a conversation, but a purely

The Peace of God is a profound thing.

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calculated negotiation in which every possibility for movement is annihilated by the minutiae of tit-for-tat. All genuine trust implies risk. All human relations go beyond the verifiable and unspokenly assume that the hopes, the needs, the longing of the other is not utterly discontinuous with my own. Indeed, my own self-interest demands and is commonly characterized by such an assumption. I do not verify the statement of my physician that the treatment he prescribes is based upon his scientific reading of the data and that his or her professional self-interest is on the side of telling the truth. In an even more fundamental relationship, a man and a woman do not verify their conjugal promises, nor insist upon verification in every aspect of their relationship. They trust one another. It is not here suggested that the full reality of the meaning of trust can replace the convention of treaty obligation in pacts among nations, but it is suggested that even within such trans-individual relationships, the assumption of the continuities of elemental human desires, fears, and envisionments of a better world do exist and operate. At the very least the rigidity of our stereotypes among contending nations must be modified by the sheer dynamism of historical change. Should we continue to deal with the U.S.S.R. as if Stalin were still the boss?

Peace

In the very considerable literature about peace and politics the term 'peace' is commonly used as if it referred to a disengaged and highly desirable virtue, achievement, or gift hanging in splendid and beguiling isolation. Such an assumption oversimplifies. When so simplified, it generally suggests the notion of a deeply interior and private serenity, a well-insulated tranquility achieved by detachment. The devout often mean by the word the kind of bovine contentment sustained only by a virtual ignorance of or dismissal of all that maddens, saddens, gladdens the generality of humankind.

Christianly, the term dare not be used in this antiseptic way. The peace of God is a profounder thing. Peace in the scriptures has meanings so many and various that they cannot be condensed to a single statement, but all such meanings operate within a context — and that context in every case involves discipline, choices, denials, sacrifices.

To what these choices are related can be illustrated by scrutinizing our motives and those of our fellows as we inquire why we want peace. When, not long ago, I saw a group of women from a wealthy suburb of my city marching in a peace rally and observed the elegance of the Bergdorf-Goodman attire, the Gucci shoes, the waiting chauffeur-driven cars at the edge of the square, I could not but recall the statement of a wise man who



once said, "Everybody wants peace. But we also want what we cannot have without war." We all want to sustain the standard of living to which we have become accustomed. We all want our proud nation to be number one. We all want to maintain access to the minerals and fuels, no matter where located, which are the necessary components of our technologically advanced society. In other words, we all want peace, but we also want one system or another by which our wishes, wants, and delights may continue without abatement. We want *our* peace. But the peace that God wills cannot be given when a holy prayer for peace is understood only in our egocentric terms. When the prophet said, "Men cry, 'Peace, Peace, and there is no peace'," he certainly was not ignoring the unhappy fact that the power of the strong to control what they want evokes an outcry from the weak.

Love and Justice

Throughout the Scriptures, love, righteousness, and justice are a trinity of terms that swirl around and penetrate each other. In one passage or another each may have a primary reference, but the context of each use almost always pushes out to enlarge its own meaning with reference to the others. The righteousness of God is not separable from his will in love to reconcile to himself all creation, and that reconciliation presupposes love and justice. The works of love are never specified aside from the obligation to regard and deal with the other, with justice.

This coexistence and interplay of each of these terms is illuminating when, as in the instance of our present inquiry into 'peace and politics,' we properly place strong emphasis upon the power of love. A barrier to a comprehensive understanding of love is our common analogous thinking by which we would grasp the fullness of meaning by our immediate experience of mutual love in intimate personal relations. We grope for adequate understanding from the purely individual and private experience of love.

But love is not merely an affection. The surplusage of love is disclosed when we puzzle over the statement of Jesus in which he states, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another." The statement is a puzzle because love is commanded! Love as we clearly know cannot be commanded. Love emerges, occurs, "we fall in love." There is a partly incomprehensible element that characterizes all instances of our human love. But Jesus nevertheless commands it. What kind of love is this, which is capable of being ordered and commanded?

I am not told that I am to like my neighbor; I am ordered to love my neighbor. In Luther's explication of our relation to the neighbor the Reformer brings us close to a right understanding. My neighbor in the biblical sense refers to those persons who live in God's crea-

Justice is love operating at a distance.

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tion with me in the time-bracket and solidarity of our life together on this earth. Though I cannot elect by an act of will every neighbor into love in the sense of an oceanic affection for all people, I can acknowledge the createdness and bonded-togetherness of myself with the whole of creation. In that created bondedness I am to recognize the authenticity, the 'thereness,' the concrete life and existence of the other.

In the broad context of human solidarity the exercise of love is realized in trans-affectional justice. Real love grasps the hand that need holds out. And these needs cry out from millions I will never meet. Justice is love operating at a distance. When, for instance, my church tells me that millions of people are starving and that it is my duty to show my love for them by a helping action, I become aware of the trans-individual meaning of love. I cannot have affection in any immediate sense for two million persons. Love exercised in that context is an act of the acknowledgment of the neighbor in his need, and my love takes the trans-personal form of distributed food.

Just as love is transposed into acknowledgment and hence capable of being brought under commandment, so the term 'justice' can be opened up when pondered in continuity with this commanded love. Justice is a term which even in pre-Christian and non-Christian discourse acknowledges the solidarity of persons within a shared theater of existence, a coexistence which absolutely requires order, limit, and the acknowledgment of rights. Justice is not an invented and imposed virtue; it is a precondition for human life. This other acknowledging and the formation of life appropriate to it are common to all notions of justice. The Old Testament does not create the idea or the term. It presupposes that ordering and ascribes it to God the creator. That order is an aspect of the righteousness of God; denial of it brings one under the judgment of God. The prophets' vehemence and the cutting clarity of their judgment make clear that injustice has the character of blasphemy before the holy and not just failure before the civil. "Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream."

It is clear from the foregoing description of terms that any envisionment of peace that is purely interior, dispositional, a kind of tranquil ambience for the inner life, is a disastrous reduction. It is equally clear that there is no possibility of peace without that transformation of the meaning and exercise of love beyond its egocentric theater, and that such an exercise that does not intersect and demand the primal dignity and world-ordering called justice is futile.



Reflection as Continuous Composting

It is exactly the cogency of the parables that gives us a vision of what a "fresh mode of moral discourse" might provide that suggests the following proposal. The genius of the parables is their insistence upon the power of God's possible. The envisionment of the possible haunts the mind into the quest for fresh ways of dealing with the indeterminate character of our moral quandaries.

At present our church has no continuing structure to deal with the kind of issues described in this letter. As issues arise and demand for guidance become clamant, we assemble an *ad hoc* study. A different issue convokes another conference. Would it not be possible as we look toward whatever new structure succeeds the procedures of our present bodies to build into such a structure an ongoing 'Commission of Theology and Ethics'? Such a commission could deepen and refine the continuing reflection of a community of conversation. Insight could deepen and interaction be more fruitful. Such a community of inquiry should include not only the competencies presupposed for the church's scholars, but also seek out those non-academic persons whose intelligence, concern, sensibility, specialized knowledge, and spiritual endowments might serve to invite the scholarship of the church into the more ample and immediate phenomena and language of the common life. An additional virtue of such a commission would be its accumulative possibility to perceive and specify such fresh modes of moral discourse as the circumstances require.

In the preceding paragraphs there is a recognition that twentieth-century modes of thought, life, and work present us with issues for moral reflection which are quite new. Problems arising from advances in the biological sciences are but one example of such emerging and pressing moral issues. Hence, the suggestion of a continuing community of moral reflection would constitute a compost heap of reflection within which the modes of thought sharpened by dealing with one issue could penetrate and illuminate another.

Prodigal Father

Foolish old man
like Lear
to divide the estate
between sons
jealous of the time
you live,
weary of their wait
for you to die.

Foolish old man!
The ledger
is the measure
of *their* love.
Now that he has
his share,
the youngest
saunters off
to consort
with whores and swine,
a lecher
defiled by rancid wine
in an ungodly land.
And the elder
is no better
though the letter
of the law
is what he follows.
Cunningly,
he calculates,
meditates
on the inheritance
yet to come.

Foolish old man!
Watcher on the hill,
straining for sight
of the unfortunate
whose plight
rumour knows too well —
your eyes fill
with tears:
you caper on the spot.
And now the geriatric trot,
the undignified run,
the excessive embrace
of the hireling
upon whose finger
you place
your ring.

Foolish old man!
For the spendthrift
you kill
the fatted calf,
risking rift
with the penny pincher
who refuses to feast
now that your sorrow's ceased.

Very foolish fond old man,
child-changed father
caught between
heartbreak and hope
D R E A M
while you can . . . .

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Luther's Anthropology in Dialogue

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One of the themes which emerged from the Luther celebration in 1983 is the universal, symbolic significance of Luther for the German people. Most political and religious parties in Germany continue to invoke his name in support of their position, and the Reformer's good offices have been utilized to promote something that, during his lifetime, was quite foreign to Luther's combative spirit: dialogue. To a man who styled his *theological* opponents "blockheads," "asses," and worse, the invocation of his name by bona fide atheists, humanists, and secularists would be a surprising development to say the least. Yet in theology's conversations with those outside itself, Luther's teaching, especially his anthropology, comes up often. Beyond the struggle for the purification of the Mass or the Real Presence lies a broader field of concerns for human dignity and freedom. In the area of the person, society and history, Luther's theological thought is meeting new partners in disputation and dialogue.

I

We have always known that there are many Martin Luthers. Now we see many dialogues proceeding between Luther and his interpreters. Some of these interpreters are friends, some antagonists of long standing, and others only curious bystanders to whom the vocabulary and passion of Luther's theology are faint memories. In this essay I should like to raise the question: Who are the most appropriate dialogue partners for Luther? Which conversations are the most urgent? Is it with the Marxists, represented by the testimonials of East German communist leader Erich Honecker? Or will Marxist ardour for Luther the revolutionary hero cool now that the tourists have gone home? Or is the most appropriate conversation carried out between Evangelical and Catholic Christians?

Luther, of course, being dead, doesn't speak to anyone. His interpreters speak for him, and this raises the issue who best represents him. In the United States some understand Luther as one resource among several in the history of the Christian tradition, while others define their theology and their approach to ministry by appeal to the "spirit of Luther." This difference not only hinders the broader ecumenical discussions; in America it has divided and decimated entire wings of Lutheranism, where, depending on one's allegiance in the fray, the battle cry has been "Sola Scriptura!" or "Sola Gratia!" Among some Lutherans, the first position relies on the Confessional interpretation of the Scriptures, especially as it is mediated through 17th century Lutheran orthodoxy. The second position consistently appeals to "the gospel" as Luther experienced it.

One potential partner in the dialogue with Luther must be the modern, scientific view of the human being. This is a

To whom should Luther be speaking?

difficult conversation, for one of the participants is typically faceless and without name or school. Yet, despite the cloak of anonymity, he or she may be the most real of all, and reluctance to take *this* partner seriously threatens theology and the church with dereliction of duty. Contributing to the dilemma we all face is terminology. Not that it has changed, but that it has *not* changed! Twentieth-century men and women still speak of God, freedom and the "I" (though not necessarily in that order) but with perversely different intentions and meanings.

Thus I do not ask, Who owns Luther? for no one does. Nor do I ask, Who speaks for Luther? for everyone does. I *am* asking, To whom should Luther be speaking, and why? Preliminary answers may be: to the Marxists, for they are neighbors; to Roman Catholics, for they are brothers and sisters; to scientific moderns, for we too are among their number.

In the dialogue with the Marxists, Luther is usually accused of subjectivism and a basic depreciation of human action. Already Ludwig Feuerbach begins his lectures on *The Essence of Faith According to Luther* with this sentence: "The Lutheran religious doctrine contradicts human understanding, sense, and feeling more than any other; indeed, it does this consciously and intentionally" (Harper & Row, 1967, p. 31). According to Feuerbach, Luther falsifies human life by means of a psychological mechanism, projection. The best and worst of human life, as it is experienced by the individual and the species, is projected onto a heavenly screen, which is nothing more than a magnified mirror-image of human longings. Feuerbach claims that Luther's doctrine lacks the objective dimension needed to safeguard human autonomy. He would identify one of Luther's typical statements, "As a man thinks, that is the kind of God he has," as the root symptom of this epidemic of religious and psychological enslavement. In criticisms later picked up by Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud, Feuerbach writes in the same essay, "Now Luther declares himself entirely . . . for God and against man. God, as we have seen, is everything to him, man nothing. God is virtue, beauty, sweetness, power, health, amiability; man is personified depravity, contrariness, hatefulness, worthlessness, and uselessness. Luther's doctrine is divine but inhuman, indeed barbaric — a hymn to God, but a lampoon of man" (p. 41).

On the depreciation of action, especially revolutionary, self-reconstructing action, Luther also comes under the criticism of Marx. First, Marx adopted Feuerbach's method of projection, then repudiated Feuerbach's psychological conclusions. Feuerbach was still too much a Lutheran, laboring on in the realm of consciousness, promoting faith-active-in-love as the solution to the problem of human self-estrangement.



Feuerbach's cure was derived from the disease itself.

Marx is of two minds concerning Luther. On the one hand he admires Luther's defiance of authority and the fervor with which the Reformer attacked exploitation, monoplies, and usury. (Every reference to Luther in *Kapital,* vol. I is positive.) On the other hand he despises the mere theological scope of Luther's doctrine of Christian liberty and vocation whereby freedom is spiritualized and the power of the prince preserved. According to Marx, Luther liberated humanity from external religious forms by enshrining them in the heart of the believer. He abolished the priesthood by creating a kingdom of priests. When put to the political test, Luther's "Freedom of the Christian" served only to solidify the bourgeoisie and the nobility's opposition to the peasants' literal understanding of spiritual truths. "The Peasant War, the most radical fact of German history," said Marx, "came to grief because of theology." ("Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right," *On Religion,* Schocken Books, 1964, p. 51)

II

Every misunderstanding of humanity (or of Luther's anthropology) begins with an attempt to analyze the human being and human freedom in isolation from the person's relationship to God in the crucified Christ. This is true of Marxism, some forms of Scholasticism, existentialism, and, of course, of contemporary secular views of human nature. Anthropologies that preceded Luther sought a component in humanity that had not been damaged by the Fall. They sought not to *exalt* the creature but to *explain* it *and* the obvious rationality that attends it despite the Fall into Sin. Although the *likeness* of God, that is, communion with God, was lost in their view, the *image* of God, humanity's freedom and rationality, survives, even flourishes, and enables human beings to seek the good and to love God. When Luther finally did away with the distinction between likeness and image, he exposed the corruption of all the faculties of body and soul, will and intellect, in order to reaffirm humankind's absolute reliance on God for justification. He dismissed not the unique rationality of persons but the idea, as it had been expressed before him, that this faculty naturally inclines humankind toward the truth about God and peaceable life in society.

Marxism, existentialism, psychoanalysis — these and many other ideologies attempt to establish the nature of human beings according to the slogan of the young Marx: *"Man is the highest essence for man."* The objectionable thing about all these ideologies is not that they ask, "What is man?" but that they fail to add, "that Thou art mindful of him."

Today's interest in "Christian anthropology" reflects the influences of the

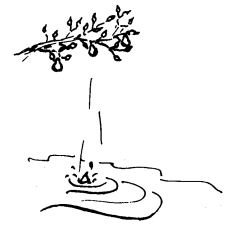
Only in the cross do men and women discover their true identity . . . .

post-enlightenment fascination with humankind for its own sake. Luther's "doctrine of man," on the other hand, remains in service to his teaching on salvation. Whatever understanding we have of the human person comes either as preface to, or byproduct of, our encounter with God. The crucified Christ is in every piece of the human puzzle.

For Luther, unlike the idealists and the young Marx, freedom is not the essence of the human condition, nor is it merely one of the pieces of components of human nature. Christians *have* freedom or, perhaps better, they *are* free only in Christ. God gives freedom; God makes people free. Luther's partners in dialogue find it difficult to believe that he is not playing dialectical games when he says that Christian men and woman are both slave and free in Christ. He says this not because he wishes to maintain a delicate tension or prescribe a proper balance, a kind of Reformation-version of the classicial ideal of moderation. He is writing *descriptively*. Just as he could say that Christians really are saints and sinners, so he could begin *The Freedom of A Christian* with his famous paradox. Luther documents the paradox not only from the Scripture but also from his own personal and pastoral experience. How could it be otherwise for people who live both from the gospel and in the world? This anthropology rests on God's revelation in the crucified one. Before one can say, "That's how it is with men and women," one must say, "That's how it is with God." Scripture, philosophy, and experience argue against natural knowledge or rational proofs of God. One either sees God in the cross, or one does not see God. Only in the cross do men and women discover their true identity, for only in the cross do they see God.

III

The Christocentric description of human freedom, which appears so "simple," creates serious difficulties for dialogue. It calls into question post-enlightenment assumptions about humanity and post-revolutionary doctrines of freedom. If true freedom is only bestowed in Christ, what does Christianity have to say to the many forms of bondage in the world today? Perhaps Marx was right: transformative action does come to grief because of theology. What does "in Christ" mean if that relationship can be sustained and even flourish in the midst of the worst kinds of repression and inhumanity? How can Luther and Lutherans defend themselves against the charge that they, like Feuerbach, have abstracted an idea of humanness from the real world and bestowed upon it a freedom that is subjectively palliative but objectively useless? Theology must understand that today it is scarcely possible to speak of *freedom* without thinking of self-determination. That is the word's true meaning, and no other!



The Christian involved in such a conversation is driven to a consideration of a term broader than freedom, namely, salvation. Salvation in Christ is whole. It is not individualistic but communal, not static but dynamic. Lutherans would argue that freedom in Christ does not exist in a vacuum. It is not a hothouse plant that wilts in the real world. It flourishes and sends out seeds and vines of influence throughout the social and economic order. But to identify Christian freedom with any economic or political program is to violate its nature. It is idolatry to equate Christ's rule with any political kingdom of freedom. Moreover, a refusal to make this equation ultimately protects society from political aberrations claiming divine sanction. Christians live in many realms of life, and they live wholly and fully in these spheres. They do not subscribe to the hymn text, "I'm But a Stranger Here, Heav'n is My Home." Still their influence *as Christians* is indirect. They are salt and light. They are called not to regulate society but to witness to it.

This does not satisfy many who are sensitive to the massive ills afflicting the world. The world has had millennia of the Christian "presence." What seems to be required is a frontal assault on the powers of destruction. What an American tycoon has engraved on a plaque in his office has been offered as advice to the Christian church: "Either lead or follow — or get out of the way!" If Christianity does not demonstrate commitment to the fight for freedom, the question of dialogue will be irrelevant, for there will be nothing to say.

Luther's social anthropology presents a second difficulty for dialogue. His dialogue partners suspect a bias in Luther that tips the balance of his theology to the side of power and oppression. In this respect Luther's thought bears resemblance to Hegel's. The writings of both men contain the seeds of their own criticism. Their *method* appears to be one of continual re-formation of all institutions and authorities on the basis of a single principle. Yet their theological or philosophical positions appear to have come to rest on the mountain of order. Critics of Luther have pointed to his distinction between the private and the public office of the Christian which emerges as a fixed hermeneutical principle in his exposition of the Sermon on the Mount. For example, he writes, "Now, with this distinction of the boundary between the province of the Christian person and that of the secular person you can neatly classify all these sayings and apply them properly where they belong . . ." (LW, 21, p. 111: WA, XXXII, 391). Of the prince he writes, "The person is indeed a Christian, but his office or his princedom does not involve his Christianity" (LW, 21 p. 170; WA, XXXII, 440).

It may help to remember that Luther speaks of "person" in two ways, and in this he combines two distinct classical definitions. Person is the essence of the

Freedom from . . . leads inevitably to freedom for . . . .

individual, that is, the individual's human *nature,* and person also means "mask" or "role." In his or her essence, the human being is responsible only to God, to live to God and from God. In his or her various roles, the person continues to live out of that essence, though the sphere of those responsibilities is such that the essence only indirectly informs the roles. Luther insists that there *is* a connection between the essence and the rules in society: "Thus real citizenship, when carried on in a Christian manner, is ten times as hard as a Carthusian [monastic] routine . . ." (LW, 21, p. 256: WA, XXXII, 511). Seen from a negative point of view, the "masks" or roles may appear as unimportant when compared to the essence of the person in his or her relationship to God. But, as the above quotation suggests, there is a positive, dynamic, experiential side to these masks. They are the Christian's way into society. The essence is fixed; in the roles, however, lie possibilities for change, growth, and development. The masks *may* be understood merely as adornments, but as the "faces of the Christian" in the family, society, and government, they provide the opportunity for channeling the freedom and other blessings at the heart of the Christian's relationship to God into the world. Servitude in Christ is bondage to one's own absolute reliance upon Christ. Hence, it is another designation for freedom. Freedom *from* sin, death, and hell leads inevitably to freedom *for* new and creative modes of serving the neighbor.

Marxists, existentialists, and professional secularists of every stripe are alarmed at Luther's bifurcation of human nature *and* at the very suggestion that in Christ a permanent bed of identity has been established in the human creature. Luther's irreligious dialogue partners perhaps do not appreciate the dynamic unity in Luther's view of humanity. They seem not to hear the almost monotonous repetition of the tree-and-fruit figure by which Luther describes the integrity of human life in Christ. Luther is not interested in carving up the human being. He proclaimed the radical reorientation of the whole person before God in Christ. He is vitally interested in the concentric ripples this reorientation creates in the family, society, and government.

That Luther's gospel did not always pursue the directions we would have wished, that it did not follow the ripples to the hidden coves, is not so much his fault as it is our task.

Anti-Semitism as Christian Legacy: The Origin and Nature of our Estrangement from the Jews

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Anti-Semitism is Christianity's most disturbing legacy to the Western world. That judgment suggests the depth of our estrangement and of our guilt, and it underscores the high priority of all efforts that enable Christians and Jews to live together in love. Hatred for the Jews has many parents. To understand it and to rid ourselves of it require knowledge of this ancestry. It is shocking expressions like "the *theological* roots of anti-Semitism" or "Christian anti-Semitism" that make the church's reconciliation with Jewish people an inevitable part of the Christian agenda.

The term anti-Semitism itself is only a little over a century old. Drafted by anti-Semites themselves to give their prejudice a pseudo-scientific facade, the term might be replaced by "hatred for the Jews" or "fear of the Jews" or "prejudice toward the Jews." In doing so we might try to rid ourselves of the ideas the term presupposes, namely, that Jews are a separate race, that one race is superior or inferior to another, or even that all Jews are Semites and all Semites Jews. Still, for better or worse, the name is here to stay. Anti-Semitism is a pernicious example of prejudice, that "avertive or hostile attitude toward a person who belongs to a group, simply because he belongs to that group, and is therefore presumed to have the objectionable qualities ascribed to that group" (Allport in Morais, 1976:11). To understand anti-Semitism, we need to review when it has occurred, what caused it, and what forms it has taken. Only then will we be prepared to suggest how we might eradicate it forever from our lives, and how Christians and Jews might instead live in reconciliation with each other.

Ancient, non-Christian Anti-Semitism

In an attempt to make Jews guilty for their own persecution, some people point to the hostility toward Jews in Hellenistic and Roman times and allege that later anti-Semitism merely continues this attitude. The causes for the ancient antipathy are multiple. Some hostile treatment arose because of political manipulation by insecure potentates who tried to gain the loyalty and gratitude of some of their subjects by depriving the Jews of privileges, encouraging agitation against them, or legitimating the taking of their property. In part, hostility toward the Jews in antiquity was also reciprocation for Jewish contempt for heathenism. The strong Jewish sense of election and monotheism led them to avoid table, marriage, and cult fellowship *(amixia)*. Observance of the Sabbath and the practice of circumcision are two examples of religiously-sanctioned exclusiveness among Jews. They refused gifts to pagan temples or to the cult of the emperor. They considered

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the sensual rites of others as the behavior of people who were spiritually blind. Such Jewish exclusiveness was sometimes treated as misanthropy; their refusal to worship the emperor as disloyalty.

Anti-Jewish polemic or calumny could be intense in ancient times. Apion (1st century C.E.) claimed that Antiochus had found a golden head of an ass in the Holy of Holies, and he accused the Jews of cannibalistic rites. Manetho, an Egyptian historian from the third century B.C.E. and Cornelius Tacitus, a Roman historian, born in the first century C.E., recount a scurrilous account of the Exodus: Pharaoh allegedly drove the Jews from Egypt because they had leprosy and other diseases which made them impure. Ringing defenses of the Jews were written by Josephus (*Contra Apionem*) and Philo of Alexandria *(In Flaccum)*.

It needs to be kept in mind that the first Jews Romans encountered were slaves, beggars, and street sellers, and the usual disdain for a poor minority by a more well-to-do majority played a role. Moreover, this ancient anti-Semitism was at most a marginal item in society. Often Jews lived quite at peace. The two things that most irritated the Romans were Jewish monotheism and the resultant exclusivism, on the one hand, and Jewish rebellion against the harsh Roman rule. Interestingly, neither of these factors would have been a problem for Christians. Christians, too, are montheistic (in a Trinitarian mode), and surely Christians have no difficulty understanding that a religious community is particularistic and exclusive. Secondly, after the second revolt, in 132-135 C.E., the Jews were without a home base in Palestine and revolts became a thing of the past.

Ancient hatred toward the Jews, therefore, offers little or nothing to explain the later hostility to the Jews among Christians, nor, of course, does it justify such hostility (for a full treatment, see Gager [1983]).

Anti-Semitism in the New Testament?

Although this is the title of a book by the late Samuel Sandmel, it is both anachronistic and misleading, as Sandmel himself admitted. He merely hoped to show where the biblical authors had purposely sketched Jews or Judaism in an unfavorable light. In a more controversial vein, Christian theologian Rosemary Ruether wrote *Faith and Fratricide,* an exploration of the theological roots of anti-Semitism. Ruether believes that anti-Judaism is the left hand of Christology and that Christians have never been able to say Yes to Jesus without saying No to the Jews. She argues that as long as the Jewish religious tradition itself failed to concede that the Christ is the divinely intended fulfillment of Moses, the Psalms, and the Prophets, the validity of the Christian view was in question. Hence in the New Testament and in subsequent Christian



theology there is an attempt to get the Jews to admit that the Christian interpretation is right. Since they refused, the church labelled them as the enemies of God.

While there is much embarrassing truth in the exegesis of the New Testament offered by Sandmel and Ruether, I believe that a more helpful approach is offered in recent studies by Daniel Harrington, John Koenig, and Krister Stendahl (among others). These scholars all concede that hostility to the Jews is shown in some New Testament passages, especially as these passages have been understood in the history of Christian exegesis, but they also argue, in somewhat divergent fashions, that a historical-critical reading of the New Testament, attempting to understand it within the thought world and controversies of the first century, eliminates a good deal of its anti-Judaic character and may even provide help for improved Jewish-Christian relationships today. Koenig, for example, sums up his own hypothesis in these words: "The New Testament as a whole, when understood historically, offers more resources than obstacles to those who value Jewish-Christian dialogue today" (1979:137).

Romans 9-11

Three sections of the New Testament have been predominant in recent discussions. The first is Romans 9-11, now often viewed as the thological climax of this great letter. Here Paul expresses regret that not all Israel has accepted Christ, but he insists that great privileges were granted to them and are retained by them (9:1-5). The church, now the bearer of God's promise (9:6-13) and made up of Jews and Gentiles, is God's beloved people (vv. 24-29). The Israelities, who so vigorously pursued a right relationship with God through the Law, failed to recognize Jesus as the promised Messiah (9:30-33). For Paul, acceptance of the Christian gospel, rather than observance of the Law, is the way of salvation (10:5-13). Israel's refusal, however, is not total since a remnant, among whom is Paul, *has* accepted Christ. Because of the present stumbling, the majority of Israel has been hardened (11:1-10), and the blessings reserved for God's chosen people were made available to the nations (11:11-12). Gentile Christians have been grafted into the olive tree, which stands for God's plan of salvation, while the Jews have been broken off. Someday God will again graft the broken off branches (= the Jews) back into the tree. Paul envisages a three-stage program: the inclusion of the Gentiles in the people of God, the hardening of a portion of Israel, and the future salvation of all of Israel. In the end God will have mercy on all his people.

This is not the final word in Jewish-Christian relationships, but Paul does say that Jews who keep the Law, but presently reject the messiahship of Jesus, will

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not suffer eternal separation from God's mercy. Thus Israel's disbelief is a temporary phase in the unfolding will of God. The schism between those who believe and those who do not is temporary and providential. Jewish failure gives the Gentiles a change for inclusion; and the faith of the Gentiles will eventually provoke jealousy among the Jews and their reincorporation into the people of God.

Some participants in the Jewish-Christian dialogue have argued that Paul proposes nothing more than an eventual conversion of the Jews, and that this conversionalistic understanding is a rejection of Judaism. Ruether, for example, remarks: "The purpose of Paul's 'mystery' is not to concede any ongoing validity to Judaism, but rather to assure the ultimate vindication of the church" (1974:107). I believe her objection misses the significance of this passage. *We* may want to recognize the on-going validity of Judaism and to renounce any attempt to convert the Jews (see below). Paul, on the other hand, seems to have believed that sometime, either individually or by God's eschatological act, the Jews would accept Jesus as messiah. But he did not here presume that Jews who did not accept Christ would be damned. Israel's rejection makes possible Gentile incorporation; Gentile acceptance of Christ will make unbelieving Israel turn to the Gospel. The salvation of all of Israel is assured according to Paul. I believe, therefore, that it is a misreading of the New Testament if it is taken to mean that saying Yes to Jesus means saying No to the Jews. This may have been a very prevalent and very influential way in which the New Testament has been read throughout Christian history, but it is a misreading, nonetheless. Romans 9-11 undercuts Christian attempts to invalidate the meaningfulness and beauty of the Jewish religious covenant.

Matthew

A second, particularly troublesome work has been the gospel of Matthew. What untold harm has been done by those who made Matt 27:25 into a general principle: "His blood be on us and on our children." Matthew, indeed, enlarged the Jewish responsibility in the passion of Jesus and diminished that of Pilate, but subsequent readers seized on the word of the "crowd" and used it to justify persecution of all Jews for all time. Other passages have proved equally harmful. "The sons of the kingdom (= the Jews) will be thrown into outer darkness" (8:12), an apparent judgment of eternal condemnation on the Jews. The exclusive claims of Christianity are highlighted in 11:25-27, stating that no individual Jew can know God unless Jesus tells him about God. Or consider 21:43, 45: "Therefore, I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a nation producing the fruits of it. When the chief priests and

the Pharisees heard his parables, they perceived that he was speaking about them." Such a passage apparently reflects the bitter conflict between Matthew and his community, on the one hand, and the leadership of post-70 Judaism, which was largely of the Pharaisaic party. Matthew wrote at a time when the period of mutual toleration between Jews and Christians was at a close. He tries to see himself within the bounds of Judaism though it is obvious that the Jewish leaders believe he is apostate. The hostility toward the current leadership of the Jews is nowhere more obvious than in chapter 23, dealing with the Pharisees.

Later Christians absolutized the words of Matthew, failing to see how he was shaped by the controversies of his time. As John Koenig points out (1979:93), they also failed to see the door that Matthew left open for Jews who did not believe in Jesus as Messiah. What saves, according to Matthew, is repentance and faith in God's power. Even Jews who do not believe the word about Jesus' messiahship and his cross may still enter the kingdom by acts of loving kindness (7:21-27, 10:40-42; 25:31-46). Matthew, to be sure, still seems to have hoped to convince the Jewish people of Jesus' messiahship (cf. 10:34 and Koenig, 1979:89), and he firmly believed that the acceptance of Jesus the Messiah reaffirms, renews, and fulfills the best of Judaism without destroying its essentials.

There is no point in downplaying the harm that Matthew's gospel has done to Jews, or the harm that still may be done by an insensitive use of this gospel in today's church. There are some things we wish Matthew had never said. There are other words which are understandable polemic, given the charged theological climate of his time. Above all, however, Matthew is not opposed to Judaism; for him a non-Jewish Christianity is incomprehensible. It was his persuasion that the church is not Israel's replacement, but it is that group within Judaism that correctly perceives the dimensions of God's covenant with Israel (Koenig, 1979:144).

John

John's gospel is the third, and perhaps most troubling, of all the works discussed in Jewish-Christian relations. The "high christology" of John is in serious tension with Jewish understanding of monotheism. This includes the identification of Jesus as the incarnate Logos and such passages as: "He who has seen me has seen the Father" (14:9); "Before Abraham was I am" (8:58); "I am the way, and the truth, and the life" (14:6); and Thomas's confession, "My Lord and my God" (20:28). Even more serious is John's censure of Jews and Judaism in what some have called the diabolizing of the Jews (Ruether, 1974:116). We think first of all of the words of Jesus in 8:44: "You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning." Or again, in 8:47: "He who is of God hears the words of God; the reason why you do not hear them is that you are not of God." In the Gospel of John, Jesus is not opposed by the Pharisees, or by the Sadducees, or by the scribes, as in the synoptics. It is not a faction within Judaism, but simply the Jews who opposed him and tried to kill him (5:16-18). All Jews are tarred with this polemical brush, and the term "Jews" becomes a symbol for unbelievers or enemies of God. Only John in the New Testament can be termed anti-Judaistic. His vehemence can be explained, though not justified, by reconstructing his historical context. John seems to have written at a time when Christians had been expelled from the Jewish synagogues (9:22; 12:42;

16:2), possibly by the amendment of the so-called Eighteen Benedictions so that one of them included a curse on Christians. Perhaps the final redaction of John is more polemical than some of the gospel's earlier stages. Yet even the Johannine church tried to remain Jewish, and its sharpest pain came from being excluded from the synagogues.

Christians have found great strength in the majestic Christ of John, and it would be wrong for us to discard the whole of John because of its anti-Judaistic parts. Still, one of our primary agendas must be to distance ourselves from those passages in John which denounce the Jews as enemies of Jesus and of God, or which sees Jesus and the church as Israel's replacement. Daniel Harrington concludes, "Neither Matthew nor John yet sees the Christian community as a new religion apart from Judaism. Their anger is over the exclusion of their community from the synagogue. Paradoxically, then, despite their strong anti-Jewish statements, they are eloquent testimony to the radical Jewishness of early Christian self-understanding" (1980:105). The fourth gospel becomes anti-Semitic (or, we might add, it has been anti-Semitic) when it is read in such a way as to suggest that our attitude toward Jews ought to be the same as John's.

In short, while the New Testament contains passages which are or could be taken to be anti-Judaistic, and while many of these passages have served as theological justification for the most fearful anti-Semitism throughout the history of the church, the New Testament as a whole, when understood historically, offers more resources than obstacles to those who value Jewish-Christian dialogue today (Koenig, 1979:137). We Gentiles are, in Krister Stendahl's happy phrase, "honorary Jews," invited by the gospel to praise God alongside Israel (Rom 15:10; cf. Stendahl, 1976:37).

Christian Roots of Anti-Semitism

Before we go on to cite some specific low points in Christian-Jewish history, we need to call attention to recurring themes within Christian theology that have exacerbated the relationship. One big difference between the anti-Semitism in Hellenistic-Roman times and that of the Christian era is that, because of the pervasiveness of Christianity throughout society, anti-Semitism was often a widespread phenomenon. The virulance of this hostility may be due to a kind of sibling rivalry between the two faiths since both came from the same roots. The Christian claim that Jesus superseded God's previous relationship with his people and that Judaism was in a sense obsolete embittered the Jews and gave justification to prejudicial thoughts, feelings, and actions. Jules Isaac complained of Christian contempt for Judaism. Its three main themes were 1) that the dispersion of the Jews was divine punishment for the crucifixion; 2) that Judaism at the time of Jesus was in a degenerate, or legalistic, state, and 3) that Jews are guilty of the crime of deicide (1964:ix-xii).

The historical reality about the dispersion, of course, is that it began more than five centuries before the Christian era and was expanded after the conquests of Alexander and the Romans, long before the crucifixion. The alleged degenerate state of Judaism also does not stand up to critical scrutiny although as Charlotte Klein has argued, this notion persists in some of the "best" of New Testament scholars (1978:chap. 3). First century Judaism was a religion of many sects and movements, including, to cite but two examples, the apocalyptic sectarianism of the Essenes at Qumran and

the creative efforts of Pharisaism, which enabled Judaism to survive and prosper after the destruction of the Jerusalem temple. E. P. Sanders has contrasted what he calls covenantal nomism, which characterized Palestinian Judaism ("one's place in God's plan is established on the basis of the covenant and that the covenant requires as the proper response of man his obedience to its commandments, while providing means of atonement for transgression," 1977:75), and participationist eschatology, which he sees as part of the Jewish legacy in Paul.

The third teaching of contempt, that of deicide, seems first to have been expressed by Melito of Sardis, in the second century though it is present, at least in germinal form, in John and in certain passages in Acts (2:23; 13:28). The charge is at once pernicious and false. While there is some disagreement among contemporary New Testament scholars on the degree of Jewish and Roman involvement in the trial and execution of Jesus, it seems fair to say that a small number of unrepresentative Jews, probably primarily from the priestly oligarchy, played a merely contributory role in bringing about his death. The charge of deicide ignores passages which speak of Jesus voluntarily giving himself up (Phil 2:5-8) or which regard his death as necessary or predetermined by God (Matt 16:21; Acts 2:23). Most of all, accusing others of deicide excuses the accuser who, from a theological, if not from an historical perspective, is also responsible for that death.

The Early Church

Throughout this period we find frequent references to the rejection of the Jews as the chosen people and to the superseding or displacement myth (the church is the new Israel instead of the Jews). The Epistle of Barnabas, for example, stated that God became man in order to bring to completion the full measure of the sins of those who had persecuted the prophets to death (5:11). That is, in killing Jesus, the Jews continued a disobedient lifestyle they had been practicing all along. From Origen on the misfortunes of the Jews were attributed to divine retribution for what they had done to Jesus. In the late fourth century Chrysostom accused the Jews of extravagance, gluttony, and deicide. Chrysostom accused the Jews of murdering their own offspring or, worse yet, of murdering the Christ. In his view God hates the Jews and always has. He added his own hatred because the Jews have the law but they insult it (cf. Parkes, 1934:163). According to Augustine, the time of the Jews is past. They continue to exist only so that they may bear witness to the truth of Christianity.

While this anti-Judaistic literature, the so-called *Adversos Judaeos* tradition, was being written, Christianity had moved from an illicit movement to a position of control in the Roman empire. In 315 a law was passed that forbade conversion of Judaism and set death by burning as punishment for this "offense." Until the time of Constantine, anti-Semitic views had been primarily theory; with him they became reality in imperial and ecclesiastical laws — and in deeds of violence. The prohibition against Proselytism changed Judaism from a missionary religion to one that was dependent on its own offspring for survival. This would be a contributory factor in the later notion of a Jewish race.

There may have been mitigating circumstances that would color our understanding of this early Christian literature. After all, we only really have the Christian side of the discussion and the efforts of a person like Chrysostom may have been aimed more at Judaizing Christians than at the Jews themselves

(de Lange, 1978:134). But there is no way to justify what these fathers said about the Jews and no point in attempting to try to do so. Rather, this sad record helps explain why Anti-Semitism is the most disturbing legacy of Christianity to the Western World.

The Middle Ages

Many theologians during the Middle Ages believed the Jews forfeited their right to the promise because of their guilt in the death of Jesus. The destruction of the temple in 70 C.E. and the dispersions of the Jews were interpreted as punishment for this guilt. Thomas Aquinas held that as long as contemporary Jews refused to believe in Jesus Christ, they were on the same level as those Jews who were actually responsible for his death. Hence, there was no difference between the Jews of his time and those of the first century. He and other theologians often merely repeated theological themes from earlier centuries. This epoch, however, is significant for our discussion because of a number of very significant anti-Jewish actions.

The Crusades, for example, called to liberate the Holy Land from the hand of Muslim infidels, led to untold violence on the Jews of Europe. Why go to Palestine to fight infidels, many asked, when the enemies of Christ and the synagogue of Satan are right in our midst? 1096 C.E., the beginning of the first crusade, is a landmark in the history of anti-Semitism, separating a period of strong prejudice but with rare outbursts of violence from another in which violence became a much more frequent occurrence.

The Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 is another sad landmark in Jewish Christian relationships. Its canon 68 ordered that Jews wear distinctive clothing lest there be sinful sexual mixing between Jews and Christians. This canon was carried out in a variety of ways, but a yellow circular badge (standing for the betrayal of Jesus for gold) and a distinctive red pointed hat were quite common. Such negative clothing introduced the isolation of Jews from the rest of society and was the antecedent for the various armbands, stars, and shields which the Nazis forced European Jews to wear in the twentieth century.

The Fourth Lateran Council also defined the doctrine of Transsubstantiation, which played an indirect but crucial role in Jewish Christian relations. Some Christians imagined that Jews themselves believed that the host was the Body of Christ, and that they tried to renew the passion of Jesus by stabbing, tormenting, or burning the host. The earliest such accusation occurred in 1243, the latest in 1836.

Another scurrilous charge against the Jews was that they participated in ritual murder of non-Jewish children. These children were allegedly crucified and the blood was supposedly used for passover bread or as a drink to rid the Jews of their bad smell *(foeter judaicus)*. Behind these charges, which led to many trials and deaths, was the notion that Jews hated Christians and mankind in general. Though the libel of ritual murder was opposed by the Jews themselves and by several emperors and popes, it tended to shape the image of Jews until modern times.

In 1348 the Jews in many parts of Europe were blamed for causing the Black Death. Jews were accused of poisoning wells with spiders, toads, lizards, hearts of Christians, bags of excrement and menstrual blood, and consecrated wafers. Despite protests by Pope Clement VI, an estimated 16,000 Jews died because of attacks stemming from this charge.

Because Jews were banned from landowning and from most of the trade guilds they were forced more and more into money lending. The church, meanwhile, forbade the taking of interest since money lending was thought to be charity extended to the poor rather than a way of generating new wealth. The church made no exception for the Jews in this respect, but the princes protected Jewish usurers in order to finance their own operations. Popular thought seems to have tolerated Jewish taking of interest either because the Bible permitted taking interest from a "stranger," or because the Jews were considered damned already so that it made no difference if they committed additional sins. The Jews were forced into money lending and were then hated for it. It led to a classical stereotype of the Jew: a miserly old man, with a hooked nose and greedy claws, avidly grasping his money bags. As late as 1966, Charles Y. Glock and Rodney Stark concluded, "Perhaps the most constant theme in anti-Semitism from medieval times down to the present is of the Jew as a cheap, miserly manipulator of money, forever preoccupied with materialism, and consequently possessing virtually unlimited economic power" (1966:109). As economic tools of the princes, the Jews often exacted from the people the money needed for his activities and were hated for it. Not a few Jews were killed or expelled by princes and barons in order to cancel their debts to them (Morais, 1976:111). Jews were in fact expelled from many countries during the Middle Ages: from England in 1290; from France in 1306 and 1394; from Spain and Portugal in 1492-1497. This latter explusion, numbering more than 100,000 has kept the Iberian peninsula devoid of Jews until the present day. The basis for all these expulsions from Christian lands was hatred of the Jews, often compounded with economic motives and nationalistic tendencies. The Spanish, at the suggestion of Torquemada and other leaders of the Inquisition, hoped to separate the New Christians or Morranos, who had been forced to convert from Judaism to Christianity, from any on-going Jewish influence. The expulsions were devastating: great loss of property, a feeling of insecurity, an increase in disease and a decline in population, and a feeling of Jews being foreigners in the Diaspora. The Jews were driven from the countries along the Atlantic coast of Europe, just when these countries were becoming leaders in world trade. The expulsions rearranged the Jewish population of Europe and left an indelible mark upon Jewish thinking.

The tendency to isolate and humiliate Jews led to the establishment of ghettos, separated and closed off by law from the other parts of town. While the word ghetto arose in the sixteenth century, the actual practice of segregation is known much earlier and can be traced to the Third Lateran Council of 1179, which prohibited Jews and Christians from living together. Ghettoization was often accompanied by the wearing of badges, compulsory attendance at conversionary sermons, restrictions on professions, and other humiliations. The ghettos were crowded and unsanitary.

Even art came to express Christian hatred of the Jews. Judas alone was depicted as a Jew in depictions of the Last Supper, and statues in many cathedrals represented the synagogue as a blindfolded woman. The synagogue was thus portrayed as blind to the truth about Christ. In the cathedral at Paris the blindfold was replaced by a snake wrapped around the woman's eyes.

Four solutions were tried for the Jewish "problem" during the Middle Ages: conversion or forced baptism, expulsion, strict segregation, and exter-

mination. As Vamberto Morais sums up, "The greatest evil of 'Christian' and ecclesiastical anti-Judaism . . . did not lie in the destruction of human lives, great and criminal as it was, but in its permanent poisoning of entire generations, and in the mental distortion it produced not only among the Christian people but inevitably in the Jews themselves" (1976:99).

Martin Luther

To survey the bases for and manifestations of anti-Semitism in the reforming movements of the sixteenth century would easily exceed the limits of this article. Instead, it is appropriate to recall Luther's well-known pronouncements on the Jews. In 1523 he published an essay, "That Jesus Christ was born a Jew," whose outlook toward Judaism was positive, if conversionalist (Text in 1962:199-229). Luther believed that God had revealed himself more clearly in the Reformation gospel, and he hoped that many Jews would become Christians. Even here Luther took issue with Jewish exegesis since he believed that the Jews erred in not believing that in Jesus, the messiah had already arrived. His mission strategy, nonetheless, was sensible: first the Jews should be assured that the messiah had arrived; only in a second stage should the Christian preacher assure them that Jesus was true God.

The evangelical mission to the Jews was not successful, and Luther tried in a later publication to prevent Christians from converting to Judaism. This essay was a vicious denunciation of the Jews ("On the Jews and their Lies," 1543; Text in 1971:137-306). He accused the Jews of self-praise and insisted that they were blood thirsty and bent on revenge, and that they persisted in an anti-Christian explanation of the Old Testament against their better knowledge. Luther claimed that the Jews knew that the messiah had already come. They were held to be greedy for money, and all chance for them to convert was long since past. He recommended that their synagogues be burnt, their houses destroyed, and their books, including the Talmud, be confiscated. Rabbis should be banned from teaching and safe conduct should be denied them. Jews in general should be prevented from loaning money at interest. Deprived of cash and jewels, they should, like Adam, perform manual labor in the sweat of their brow. Luther apparently had become convinced that the Jews were making light of and even blaspheming Christ in their prayers and synagogues. He seemed to fear that the wrath of God would descend upon Christians for tolerating the supposed Jewish public blasphemy. In his last sermon of February 15, 1546, he recommended that unrepentant Jews be banished from the land though anyone who repented should be accepted as brother or sister. Luther passed on his recommendations to the secular authorities, who, however, failed to carry them out in their generation.

Jaroslav Pelikan summed up this sad chapter in the life of Luther well: "I cannot escape the conviction that the time has come for those who study Luther and admire him to acknowledge, more unequivocally and less pugnaciously than they have, that on this issue Luther's thought and language are simply beyond defense" (Fourth International Congress for Luther Research, St. Louis, 1971). We need to recognize that it was not only in such polemical tracts that Luther said anti-Judaistic statements. It was also in his condemnation of the doctrine of merits, interpreted by him as works-righteousness, that the Reformer wrote, "Such dreadful monstrosities and horrible blasphemies ought to be propound-

ed to Turks and Jews, not to the Church of Christ" (1963:125 see also now Oberman [1984])

Modern Anti-Semitism Before the Holocaust

In a period marked by the Enlightenment, the rise of Democracy, and the decline of the church's influence, the Jews were emancipated, that is, they were accepted as full citizens. With the revolutions in France and the United States a new age seemed to be dawning. Many thought persecution was unworthy of enlightened men and women; many liberals thought that emancipation would pave the way for assimilation and conversion. Still the Jews remained, even after emancipation, a distinct group by virtue of their marriages, their concentration in certain professions, their social cohesiveness, their maintenance of particular cultural patterns, and their denial of the predominant religion (Katz, 1980:9). Jacob Katz, in fact, claims that modern anti-Semitism continues to show the influence of the pre-modern Christian rejection of Judaism, even when the modern anti-Semites are antagonistic to Christianity itself. Voltaire, for example, was anti-Semitic, but believed that Christianity was a "higher religion" than Judaism. As the Jews moved into the mainstream of society, they expanded their sphere of influence, physically, economically, socially, and intellectually. These sociological challenges and the underlying anti-Judaistic heritage of Christianity were compounded in the 19th century by a new phenomenon, racial anti-Semitism. According to the racial theories then propounded, races were distinctively different and these differences affected human history. Count Gobineau was one of the leading racial theoreticians. He predicated innate differences between groups of different racial descent, but the application of such racial theory to Semites and Aryans reached a nadir in the work of Ernest Renan. He wrote: "The Semitic people almost entirely lack curiosity . . . One does not find in their midst either great empires or commerce or public spirit . . . The Semite knows almost no duties except for himself . . . to ask him to keep his word, to do justice in a disinterested position is to ask something impossible" (Katz, 1980:137). Heinrich von Treitschke coined the terrible slogan, "The Jews are our misfortune."

For the racist Theodor Fritsch, Christian teaching arose as a protest of the Aryan spirit against the inhumane Jew-spirit. He was among the first to assign an Aryan, non-Jewish descent to Jesus (Katz, 1980:304-306). Houston Stewart Chamberlain, son-in-law of Richard Wagner, asserted that the Jews suffered from racial bastardization and its consequences, and denied that the Jews ever possessed even the rudiments of what might be called religion. Whatever might be termed positive in Jewish religion was not considered native. In Chamberlain's view the Ten Commandments had been borrowed from Egyptian sources.

Fortunately, the visions of Fritsch and Chamberlain were not easily translatable into concrete action. It took the disappointment of World War I, the chaos of the Weimar Republic, and the monomania of Adolf Hitler to translate racial theory into the "final solution," the annihilation of six million Jews in the Holocaust. As Katz remarks, "The basic principle of anti-Semitism, the denial of Jews of the right to exist, came here to a wholly unexpected, but not inconsistent, fruition as the policy of a government" (1980:317).

Katz's central hypothesis about anti-Semitism in the eighteenth to twentieth centuries is profoundly sobering. He

points out that the negative characterization of the Jews was part of anti-Jewish tradition prior to the emergence of the theory of race, and it was this anti-Jewish tradition, nurtured in and, to an extent, by Christianity, that was the determining factor in racial discrimination against Jews. The nineteenth century saw the condemnation of the Jews transferred from its original religious-historical framework into a supposedly scientific context. The overt reaction to Jewish emancipation came in those countries where Christian resentment against the Jews and Judaism remained a latent but mighty force.

Through the centuries a variety of factors have played into Western anti-Semitism. Sociological factors lie behind current American perceptions of Jews as conceited, insolent, overbearing, clannish, and exclusive (Glock and Starck, 1966:113). Economic factors arose in the Middle Ages, when Jews participated in banking and usury, and also after emancipation, when Jews were leaders in many of the economic changes of the nineteenth century. Politics figured prominently in Bismarck's use of anti-Semitism to grasp for power and in the notorious Protocols of the Elders of Zion, which reported an international Jewish conspiracy aimed at world domination, the overthrow of Christendom, and the establishment of the devil's reign on earth. But we need to be very clear: While there are racial, cultural, political, economic, and sociological causes for anti-Semitism, "Christian" attitudes, feelings, words, and actions to and about Jews were always at the center of the problem or provided a climate in which such anti-Judaism could flourish. It needs to be stated with emphasis that all anti-Semitism is also anti-Christian. No one who has penetrated the meaning of the Gospel to any extent at all can discover in it the slightest justification for the tragedy of the last 2,000 years of anti-Semitism. Of course, many of those who believed in or practiced anti-Semitism were non-Christians or even anti-Christian. Throughout the centuries there have always been Christians who loved the Jews, and those great ancestors whose words were intended, or have been interpreted, as anti-Semitic — the author of the fourth Gospel, Ambrose, Augustine, Aquinas, Luther — also bequeathed to us a different, dearer picture of a God of grace, love, and forgiveness for all men and women everywhere. But when all the provisos and mitigating circumstances have been recorded, when you and I have written down our own, "It was not I," the thesis with which this essay began still stands: Anti-Semitism is Christianity's most disturbing legacy to the Western world.

The record is clear and, to a large extent, highly displeasing. Christian accountability has been documented briefly here and in extensive detail in the vast literature dealing with anti-Semitism. Collectively and individually we need to confess our sins of the past and the present, to lay hold of the forgiveness offered to us through the Gospel, and to resolve, as individuals and the church, to lay out a new agenda in Christian-Jewish relationships.

How Might We Relate to Jews in the Future?

Christians need to lead in a society-wide effort to eliminate the sociological, economic, and political bases for anti-Semitism. Stereotypes die hard, and the notion that Jews are clannish and pushy, or greedy and materialistic, or in any kind of conspiracy to control banking and commerce need to be counteracted by what we say and what we do. This includes all kinds of disparaging ethnic and religious humor.

Christian churches and related institutions must expand areas of cooperation with Jews in social ministry and social justice. The Vatican Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews concluded: "Jewish and Christian tradition, founded on the Word of God, is aware of the value of the human person, the image of God. Love of the same God must show itself in effective action for the good of mankind. In the spirit of the prophets, Jews and Christians will work willingly together, seeking social justice and peace at every level" (1974:187).

What We Teach

Christians must rethink their theology and the curriculum currently used in parishes and seminaries. Four issues come immediately to mind:

1) We need to discover and teach a fair picture of Judaism in the first century C.E. and in our own era. The stereotype still prevails that Judaism then — and now — is degenerate or deteriorated in comparison with the canonical Hebrew Scriptures. As Charlotte Klein has pointed out, this deficiency comes about in part because all too many Christian scholars know Judaism only from secondary sources, and these sources often betray their bias by calling first century Judaism, "Late Judaism." They often misinterpret the role of the law, the Pharisees, and the Jewish role in the death of Jesus. Christian lay people and leaders today often only know contemporary Judaism secondarily and not from face-to-face confrontation and dialogue.

2) We need to emphasize the Jewishness of Jesus (for a discussion of this from a Jewish perspective, see Vermes, 1973). Christians need to affirm both that Jesus is the fulfillment of God's promises and, in many ways, a radically new understanding of the promise. The Hebrew Scriptures, read on their own terms, would not lead one to expect a messiah who would die or a messiah whose deity would be confessed. Jews do not reject Jesus because they deny the Scriptural testimony, but because they find God leading them, through Scripture and Talmud, in a different direction.

3) We need to make sure that anti-Judaism is not the left hand of Christology. Saying Yes to Jesus dare not mean saying No to the Jews. This will require particular care as we speak about the uniqueness and universality of the Christ. The potentially anti-Judaistic comments of the New Testament call for special efforts. Some of this offense may be removed by educating the church about the true state of affairs in the first century. We may also need, following John Koenig, to identify various levels of authority within the canon. The evangelist John's enunciation of God's goodness and triumph through the crucifixion of Jesus needs to be retained; his polemical comments about the Jews need to be identified as expressions of people who were involved in controversy with the synagogue, but without universal authority. Public reading of the New Testament may require replacement of terms like "the Jews" in the Gospel of John.

4) Our education goals in parish and seminary must include teaching about the Holocaust, its "Christian" roots, and its formative efforts in making Jews and Christians what they are too. Pray God, we will never have again the combination of social, economic, political, and human factors that led to the "final solution." Christians need to reflect on the religious causes of all forms of anti-Semitism in order to purge our guilt and to amend our present conduct.

It seems to me, however, that there are additional implications, often of a more controversial nature, that flow from our

past record and the imperative of the Gospel.

Israel

Christians need to say Yes to Israel since the state of Israel keeps Hitler from gaining a posthumous victory (Fackenheim, 1968:20). Israel provided a homeland for thousands of Jewish refugees after World War II, and it provides now a place where Jews can be unencumbered by the remaining relics of anti-Semitism. Our Yes to Israel need not be an uncritical Yes or an unconditional Yes. A mature, wholesome relationship will allow (demand) criticism of the annexation of the Golan Heights or insist also on the rights of the Palestinians. But on the right of Israel to exist and to live within safe borders there can be no equivocation or prevarication. Like any nation state, Israel is bound to err; the way the state itself was formed may not be without moral problems. But given the circumstances of the Holocaust, and given the intricate way in which Christianity has been interlocked with the whole sad history of anti-Semitism, solidarity with the people of Israel is the only option.

Mission or Witness?

As a second, decisive response to anti-Semitism, we must reject the notion of a special mission to the Jews. It goes without saying that Christians will eschew any kind of proselytism or forced conversion. In addition, we need to acknowledge openly the validity of the faith system of Judaism. Franz Rosenzweig spoke of Christianity as Judaism for Gentiles. He believed that Jews do not need Christ, because they are already of God. Perhaps this proposal is too simple or too much of a slogan to resolve this question completely (cf. Pawlikowski, 1980:89-90), but it contains at least a germ of the truth.

Renouncing efforts to convert Jews does not mean that we remain silent about God's revelation to us. We must continue to bear witness to *Jews and all others* about what we have seen and heard: what happened in Christ is an action of God embracing all mankind. To share the faith is an essential responsibility of us as believers, but we also need to listen to what Jews have seen and heard. If we want to continue to profess that the salvation offered through Jesus is both unique and universal, we need to clarify and express wherein the uniqueness and universality consist. The implications of the Christian Gospel may be further disclosed as our living faith is shared with contemporary Jewish sisters and brothers, who are, like us, daughters and sons of God.

Jews who respond to the Gospel and who become Christians should be welcomed and nurtured within the Christian community. What we need to deplore are evangelistic efforts aimed specifically at the Jews or the compiling of arguments based on a pre-critical understanding of the Old Testament, designed to convince them that Jesus is the promised messiah and that Christianity is the only way to salvation. I continue to hope that Christ will finally be all in all, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. That is now primarily an eschatological hope which will require God's own action to effect it. We need to affirm and live out what we have in common with the Jewish people, and we need to recognize the discontinuity with Judaism that the coming of Christ and his gospel has brought about. Need we add that the coming of Christ places Judaism in a situation of crisis? (Cf. the statment in 1975 by a Consultation of the Lutheran World Federation, cited in Croner, 1977:129.) The crisis for

Judaism needs to be tempered, at least to this extent, that Jews at the beginning of the church could be baptized in the name of Jesus and *continue to belong* to the Jewish people (see the study by the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany, cited in Croner, 1977:147).

The Dialogue

Jewish-Christian dialogue should remain high on our agenda, at international and trans-Christian levels, as well as at the local level, between individual churches, synagogues, and temples and between individual Jews and Christians. Dialogue means more than politeness. The aim of dialogue is a fuller understanding of the position of the other, in order better to grasp the inner logic of one's own position and in order to achieve some clarity and authenticity in relations with the other traditions. Monika Konrad Hellwig is surely correct that the central and constitutive claim on which one's own tradition rests must be placed central in the dialogue (1981:202). "We cannot accept the rules of a dialogue that require us to remain silent about what lies at the core of our movement" (Braaten, 1981: 79). Christian perception of revelation and redemption are focused in Jesus of Nazareth.

Some Christian participants in the dialogue assume a position which appears to make dialogue easier, but which in fact makes the dialogue irrevelant for many adherents of a classical Christianity. Rosemary Ruether, for example, says that to reaffirm Jesus' hope in his name is to say that now in his memory we affirm his hope. Jesus is not, in her view, the messiah. Rather, he hoped for the Kingdom of God and died in that hope (1974:249). A. Roy Eckhardt proposes that it was God's purpose that a majority of Israel should not accept Jesus. In his view, Auschwitz at once undercuts the idea of God's faithfulness to Israel and means the end for Christians of the belief in the Resurrection. Jesus now sleeps with the Holocaust victims (cited in Pawlikowski, 1980:40). Despite the great debt we owe to Eckhardt for his work in combatting anti-Semitism, we need to challenge him on this position. "The true identity of Jesus," Carl Braaten has argued, "can be acknowledged only by faith in him as the risen Lord and the living Christ" (1981:77). Jesus was a Jew, that we proudly affirm. But the Jesus we worship is the Christ, the Savior, and the Lord. Again in the words of Braaten, "Salvation in the New Testament is what God has done to death in the resurrection of Jesus" (1981:84).

The dialogue we call for allows neither side to water down its distinctive views. I am grateful to Jewish colleagues who assure me that I have a place in the life to come because I have kept the Noachic laws. But I owe them the witness that their generosity does not begin to touch my own self understanding or why I can confess, in the words of the Nicene Creed, "I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come." For real and continued progress to be made in Jewish-Christian dialogue, I believe that Christian participants should begin with the faith of the ecumenical creeds and learn from the dialogue the deeper meaning of these words as they confront the living faith of Israel.

Our dialogue with the Jews has important implications for the entire mission of the church in the world. Someone has said that the very credibility of Christianity is at stake. No one, the charge goes, can be the true messiah whose followers are compelled to torture and destroy others who think differently. As the very first step, we need once more to join the call of the first assembly of the

World Council of Churches at Amsterdam in 1948 and renounce anti-Semitism as "absolutely irreconcilable with the profession and practice of the Christian faith. Anti-Semitism is sin against God and man" (cited in Croner, 1977:70).

This categorical renunciation of anti-Semitism in all its forms may well be the most beneficial legacy we can leave to the Jewish and Christian sisters and brothers who will follow us in the ages to come.

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A Simple Priest

Breathing the shape of the wine,
Feeling all over the husk of bread,
Old Godsoaked rumpled lover
Grimy with the thin light dust
Of a thousand, ten thousand, masses
Said when the red light in your brain
Shone out on the wintry deepness
Of a groggy morning's Godloving.

When last night had bent down low
To the sound of your heart's drumming,
Seeking the stories, the long peopled stories,
That drive the chill from your bones
In the lost sultry morning's loneness —
Cracking the bread open with soft fingers,
Watch the small crumbs pop in candlelight,
Dancing slowly to the Incarnation.

The edges of your slight lips curl
As the nether ends of the Earth curl
Toward their Creator, curl slightly
Into the secret your soul can not,
Will not, give up till the very last . . .
Breathing the shape of the wine . . .
Then down to the warm darkness of God.

Jay C. Rochelle

A Book Worth Discussing: Constructive Negation: Reflections on A Marxist Looks at Jesus.

Steven Schroeder

Amarillo, Texas

Milan Machovec's *A Marxist Looks at Jesus* (Fortress, 1976) is not a new book since the original Czech manuscript was the result of the 1960s dialogue between Christians and Marxists that took place in Prague. That dialogue has its roots in what seems to be another world, a world irrevocably altered by the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. Still there are good reasons for returning to one of this dialogue's most important products.

In fact, the dialogue has continued in spite of setbacks, especially in Latin America and Southern Africa where Christians and Marxists struggle together against centuries of oppression. In addition, millions of Christians live within social structures that are Marxist-Leninist, and, as the church in the German Democratic Republic discovered a number of years ago, they *are* the church *within* — not beside or against — socialism. Marxist-Leninist social structures have sprung up and flourished in soil nourished by rich and longstanding Christian traditions, and, as East German Christians discovered — especially in the 500th anniversary year of Luther's birth — the two have much to offer one another. Machovec's vision of a "radically dialogical future" could become a new and powerful basis for the struggle of Christians to be the church in the world.

It is no coincidence that Machovec's radically dialogical future depends on the type of radical criticism embodied in Jesus' ministry and in the work of Marx, and that "negation" plays a central role in this criticism as well as in Luther's theology. Negation becomes constructive precisely because it dissolves a present seen as absolute and opens that present to the possibility of transformation.

In the process of a thorough anaylsis of available sources, Machovec, who characterizes himself as an atheist rather than a believer, produced a remarkably sensitive portrait of Jesus of Nazareth. Machovec describes the age in which Jesus lived as one in which people looked for a "way out" but were denied it by the millions. The Jewish people were marked by the fact that, unlike other races and nationalities, they did not have two histories — one sacred and one profane: the history of the people *was* sacred history. The prophetic tradition, in which Jesus clearly stood, provided "a first hint" that human beings have "always to be starting again," that their reform is permanent or does not exist at all. Because Jesus and his first disciples did not draw a line between this world and another, his reflections about the Kingdom of God concern this world, with its history, politics, social situations, and the real longings of real persons for their earthly future. Jesus' ministry is eschatological but not apocalyptic: everything is related to the future upheaval, but there is no description of the state that will come after the catastrophe. What Jesus proclaimed was "the demand which the 'future age' makes on human beings in the present" (p. 80). The future is not something that

'arrives' — from foreign parts, independently of our own activity, but something that *depends on us,* at every moment" (p. 88).

This whole analysis, including Machovec's understanding of parable as process, is remarkably similar to John Dominic Crossan's description of "the challenge of the historical Jesus" as "an attack on the idolatry of time." Like other commentators on the parables, Crossan sees them primarily in terms of what they *do:* the parables of Jesus are seen as God's Kingdom happening. In Machovec's terms, their action is itself the breaking in of the future age.

There was at first nothing at all particularly remarkable about Jesus. The name itself (Jeshua) was common enough, and the family was rather ordinary. Machovec envisions a typical childhood followed by some time in seclusion, possibly with an ascetic group such as the Essenes, which enabled Jesus to burst on the public scene with an already mature message. According to the "unequivocal tradition of Judaism, the Messiah could only *come,* could only appear in the midst of events, he could not be *already there* in swaddling clothes surrounded by a mother's tenderness" (p. 147). Jesus' significance developed in the context of an ongoing struggle with the meaning of both "prophet" and "messiah."

In many ways, Machovec joins the evangelist Luke in proclaiming "the good news of the humanity of Jesus" (p. 183). Because the future is something that depends on us in every moment, Jesus' teaching becomes "a severe and uncompromising demand on oneself" (p. 110). Jesus left behind "radical demands" but dined with prostitutes and tax-collectors. This is a model for radical openness to others combined with responsible, uncompromising demand on oneself. The future depends on us; this demands responsible action in the present as surely as it demands openness to others in the process of shaping the world to come.

Machovec deals specifically with implications of Jesus' teaching for conversations between Christians and Marxists. His belief that the "real content" of atheism is "not something affirmative but something critical" allows him to appreciate the radically critical content of Jesus' message. Unfortunately, Marx's method has been "transformed from a capacity to explain ideas by their socio-economic conditioning into an incapacity to explain even the most sublime human ideals by anything other than the socio-political conditioning" (p. 22). Machovec focuses on a dialectical unity between future and present, which he says belongs to the nature of the human condition. He sees this as being parallel to the relationship of Kingdom and repentance in Jesus' teaching; the breaking in of the future *demands* a change in the present. Machovec realizes that a radical critical approach lies at the heart of both Marx and Jesus. They are not the same, but neither are they necessarily antagonistic. There may well be a need for both "scientific" and "ethical" criticism. Neither excludes the other; in fact, each needs the other.

All of that leads me back to Luther as a basis for concluding remarks on constructive negation. In his *Lectures on Romans,* Luther voiced the insight that God cannot be possessed or touched except by the negation of all our affirmatives. To those who expect God to be a "Yes", this image of God is "No" is maddening. But it is undeniably consistent with a longstanding aniconic tradition that undermines fixities, challenges absolutes, and demands a radical openness to the breaking in of the future.

Herbert Marcuse contends that Hegel provides the basis for criticizing not only the logic that would rationalize the

world but also the world itself. What is crucial in Hegelian philosophy is the contradiction between what is and what might be. Everything includes its own negation in the process of its becoming. This critical approach to reality is at once "negative" and revolutionary because it always criticizes the existing state of affairs. It is a philosophical embodiment of the announcement of the Kingdom and the call to repentance, and it is a philosophical basis for the political and historical understanding of Marx.

Marcuse and Machovec note that those attempting to appropriate such radical insights can canonize them at the same time that they undermine their revolutionary impact. Hegel himself recognized the unsettling character of his early insight; his later work takes the form of a growing consciousness of the shattering of the ground under his feet. He seemed to write like a man determined to preserve order in spite of a destructive insight. That determination moved his understanding of liberation increasingly from the material and political world to a world of pure thought. Machovec recognizes a similar tendency in Christianity, especially as it became an established religion. The tendency was to move the Kingdom to a future that would simply, miraculously replace the present. Philosophy followed the same line by separating the struggle for liberation from the world of politics and material production. Given Marx's adamant insistence that such an approach is upside down, it is remarkable that many Marxists assume their philosophy is a given, not open to transformation or development!

Christians — whether in the Third World or the advanced industrial nations — are struggling to be the church in a world where ideologies are afforded the status of Absolutes. Going back to Machovec — and going back through him to a more radical look at our own traditions — may help in that struggle. Christians in the United States have long looked with a combination of suspiscion and pity on the church in East Germany and the Soviet Union. How can the church exist in a Communist society? But it is time now to ask honestly and candidly how the church can exist in a Capitalist society. Both questions are aspects of one question that has always confronted Christians: how to be the church in the world, how to be the *present* sign and embodiment of a Kingdom which is the future breaking into the present.

In our common struggle to create a more human world, it is incumbent upon Christians and Marxists to remember that we create a human present only as we begin to realize the dialectical unity of present and future. When we see our present as a "given" from the past, closed to the future and to transformation, we are called to open it. Both Jesus and Marx provide valuable models for a response to that call.

Christians and Marxists agree on the need for repentance. Both traditions have done a remarkable job of systematic and dogmatic interpretation; the point now, as Marx reminded us, is to do an equally remarkable job of transformation.

A Book Worth Discussing: FOXFIRE 7: Ministers, Church Members, Revivals, Baptisms, Shaped-Note and Gospel Singing, Faith Healing, Camp Meetings, Foot Washing, Snake Handling, and Other Traditions of Mountain Religious Heritage.*

J. Jeffrey Zetto

When Eliot Wigginton arrived in Rabun Gap (Georgia) High School in 1966 to teach English and Geography, he was armed with his new Master's degree and the audacity to think he had the answers to the problems of education in Southern Appalacia. He didn't — and in six months he was ready to admit defeat. In desparation he proposed to his students that they produce an in-house magazine, sharing what was most important to them: the lives, history, and activities of their families and friends. *Foxfire* [hereafter *F*], now a major national publication on life in Southern Appalacia — and still student produced — was born. *F7* is the seventh anthology from the magazine and a triple tribute to the genius of its founder: first, because *Foxfire* could spawn seven major anthologies; second, because it is the first volume in the series to deal with one specific topic and to generate its own original research; and third, because it was edited by one of Wigginton's former students, who has graduated from the University of Virginia and returned to work on the *Foxfire* staff as a teacher of photography and journalism.

F7 began as a simple student project. High school senior Kieth Head interviewed his great-grandfather, Grandpa Ray Dryman, "one of the oldest members of the Pentecostal Church of God in this area" (10). The infectious and authentic quality of Appalacian piety expanded the student project into a major study, then a full file drawer, and, finally, into this large volume "focusing on the documentation of religious beliefs exercising the most influence in our particular area of Appalacia" (12). The students included articles by two experts, Bill J. Leonard (theology) and Edith Card (music), to provide historical contexts for the interviews but, in the main, this is the students' book.

And an excellent and comprehensive book it is! Almost half the book consists of interviews with clergy and laity outlining their perception of their own denomination's and congregation's history, theology, and practices. One third concentrates on five practices traditionally, but not exclusively, associated with Appalacian religion. The book is liberally illustrated with excellent photographs; LP recordings of the shaped-note music are available.

The data gathered by the *F7* researchers supports Bill Leonard's description of Southern Appalacian Christianity;

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"pluralistic, Protestant, revivalistic, competitve, and restorationist" (19). Pluralism in doctrine and practice led to competition between denominations.[1] Yet there was an over-arching unity which might be called "small-church, personal Protestantism" The small Roman Catholic and growing Jehovah's Witness presence reflects a post-World War II immigration rather than a conscious and deliberate denominational outreach. And, as in our Lutheran history when people sought to establish "Zion on the Mississippi" and other Zions, there are those groups in Appalachia, nurtured in the isolation of mountain valleys, who sought to restore New Testament Christianity and revitalize the New World.

Interviews with more than forty-five individuals and over two hundred photographs have been included in this volume. In every case the vitality and flavor of Appalacian Christianity is evident. What began as an individual student project has become a valuable contribution to the study of religion in America. But now we shall compare that contribution with one of the classics of modern American religious historiography, Arthur Carl Piepkorn's *Profiles in Belief.*[2]

Profiles in Belief

Perhaps nowhere is the importance of Oral History in general and *FOXFIRE 7* in particular as evident as in its role as a complement to *Profiles in Belief.* I offer two examples.

Shaped-note Singing

Singing schools originated in colonial New England as an effort, in the face of encroaching illiteracy, to assist congregations to sing hymns. The syllables *"fa so la mi"* had been used in hymnbooks since the *Genevan Psalter* (1562) to express the intervals of the musical scale. American usage developed "fasola" hymnals, singing schools, and singers. After the American Revolution, immigrants brought the *"do re mi . . . si do"* system to urban singing societies, leading to a division between city and country, North and South. This division was exacerbated when shapes were added to the syllables in hymnals prepared for Appalacian congregations. Benjamin White's *Sacred Harp* (1844) used only *fa so la mi* while Jesse Adkins *(Christian Ministrel,* 1848) and William Walker *(Christian Harmony,* 1866) and their followers used the "full notation." This division continues in the singing schools today. While singing schools and singing conventions have abated in this century, their influence in American church music ought not be minimized. The combination of Southern hymnals and singing schools has provided us with at least fifteen hymn tunes in the *Lutheran Book of Worship.*[3] Even more important is the recognition by the shaped-note singers that the interaction of words and music is a powerful vehicle for the communication of the Gospel.

Handling Poisonous Snakes

If one strength of Oral History is its ability to communicate individual feelings and particular details associated with an event or person, then no chapter of *F7* demonstrates this ability better

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[1] "We Methodists had a revival meetin' last week and no one was saved. The Baptists down the road had a meeting the same week and, thank God, they didn't save anybody either." (16)

[2] Arthur Carl Piepkorn, *Profiles in Belief: The Religious Bodies in the United States and Canada,* ed. John H. Tietjen, 4 volumes (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1977-1979).

[3] LBW 30, 33, 61, 127, 217, 220, 240, 246, 347, 372, 285, 392, 420, 423, and 499.

than "The People Who Take Up Serpents." Snake handling was so delicate an issue[4] that Eliot Wigginton personally supervised the research and wrote the chapter. What emerged from nine months of study is oral history at its best: three five-hour services recorded on audio tape, video tape, and photographic film, extensive interviews with the pastor and parishioners, and the reactions of the researchers themselves, all condensed into fifty-eight pages. The chapter consists of a montage of photographs, citations, and commentary based on the fifteen hours of worship from one Saturday night through the next Sunday evening.

F7 and Oral History

F7 will not change the basic shape of American religious history; it does not intend to. As perviously stated, oral history does not deal with broad strokes but with the particulars and details. This *F7* does admirably. However, two criticisms should be addressed toward the book; the first concerns the researchers, the second its editor.

The Researchers

There are two limitations in oral history: the person interviewed must be sufficiently knowledgeable and articulate about the subject to provide useful information and the interviewer must be sufficiently skilled to elicit, record, store, and transcribe the information for future researchers. The uneven quality of a few of the interviews, good as they are, reflects the relative inexperience of some of the high school interviewers. As an examination of one segment of American culture the interviews are excellent, but I would have liked more detail, especially about the weekly cultus of the congregations and the impact of religion on daily life. Finally, there were times when I felt an interviewer assumed too much knowledge in the reader. Within the context of the volume and given its overall excellence, these are minor flaws.

The Editor

More serious is a possible bias by the editor regarding one subject, handling poisonuous snakes. Eliot Wigginton admitted, "All of us [at Foxfire] are human beings trying to find our own place in the maze of religious beliefs and strike our own balance" (371). It is unfelicitous, therefore, that the chapter "The People Who Take Up Serpents" begins with the naked citation of Genesis 3:1. If this is an editorial implication that snake handling is one of the temptations of that "most subtle beast," it is inappropriate and is the only serious blemish in an otherwise excellent volume. Mark 16:17-18 would have been a more appropriate reference.

A Tool for Parish Ministry

More important than its use as an adjunct to classical encyclopedic studies like *Profiles in Belief* is *F7's* use as a model for parochial understanding and congregational research. Church members need to know the sources of their polity and piety. *F7* shows how to discover them at the local level.

Simple questions like what happened to an apparently abandoned neighborhood church building can break down prejudices and build new bonds. Mike Drake, a Foxfire student, thought a

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[4] The use of rattlesnakes and copperheads, very much alive and deadly, in worship services is illegal in most states. Though people are identified and the photographs of the services are quite explicit, there is no mention of legal repercussions.

church in his neighborhood was haunted.

> When I was younger, I had always heard about a church near where I live. It was supposed to be haunted and, supposedly, if you ran around it three times, a witch would chase you around it the fourth time. I kept hearing that, so I went there one time and was going to run around it, but I got scared, and, up to now I have never run around it . . . .
>
> My parents helped me find the only living member of the church . . . .
>
> Now that I have learned about the church, I am no longer scared of going to it . . . Knowing about the church has drawn me a lot closer to it and it means a lot more to me now than just a building that is supposed to be haunted. (71-72)

How many of us have "haunted churches" in our theological and denominational neighborhoods? How many of our parish ministries could be more effective if we would listen to the "only living member." We need to heed Eliot Wigginton's *apologia* for the first *Foxfire* anthology a decade ago:

> Daily our grandparents are moving out of our lives, taking with them, irreparably, the kind of information contained in this book. They are taking it, not because they wanted to, but because they think we just don't care. And it isn't happening just in Appalacia. I think, for example, of numerous Indian reservations, Black cultures, near the southern coasts, Ozark mountain communities, and a hundred others.

Used by Christians to discover the personal depths of their Faith, oral history can be the exercise of that most interpersonal means of grace, "the mutual conversation and consolation of sisters and brothers."

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[5] *The Foxfire Book,* edited with an introduction by Eliot Wigginton (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, 1972), p. 12.

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

Letter to the Editor in Response to "Deterrence and the Kingdom"

In the June, 1984, issue Paul Johnson published an essay dealing with the doctrine of deterrence and its relation to the doctrine of the two Kingdoms and how those two relate to the "Peace and Politics" statement of the LCA.

Dear Editor:

Paul Johnson's article, "Deterrence and the Kingdom" (June, 1984), as a response to the LCA proposed social statement on *Peace and Politics,* made some very salient points. I would like to respond to his article by making a couple points of my own.

First, the primary target of Johnson's critique is the social statement's uncritical acceptance of "deterrence" as a "working" option for governments. Johnson helpfully points out that deterrence is a weak agent for social and political peace in today's world (pp. 149-150); and that, furthermore, the statement's allowance for a limited war with nuclear weapons, should the conditions arise to warrant such an out-an-out conflict, is "ludicrous" (p. 150). What Johnson blames for the theological problem behind the social statement is "the 16th century theory of two kingdoms" which "ends up subsuming peacemaking under peacekeeping, church under state, and gospel under law" (p. 151). What is lacking, says Johnson, is "the kingdom Jesus came preaching," namely the kingdom of the gospel (right-hand). The point Johnson is appropriately making here is that the gospel does make a difference in the world, and is enabling for more direct political involvement than the seemingly quietistic tendencies the statement allows. The only correction I would suggest is that Johnson get his church history straight and recognize that the problem is not in the 16th century for two kingdoms theology, but in the later centuries, especially in the nineteenth century and the dualistic hangovers of that period in Lutheranism today.

Second, Johnson's constructive proposal is for the U.S. and U.S.S.R. to return to what Johnson refers to as their roots in the Judeo-Christian scriptures. More specifically, he calls for restoring the "policy" of the Old Testament prophets and the New Testament Christ — namely, justice for the poor and the oppressed (p. 152). If these nations were less embroiled in their present "activity that has theological roots in the kingdom of the left" (p. 152), and were more about the pre-eminent activity of God's right-hand, the Gospel (p. 153), "the burdens being created at home and those on a world-wide scale could easily be taken care of" (p. 153). Is it theologically accurate to equate the Gospel, the uniquely liberating mercy of Christ, with the message of the Old Testament prophets of justice for the poor and the oppressed? Certainly one must make a strong case for their relationship. But are they the *same?* Furthermore, how does one conceptually go about arriving at the vision which Johnson (and I) would share, of nations working together for justice? Is the solution really in resurrecting (somewhat ambiguous, at best) roots from the past? Might a more helpful direction be to tap the resources of the living Word of God as it is active

in the world today — active in both critical judgment, which commands justice, and mercy, which invites to an "alien justice" (the "two kingdoms")? There are at least two ways in which one could usefully bring a "two kingdoms" theology to bear upon the nuclear dilemma. One is to underscore that Christians, being liberated by the gospel, are freed to lose themselves in the task of God's left-hand activity in the world, which seeks to criticize to death all forms of injustice, and to truss up others in that critical activity who are frightened off by totalitarianism, or lulled into apathy by privatization. The other is for Christians to applaud the left-hand activity going on in various parts of the globe, whether in the "grassroots surging for peace" or other critical ventures where Judeo-Christian roots or belief may well be lacking, as the creative left-hand work of the Father, who can use even the self-interest of others (e.g., self-survival!) for his own purposes.

Michael Hoy
Graduate Student, LSTC

Book Reviews



IN MEMORY OF HER: A FEMINIST THEOLOGICAL RECONSTRUCTION OF CHRISTIAN ORIGINS. By Elisabeth Schüssler Florenza. New York: Crossroad, 1983. xxv and 351 pages. Cloth. $19.50.

Fiorenza has written a book on the role of women in the New Testament and early church that will undoubtedly prove to be seminal and formative for all informed future discussions of this topic. She describes her book as part of the "quest [of women] for power, freedom and independence." Her scholarship is usually impeccable and her bibliography is invaluable for anyone interested in the role of women or in general studies of the early church.

Her first 104 pages are dedicated to a series of hermeneutical essays since she sees rightly that women will remain subordinate in the church until the long tradition of male-dominated hermeneutics is broken. Her concern however is not limited to the power of male exegetes. It goes on to what she identifies as the basic problem, the androcentric texts of the New Testament and early Christian literature. These androcentric texts, which are the only kind to be found in the New Testament, have been the "key weapon of dominant males" in the life of the church.

Her chief point in these essays is that only the feminist reconstruction of these texts should be heard by the church. "The unifying vision of the interpreter" will enable others to understand not so much what the texts say but what historical and social realities they originally reflected. Until this is accomplished, nothing will change in the role of women in the church. Of course, she is right in her basic argument that exegesis and church history have both been almost exclusively patriarchal, written by the victors in the struggle between the sexes. But it seems to me that she has not gone far enough with her argument. Must not the same hermeneutical criticism be addressed to the creedal formulations and the various liturgies that over the centuries have been the real teachers of the people of God? Are they not also and-ocentric? Must they not also be subjected to a thorough-going feminist historical reconstruction?

If this is also true, then the other hermeneutical question must be faced, namely, what is authoritative for the life of the church, the text or its interpretation?

Perhaps even more serious is the question of whether the church's scriptural and liturgical tradition, will survive in any recognizable form. One understands the passion and the scholarly rigor that drives Fiorenza to her radical conclusions, but one also wishes that she had devoted time to these hermeneutical questions.

It can be mentioned in passing that not all New Testament texts are androcentric, even though they probably have been written and preserved by men. Many of Jesus' words are gynocentric, and even Paul has a few that recognize the importance, although perhaps not the full equality, of women.

In her epilogue, the author writes that "A feminist Christian spirituality, therefore, calls us to gather together the *ekklesia of women,* who, in the angry power of the Spirit, are sent forth to feed, heal, and liberate our own people who are women." (346) Those are challenging and disturbing words. First, they represent her solution to the problem of male domination which is the creation of the ekklesia of women, in which males will not participate. She may be right, but one hopes and prays that God's Spirit will give the church a more gentle, more loving solution. Otherwise, 500 years from now an angry male andronist will surely write a book entitled *In Memory of Him.* Second, these words indicate the general tone of the book. Again, one deeply respects the fact that in her anger she continues to love the church and seeks to help it to find its way out of the wilderness, but the soft word usually proves more effective in winning converts. This reviewer, of course, is a privileged patriarch.

My most serious problem lies with the title of the book, where the Her is a reference to Jesus Christ whom she finally identifies as Jesus-Sophia and therefore a feminine presence. I find her evidence and arguments here to be unconvincing. How would Christian males respond to the Savior if she had been female? That is hard to answer, but it is true that millions of males have been delighted to pay honor to his mother and to find great comfort in her femininity.

Her discussion of "love patriarchalism" is most helpful. She defines it as the exercise of control by the patriarchs of the church which is marked by willing acceptance (love) of given inequalities (on the part of both oppressor and oppressed?). It seems to me that patriarchalism is clearly as anti-feminine as she describes it. But it should also be remembered that these patriarchs were probably against the laity just as strongly as they were anti-feminine. Laymen were disenfranchised and barred from office as effectively as women and often more completely.

There is a frustrating methodological problem in the book that prevents the reader from being a full partner in the dialogue for which she calls. I refer to her custom of condensing an argument or omitting crucial pieces of evidence and then referring the reader to one of her other works or the work of another author for the missing material. It would be better to have more quotations from primary sources rather than from secondary authorities.

I have a suspicion that Fiorenza will be disappointed by reviews that are only laudatory. At least, I hope she reacts that way because I do not want to be excluded from the ekklesia of women.

Herbert T. Mayer
St. Louis, MO

GOD AS THE MYSTERY OF THE WORLD. By Eberhard Jüngel. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983. xvi and 414 pages. Cloth. $20.95.

Eberhard Jüngel asks, "Where is God?" He answers: "Nowhere." (p. 102) God does not exist. (p. 108) Jüngel's is a modern answer because as moderns we do not "need" God anymore. The laws of nature provide a sufficient explanation of our world of space and time. God is not philosophically necessary to explain things. When God becomes unnecessary, he becomes unthinkable. And so he has died to modern thought. (p. 204).

Can this notion of God's death be appropriated theologically? Can God's being become "thinkable again" now that he is unnecessary? Yes, answers the Tübingen theologian. Our non-existent God never was really necessary in the first place. We only thought he was necessary due to the mistake made by the early Christian

apologists who adopted Greek metaphysical categories: God stands above us as the absolute reality which excludes every possibility from its self yet conditions all other reality. Such a divine being died in the modern age, and Jüngel traces the divine demise from the onset of the illness in Descartes through his deterioration in Fichte, Kant, Hegel, and Feuerbach, until the final passing in Nietzsche. But this is no loss to Christian theology. It just so happens that the God worshipped by Christians never was anywhere, never existed within the world of space and time, nor was philosophically necessary.

Does Jüngel believe in God? Yes, he does, but not because he knows anything about God in the sense that he knows things scientifically or philosophically. What he thinks theologically is based upon faith. Where did this faith come from? From God's self-revelation in the cross of Jesus. Jüngel is a Barthian and prefers special revelation over natural theology. The task of theology is the explication of this special revelation.

The God who reveals himself is the God who loves us. In the very act of God's loving us through a human being, Jesus, God becomes humanlike. Jüngel contends that God's existence and essence are undifferentiable, so that if God exists in this event of human love, then this event itself is the essence of God. God's very being, his essence, is in his coming.

Jüngel's point is that such loving is not necessary (philosophically necessary, that is) because it can not be deduced from our ordinary experience with the world. God loves out of divine freedom, and the only way we can know about this love is to experience it in a historically contingent event, an event of revelation. The first stage in thinking God consists of narrative thinking, i.e., of telling the story of the Christ event.

Jüngel introduces a very confusing phrase: God is "more than necessary." This phrase is confusing because "more than" ordinarily implies that God is *at least necessary.* If God is at least necessary, then Jüngel is responsible for demonstrating how God is necessary on philosophical grounds. But this he will not do. Why? Jüngel's method is to shift theological discussion out of the scientific and philosophical arena where so-called necessary principles are appropriate, and then to move into the historical arena where contingent events are appropriate. When Jüngel uses the phrase "more than necessary," he seems to want to remain in the philosophical camp. In doing so he seems to introduce nonsense.

Jüngel formulates the problem of theology today strictly in terms of modernity, of the atheism produced during the age of excessive scientism, materialism, and secularism. What is wrong with this is that our modern age is right now undergoing rapid and dramatic change. A newer post-modern sensibility seems to be emerging. Post-modernity is not atheistic. It is quite religious, even mystical. There is a resurgence of religious consciousness all over the world, Germany included. The new age mystics are retrieving many ideas from ancient monism and pantheism and combining them with schemes of evolutionary development and personal transformation. They are synthesizing science and spirituality into a wholistic understanding of divinity as the mystery underlying and directing our dynamic world. In many ways the excesses of scientific atheism have become old hat. A new religiosity is rapidly taking its place. Jüngel's analysis of the theological problematic, however, culminates in an exegesis of Nietzsche who lived a hundred years ago. What we still need is a theologian who can help us to think God in the 20th century.

Ted Peters
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FORM AND MEANING: STUDIES IN LITERARY TECHNIQUES IN THE BOOK OF JONAH (BIBLE AND LITERATURE SERIES 8). By Jonathan Magonet. Sheffield, England: The Almond Press, 1983. 184 pages. Paper. $10.95.

First glances at books don't always induce second glances, and that is probably true of this book. It suffers from all the marks of a dissertation: 60 pages of footnotes and bibliography for 100 pages of

text; French, German, and Hebrew in the text; a heavy, uninviting style. However, it is one of the most stimulating, challenging studies of Jonah to come along for some time.

As the title suggests, this is a literary rather than theological study. It devotes a chapter to the distribution, nuances, and deepening significance of individual words in Jonah. It documents how phrases are repeated and expanded. It picks out reminiscences and quotes from other parts of Scripture — and compares Jonah alternately with Abraham, Elijah, Jeremiah, and all Israel. It studies the structure of larger units, as the mirror image parallelism of chapters 2 and 3. Each step of the study is done with a meticulousness seldom seen.

Of course, not everything Magonet proposes is equally convincing, either in the details (especially in his study of ch. 2) or in the historical and theological context assigned to Jonah. Sometimes, one wonders if Magonet's observations don't testify to his ingenuity rather than the biblical author's. However, the deeper impression is that the short, seemingly simple Book of Jonah is a literary masterpiece and a theological gold mine. Magonet summarizes the myriad of details into four summary themes: knowledge of God/disobedience of God; particularism/universalism; traditional teaching/new experience; the power of God/the freedom of humans.

Three other bonuses come with the book: a complete bibliography updated through 1983; a methodology for dealing with the question of priority of quotations and allusions in the Bible; a 12-page postscript essay which summarizes in a nontechnical but evocative way the message of the Book of Jonah.

This book is too sketchy and unsystematic to be or replace a commentary. It does give meticulous and incisive groundwork for a commentary — and for sermons, studies, and personal edification. Rarely has this reviewer marked his Bible (Hebrew and English) more.

Henry Rowold
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CHRISTIAN WORSHIP AND ITS CULTURAL SETTING. By Frank C. Senn. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983. xi and 148 pages. Paper. $8.95.

Most pastors and laity are unaware of what has been happening in liturgical studies in recent years. We have experienced worship differently but continue to think of this event as a list of items to be gotten through or as a series of activities before the sermon. Frank Senn provides a helpful resource for busy pastors and often-bewildered laity to start thinking about worship differently. The book is also a timely one as we begin dealing more explicitly with the knotty problem of relating worship and its cultural context.

Years ago, Anton Baumstark, in his now classic work *Comparative Liturgy,* stated that:

> . . . liturgical forms are so intimately bound up with the external history of the world and of the Church and with the development of religious sentiment, itself conditioned by historical happenings, that they are constantly being subjected to very great modification. (p. 1)

But it is only in the last 15 years or so that the discipline of liturgical studies has been concerned with developing more adequate ways of investigating and interpreting Christian worship as a cultural expression. Senn's book is reflective of such a concern. He probes the relationship between worship and culture in the following fashion: anthropoligically (chapter 1), historically (chapters 2 and 3), linguistically (chapter 4), ritually (chapter 5), theologically (chapter 6), and experientially (chapters 7 - 9). The result is a balanced consideration of Christian worship in its many dimensions.

Senn is at his best when discussing historical questions of how and why Christian worship has developed and changed. He is not as strong on matters of language and communication (cf. chapter 4, "The Language of Worship.") While it is certainly correct to say that "everything in worship communicates," we are not provided with an adequate account of worship as a linguistic event which accomplishes or performs the promise of the Gospel.

Lutherans have a great deal of critical

and reflective work to do on one of the pressing pastoral issues currently confronting our post-*LBW* situation — the adaptation of the forms and language of worship in varied cultural contexts. Senn's book shows us how such a task may proceed.

Michael B. Aune
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WHERE IS GOD IN MY SUFFERING? BIBLICAL RESPONSES TO SEVEN SEARCHING QUESTIONS. By Daniel J. Simundson. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1983. 80 pages. Paper. $3.95.

In an earlier book, *Faith Under Fire,* Simundson (Luther-Northwestern) provided a solid and sensitive study of the variety of scriptural perspectives on suffering. This book is a devotional and pastoral application of that study.

Suffering for the Christian brings a level of ambiguity and anguish beyond the physical or emotional pain. How does that suffering relate to faith in a loving, omnipotent God? Simundson echoes seven aspects of that question, and deals with each in the context of a word of Scripture: Do I Deserve This? (Ex. 34:6-7, John 9:1-7); My God, Why Have You Forsaken Me? (Ps. 22); Can Any Good Come From This? (Gen. 50:15-21); Why Do My Friends Condemn Me? (Job 6:14-27); Why Doesn't God Do Something? (Gen. 6:5-8); Whose Fault Is It? (Rom. 8:31-39); Is There Any Hope? (1 Cor. 15:12-26). His pastoral sensitivity and experience come alive on every page. Most meaningful to me were his applications of the biblical lament and the suffering of Jesus. Simundson counsels a person to live in the mystery of suffering within the radicality of faith in the Risen Lord — and calls on the Christian community to be vehicles for God's love and presence.

This book makes a fine complement to his former book and provides an excellent resource for those facing the ambiguity of suffering and those who minister to them.

Henry Rowold

PROPHECY IN EARLY CHRISTIANITY AND THE ANCIENT MEDITERRANEAN WORLD. By David Aune. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983. xii and 522 pages. Cloth. $29.95.

In order to understand early Christian prophecy, it is important not only to understand the religious climate of the ancient Mediterranean world, but also the role that prophecy played in the Israelite-Jewish heritage and the Greco-Roman culture.

Aune explores and categorizes a vast number of oracles and other forms of prophetic speech within the Greco-Roman and ancient Israelite traditions. He argues convincingly that the spirit of prophecy did not cease during the 5th century B.C.E. only to rise again within early Christianity. Instead, it remained alive, but went through profound changes.

His discussion of the prophetic role of Jesus is perhaps the most interesting part of the book. Jesus was considered to be a prophet by his contemporaries and, at times, defined his role as such. "Truly, I say to you" is but one of the literary devices used by Jesus in his prophetic role. Although Jesus' prophetic role was important for Luke-Acts and John, Matthew, who used literary devices to depict Jesus as the new Moses, did not show much interest in the title of prophet. This lack of emphasis on Jesus-as-prophet was carried over to the early church, which did not consider the title "prophet" to be adequate in describing the significance of Jesus. More "lofty conceptions" began to take its place.

In I Cor. 12:28, Paul writes about apostles, prophets, and teachers. Thus, it is clear that prophets did play an important role within the structure of the early church. Aune argues, however, that the prophet was never fully integrated into the organizational structure of the early Christian church, but became important only within the context of worship. As the early Christian church became more structured, with traditions, rules, social values, and customs, the role of prophet became less important and sometimes became an "endangered species." Even within worship, prophecy became unstable. Pushed out of the organized church, the spirit of prophecy became accepted only within

undefined and unstructured settings. Institutionalization gradually took the place of prophetic speech within the early church.

Students of early Christian prophecy will welcome this publication as a comprehensive textbook on the subject.

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WOMEN & WORSHIP. By Sharon Neufer Emswiler and Thomas Neufer Emswiler. New York: Harper & Row, 1984. xiv and 142 pages. Paper. $6.95.

This is a revision of the authors' best-selling 1974 book. The revision takes mostly the form of expanded text. There is a greatly expanded bibliography and resource guide; the listing of non-sexist hymns has omitted the F. E. L. hymnal listings and shifts from SBH and LBW, but lumps LC-MS with others using LBW, thus failing to note that LC-MS has its own resource in Lutheran Worship. A new appendix appears, "Guidelines for Non-sexist Use of Language in Worship," which offers examples of a variety of problem areas in American usage and give helpful alternaties.

There is a new chapter at the beginning of the book entitled "The Importance of Language: Witness from Theology, Psychology, Sociology and Linguistics" which deals with the effects of sexist language on our mental and even physical well-being. The chapter on the biblical witness has been slightly expanded to include more about the creation stories; the authors reflect a loyalist position vis-a-vis Scripture, though they are interested in liberating the text. The chapter "Freeing our Concept of God from Sexism" has been expanded to consider the charge that the change of language concerns the nature of God. The authors argue that it is heresy to limit the concept of God to Fatherhood. The chapter on "Liberating the Liturgy" which deals with language and leadership adds a section on nonverbal elements in worship, including tone of voice, dance and gesture.

Although the principles are discussed with some completeness and care and the book certainly deals with a crucial issue, as is demonstrated poignantly in the first chapter, "How the New Woman feels in The Old Worship Service," when it comes to the application of the principles the book becomes less than impressive.

The General Prayers offered by the authors often confuse sermonizing and prayer, as e.g. "O God, we turn to you to get the inside track and obtain special favors" (p. 67), which is rather more a statement to the worshiper than to God.

The Calls to Worship seem dated and lack nobility of speech. I'm not sure what sentences like "To worship is to heighten our awareness of the poetry of our existence" (p. 54) mean — let alone whether or not this one adequately defines worship (I'm sure that it does not).

Much of the language of the liturgies and their several parts confuses psychology and religion to the point of discomfort; a blatant example: "It's so hard to believe that it must be said over and over: 'You're OK, I'm OK.' God accepts us and loves us just as we are" (p. 71). It's hard to believe anyone could say that in worship.

I find sentences like "God, we know that your Spirit hovers over us like a big bird" (p. 58) jejune and embarrassing. If the picture of God the Father is hard for children, what image comes to mind when *this* is spoken?

In finding substitute language for such liturgical texts as the *Gloria,* Lord's Prayer, etc. (what is wrong with the work of the International Committee on Ecumenical Texts? It has the advantage of catholicity.), liberties are taken which are theologically questionable. For example, as alternative *Gloria Patri:* "Glory be to Yahweh and to Jesus and to the Holy Fire" (p. 92). Two problems here: first, is it not the case that Christianity embraces as Trinity the one whom Israel knew as Adonai (Yahweh)? And second, are we that familiar with the name of Adonai (Yahweh) to use it publicly in worship? And would they be offensive to our Jewish brothers and sisters?

Speaking of our Jewish background, the argument on pp. 30ff. concerning the depiction of Christ as a variety of national types is strained. Jesus was a Jew, and the particularity of Jesus is one of the stumbling blocks, in fact *the* stumbling

block of the Gospel. It should not be pushed aside through the hidden assumption that the Christ is a moveable feast able to show up in a variety of guises. Contrary to the authors, some of us do emphasize that Jesus was a Jew, since we reckon that the renewed covenant makes no sense apart from Judaism.

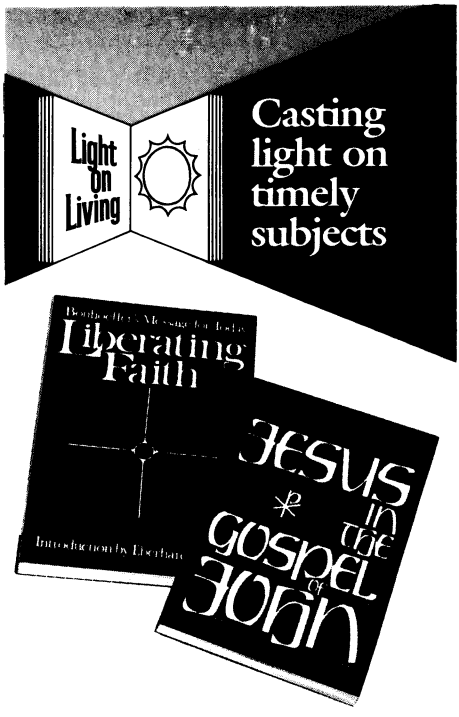
The authors speak, in chapter 9, of handling objections to the sorts of changes they propose. The chapter, however, does not deal with the question of taste and propriety. Not all folks oppose novelty and/or inclusive revision of the liturgy merely to be cantankerous. For some, questions of poetry and symmetry and language-that-is-more-than-fleeting come to mind.

In sum: the chapters on the rationales for change are good and well worth your while overall. On the other hand, the liberated liturgies proposed fall below the standard the authors themselves propose on p. 6: "Language has a powerful influence on our lives; it is not a trivial matter. Words form the bridges from one human being to another." Too much of the language is trivial and forms bridges that lead into sentimentality. This is such a *crucial* area for contemporary worship; we are to praise the Emswilers for their attempt, even while acknowledging that the best is yet to come.

Jay C. Rochelle
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Chicago, Illinois

1 SAMUEL. Word Biblical Commentary 10. By Ralph W. Klein. Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1983. xxxiii and 307 pages. Cloth. $18.95.

This volume is part of an ambitious project, being one of the first to appear out of a proposed 52-volume series on the entire Hebrew and Christian scriptures. Authors of the individual commentaries come from a wide range of Christian traditions, but all are either university, college, or seminary teachers. The editors have aimed the series at both the guild of professional biblical scholars as well as "the fledgling student" and "working minister." In order to achieve its aims, each volume is formatted so as to include a multi-faceted



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treatment of every portion of the scriptural material, including: a) extensive scholarly bibliography on each section or pericope; b) a fresh translation from the original language; c) detailed textual notes; d) remarks on the form, structure, and setting of the pericope; e) comment on matters primarily historical and geographical; and f) explanation of how the pericope fits into the overall argument of the book.

If the 1 Samuel volume is typical of the entire series, then the editors have succeeded in reaching their intended audiences. Guild members and academics will find Klein's work thorough, careful, and balanced in its use of the tools and tradition of biblical scholarship. Moreover, the non-technical reader will likely find all but the textual notes useful. In its commentary and explanation this volume is clear, insightful, and instructive.

In general, Klein treats 1 Samuel as part of the larger Deuteronomistic History [Dtr], which he dates along with current European scholarship to the exilic period of Israel's history. Dtr sought to interpret the fall of Jerusalem at the hands of Babylon and also to offer Israel hope in the mercy of a faithful God. In the section of Dtr which comprises 1 Samuel, the exilic compilers have included earlier traditions concerning Samuel at Shiloh, the Ark of the Covenant, the rise of monarchy in Israel, Saul's battles, and the rise of David as king. Klein demonstrates that each of these older sets of material once had its own particular message, but now each has been put into the service of the Deuteronomistic editors' message of judgment and hope.

People read commentaries for different reasons, and those who read this commentary will find in it different strengths. Its lasting scholarly contribution will most likely be its excellent text-critical work on one of the more notoriously corrupt sections of the Hebrew canon. In addition, it presently contains the best bibliography available anywhere on 1 Samuel, and its commentary on the message of 1 Samuel in the overall scheme of the Deuteronomistic History is as clear and balanced as any which has sought to make results of recent scholarly discussion on this subject accessible to the general reader.

This volume would be a sound investment for anyone building a library, whether personal or institutional, in the area of biblical studies, and if it is a harbinger of things to come, other volumes in the Word Biblical Commentary series deserve a careful look as well.

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Briefly Noted

The Elusive Mr. Wesley: John Wesley His Own Biographer. Volume One. By Richard P. Heitzenrater. (Abingdon, $9.75). This volume contains selections from Wesley's own writings (many from diaries deciphered by Heitzenrater.) while a second volume will contain accounts written by his contemporaries. Enjoy these selections from his *Primitive Physick* (which went through twenty-two editions): To cure baldness: Rub the part morning and evening, with onions, till it is red; and rub it afterwards with honey (it doesn't work, ed.); for hard breasts: apply turnips roasted till soft, then mashed and mixed with a little oil of roses; for warts: rub them daily with a radish. His diaries are hourly barometers on the temper of his devotion from about 4 A.M. to 9:30 P.M.

Freedom for Ministry. By Richard John Neuhaus. (Harper & Row, $7.95). In this paperback reprint. N. deals with the theoretical and practical problems of ministry, but always within the context of affirming the urgency and dignity of the calling. N. has a high, sacramental view of ministry, tarnished a bit, in my judgment, by his own struggle with (against) the ordination of women, but also often glorious: "Let no one judge before the time. At that time it will be revealed to us and to all that we were indeed the ambassadors of a sovereignty then no longer disputed. That is the promise, and that promise alone is the source of freedom for ministry."

A Short History of the Catholic Church. By J. Derek Holmes and Bernard W. Bickers. (Paulist, $8.95). Though this short history must restrict itself to popes, councils and other institutional goings-on,

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the authors can be even-handed, as in this summation on Luther: "Through his vigorous preaching, his writings, his inspirational hymns, he caught the imagination of the people and provided them with a liturgy which, in terms of participation, was closer to the early Church than the medieval practice they had been accustomed to attend . . . In these ways he gave people hope, introducing them to a faith that was real, opening up for them the treasures of scripture, allaying their fears and giving them the confidence which would help them overcome their differences with other reformers . . ." For them the following U.S. statistics are part of the "bleak" picture: "Three out of four Catholics approved of sexual intercourse for engaged couples, eight out of ten approved of contraception, seven out of ten of legalized abortion, while four out of ten did not believe that the pope was infallible."

Style and Discourse. (United Bible Societies, $5.95). Here is a significant application of rhetorical analysis and modern semantic theory to the Greek of the New Testament. The contributors are E. A. Nida, J. P. Louw, A. H. Snyman, and J. v. W. Cronje, who met in a symposium at the University of Pretoria in 1982. Unusually clear for a presentation of this type, this anthology should help to move scholarship to a recovery of ancient rhetorical analysis and the discovery of communication theory. (Edgar Krentz)

Ellis Rivkin puts an interesting question in the title of his book **What Crucified Jesus?** (Abingdon, $6.95). His answer is that Jesus was the combination of different strands: prophet of action (like Moses, Samuel, and Elisha), visionary prophet (like Isaiah and Ezekiel), and the model of the Scribe-Pharisee (that is, the teacher who taught the word of God by interpreting the Scriptures). Such a leader would have been a charismatic of charismatics and would inevitably have to suffer the fate of John the Baptist. Jesus was not a political zealot, but he was a threat to the establishment. Rivkin uses Josephus to sketch out the conditions under which Jesus would have ministered and died: Caiaphas, for example, acted to prevent the suspicion of Rome that he supported such a charismatic leader. On the basis of Josephus, Rivkin argues for the fundamental historicity of the trial of Jesus in the synoptic Gospels. This analysis by a competent Jewish scholar deserves attention. Read it next Lent and it will enrich your preaching. (Edgar Krentz)

A Whirlpool of Torment. By James L. Crenshaw. (Fortress, $7.95). In this twelfth volume in the Overtures to Biblical Theology series, C. examines texts in which God has become a personal enemy, responding with fickleness to human faithfulness. The texts are Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac, the confessions of Jeremiah, Job, the book of Ecclesiastes, and Psalm 73. The author takes the reader along the path of God-forsakenness and concludes that our inability to abandon the Lord is both a testimony to the profundity of sacred memory and a constant source of torment.

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Ministry in the New Church

John H. Tietjen

President, Christ Seminary-Seminex

What the Commission for a New Lutheran Church recommends concerning ministry in the new church should be of interest to us all, especially for those involved in seminary education.

CNLC ministry discussion has revolved around two main issues. Not just parochially Lutheran problems, they are ecumenical issues that confront the whole church. In resolving them Lutherans need to be aware of the ecumenical consequences of their decision. At the same time they need to appreciate the opportunity they have to make an ecumenical contribution by a good decision.

One issue is the relation between the ministry of all Christians and of those set apart for what Lutherans call the office of the ministry. Three answers have been given historically to describe the relation.

According to one answer, the ministry of all Christians derives from the office of the ministry. From the time of the apostles to the present day those who preach the Gospel and administer the sacraments create the church, calling Christians into community and sending them out in mission. Pre-Vatican II Roman Catholics gave this answer in its most fully-developed form.

In a second answer, the ministry of the clergy derives from the ministry of all Christians. Jesus Christ gave the church the authority to preach the Gospel and administer the sacraments, and the church sets apart some to do in its name what for the sake of good order all cannot do. Many Christians, including not a few Lutherans, hold this functional view of the office of the ministry.

According to a third answer, the ministry of all Christians and that of the office of the ministry were simultaneously instituted by God in Christ's commission to the church and the apostles. Each has essentially the same ministry to perform. The office of the ministry exists to lead and enable God's people in the exercise of their ministry. This is the answer given by the Task Force on Theology in its report to the CNLC.

Choosing among the three answers is no mere academic exercise. Those who want to affirm the integrity and importance of the ministry of all the people of God will not be happy with the first answer. Those who want to affirm the integrity and importance of the office of the ministry will not be satisfied with the second answer. Only the third answer meets the concerns of both groups and makes a contribution to the ecumenical discussion concerning ministry.

The second major ministry issue before the CNLC is whether the office of ministry has only one form or can and should take on a variety of forms. The issue is raised because of the recognition which the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches gives to teachers, deaconesses, and deacons as part of the office of the ministry and of the implications of continuing the recognition in the new church for those whom the American Lutheran Church and the

Lutheran Church in America designate as lay professionals. Ecumenically the issue is raised by the recommendation of *Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry* that churches reclaim the threefold form of ministry — episcopate, presbyterate, diaconate.

Some insist that there should be only one form of the office of the ministry, namely, pastoral ministry; all others who serve in church occupations are "lay professionals."

Others point out that from the beginning and throughout history the church's office of the ministry has taken on a variety of forms. Pastoral ministry has exercised all the dimensions of the office, but other forms of ministry, such as teacher, evangelist, deacon or deaconess, have been established to carry out specific aspects of the office of the ministry. In its freedom the church can create whatever forms of ministry it needs to carry out its mission. So argues the CNLC's Task Force on Theology.

Inertia may very well lead the CNLC to recommend the status quo with its one form of the office of the ministry in the pastorate. Deciding that we should have more than one form of the office of the ministry opens up the possibility of making an ecumenical contribution. We thus affirm the variety of forms of ministry already functioning among us. We could act on the BEM recommendation that we use the diaconate as the form of ministry to embrace the varieties of ministry among us distinct from pastoral ministry. Lutherans could then make an ecumenical contribution by reclaiming the three-fold form of ministry in a specifically Lutheran theological framework that sees both diaconate and episcopate in relation to pastoral ministry.

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