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The Roots of the Moral Majority: Fundamentalism Revisited
David Edwin Harrel, Jr.

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Let's Go Back to the Bible!

You'll pardon me, an exegete, for saying it: "That's good advice." The people who penned the sacred words over a thousand-year period in Israel and during the church's first century bequeathed us an authoritative and normative record, which challenges each new generation with fresh insights on what it means to be God, or to be God's daughters and sons.

You'll also pardon me for saying, "Not every trip back to the Bible is worthwhile." Some term papers — and even some books and articles — miss the good points or even the whole point. Some want to use the Bible as a club or to bolster their own preconceived opinions. Even St. Paul urged us to try the spirits.

The Moral Majority calls us to go back to the Bible, but their invitation seems to lead to fundamentalism rather than to the living Scripture. **David Edwin Harrel, Jr.** compares the Moral Majority to the Scopes Trial and to the issues of the 1920s. He reviews today's cast of leading characters and outlines MM's agenda: traditional values, evolution, school prayer, militarism, inerrancy, premillennialism, and all the rest. What is the reason for this new strength on the right? Why have they become militant and where do these people hurt? Will Americans join the Moral Majority, or is this only a momentary detour from secular humanism?

Frederick A. Niedner also invites us back to the Bible. He wants us to take another look at the Gospel of Mark, which provides the majority of the Gospel readings this church year. Mark fashioned his passion narrative in such a way as to make it a resource for persecuted Christians in the first century. Jesus is portrayed as prototype for the persecuted Christian in both the passion narrative and in chapters 1-13. His baptismal identity remained more or less secret until Jesus himself confessed it (14:61-62) and until the centurion hailed him as the Son of God (15:39). Mark's purpose was more soteriological than christological. He sought to proclaim how the death of Jesus saves those who have been baptized in his name and

who are giving their lives, even as Jesus did, for the sake of their baptismal identity. Mark's story is the story of Jesus and the story of any and all baptized and persecuted Christians.

The Bible and **John W. Ribar** have something to say about the pathological need to be Godlike. This essay explores the glaring contradiction between our perfectionist pretensions and the stubborn fact of imperfection in us and all around us. God's help is needed by those caught in this dilemma, a help inscribed at the Bible's very center: "At great cost he has saved and redeemed me." "The Holy Spirit called me through the Gospel."

We've punctuated these essays with a hymn by **Norbert E. Hattendorf** and **Paul Manz**, and a poem by **Eward Hinck.**

"Let's go back to the Bible," Jesus said to the Emmaus disciples, as he began with Moses and all the prophets to explain what the Scriptures were all about. Would that, this Easter, he would once more open our eyes and set our hearts on fire!

You'll pardon me, an exegete, for this somewhat shorter editorial; I need to heed the Lord's advice.

Ralph W. Klein
Editor

The Roots of the Moral Majority: Fundamentalism Revisited

David Edwin Harrel, Jr.
Distinguished Professor of History, the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville

This paper was delivered at the Institute for Ecumenical and Cultural Research, Collegeville, Minnesota in March 1981, and is a preliminary interpretation of Professor Harrel's larger study of the religious right, which is to be published in book form by Indiana University Press. It was first published as Occasional Paper No. 15 by the Institute for Ecumenical and Cultural Research, from whom additional copies are obtainable.

The Scopes Trial

"This is far worse than anything you could imagine, even under the bowl," wrote H. L. Mencken to his friend Raymond Pearl in July 1925, in the midst of the Scopes trial in Dayton, Tennessee. "Every last scoundrel in sight is a Christian, including the town Jew. . . . The trial," he continued, "is superb — an obscenity of the very first calibre."[1]

It was quite a show. Starring for the defense, the nation's most famous trial attorney and most notorious infidel, Clarence Darrow, retained by the American Civil Liberties Union; for the prosecution, William Jennings Bryan, ex-senator, ex-secretary of state, three times Democratic nominee for the presidency, and, according to the Rev. Charles R. Jones, who introduced Bryan to his Sunday School class in Dayton, "the ambassador of Jesus Christ."[2] At stake was the Tennessee antievolution law written by Representative J. W. Butler, a farmer and a Primitive Baptist from Macon County, an area distinguished chiefly for having the highest illiteracy rate in the state, no railroads, and 13 inhabitants who paid federal income taxes in 1922.[3] The Honorable Mr. Butler explained his thinking to visiting newsmen: "The teaching of this theory of evolution breaks the hearts of fathers and mothers who give their children the advantages of higher education in which they lose their respect for Christianity and become infidels."[4] In spite of Butler's well-intentioned effort to protect the mothers and fathers of Tennessee, a group of Dayton's leading citizens, meeting in Robinson's Drug Store, persuaded young John T. Scopes that a test trial would bring glory to himself, to Dayton, and to God. After that, things began to get out of hand.

The town fathers discussed building a stadium in which to stage the trial, but the Progressive Dayton Club urged a course of dignified hospitality. Unfortunately, Dayton did become a circus as the supporting cast assembled. There was Scopes himself, just returned from a

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[1] Carl Bode, ed., *The New Mencken Letters* (New York: Dial Press, 1977), p. 187.

[2] "The Scopes Trial," *The Independent*, Vol. 115, No. 3921, p. 86.

[3] "No Monkeying with Evolution in Tennessee," *The Literary Digest*, April 18, 1925, p. 30.

[4] "Dayton's 'Amazing' Trial," *The Literary Digest*, July 25, 1925, p. 7.

triumphant round of banquets in New York, but remaining shy and withdrawn during the trial; Judge John T. Raulston, plump, red-faced, God-fearing hillman from Fiery Gizzard, Tennessee; the jury of twelve true men, everyone of whom could read and write except Jim Riley, who, explained the locals, "can think, and he has . . . quick ears."[5] There were the radio crews who did the first live broadcasts in American history, the scores of reporters led by Mencken, countless streethawkers selling pamphlets, Bibles, and stuffed monkeys, and an incredible array of evangelists come to "drive hell out of the high schools." Mencken described the scene in Dayton one evening:

> There was a friar wearing a sandwich sign announcing that he was the Bible champion of the world. There was the Seventh Day Adventist arguing that Clarence Darrow was the beast with seven heads and ten horns described in Revelation XIII, and that the end of the world was at hand. There was an evangelist made up like Andy Gump, with the news that atheists in Cincinnati were preparing to descend upon Dayton, hang the eminent Judge Raulston, and burn the town. There was the ancient who maintained that no Catholic could be a Christian. There was the eloquent Dr. T. T. Martin, of Blue Mountain, Mississippi, come to town with a truckload of torches and hymnbooks to put Darwin in his place. There was a singing brother bellowing apocalyptic hymns. There was William Jennings Bryan, followed everywhere by a gaping crowd. Dayton was having a roaring time."[6] And Mencken failed to mention the Arkansas "evangelist with absolute proof that the reigning Pope was a keeper of bordellos."[7]

Darrow vs. Bryan

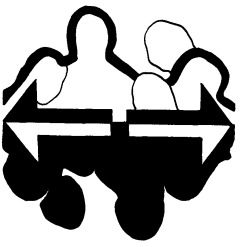
The trial became a sideshow. Everyone expected that Scopes would be convicted. The Tennessee Supreme Court later avoided ruling on the law's constitutionality by reversing Scopes' conviction on a technicality. Judge Raulston refused Darrow's request to call expert scientists as witnesses, ruling that the truth of evolution was not an issue in the case. But the trial did have one particularly poignant moment when Darrow called Bryan to the stand as a witness for the defense. Darrow was determined to show that even Bryan did not believe everything in the Bible literally. Bryan readily confessed faith in the flood and

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[5] *Ibid.*, p. 5.

[6] H. L. Mencken, *A Mencken Chrestomathy* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1974), p. 398.

[7] William Manchester, *Disturber of the Peace* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1950), p. 173.



the story of Jonah and the fish. Darrow pressed him.

"Question: The Bible says Joshua commanded the sun to stand still for the purpose of lengthening the day, doesn't it, and you believe it.

Answer: I do.

Q: Do you believe at that time the entire sun went around the earth?

A: No, I believe that the earth goes around the sun.

Q: Do you believe that the men who wrote it thought that the day could be lengthened or that the sun could be stopped?

A: I don't know what they thought.

Q: You don't know?

A: I think they wrote the fact without expressing their thoughts.

Q: What do you think?

A: I do not think about things that I don't think about.

Q: Do you think about things that you do think about?

A: Well, sometimes."[8]

The End of Fundamentalism?

The Scopes trial was only one incident, of course, in a massive religious and social upheaval in America, but it was both really and symbolically important: it was the last hurrah of pre-World War II fundamentalism. Bryan died in Dayton on the Sunday following the trial and there was no other leader in the anti-evolution movement who could nearly rival his prestige. The reform splintered into increasingly eccentric cells of extremists. The trial itself proved an enduring embarrassment to the movement. Although many fundamentalists were pleased with the outcome, Bryan, his beliefs, and Dayton had been subjected to an unprecedented barrage of ridicule and contempt by the national press. Responsible conservative denominational leaders began to withdraw their support from the antievolution crusade; only in the South did the movement gain any major victories after Dayton. In 1925 a coalition of moderate conservatives and fundamentalists controlled both the Northern Baptist and Northern Presbyterian churches; by 1927 they could muster only small minority votes in either church. The sudden liberal victory had been unexpected and, seemingly, almost complete. Asked about the Scopes trial some years after the event, H. L. Mencken replied, "Well, we killed the son-of-a-bitch."[9]

It was widely assumed for at least half a century that the Dayton debacle had killed almost all of them. Surveying the prospects of American Catholicism in 1940, Theodore Maynard wrote, "Protestantism, especially American Protestantism, is now so doctrinally decayed as to be incapable of offering any serious opposition to the sharp sword of the

[8] "Mr. Bryan's Expunged Testimony," *The Outlook*, July 29, 1925, p. 443.

[9] Manchester, *Disturber of the Peace*, p. 185.

Spirit, as soon as we make up our minds to use it. Except for isolated 'fundamentalists' — and these are pretty thoroughly discredited and without intellectual leadership — Catholicism would cut through Protestantism as through so much butter."[10] As late as 1978 a widely-distributed history text assured that "the defeats suffered by the Fundamentalists in the 1920s insured that few Protestants would ever again call themselves fundamentalists."[11]

It was never so. The fundamentalists were still there: up in the coves and hollows, milking the cows, driving the trucks and tractors, in the cinder block churches that lined the railroad tracks. Mencken mused while riding the train back to Baltimore from Dayton that one could throw a brick out the window almost anywhere in route and hit a fundamentalist on the head. But, they seemed remote and bizzare, and they talked funny, generally with a southern drawl. Their leaders were increasingly eccentric and narrow — Carl McIntire, Bob Jones, Sr., John R. Rice. The flock was scattered into bickering sects.

Billy Graham

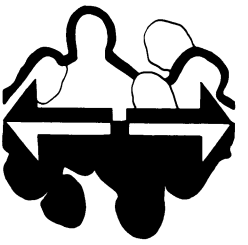
In the 50 years from 1925 to 1975 only Billy Graham drew American attention seriously back to the Bible-believing base of American society. Riding the wave of anti-Communist conservatism in the 1950s, Billy rose from the simplicity of his North Carolina Baptist upbringing to international Christian stardom. By 1981 he had been beheld personally by more people than any other human who ever lived (50 million) and had gathered one and a half million "inquirers." He has known, and possibly in some cases influenced, every president since Harry Truman. When he finally found in Richard Millhouse Nixon an Israelite in whom was no guile, he gave himself wholeheartedly to politics. Chastened by Watergate, Billy survived, a wiser but no less respected man, a prophet with immense honor in his own country.

Billy did all of this by preaching the Bible, fundamentalist style. It was all there: hell, sin, the soon-coming of the Lord, repent or perish, let every head be bowed and every eye be closed, just slip your hand up right where you are sitting, send your offerings to Billy Graham, Minneapolis, Minnesota — all delivered with piercing eyes fixed on awed listeners and bony finger that seemed to search out backsliders. It is still there, more mixed now with occasional pleas for social justice and less certain about such subjects as the exact dimensions of heaven, but Billy still believes in sin and salvation and he is not ashamed to preach it.

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[10] Quoted in Thomas Clancy, "Fundamental Facts About Evangelicals," *America*, May 31, 1980, p. 454.

[11] *Student's Guide to the Long Search: A Study of Religions* (Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company, 1978), p. 197.



Through it all, however, Billy Graham was different. In his earliest campaigns he received the backing of fundamentalist leaders, but they soon dropped him. Carl McIntire concluded that Billy was "the greatest disappointment in the Christian world."[12] In spite of his sometimes threatening glare, Billy always ended up with a smile; his spirit was basically irenic. Often attacked by liberals in his early years, he rarely fought back. As time passed, points out sociologist Bill Martin, Billy seemed to waffle: he flatly stated that the future of Christianity was not inextricably connected with the American nation; he hinted that there might be Christians among Communists and made inquiries about holding a campaign in the Soviet Union; and he spoke well of Catholics and implied that he might preach in Rome "if the Coliseum could be made safer for Christians than the last time it was extensively used."

Jimmy Carter

Billy Graham certainly represents a broad segment of American religion. Bernard Weisberger's characterization of Charles G. Finney is equally true of Graham: "He did not study the popular mind; he had it."[13] It was a mind brought to political eminence by Jimmy Carter, full of assurance, religious openness, earnestness and zeal. This warm and friendly religious affirmation astonished and disturbed many sophisticated Americans; Graham remained a curiosity and Carter a paradox. In spite of Carter's fairly orthodox liberal politics, many liberals were embarrassed by a president who taught a Baptist Sunday School class and "witnessed" to visiting heads of state. It seemed fitting in the 1970s that there should be a professing Christian in the White House, but not one who actually believed it. Surely, thought concerned liberals in 1976, fundamentalism had returned from the dead. Not yet.

Billy Graham and Jimmy Carter represented a variety of domesticated evangelicalism that increasingly angered fundamentalists. In fact, the immediate beginnings of the new religious right date from 1978 when a deep disillusionment settled over fundamentalists whose hope had risen with the election of Jimmy Carter. "It was a tremendous letdown, if not a betrayal," they thought, "to have Carter stumping for the ERA, for not stopping federally paid abortions, and for advocating homosexual

[12] Quoted from William C. Martin, "Billy Graham" (unpublished typed essay), p. 20. This essay will appear in a forthcoming book to be published by Mercer University Press, David Edwin Harrell, Jr., ed., *Varieties of Southern Evangelicalism*. I have leaned heavily on Martin's interpretation of Graham and in this paragraph, particularly, the text is sprinkled with his wording.

[13] *Ibid.*

rights."[14] "I've had about all the born-again diplomacy I can stand," said Cornelius W. Pennell, pastor of the huge Forrest Hills Baptist Church in Decatur, Georgia, in July 1980.[15] About all Jimmy Carter had proven, said Jerry Falwell, in a 1979 sermon, was "that America can live without a president."[16]

It was clear by 1978 that there were fundamentalists still around and that they were growing more and more restive about being identified with the likes of Graham and Carter. The election of 1976, with its apparent religious tone, was no adequate preview for what was to come. Jimmy Carter's religion seemed amusing; the Moral Majority was not funny. On his return from Dayton, H. L. Mencken wrote to a friend, "I set out laughing and returned shivering."[17] Religion provided color stories in 1976; in 1980 the new right was labelled by the *Christian Century* "the most significant religious news story of 1980."[18]

The Electronic Church

By the 1970s conservative American religion had bred a new generation of leaders, leaders with unparalleled financial power and communications resources. Some of them were evangelists of the old school who admired Billy Graham and Billy Sunday, but others rarely preached; they were religious television personalities, the products of the modern media revolution.

Threatened by science, conservative religion has always been fascinated by technology, from neon signs to satellite television. Revivalism has been religion's Wild West; it beckoned bold entrepreneurs and speculators. Since the time of the early 100,000 watt radio stations in Chicago and Del Rio, Texas, independent evangelists have played a game of survival of the fittest. They skillfully built clienteles and experimented with every new communications advance. When cable and satellite television made relatively cheap programming possible, the fundamentalists and charismatics were miles ahead in knowing how to market their product.

By 1980, the power and breadth of the electronic church, composed mostly of independent ministries, was staggering. An estimated 130 million Americans tuned in a religious television program each week, approximately 47 percent of the population, while only 41 percent attended church services. Of the 8,000

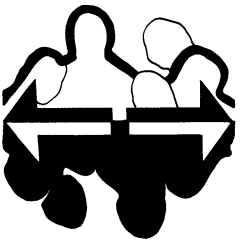
[14] Allan J. Mayer, et. al., "A Tide of Born-Again Politics," *Newsweek*, September 15, 1980, p. 31. See Jerry Falwell, *How You Can Help Clean Up America* (Lynchburg, Virginia: Liberty Publishing Company, 1978), p. 40.

[15] Roland Evans and Robert Novak, "Southern Preachers vs. Jimmy," Danville (Kentucky) *Register*, July 4, 1980.

[16] Birmingham, Alabama, July 30, 1979.

[17] Bode, ed., *New Mencken Letters*, p. 189.

[18] "New Right Tops 1980 Religion News," *Christian Century*, December 31, 1980, p. 1283.



radio stations in the United States, 1,400 are religious; 30 of the nation's 800 television stations and 66 of the 800 cable systems are religious. Including small local ministries, radio and television evangelists probably take in over one billion dollars each year, the largest being Oral Roberts at $60 million, Pat Robertson at $58 million, Jim Bakker at $51 million, Jerry Falwell at about $50 million, Rex Humbard at $25 million, and Jimmy Swaggart at $20 million. With a touch of braggadocia, Ben Armstrong, executive secretary of the National Religious Broadcasters, reported in 1980 that "broadcast religion touches more people than all the churches combined."[19]

Curious as it seems, the growth of the electronic church took place outside the attention of most Americans, certainly most American intellectuals. It is true that the preachers were there when one spun the television dial (Garry Trudeau lingered long enough to do a couple of Doonesbury strips on Jimmy Swaggert), but they seemed relatively irrelevant. Then, early in 1979, Jerry Falwell formed the Moral Majority. He caught the attention of the news media, increasing numbers of politicians, and some suggest as many as four million voters. When the post-mortem began in November 1980, the Moral Majority claimed to have been crucial not only in the election of Ronald Reagan, but to have cleansed the Senate of the likes of Gravel of Alaska, McGovern of South Dakota, Bayh of Indiana, Church of Idaho, Culver of Iowa, and Nelson of Wisconsin. They clearly swayed state elections, expecially in the South. Alabama elected its first Republican senator in 100 years and first Catholic ever, former POW Jeremiah Denton; Birmingham voters unseated Congressman James Buchanan, a Republican and the only Southern Baptist minister in Congress, because he had voted "immorally" on several women's rights and civil rights issues. The Moral Majority intended for 1980 to be a trial run, preparation for an all-out assault in 1984. Even they were astonished by their success.

Political Ties

The general outline of the formation of the new right political coalition has now been thoroughly explored by the press. Generally regarded as the organizational genius behind the movement is Paul Weyrich, an Eastern Rite Catholic and veteran Washington lobbyist. Weyrich operates a school in Washington for conservative political candidates and heads an organization called the Committee for the Survival of a Free Congress. One of a bewildering variety of conservative lobbying organizations in Washington, Weyrich's group has been

[19] Edward Plowman, "Carter's Presence Confirms Clout of Evangelical Broadcasters," *Christianity Today*, February 22, 1980, p. 49.

characterized as a "little to the left of the John Birch Society and a little to the right of the American Conservative Union."[20] Joining Weyrich in building the coalition in 1978 and 1979 were Richard Viguerie, professional fund raiser and publisher of the *Conservative Digest*, and Terry Dolan of the National Conservative Political Action Committee.

The influence of this political triumverate literally exploded in 1979 when they established contact with several of the important electronic evangelists. As early as 1976 Viguerie predicted that the "next major growth area for the conservative ideology" would be among evangelical Christians.[21] Perhaps the key figure in making the linkage was Ed McAteer, a former Colgate-Palmolive marketing executive and later field director for the Conservative Caucus. McAteer was a Baptist and, apparently, an electronic church groupie; he knew many of the evangelists and he introduced them to the conservative political lobbyists, opening the door to what Weyrich now likes to call "the sleeping giant."

In January 1979, Falwell was persuaded to establish the Moral Majority, appointing Robert Billings, a former Weyrich aide, as its director. Billings later became Ronald Reagan's religious affairs advisor, before establishing his own organization in 1980 called the National Christian Action Coalition. In February 1979, McAteer became head of the Religious Roundtable, an elite organization founded after a high-level meeting in Washington attended by Weyrich, Viguerie, and representatives of a score of religious and industrial organizations. The Roundtable initially included just 56 members, but it listed many of the most prominent television preachers and a number of important new right politicians. Perhaps the most important of the other religious organizations which blossomed in this hothouse environment was the California-based Christian Voice.

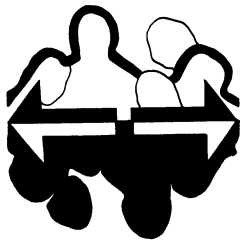
Each of these Christian organizations chiseled out a special area of responsibility. Christian Voice publicized a congressional "hit list" naming 36 congressmen with poor moral voting records. The Moral Majority, aided by Falwell's fund raising, began registering conservative voters, sometimes in church buildings. The groups funneled information to several hundred thousand evangelicals in their newsletters and in grassroots conferences featuring Weyrich and his cohorts.

Perhaps the most important single event marking the emergence of the religious right was a mass meeting in Dallas, Texas, sponsored by the Religious Roundtable on August 21 and 22, 1980.

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[20] L. J. Davis, "Onward Christian Soldiers," *Penthouse*, February, 1981, p. 59.

[21] Robert Zwier and Richard Smith, "Christian Politics and the New Right," *Christian Century*, October 8, 1980, p. 938.



Organized by conservative Southern Baptist television evangelist James Robison, the meeting was attended by perhaps 10,000 fundamentalist ministers. An impressed Ronald Reagan was the only political candidate attending and he pleased the audience by announcing that he also believed that evolution was only a theory. Then, recognizing the strictly religious nature of the gathering, Reagan reportedly announced: "I know you can't endorse me. But . . . I want you to know that I endorse you."[22]

The mushrooming of the religious right in 1979 resulted from two skillfully-orchestrated but quite unstable coalitions. The first was the alliance of the professional political lobbyists in Washington with the conservative religious leaders. Some liberals saw the union as completely manipulative, the deceptive use of "a religious issue as a front for what is in reality a right-wing political campaign."[23] But, in fact, each of the evangelists had his own reasons for becoming politicized; it seems totally unrealistic to picture them as weak-willed dupes being suckered by Washington conmen.

In some ways more remarkable than the political-religious alliance of 1979 was the religious diversity within the new right. For half a century conservative American religion had been divided into countless warring sects, generally most angry at one another. "One thing fundamentalists do better than anything is fight," remarked Falwell. "It's all we know how to do and if there isn't an issue we'll start one."[24] But, for reasons which should later become apparent, and always asserting they would not "compromise our theological principles," an astonishing group of individualistic ministers began treating one another civilly.

The Cast: Falwell

Most visible in the religious right are evangelists from the fundamentalist tradition. Their acknowledged leader is Jerry Falwell, pastor of Thomas Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Virginia, an independent Baptist church with 17,000 members, an elementary and high school, a college, seminary, an alcoholic treatment center, a summer camp, and a foreign mission. In addition, Falwell broadcasts "The Old Time Gospel Hour" over 324 television outlets to an estimated audience of fifty million viewers. His ministry employs 950 people and has an operating budget of just over one million dollars a week. Cherubic and rosy-cheeked in the pulpit, Falwell is tough and articulate. Born into a family of "brawlers," Falwell was a

[22] Mayer, et. al., "Born-Again Politics," p. 36.

[23] James M. Wall, "The New Right Exploits Abortion," *Christian Century*, July 30-August 6, 1980, p. 747.

[24] Sermon, Birmingham, Alabama, July 30, 1979.

good student and excelled on his high school football team. Jerry found the Lord in 1952. After four years in Bible school he returned to Lynchburg to establish a new congregation in an abandoned pop factory. Since that time, Falwell has had every reason to believe that God liked what he was doing and it was clear that many Americans did. By 1981 he was receiving support from three and one-half million families.[25]

Robison

Probably the second most visible of the fundamentalist evangelists is Southern Baptist revivalist James Robison, whose crusade ministry has been second only to Billy Graham's for two decades. Robison is Texas born and based and his style is tough and abrasive. "That's how I witnessed," says Robison, "tear 'em up. I'd have truck drivers push back their beer and start crying and say 'tell me more.'"[26] In 1980 Robison's ministry reportedly employed 125 people and was growing; he budgeted $15 million for prime-time television specials during 1981. Robison is a key figure in the conservative push to control the Southern Baptist Convention. Since the mid-1970s he has turned increasingly political and is a leader in the Religious Roundtable and the Moral Majority.

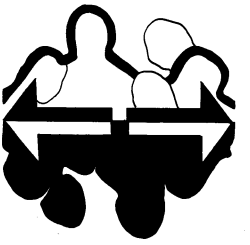
Bakker

The charismatic wing of the electronic church, which is by far the largest segment, has been far less committed to the political right. Conspicuously absent from almost all of the coalition meetings have been Oral Roberts, Rex Humbard, and Jimmy Swaggart. The main links of the charismatics to the religious right have been Jim Bakker and Pat Robertson, the powerful hosts of PTL and The 700 Club.

Bakker's support for the right has been strong and consistent. An Assemblies of God minister, Bakker first gained fame as Robertson's employee, but in the mid-1970s he broke to establish his own Christian network. Bakker has received constant criticism both because of his unsophisticated theology and because of chronic financial difficulties and high pressure money-raising techniques. All through 1979 and 1980 Bakker fought a running battle with the FCC over alleged misuse of funds. Critics suggested that PTL (originally signifying Praise the Lord or People that Love) should be christened Please Throw a Lifesaver or Pay the Lawyer. But in spite of this "shaky public image,"[27] in 1980, Bakker's two-hour talk show was aired daily on over 200

[25] For recent sketches of Falwell, see Davis, "Onward Christian Soldiers,"; "Reverend Jerry Falwell," *Penthouse*, March, 1981, pp. 59ff; Kenneth L. Woodward and Howard Fineman, "A $1 Million Habit," *Newsweek*, September 15, 1980, p. 35.

[26] John Maust, "Evangelist James Robison: Making Waves — and a Name," *Christianity Today*, March 21, 1980, p. 52.



television stations, his headquarters was contacted daily by 20,000 people, and he received monthly support from 700,000 contributors. Deeply angered by his legal bouts with government agencies, Bakker apparently gave his full support to the new political right.

Pat Robertson

Pat Robertson, host of the theologically more serious 700 Club and founder of the Christian Broadcasting Network, gave important but more limited support to the new right. Robertson, a charismatic Baptist minister whose father was a senator from Virginia, has consistently denied any direct political interest and publicly avowed that "God isn't a right-winger or a left-winger."[28] Robertson was one of the major sponsors of the Washington for Jesus Rally which drew about 200,000 Christian demonstrators to Washington in April 1980. The charismatic-dominated organizers of the event were "careful to avoid identification with New Right politics or specific controversial causes," a stand which probably accounted for Falwell's inability to fit the rally into his schedule.[29] One prominent charismatic leader privately expressed the belief that Robertson later regretted the limited support he had given to the political right.[30] And yet Robertson's influence was important to the conservatives. The Washington for Jesus Rally featured such militant conservatives as James Robison and Southern Baptist Convention president Adrian Rogers; Robertson's 700 Club was a litany of support for conservative causes, if not candidates (particularly a millennialistic backing for military spending and support of Israel). He also reportedly supported several of the new religious right organizations, particularly the Christian Voice.[31]

Even more unlikely than this loose coalition of evangelists was the shocking fundamentalist flirtation with the formerly polygamous and heterodox Mormons and that fetching lady who sits on the seven hills. Conservative Roman Catholics had long looked upon fundamentalists as eccentric but potential partners against worse evils. In 1955, when Billy Graham was under bitter attack by the liberal religious press in America, the editor of *America* wrote,

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[27] "PTL and the FCC: They're Still Sparring," *Christianity Today*, June 6, 1980, p. 46.

[28] Mayer, et. al., "Born-Again Politics," p. 29.

[29] Edward E. Plowman, "Washington for Jesus: Revival Fervor and Political Disclaimers," *Christianity Today*, May 23, 1980, pp. 45-46.

[30] Interview with Thomas Zimmerman, Springfield, Missouri, October, 1980.

[31] See James M. Wall, "God's Piece of Cheese," *Christian Century*, February 27, 1980, pp. 219-220; Ted Moser, "If Jesus Were a Congressman," *Christian Century*, April 16, 1980, pp. 444-446.

"We wish Billy Graham well in his mission of recalling God to the minds of the secularized world. We would also wish that there were more like him where he came from."[32] As it turned out, there were many more like him where he came from and they received substantial Catholic support. The audience of Pat Robertson's 700 Club is about 15 per cent Catholics and "it is estimated that Catholics contributed about twice as much money last year to 'The 700 Club' as they did to the bishops' communications collection."[33]

Traditional Values

The focus of this unstable coalition has been necessarily quite narrow. Pro-life has been the most important unifying issue, though it seems inaccurate to see the religious right as a single-issue movement. Three areas of concerns are generally shared by the religious right and political candidates are graded in each area.

One set of religious right issues has to do with the preservation of traditional moral values. Specific concerns include curbing abortion; opposing ERA, gay rights, and other alternative lifestyles as destructive of the family unit; and banning pornography. The pro-life issue comes closer than any other to being, especially for Catholics, what the *Christian Century* has called "one of the most intense 'single issues' yet to plague the American political system."[34] At the huge Convocation '81 rally held by religious conservatives in Washington in February 1981, pro-life groups seemed particularly confident that they were the "vital element of the whole New Right package deal."[35] Several pro-life constitutional amendments have been proposed, all aimed generally at defining life as beginning at conception.

If pro-life is the most important single issue in the coalition, the most hysterical moral issue for most fundamentalists is the open flaunting of alternate lifestyles. Fundamentalism is a masculine movement, its language filled with militant, aggressive imagery. "Men are the key to a moral revolution in America," wrote Falwell. "Men have led women and children a long way; now it is time for an 'army' of spiritually concerned men to lead America the right way."[36] The Equal Rights Amendment is seen as a threat to traditional sex roles; Falwell has warned that it would allow homosexual marriages. But it is gay rights which receives their most severe abuse; fun-

[32] "Billy Graham in England," *America*, June 4, 1955, pp. 254-255.

[33] Clancy, "Fundamental Facts," p. 455.

[34] James M. Wall, "The New Right Exploits Abortion," *Christian Century*, July 30-August 6, 1980, p. 747.

[35] Richard V. Pierard, "An Innocent in Babylon," *Christian Century*, February 25, 1981, p. 190.

[36] Falwell, *How You Can Help Clean Up America*, p. 19.



damentalist sermons are filled with attacks on "homosexual perverts." James Robison's politicization can be dated from a legal confrontation with a Dallas television station in the summer of 1979 when his program was cancelled because of his withering attacks on homosexuals. Homosexuality quite obviously disgusts fundamentalists, and a recent critic of the religious right charges that "while Falwell piously informs us that it is our duty to love homosexuals, he makes it clear that God wants them killed."[37] In general, this set of issues symbolizes what conservatives believe is a pervasive decay in the moral fiber of American society.

Antievolution

The second set of issues which unites the religious right concerns schools, and, at least partly, reflects old doctrinal concerns. At the center is the still unresolved issue of teaching evolution. Nell Seagraves and her son Kelly, of recent television fame, have led an attack in California for the past 18 years through their San Diego-based Creation Science Research Center to require that textbooks specifically acknowledge that evolution is a theory and not a fact. Most antievolutionist plans are more ambitious. While it is clear that laws prohibiting the teaching of evolution are unconstitutional (the Supreme Court finally ruling in 1968 that the 1927 Arkansas law violated the First Amendment), most recent efforts have tried to force the teaching of creationism. A 1973 Tennessee law requiring teachers to explain the Genesis account was declared unconstitutional because it gave preferential treatment to a particular faith. Creationists have since pressed for the teaching of "scientific creationism" in schools where evolution is taught. In more than 30 states legislation is now pending on that subject. A bill which almost surely will be introduced in Congress this year would require equal federal funding for creationist research, equal federal allocations for creationists' museum exhibits, and restrict evolutionary teaching in schools. Despite a string of judicial setbacks, the creationist assault has had its impact. [Ed.: The latest setback was early in January 1982 when a federal judge in Arkansas rejected a proposed law requiring public schools to teach theories of creation science along with theories of evolution science. The judge said creation science is not science and the only "real effect" of the law is to advance religion.]

Many widely used textbooks now approach evolution with great caution and many school boards, in order to avoid confrontation with the fundamentalists, have either deemphasized evolution or omitted it entirely. "Quite likely," writes one critic, "many students

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[37] Davis, "Onward Christian Soldiers," p. 138.

graduating from today's schools have no knowledge of evolution."[38]

School Prayer

More emotional is the effort to nullify the 1963 Supreme Court decision banning prayer in the public schools. Angered by this symbol of the secularization of the school system, the issue has become a test case for fundamentalists. In recent testimony before the House Judiciary Committee, James Robison charged that banning prayer in the schools was followed by "plagues" which include "acceleration of the Vietnam War, escalation of crime, disintegration of families, racial conflict, teenage pregnancies and veneral disease."[39] Senator Jesse Holmes introduced a bill in 1980 which would have banned federal court review of any case involving prayer in the schools; other conservatives favored a constitutional amendment guaranteeing that right.

Private Schools

By far the most important of the school issues, however, relate to the mushrooming private school movement, which Jerry Falwell has called the most significant phenomenon of this era. The dimensions of the private school explosion are startling indeed, from 1,400 Protestant schools in 1960 to 16,000 in 1980; an increase of 150 per cent in the number of students between 1965 and 1975. Robert Baldwin, executive director of Citizens for Educational Freedom, recently reported that "independent schools are currently being founded at a rate of about three a day . . . [and that] if this pace continues, by 1990 there will be more independent schools in the United States than government schools."[40] Falwell claims that there are 108,000 fundamentalist churches in the country, each anxious to establish its own parochial school.

These new schools clash with the federal government on a number of points and have provided the religious right with a whole set of legislative needs. Senator Daniel P. Moynihan has introduced one of a variety of bills designed to provide tax credits for the parents of students in such schools. More pressing has been an impending war between the schools and the IRS. In 1978 the IRS threatened to revoke the tax-exempt status of any school that could not prove

[38] Gerald Skoog, "The Textbook Battle Over Creationism," *Christian Century*, October 15, 1980, p. 976. A good survey of the legal clashes is John M. Swomley, Jr., "The Decade Ahead in Church-State Issues," *Christian Century*, February 25, 1981, pp. 199-203. Also see Niles Eldredge, "Creationism Isn't Science," *The New Republic*, April 4, 1981, pp. 15-20.

[39] See Martin E. Marty, "Things Fall Apart," *Christian Century*, September 10-17, 1980, p. 863.

[40] M. Stanton Evans, "The Private School Room," *National Review*, May 16, 1980, p. 602.



it did not discriminate by enrolling a quota of minority students. Inundated by letters, Congress passed a law which forbade IRS to spend money investigating such cases, but the resentment between the schools and government regulatory agencies remains sharp and a major motive for the politicization of the religious right. [Ed.: The Treasury Department recently announced a policy shift ending the practice of denying tax-exempt status to private schools that discriminate against minorities.]

Militarism

The third set of issues uniting the religious right includes support for military spending, an aggressive foreign policy, and, especially, vigorous support for Israel. It is at this point that the conservative alliance is probably weakest, since many conservative businessmen favor an accommodation with the Arabs. It is also at this point that the religious right seems to its critics to be least Christian. And yet, the militant pro-Israel foreign policy of the religious right is probably the issue most directly related to its doctrinal beliefs. More ominously, as several critics have observed, this is the point at which the religious right might well make its largest contribution toward the dramatic world-ending cataclysm they are confident is rapidly approaching.

The 80s and the 20s

Such, then, are the general outlines of the rise of the religious right. Considerably more intriguing is the question, why? To discover why one must look at the religious, intellectual, social, and political assumptions that undergird the movement. Viewed from these perspectives, the fundamentalist uprising in 1925 offers striking insights into the dynamics of the religious right in 1980.[41]

In the first place, both movements are distinctively religious. Whatever their political ramifications, they began as religious fusses. In 1925 the Northern Baptist and Presbyterian churches were in the throes of a life and death struggle to determine who would control the denominations. At stake were consciences, jobs, and money. The besieged conservatives looked for allies wherever they could find them, mostly in the uniformly conservative but only mildly involved southern churches. They exerted immense pressure on the moderates within their own denominations and in 1925 appeared to be on the verge of winning. In the 1970s a clear siege mentality was typical of conservative

[41] In the interpretation of fundamentalism that follows I am particularly indebted to a brilliant new book by George M. Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth-Century Evangelism: 1870-1925* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980).

Catholics and Southern Baptists. Fundamentalists seemed to gain control of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1978 and have dared the liberals to come out fighting. Many observers of that church believe it will suffer a major division in the 1980s. Fundamentalist Baptists and conservative Catholics, looking for support, found conservative allies in the increasingly respectable Pentecostals and Mormons. Out of these denominational pressure-cookers have come the warriors ready to press the battle throughout American society.

Inerrancy

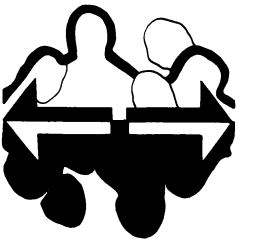
Theologically, two main planks from the 1920s' fundamentalist crusade still undergird the religious right platform. The first is a belief in the inerrancy of the Bible. Falwell believes in Jonah and the whale just as firmly as did William Jennings Bryan. "The basic tenet of . . . fundamentalist Christianity," said Falwell in a recent interview, "is that we have one basic document on which we predicate everything we believe . . . the inerrancy of scripture not only in matters of theology, but science, geography, history, et cetera — totally and entirely, the very word of God." Falwell, claiming as allies Billy Graham, Pope John Paul, and "over half the preachers in America," warned, "People want what they have always wanted: they want a message from God."[42] He may be right. A poll sponsored by the *St. Cloud* (Minnesota) *Daily Times*, in March 1981, revealed that 54 per cent of the people in its reading area favored teaching creationism in the public schools.[43]

Premillennialism

The second major theological tenet shared by most of the religious right leaders is dispensational premillennialism, a theory that became widely accepted by American evangelicals in the late nineteenth century. The idea has been popularized most recently in Hal Lindsey's *Late Great Planet Earth* which at last count sold over nine million copies. The main points of premillennial belief include dividing world history into seven dispensations, the interruption of this scheme by the church age, and the imminent beginning of a period of tribulation to be followed by the return of Christ and the beginning of the millennial reign of Christ on earth. A whole new vocabulary has been introduced into evangelical thought. Many Americans had assumed, along with Martin Marty, that "rapture" was something achieved in the back seat of the car at a drive-in movie, but to the initiated it meant the instantaneous pretribulation "catching up" of the righteous, a remarkable event which any day

[42] "Reverend Jerry Falwell," pp. 151-152.

[43] "54% Back Teaching Creation Theory," March 23, 1981, pp. 1A, 6A.



now will empty assorted fundamentalist churches and leave cars with appropriate bumper stickers driverless, while at the same time leaving untouched the entire faculty and student body of Yale Divinity School.

The impact of premillennial theology on the religious right is strangely ambivalent. It clearly places history outside human manipulation and anticipates that change can come only by cataclysmic supernatural intervention. Dispensational premillennialists have historically been pessimistic and little given to political and social reform. Yet in both the 1920s and the 1970s premillennialists have launched political crusades. This is a source of considerable tension in the movement. The feature story in a recent Arkansas Southern Baptist Church Newsletter, appropriately named *Good News*, was "Global Gloom." The "good news" was that the "world won't be fit to live in by 2,000 A.D.," but "those who have trusted in Jesus Christ" will be survivors.[44] The more direct influence of premillennialism has been the identification of the establishment of Israel with the coming end of the church age, confidence that most Jews would soon become Christians, the marking of Russia as the evil power of the North which would lead the final persecution ending in Armageddon, and the belief that the United States was destined to be Israel's protector in the struggle that would precede the end-time.

Anti-Intellectualism

While one could hardly understand the rise of the religious right apart from this religious content, it is clear that the movement also reflects some other widely-held intellectual assumptions. Most obvious is the virile anti-intellectualism that is never far beneath the surface in American society. In its extreme form it was voiced by Brother Joe Leffew in an outdoors Pentecostal revival during the Scopes trial: "I ain't got no learnin' an' never had none. . . . Glory be to the Lamb! Some folks work their hands off'n up'n to the elbows to give their young-uns education, and all they do is send their young-uns to hell. . . . I've got eight young-uns in the cabin and three in glory, and I know they're in glory because I never learned 'em nothin'."[45] While many fundamentalists would have expressed shock at such statements, Bryan was as sure as Joe Leffew that "it is better to trust in the Rock of Ages, than to know the age of the rocks."[46] Every fundamentalist knows how to list academic credentials: M.A., Ph.D., A.S.S.

But fundamentalist anti-intellectual-

[44] Blvd. Baptist Church, Fayetteville, Arkansas, no date, no page.

[45] Allene M. Sumner, "The Holy Rollers on Shin Bone Ridge," *The Nation*, July 29, 1925, p. 138.

[46] Quoted in Marsden, *Fundamentalism*, p. 212.

ism was not simply obscurantism. It was a protest against the chopping up of life in the twentieth century. The explosion of knowledge, the communications revolution, and the endless specialization of modern society seemed to rob people of control over their own lives, giving it over to experts. The intellectual protest of conservative religion in the 1920s and in the 1970s has been aimed at what many common people believe to be scientific elitism which encroaches on their right to make religious choices and to nurture their children in their beliefs. They were being arrogantly manhandled by "conceited professors," "conceited skeptics," "the highbrows," and "biological baboon boosters."[47] "There are only 11,000 members of the American Association for the Advancement of Science," said Bryan in 1925. "I don't believe one in ten thousand should dictate to the rest of us. Can a handful of scientists rob your children of religion and turn them out atheists? We'll find 109,000,000 Americans on our side. For the first time in my life, I'm on the side of the majority."[48] Falwell viewed the modern struggle in the same democratic terms: "The problem is that we don't agree with those buzzards — and that we outnumber them!"[49]

Anti-elitism is powerful medicine in 1980. Millions of people feel they have little control over the politicians who rule them, the intellectuals who instruct them, and the churches and other institutions which allegedly represent them. Editor James M. Wall of the *Christian Century* wrote of this resentment:

> Secular elites who control much of our national media consistently show a disdain for and rejection of the overt expression of religious conviction. Small wonder, then, that the New Right can appeal to so many conservative Christians. Persons threatened by change will retaliate if they do not feel understood. . . . If we are troubled by the prospect of the New Right's determining what is 'acceptable' in order to be saved, we must not forget that the current religious and secular liberal establishment has also been guilty of defining for the nation what was pure and right.[50]

Considerably more subtle, and more important, the intellectual base of fundamentalism rests on its continuing loyalty to a nineteenth century Baconian

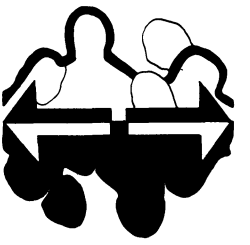
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[47] See William E. Ellis, "The Fundamentalist-Modernist Schism Over Evolution in the 1920's," Kentucky Historical Society *Register*, April, 1976, p. 120.

[48] "Tennessee's Coming Battle on Evolution," *The Literary Digest*, June 6, 1925. p. 36.

[49] Mayer, et. al., "Born-Again Politics," p. 31.

[50] "A Changing Political Climate," *Christian Century*, September 24, 1980, p. 868.



definition of science.[51] Fundamentalists have never been by definition anti-intellectual, although it sometimes provided a route of final retreat or might be used as a tool for rallying popular support. But creationists have always been inordinately interested in scholarship. A recent survey found many "highly technically trained people" in the religious right movement.[52] For over half a century creationists have maintained a frantic search for "scientific verification" of the Biblical record. One fundamentalist evangelist summed up their feelings in 1920: "I am a Christian because I am . . . a scientist. . . . I do not mean that I devote all my time to scientific investigations, but I believe in the scientific method of 'gaining and verifying knowledge by exact observation and correct thinking.'"[53]

An Errant Science?

The problem, believed conservative Christians, was that science had lost its way. And, in fact, in the late nineteenth century science did begin adopting a new interpretative model, a model, notes a modern historian, "more willing to see perception as an interpretative process. Hence they were more open to speculative theories." Historian George Marsden continues, "In America between 1860 and 1925 something like the general acceptance of a new perceptual model took place in both the scientific and theological circles. Similarly, the modern theological community adopted a model of truth that in effect stigmatized theologians who rejected evolutionary views as neither scientific nor theologically legitimate."[54] It seemed outlandish to many conservative theologians to label as scientific that which could not be subjected to observation and verification (such as the theory of evolution); it seemed to return to the superstition of the Middle Ages. The presence of many conservative Christians at the technological level of the modern scientific community is surely partly related to their commitment to the old science of observation and their resistance to the speculative content of contemporary science.

Class Religion

The presence of large numbers of fun-

[51] I am particularly indebted in my discussion of this point to George Marsden's chapter, "Fundamentalism as an Intellectual Phenomenon," *Fundamentalism*, pp. 212-221. An earlier book which emphasized the accommodation of nineteenth century religion to Baconian science in Theodore Dwight Bozeman, *Protestants in an Age of Science: The Baconian Ideal and Antebellum American Religious Thought* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1977).

[52] Pat Horn, "The New Middle-Class Fundamentalism," *Psychology Today*, September, 1976, pp. 24-25.

[53] Quoted in Marsden, *Fundamentalism*, p. 217.

[54] *Ibid.*, p. 215.

damentalists in middle-level technological jobs also points to the social roots of the religious right. It is clear that from the time of Dwight L. Moody, through the fundamentalist revolt of the 1920s, to the contemporary religious right, conservative religion has appealed primarily to the "predominantly white, aspiring middle-class."[55] Fed by first-generation urban dwellers, the major fundamentalist explosions have come at times when large new upwardly mobile groups were pressing into the middle-class and this change in status has typically caught liberal Americans by surprise. A recent critic of the Moral Majority wrote, "Don't think that these are wicked people; they bear no resemblance to the sort of ex-rednecks recruited by central casting to depict bigots in late-night movies. They're clean, kindly, upstanding folk, the best people in their towns, the pillars of their churches, kings and queens of the covered dish supper."[56] "The image of American evangelicalism that goes out from the pulpits and over the air waves," bemoans Jim Wallis of *Sojourners*, "is a religion for those at the top, not those at the bottom of the world system."[57]

Nor is the religious right unaware of its new class status. Falwell acknowledged that the success of his movement was directly linked to the presence of doctors and businessmen who could finance fundamentalism in a way possible since the 1920s. Their new middle-class status creates two tensions in fundamentalists, which partly explain their sense of crisis. First, they are appalled by the wicked society in which they find themselves, and which for the first time they sense to be within their power to influence. In short, the fundamentalist vanguard is not so much a frustrated middle-class which is losing control as it is an emerging middle-class flaunting its newly acquired respectability and power. Second, this upwardly mobile class is deeply insecure about its own virtue. How can you keep the wholesome innocence of the farm when there is no more farm, and the church seats 10,000 people, and the pastor wears a pastel double-knit suit? An advertisement touting James Robison's recent television campaign summed up these tensions: "If you sense that our country and our world are headed for disaster, that the Church and even you may have become too comfortable, too complacent, please watch these programs. We're running out of time."[58]

Of course, this new militant middle-class has made contact with an older middle-class which for at least the past 100 years has been engaged in a classic battle of elites in American society. This

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[55] *Ibid.*, p. 91.

[56] Davis, "Onward Christian Soldiers," p. 54.

[57] "Recovering the Evangel," *Sojourners*, February, 1981, p. 3.

[58] *Christianity Today*, June 8, 1979, p. 37.



is the linkage which was hastened by Paul Weyrich and the conservative lobbyists in the 1980 elections. In a sense, the new religious right has simply run headlong into what sociologist Peter Berger calls the "current class struggle . . . between the new knowledge class and the old business class." Berger writes,

> As in all class struggles, this one is over power and privilege. The new class [knowledge class] is a rising class, with its own very specific (and identifiable) vested interests. But, in the public rhetoric of democracy, vested interests are typically couched in terms of the general welfare. In this, the new class is no different from its current adversary. Just as the business class sincerely believed (presumably still believes) that what is good for business is good for America, the new class believes that its own interests are identical with the 'public interest.' It so happens that many of the vested interests of the new class depend on miscellaneous state interventions; indeed a large portion of the new class is economically dependent on public-sector employment or subsidization.

Each of these classes has its own symbols which allow people to identify friends and enemies. "Thus," continues Berger, "a young instructor applying for a job in an elite university is well advised to hide 'unsound' views such as political allegiance to the right wing of the Republican party (perhaps even to the left wing), opposition to abortion or to other causes of the feminist movement, or a strong commitment to the virtues of the corporation. Conversely, a young business school graduate seeking a career with one of *Fortune* magazine's '500' had better not advertise his or her career in the new politics, or views associated with the environmentalists, antinuclear or consumer movements."[59] From this perspective, the new middle-class fundamentalists were simply fresh reenforcements slamming vigorously and patriotically into the old conflict. They were attracted to the side of the old elite both because of the presence of their religious enemies in the opposing camp and because they were defending their newly-born status.

New Militancy on the Right

The spontaneous politicization of the religious right beginning in 1978 calls for one more immediate explanation. Why did this generally apolitical, theologically separatist movement suddenly turn militant? Political action does not come naturally to conservative Protestantism. Every fundamentalist and pentecostal has been fed a diet at least partly sea-

[59] "The Class Struggle in American Religion," *Christian Century*, February 25, 1981, pp. 197-198.

soned with world separation and expectation of the imminent second coming.

A part of the answer may lie in the general sense of well-being in American society. In spite of complaints about the economy and other discomforts, both in the 1920s and in the 1970s, most Americans were enjoying remarkable prosperity. In his famous book on the paranoid style in American politics, historian Richard Hofstadter pointed out that it was in precisely such times that voters were most likely to be preoccupied with their identity in society rather than with specific personal needs. In short, the kinds of problems that concern the radical right, that in fact posess it, have to do with the collapse of society rather than personal privilege.[60]

The Tables Turned

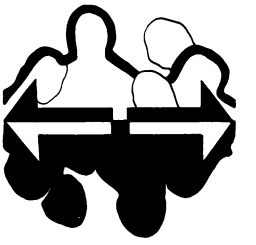
But there is a more immediate reason why millions of religious Americans, inspired by their evangelist leaders, swarmed to the polls in 1980. It was because they had been attacked. Liberal religion and liberal politics put tremendous pressure on conservative Christians in the years immediately before 1920 and 1975 and then recoiled in shock and indignation when the fundamentalists fought back. If you don't want to fight, don't hit a fundamentalist. Though the parallel is not exact, it brings to mind Commodore Vanderbilt's remark after being outfoxed by Daniel Drew in their war over the Erie Railroad. Moralized the subdued Commodore: "Never kick a skunk."

In 1917 the *Christian Century* and the Chicago Divinity School declared war on the still fairly moderate fundamentalist movement. During the next three years the *Christian Century* published 21 articles denouncing the "premillennial menace." In one of the ironies of history, the liberal attack centered on the lack of American patriotism among the fundamentalists who had refused to support World War I.[61] Stunned by the attack, the fundamentalists by 1919 had shifted their position on the war and were ready to engage the liberals in full warfare. Protestantism was suddenly caught in a battle between extremes. H. L. Mencken wrote with considerable perception in the *American Mercury*:

> One half of [Protestantism] is moving, with slowly accelerating speed, in the direction of the Harlot of the Seven Hills; the other is sliding down into voodooism. The former carries the greater part of Protestant libido. . . . There is no lack of life on the higher levels, where the more solvent Methodist and the like are gradually transmogri-

[60] See James M. Wall's comment on this point in "A Changing Political Climate," *Christian Century*, September 24, 1980, pp. 867-868.

[61] See Marsden, *Fundamentalism*, pp. 141-153.



> fied into Episcopalians, and the Episcopalians shin up the ancient bastions of Holy Church, and there is no lack of life on the lower levels, where the rural Baptists, by the route of Fundamentalism rapidly descend to the dogmas and practices of the Congo jungle. But in the middle there is desiccation and decay.[62]

The same kind of pressure from the extremes was clearly present in American society by 1975. The 1960s and 1970s brought rapid, even reckless, social change to America and finally stretched the tolerance of moderate American society to a breaking point. In an editorial pondering the massive conservative religious entry into politics, *Newsweek* columnist George F. Will wrote in September 1980: "More important . . . is the question of why so many people are so aroused. The answer is they have been provoked."[63] The virulent pro-Americanism of the religious right must be understood partly as a reaction to the virulent anti-Americanism that flourished in so many Christian agencies and seminaries in the 1960s and 1970s. As Peter Berger has noted, many American Christians felt they were faced with a choice between flag-burning and flag-waving.

In sum, in the twentieth century, American conservative evangelicals have entered politics only when it seemed to them that the very structure of society was seriously threatened by modernism and liberalism. Generally, fundamentalists' deepest interests have been religious, with forays into politics on questions of personal morality. But on two occasions in the twentieth century religious conservatives have felt compelled to launch crusades to save society. And, although the Scopes trial made it appear that the controversy was over evolution, most fundamentalists believed the issue was the survival of Christian civilization. And, in truth, the stakes were high, the issues profound. Reacting to J. Gresham Machen's *Christianity and Liberalism*, a sophisticated and well received defense of theological conservatism, editor Charles Clayton Morrison of the *Christian Century* wrote: "Two worlds have clashed, the world of tradition and the world of modernism. One is scholastic, static, authoritarian, individualistic; the other is vital, dynamic, free and social."[64]

Secular Humanism

The evil that called for all-out war in 1980 was "secular humanism," the name given by fundamentalists to the general philosophy behind the specific changes occurring in American society.

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[62] Mencken, *A Mencken Chrestomathy*, p. 76.

[63] "Who Put Morality in Politics?" *Newsweek*, September 15, 1980, p. 108.

[64] Quoted in Marsden, *Fundamentalism*, p. 175.

They believed the philosophy was unalterably connected with the theory of evolution. "The ultimate end of secular humanism," according to Falwell, will be "amorality, atheism, and developing a permissive society where there is no authority for right or wrong." The results will include "the wipeout of the family, the wipeout of all the traditional values that have made the United States, in my opinion, the greatest free society in the world for many years."[65] It is hard to gainsay much of what Falwell says. "Jerry Falwell is partly right," wrote William F. Fore of the National Council of Churches recently, "and this makes him far more dangerous than if he were totally wrong. It is true that the nation needs spiritual reform, that the family is endangered, that ordinary people need to assert themselves politically. It is true that our society has fallen into a moral cynicism that feeds corruption."[66] Fundamentalists became more and more convinced in the 1960s and 1970s that America was not witnessing a minor rearranging of social customs. Society was in the throes of a revolution which was being supported by American intellectuals and liberal Christians. It was only when the stakes reached that lofty level that the fundamentalists laid aside their preparations for the rapture and turned to the job of saving America.

Prognosis

Finally, what of the future of the religious right? The first fundamentalist alliance collapsed in 1925 with incredible speed. Liberal opposition is mobilizing after the success of the Moral Majority in 1980. A distinguished group of Jewish and Christian leaders has formed Moral Alternatives in Politics to encourage pastors to speak from their pulpits against the New Right. The American Way, an organization which includes Theodore Hesburgh on it board, has raised a million dollars to produce television commercials supporting religious pluralism. And yet, the opposition at this point seems quite unequal to a major battle with the conservative evangelists. In the foreseeable future their budgets are likely to remain infinitesimal compared to the bankrolls of the electronic evangelists.

More important are the internal tensions within the religious right. First is the highly visible split between the fundamentalists and the more moderate evangelicals, most notably Billy Graham. In a showdown, it is not clear whether Graham would side with the fundamentalists or mainstream American religion. Second, not far beneath the surface fester all of the old doctrinal questions which have historically divided conservative religion. Only under severe stress can

[65] "Reverend Jerry Falwell," p. 59.

[66] "Forms of Self-Deception and Hypocrisy," *Christian Century*, October 22, 1980, p. 1004.



fundamentalists, Pentecostals, Catholics and Mormons pray before a common altar. Cracks in the alliance are visible and threatening. In January 1981, Dr. Curtis Hutson, editor of the *Sword of the Lord*, the largest traditional fundamentalist paper in the country, withdrew from a James Robison Bible Conference, reportedly "to avoid appearing with antifeminist leader Phyllis Schlafly because she is a Roman Catholic." Hutson explained, or rather reminded his fellow fundamentalists, that Catholicism was "a growing accumulation of error through the years, with new doctrines being added continually."[67]

Perhaps even more ominous was the fierce competition for leadership. Given fundamentalists' feelings about popes, and the increasingly keen competition for the religious dollar, there is little likelihood that any individual can establish himself as the dominant figure in a broad alliance. In the 1920s Bryan was a unique figure, the only man who could pass easily through the maze of fundamentalist organizations and communicate with the competing evangelists. There is no such figure in 1980. Weyrich and his colleagues have more savvy than Bryan, but they have no control over their religious partners if the coalition begins to unravel.

Finally, the religious right is threatened by success. At their recent Convocation '81 in Washington, Billy Graham warned the new evangelists, "that the most difficult thing in life to handle is 'success.'"[68] The revivalists are, indeed, faced with a dilemma. You preach on sin, you warn of the troubles ahead, you pray for the Lord to come, and, my Lord, how the money rolls in. The religious right is big business. One disgusted visitor to Convocation '81 called it a "sorry circus of crass commercialism."[69] In the midst of such luxury, one could forget the urgency of his message. And the people are pretty cagey. Gerald W. Johnson watched the revivalists of the 1920s come and go in Raleigh, North Carolina, and concluded that by and large they bought their own patient medicine, else they could not "put it over." He wrote, "You can fool all of the people some of the time, and educated people, perhaps, all the time, but you cannot fool the riff-raff all the time."[70] When Jerry Falwell finally confessed that he had been less than honest about Jimmy Carter's remarks on homosexuality, he candidly confided that a preacher could get by with anything except digging into the till and hanky-panky with the sisters. Actually, several American evangelists have gotten by

[67] "Baptist Shuns Catholic Schlafly," Tampa (Florida) *Tribune*, January 29, 1981, p. 3A.

[68] Pierard, "An Innocent in Babylon," p. 191.

[69] *Ibid.*

[70] "Saving Souls," *American Mercury*, July, 1924, p. 366.

with at least one of those indiscretions and probably both. What one cannot get by with is loss of conviction and public confidence. Exuberant Tammy Bakker, surrounded on the PTL set by the most luxurious and technically-advanced television production studio in the world, recently burst forth, "This life is so great — I just love it whether or not it's true."[71] The luxury is all right, but it better be true. If it is not, the crackers will flip that dial right back to secular humanism.

[71] Philip Yancey, "The Ironies and Impact of PTL," *Christianity Today*, September 21, 1979, p. 32.

Markan Baptismal Theology: Renaming The Markan Secret

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Before the use of historical criticism by biblical scholars in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, most everyone assumed that the four New Testament gospels were biographies of Jesus. In light of that assumption, it is not surprising that the gospel of Mark was generally considered the least valuable of the four gospels. After all, Mark omitted any reference to Jesus' birth and early life, and he cut off his account abruptly with the women who came to the empty tomb running away frightened and saying nothing to anyone.(16:8)[1] Most early and traditional lectionary systems contained readings from Matthew for most Sunday gospel lessons, with some supplementary material from Luke or John. There seemed little reason to include Mark, since most of his narratives appear in similar or even identical form in Matthew and Luke.

Historical critical scholars recognized that each of the gospels was written by and for early Christians who found themselves in very different circumstances. The gospels were problem-solving documents, as it were, each tailored carefully for specific readers. Even in this perspective, however, the gospel of Mark received less attention than did the others. Since the prevailing theory concerning the origins of the synoptic gospels was, and still is, that both Matthew and Luke used Mark as their primary source, it was Matthew and Luke who were exposed to the most careful scrutiny. They seemed easier for the critics to decode. Without being able to compare Mark directly with his sources, this earliest gospel was, and in some ways still is, the most difficult to evaluate and interpret.

Mark did not begin to get a proportionate share of attention from scholars until the publication in 1901 of William Wrede's *The Messianic Secret*.[2] The secrecy of Jesus concerning his identity and mighty works is a major feature of Mark, and one which both Matthew and Luke tone down in their renditions of the tradition. Wrede, and those who built upon his work, took his secrecy motif to be the key to interpreting Mark's theological agenda. Although the subsequent arguments about purpose have gone through several stages,[3] the dominant assumption has become that Mark was not offering a primitive biography, but was engaged in addressing an essen-

[1] Some were so embarrassed in the early church over Mark's failure to provide a more suitable conclusion for his gospel that at least four different people tried to improve it by providing a better ending. Those endings now appear as footnotes at the end of Mark in many editions of the New Testament.

[2] Originally entitled *Das Messiasgeheimnis in den Evangelien*, this work has been translated into English by J. C. G. Greig (Greenwood, South Carolina: The Attic Press, 1971).

[3] An excellent summary of the stages of this argument appears in Jack Dean Kingsbury, "The 'Divine Man' as the Key to Mark's Christology — The End of an Era?" *Interpretation* 35 (1981), 243-257.

tially *Christological* problem or controversy. That is, Mark was thought to be promoting one identification of Jesus' person at the expense of another, competing identification. The most prevalent current thesis is that Mark was opposing a hellenistic, docetic Christology by portraying Jesus as secretive about his divine sonship and mighty works (cf., e.g., Mark 1:34; 3:11-12; 5:43) while being very public with pronouncements about how the Son of Man, meaning himself, must suffer many things, be crucified, and rise again. (cf. 8:31; 9:31; 10:33-34)

In a recent article (see note 3), Jack Dean Kingsbury has argued that this approach to Markan Christology is faulty and cannot lead to a comprehensive understanding of Mark's purpose and message. Kingsbury focuses upon "Son of God" as the primary Christological title in Mark, to which all other titles are somehow subservient, including "Son of Man". The secrecy motif in Mark serves this "Son of God" Christology. Taking his primary cues from the breaking of the secrecy in Jesus' testimony about himself in Mark 14:61-62 and the centurion's confession in 15:39, Kingsbury theorizes that Mark used the secrecy motif to teach his readers that the true meaning of Jesus' divine sonship can only be understood in light of the Son of God's fate. He is the crucified one, the suffering servant.

This focus upon the "Son of God" Christology does allow for a more comprehensive interpretation of all the Markan material, beginning with 1:1: "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." But Kingsbury holds that the gospel of Mark is still, more than anything else, an exercise in Christology (Who is Jesus?). This article will argue that Mark wrote and arranged the story of Jesus with a soteriological purpose, so as to portray Jesus as a kind of prototype of the beleaguered Christians in Mark's community. Jesus endured precisely what the community was experiencing, but he not only lived *like* them, he lived *for* them. And he died for them. In sum, Mark was engaged in what theologians call "soteriology" (how Jesus' life and death were a saving event). Even Mark's Christology was ultimately put into the service of his soteriological purpose.

A Gospel for the Persecuted

In the case of Mark's gospel, the community's predicament is not difficult to ascertain. Commentators almost invariably describe Mark's audience as a community undergoing persecution.[4] Never-

[4] The most thorough discussion of Mark's audience as a persecuted community remains that by Robert H. Smith, "Darkness at Noon: Mark's Passion Narrative," *Concordia Theological Monthly*, 44 (1973), 325-338. Cf. also Vincent Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark* (London: Macmillan, 1959), 31-32; D.E. Nineham, *Saint Mark* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1963), 32-33; Paul J. Achtemeier, *Invitation to Mark* (Garden City, New York: Image Books, 1978), 20;



theless, those same commentators generally proceed to interpret Mark as though the audience's situation was only incidental to their task. What follows is an attempt to demonstrate that a more comprehensive interpretation of Mark's gospel is possible if the interpreter assumes that the primary agenda of the evangelist was to reshape the gospel story so as to marshal its resources for a persecuted audience.

Among the features of Mark which mirror its audience's persecution is the apocalyptic outlook of the gospel. The most obviously apocalyptic material is Jesus' speech of warnings concerning the end time in Mark 13. Other clues to Mark's apocalyptic viewpoint are seen in the identification of Jesus as the "Son of Man" (8:31; 9:31; 10:33; 14:21; 14:62; cf. Daniel 7:13-14), and the great importance attached to Jesus' successful campaign against all sorts of demons in the first half of the gospel. Demonic control over the earth is also a popular apocalyptic theme. (cf. Rev. 20) Most apocalyptic writings, including the later Old Testament books (such as Daniel, Joel, or portions of Zechariah), the intertestamental literature, which is predominantly apocalyptic, and the New Testament book of Revelation, have one thing in common: they were produced in and by communities victimized by persecution or ruthless oppression. Apocalyptic discourse is the jargon or code of persecuted people by which they comfort themselves with the hope that God is still in control of the world and particularly of their lives and fates — despite all appearances to the contrary.

Jesus tells his followers to expect persecution: "You will be hated by all for my name's sake." (13:13) Earlier in Mark, Jesus describes discipleship as "taking up one's cross" (8:34), and he promises the power-hungry James and John that they will indeed suffer a fate like his own. (10:35-40) Such speeches clearly point to a persecuted audience for Mark.

The Passion Narrative

Immediately after the warning about persecution in Mark 13 comes the notice of the officials' plot against Jesus. (14:1-2) This sets in motion the section of the gospel known as the "Passion Narrative". Virtually every pericope within the narrative addresses concerns and dilemmas faced by persecuted people and communities.

Jesus is betrayed by an insider, one of the twelve. (14:10-11) What Judas betrays is Jesus' identity. "The one I shall kiss is the man; seize him. . . . " (14:44), Judas told the officials. It is interesting to note that in Luke, Judas merely informs the officials where they can find Jesus apart from the multitudes of disciples who might prevent his arrest. (Luke 22:3-6) In John, Judas also betrays Jesus' location, not his identity. (John 18:2) In Mark, however, the question is, "Which one is he?" If members of a

persecuted community were discovered, it would likely be due to some treachery by a member of the community, an insider like Judas, one of the twelve. The problem caused by fear of traitors within a Christian community is not difficult to imagine. The community would be torn apart as members began to suspect one another of being spies or of being weak links in the group's security because of pressure or torture. Mark portrays Jesus as knowingly sharing a last supper with the one who would betray him. He did not exclude him from the fellowship, and, unlike Matthew's and John's accounts of the final meal together, Jesus called no attention to Judas in Mark. (cf. Matt. 26:25 and John 13:21-27) Mark seems to warn against allowing suspicion to tear apart the community and break up the fellowship of the Lord's Supper. The group could remain a community only by trusting one another as each of them drinks the cup of the covenant (14:23-24) and thereby pledges to drink, if need be, the cup of crucifixion (cf. 10:39 and 14:36).

The Gethsemane scene (14:32-42) is also reminiscent of a situation which persecuted Christians knew all too well. Severe anxiety and great temptation would afflict those who knew they had been found out and would soon be arrested. Jesus describes the dynamics of the temptation in words similar to Paul's. "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak," Jesus tells the disciples. (14:38) The flesh, at least as Paul describes it, is the drive for survival, for self-preservation at any cost. (cf. Rom. 8:1-27; 13:11-14; or Gal. 5:13-26) The Spirit, on the other hand, is the power which enables whatever sacrifice is necessary to do the will of God. Thus, while the flesh urges apostasy and even treachery in the desperate attempt to save one's own skin, the Spirit enables endurance, maintenance of integrity, faithful witness under pressure, and ultimately sacrifice for the sake of the community.

But how is one to resist the flesh and live by the Spirit under such pressure? "Watch and pray," says Jesus. (14:38) Moreover, a specific prayer for such occasions is suggested in Mark's version of this story. It is the "Abba, Father" prayer which implores, "Thy will be done." (14:36) The allusion to the prayer known as the Our Father is obvious (cf. also the allusion to the temptation petition in 14:38) and, it would seem, intentional. Mark alone among the synoptics does not record Jesus' teaching of the Lord's prayer, but he does allude to it here when the sons and daughters of God would be most tempted to abandon their identity as children of God. Interestingly, the other two references to the Abba prayer in the New Testament (Rom. 8:15 and Gal. 4:6) also occur in contexts which discuss the flesh-Spirit struggle.[5]

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[5] For a more complete discussion of the



The arrest scene (14:43-52) concludes with the notice of Jesus' abandonment by his followers. Persecuted ones could expect that after their arrest no one would admit they knew them or would wish to be associated with them. The flight of the mysterious "young man" (14:51-52) is more difficult to interpret, and a full discussion of this reference, which is unique to Mark, cannot be entered into here.[6] It may depict Jesus' abandonment. The "young man" may have been understood by Mark to be an angel (the same Greek word for "young man" appears in Mark's empty tomb story, 16:5). If that is the case, Mark would seem to be suggesting that even the agents of God, who should have been Jesus' faithful protectors (cf. Luke 22:43 or Matt. 26:53), have abandoned him. This feeling of abandonment would surely have been within the experience of persecuted Christians. Where were the forces of God when they were needed most?

The account of the Sanhedrin's trial of Jesus (14:53-65) is also a mirror of Mark's persecuted community. The trial is unjust (14:55-56) and the defendant, Jesus, is completely misunderstood (14:57-59). He is thought to be some sort of insurrectionist, or at least that is the accusation implicit in the question concerning the temple. Through all of this, Jesus is silent in Mark. (cf. the radically different picture in John 18:19-24) He will answer only one question: "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" (14:61) Jesus answers, "I am." (14:62) Earlier, in his warning to the disciples about their own eventual persecution (13:9-13), Jesus had said, "Do not be anxious beforehand what you are to say; but say whatever is given you in that hour, for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit." For his confession, Jesus was judged a blasphemer and condemned to death.

The scene is likely a model of trial scenes observed and experienced by members of Mark's community. Early Christians in various parts of the Roman Empire were suspected of treason and complicity in insurrection,[7] and they would no doubt have been questioned concerning such suspicions. The early church historian Eusebius records the proceedings of a second-century trial in which the only question of the accused was, "Are you a Christian?" (*History of the Church*, 4.17) It is quite possible that Mark's trial account mirrors such proceedings, and the first readers of Mark would recognize in the high priest's

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relationship of Jesus' Abba prayer to the Our Father, see David G. Truemper and Frederick A. Niedner, *Keeping the Faith* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981), 100-103.

[6] For a summary of the most important interpretations of this reference, see R. Scroggs and K. I. Groff, "Baptism in Mark: Dying and Rising with Christ," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 92 (1973), 531-548.

[7] That is abundantly clear from Luke's gospel; cf. Luke 23:2-5. See also Smith, 325-327; and Kee, 97-100.

question the one they also would be asked, "Are you a Christian? Are you baptized?"[8] The appropriate response to that question would be "I am." Mark appears to suggest to persecuted readers that they answer little or nothing in response to the false charges and accusations of the unjust proceedings. If asked directly whether they are Christians, they should, by the power of the Spirit, respond simply and affirmatively. Nothing else need be said, nor would the persecutors need to hear anything more.

The account of Peter's denial (14:66-72) deals with yet another familiar problem in persecuted communities, the problem of the "lapsed ones". Sometimes the flesh got the best of the Spirit when members of the Christian community were faced with discovery. They would deny or even curse the Lord to save their skin. Such a denial would be temporary, and when the frightful moment had passed, the lapsed one would tell the community what had happened and request forgiveness and readmission to the community. Some congregations would not allow such reentry, and Hebrews 10:26-39 appears to reflect the theological rationale for this practice. Mark seems to be arguing for the opposite practice. If Peter, the chief apostle of the early church, had been one of the lapsed ones, then it could happen to anyone, no matter how strong that person might seem to be. (cf. Mark 14:29, 31) But if it does happen, there is forgiveness in this community for even so grave a "sin". If God could use lapsed Peter as the chief apostle, there ought to be forgiveness for any and all others.

The Death of Jesus

Finally, Jesus was led away to be crucified. In this scene the abandonment becomes complete. None of Jesus' friends is present (cf. the different views in John 19:25-27 and Luke 23:48-49), and he is taunted mercilessly by the passerby (15:29-30), the temple officials (15:31-32), and even by those crucified with him (15:32). There is no friendly fellow-victim in Mark as there is in Luke. (cf. Luke 23:39-43) Darkness covers the earth and it is as though the whole of God's judgment upon the world has befallen the crucified one. (cf. Amos 8:9-10) The abandonment reaches its extreme with the only word of Jesus from the cross, "My God my God, why have you forsaken me?" (15:34) That is the ultimate question of the persecuted one. What had begun as a hope for a new life has come to this. Why, God? There is no cry of victory as in John (John 19:30), no touching recall of the child's bedtime prayer as in Luke (Luke 23:46). There is only desertion and death.

Mark wants his readers to know, however, that this is precisely the way those

[8] The association between the title "Son of the Blessed," a circumlocution for "Son of God" in the high priest's question, and baptism will be discussed above.



persecuted must die if their death is to mean something besides mere abandonment and failure. When the centurion in charge of the execution saw how Jesus died, he confessed, "Truly this man was the Son of God!" (15:39) This one died differently than others the centurion had executed. He did not return the curses of the taunting crowd or blame his fate upon the execution squad. This one saw what had happened as a matter between himself and the one whom, even in despair, he called "my God". The centurion is the only human being in the whole of Mark's gospel to confess Jesus' true identity. Not even Peter at Caesarea Philippi had confessed the whole truth about Jesus as did the soldier. (cf. Mark 8:29) What is the message for the persecuted community? If you die like this, saying and doing only what the Spirit gives you to say and do, your death, despite all appearances to the contrary, will have an effect on your persecutors. They will be brought to confess the truth about Jesus, and you will not have died in vain. Eventually, as the persecutors are brought to confess Jesus as the Son of God, the community will be spared futher harrassment. Jesus died for the community (Mark 10:45 and 14:24), but in a very real sense, so do all who die as Jesus did, with the Spirit's witness on their lips.[9]

Clearly Mark fashioned his Passion Narrative in such a way as to make it a resource for persecuted Christians of the first century. Not only does he treat the major problems which such communities and individuals would face, but he offers Jesus as a model or prototype for effective martyrdom. Jesus followed his own advice. (13:9-13, 37) He watched. He prayed. He spoke only what the Spirit gave him to speak, and his death brought someone to new belief. (15:38-39) So, too, could the deaths of his followers.

This interpretation of Mark's Passion Narrative is not, for the most part at least, genuinely new. What has seldom, if ever, been attempted before, however, is a comprehensive association of Mark 1-13 with this persecution-related agenda. Until recently, in fact, it was commonplace to refer to Mark as a Passion Narrative with an extended introduction,[10] and the implication was that Mark had

[9] Mark's is not a totally new idea. The pseudepigraphical book known as IV Maccabees describes the martyrdom of one Eleazar and his seven sons and concludes that the faithful way they died both impressed the executioners and served to save the persecuted community of Jews under the second-century B.C. hellenistic oppressors. For the importance of IV Maccabees to the New Testament understanding of Jesus' death, see Sam K. Williams, *Jesus' Death as Saving Event* (Missoula, Montana: Scholars Press, 1975).

[10] This "dogma" of Markan studies was first enunciated by M. Kähler, *The So-Called Historical Jesus and the Historic, Biblical Christ*, translated and edited by C. E. Braaten (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964; 1st German edition in 1892), 80, note 11.

more or less haphazardly collected a body of materials to fill up what are now chapters 1-13 merely to have something to precede his Passion Narrative. Recent research has shown that the whole of Mark has been carefully crafted so as to relate the initial sections of the gospel to the Passion Narrative in a very complex and intricate way.[11] Still, however, the focus of this research has remained on Mark's *Christology*. But if Mark's Passion Narrative is *soteriological*, or at least not primarily Christological in its intention, need the first 13 chapters be seen only as Christological groundwork for the Passion Narrative? In what follows, an attempt will be made to demonstrate that Jesus' role as prototype for persecuted ones begins not in chapter 14 of Mark, but in chapter 1.

The Jesus of Mark 1-13

The primary connection between Jesus' role as prototype in Mark's Passion Narrative and his identical role in the earlier sections of the gospel is to be found precisely in that theme of Mark's which has been interpreted heretofore almost exclusively as Christological, namely, the identification of Jesus as the Son of God and the secrecy concerning it, which have their origins in the baptismal scene of 1:2-11. There Jesus is baptized by John in the Jordan, he is given the Holy Spirit (1:10), and the voice from the heavens identifies him as the Son of God (1:11). It is important to note that the Spirit's coming and the heavenly identification are much more private, almost secret, in Mark than they are in the parallel accounts of Matthew 3:16-17 or Luke 3:21-22. In contrast especially to Matthew's version, Jesus alone seems to see the Spirit descending upon him like a dove, and the heavenly voice speaks to him directly using second rather than third person pronouns. (1:10-11) It is those very same things which are kept hidden in the secrecy motif which Mark develops in the following chapters. Jesus is the Spirit-filled agent of God, who is designated as "beloved Son" of God, and thus destined for suffering service (cf. Is. 42:1), for sacrifice (cf. Gen. 22:2), and eventual coronation as messiah or anointed one (cf. Ps. 2:2, 6-7).[12] Yet, save for the demons, no one knows that. His life is misunderstood, either partially or completely, even by those closest to him (cf. 4:41; 8:27-33), until finally after his death the centurion catches on and confesses him to be the Son of God (15:39).

The misunderstanding results, at least in part, from some deliberately secretive behavior on Jesus' part. Immediately after his baptism, Jesus, driven and em-

[11] John R. Donahue, "From Passion Traditions to Passion Narrative," in *The Passion in Mark*, edited by Werner H. Kelber (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), 1-20.

[12] On the association of the baptismal identification by the heavenly voice to these three Old Testament texts, see Kingsbury, 253.



powered by the Spirit, begins an assault on the kingdom of Satan (1:12-13) and proclaims the arrival of the kingdom of God (1:14-15). The demons recognize the true identity of their assailant and cry out accordingly. "I know who you are, the Holy One of God," says the unclean spirit in Mark 1:24, whereupon Jesus immediately silences and exorcises him and the onlookers are astonished at the authority with which Jesus has acted. In Mark 3:22-27 the scribes accuse Jesus of casting out demons by the authority of Beelzebul, the prince of demons, and Jesus interprets their accusation as blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. (3:28-30) The implication is that his authority over demons and unclean spirits derives from the Holy Spirit, and, as noted above, Jesus' association with the Holy Spirit is described in Mark as beginning at Jesus' baptism. (1:10) Thus, the unclean spirit in Mark 1:24 actually acknowledged and called the attention to Jesus' baptismal identity, but it is that identity which Jesus keeps hidden from the onlookers by silencing him. In a summary statement concerning Jesus' healing and exorcism activities (1:32-34), Mark notes that Jesus "would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him." We may presume that the demons' knowledge of Jesus here is like that of the unclean spirit in 1:23-26, and thus we may conclude that here, too, it was his baptismal identity which Jesus was keeping hidden.

The clearest indication that the content of the great secret in Mark's gospel is Jesus' baptismal identity is in the account of a group of exorcisms in 3:7-12. There Mark summarizes, "Whenever the unclean spirits beheld him, they fell down before him and cried out, 'You are the Son of God.' And he strictly ordered them not to make him known." The unclean spirits make direct reference to the identity bestowed upon Jesus by the heavenly voice at his baptism (1:11), and it is that baptismal identity which Jesus keeps under wraps.

Yet another pericope which links the secrecy motif to Jesus' baptismal identity is the story of the transfiguration in 9:2-13. The heavenly voice speaks once again and repeats the baptismal word, this time as a proclamation to the disciples present, using third person pronouns: "This is my beloved Son; listen to him." (9:7) Immediately thereafter, Jesus swears the disciples to secrecy concerning the incident (9:9), at least until after his resurrection.

Other calls for secrecy do not appear, at least at first glance, to be related to the baptismal identity of Jesus. Jesus asks for secrecy but does not get it after cleansing a leper in 1:40-45, and he is then obliged to travel about less openly. In 5:43 Jesus asks that Jairus' family keep quiet about the raising of their daughter. Similar silence is requested concerning miracles in 7:36 and 8:26. It is important to note here, however, that Mark reports Jesus as having done many other miracles without asking for secrecy or silence, and

in one case, the healing of the Gerasene demoniac (5:1-20), Jesus even tells the man from whom the demons were cast to go tell all his friends (5:19). This particular story would appear to be a break in the secrecy motif, especially as it relates to the baptismal identity of Jesus, because the unclean spirit involved cries out, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God?" (5:7) But the secrecy is not really broken here. First, there are no onlookers in the isolated cemetary where the story takes place, and thus no secrecy is necessary. In addition, the unclean spirit is run into the sea and silenced anyway, and finally, what Jesus bids the man to tell his friends is merely "how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you." From all of this we may conclude that Jesus is secretive about his miracles only in certain settings and that it is not specifically his miraculous powers which must be kept secret. The only thing about which Jesus is consistently secretive is his baptismal identity.

Another charge to secrecy which deserves comment is that to Peter after his confession at Caesarea Philippi. (8:27-30) Unlike Matthew's account (Matt. 16:16), Peter does not confess the divine sonship of Jesus but says only, "You are the Christ." (8:29) Not until the transfiguration scene (9:2-8) will the heavenly voice announce Jesus' divine sonship in Peter's hearing, and no one will confess it publicly until Jesus' own confession while on trial. (14:61-62) His response to the high priest's question links his identity as messiah to the baptismal identity of divine sonship, as does the opening line of Mark's gospel. While Peter is not sworn to secrecy concerning the baptismal identity, his confession is just close enough to it to warrant the need for secrecy. Only at 14:61-62 and at 15:39 is his true baptismal identity to be revealed.

Finally, one other type of secrecy appears in Mark. When those accompanying the disciples ask why Jesus speaks in parables, Jesus answers, "To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside everything is in parables; so that they may indeed see but not perceive, and may indeed hear but not understand; lest they should turn again, and be forgiven." (4:10-12) It sounds like a scandalous thing for Jesus to have said,[13] at least to the ears of anyone trained to think of Jesus as intending to be merciful to everyone and to think of parables as devices which assist rather than impede understanding and perception. How can this speech be integrated with the rest of the Markan secrecy motif?

Part of Jesus' comment is a paraphrase of God's description of the effect Isaiah's message would have upon Israel. (Is.

[13] Matthew seems to have thought so, too, for he alters Jesus' speech so that the misunderstanding of Jesus is more clearly the fault of Jesus' hearers than a result of Jesus' teaching method; cf. Matt. 13:12-13.



6:9-10) Isaiah's mission was destined already at his call to failure. His words of warning and judgment would only drive people to harden themselves further against God's intentions until finally the city and nation would be destroyed. Isaiah would never be allowed to speak the whole truth about God, for the word of God's mercy would have to wait for the people's repentance, and that would not come until the nation had fallen. For his efforts Isaiah was to be misunderstood, hated, and, at least according to Jewish tradition, martyred at the hand of the wicked king Manasseh. Perhaps Jesus is being associated with the prophet Isaiah in Mark 4:10-12 so that the prophet's mission and fate are seen as a *type* of Jesus' ministry and fate. Like Isaiah, Jesus would not be understood or honored as an agent of God *until* his detractors had done away with him. Only then would the centurion make his confession.

The plain sense of Jesus' explanation for speaking in parables, of course, suggests that Jesus was speaking in a kind of code. Those privy to the secret of the kingdom understand the code, but outsiders, though they can hear and understand Jesus' teachings on a superficial level, do not catch on. Again, the centurion's confession indicates that the death of Jesus is the genuinely revelatory event in Mark's understanding, and what the crucifixion reveals is the baptismal identity of Jesus, that is, his divine sonship.

The Soteriological Secret

Having surveyed the secrecy motif, what are we to make of its place and function in Mark's overall program? The secret in Mark is really not so much the "messianic secret," as it has been known ever since Wrede's work, but the baptismal secret. The secret which is broken at Jesus' confession (14:61-62) and made known to the centurion by the way Jesus died (15:39) is the divine sonship bestowed at baptism. During his whole career Jesus had lived, worked, taught, and battled the unclean spirits, all as the Son of God and by the authority of the Holy Spirit. But his identity as the baptized one had to be kept secret until the last and best possible moment. The conclusion suggested here is that Mark is offering Jesus as a prototype for persecuted ones not only in the Passion Narrative, but beginning already with the baptismal scene of Mark 1:9-11 and in all the subsequent stories involving the secrecy concerning the identity given Jesus there.

The whole gospel of Mark is the story of a persecuted one to whom identity and the gift of the Holy Spirit are granted in baptism. Because of persecution in the Markan community, such baptism would be a private, even secret, event rather than a public one. The baptized would have to keep their true identity a secret, speaking very cautiously and often even in code (like drawing a fish on the ground), lest the wrong people dis-

cover the secret. The baptized could expect one day to be found out, probably through the betrayal of a weakened fellow Christian, and to be tried and eventually executed. But there were abundant resources for enduring the trial so that the execution might have its saving effect. The Spirit would do battle against the flesh and would prompt the words necessary at the trial and in the last moments of life.

What Mark has done is to write the story of Jesus in such a way that the persecuted readers find themselves reading their own story. The readers and Jesus share a common identity as baptized one, and they will share a similar fate as well. Mark calls his story "the gospel" (1:1), that is, "good news." What is the good news of such a story? The good news is that the story does not end with the inevitable cry of dereliction, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" It continues with the centurion's confession and ultimately with the empty tomb. The young man at the grave declares of the baptized one, the Son of God, the crucified one, "He has risen, he is not here; see the place where they laid him." (16:6) Such is the ultimate fate of the one whose life's secret is bound up in baptism.

If Mark has indeed written his gospel so that it is at the same time the story of Jesus and the story of any and all baptized and persecuted Christians, it is possible to understand two features of Mark which have long perplexed interpreters — the absence of traditions concerning Jesus' birth and early life at the beginning of the book and a similar absence of materials concerning the appearances of the risen Christ at the end. These "omissions" caused pre-critical interpreters to consider Mark a kind of second-rate gospel in comparison to the others, while critical scholars have generally concluded that Mark simply was not aware of the traditions presented at the beginnings and ends of the other three canonical gospels. The absence especially of traditions concerning Jesus' origins have been especially disturbing to those who saw Mark as offering Christological answers. In comparison to theologians like Paul, Mark comes off as something of an "adoptionist"[14] in his Christology.

If Mark's agenda was not primarily Christological, however, such assessments are inappropriate. Indeed, our soteriological reading of Mark suggests that Mark simply begins his story at the point where Jesus' story and the readers' stories converge, namely, in the baptismal waters. Paul suggests that the sons and daughters of God who have become heirs by adoption in baptism are no less the children of God than is Christ himself. (Gal 4:4-7) Mark wants to tell his

[14] This is the name commonly given Christologies which present Jesus as a totally normal man whom God adopted, as it were, to be his son and agent. Christologies of this type do not trace Jesus' origins to a pre-existent state which he left in order to "become flesh."



readers that their story, as God's baptized children — like that of Jesus himself — is good news despite all evidence to the contrary.

A similar judgment may be made about the absence of stories concerning appearances of the risen Lord. Appearance stories in Matthew, Luke, and John have two primary purposes. First, they reinforce the message of the empty tomb stories and further the witness that God has "vindicated Jesus out of his death."[15] Second, they answer the question, where is Jesus now and what is he doing? Ending as he does at 16:8, Mark describes no *vindication* of Jesus as the Son of God. This is one more indication of how closely Mark has joined the story of Jesus to the story of his persecuted readers. The latter were dying without vindication. They had no proof that their story would not end forever on a cross, a rack, or a stake. They could only hope that the word of the young man at the empty tomb was the truth about their story's end.

Mark does provide material which tells where Jesus is now and what he is doing. In the story of the transfiguration, which the disciples are told to remember after the resurrection (9:9), they had seen Jesus with Moses, the great teacher and prophet of Israel, and with Elijah, who was believed to be active in helping Israelites caught in hopeless situations. Both were believed in Jesus' day to have been taken to be with God in the heavens. Where was Jesus if his tomb was empty? He was with God, filling roles like those of Moses and Elijah on behalf of the beleaguered church. He continued as their community's teacher and helper while awaiting the moment when he would return as the Son of Man. (cf. Mark 8:31; 14:62) Only then would there be vindication for those who had hoped in him as they went to their deaths and as they lived out their lives with their secret identities in the mean time.

Conclusion

The whole of Mark's gospel, then, has been carefully tailored and crafted so as it make it simultaneously the story of a baptized one and The Baptized One. Mark's is not a "second rate" gospel nor is it somehow more primitive than the other canonical gospels in its theological sophistication or literary quality. Furthermore, Mark is not primarily an exercise in Christology, although to be sure, Mark's "Son of God" Christology, specifically as Kingsbury has described it, is an important part of the gospel's capacity to translate the persecuted one's story into good news. If Mark's real purpose was to link the stories of the persecuted Christians to the story of Jesus by

[15] This phrase is Norman Perrin's, *The Resurrection according to Matthew, Mark, and Luke* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977), 83.

means of their common baptismal identification, then Mark's primary purpose was more soteriological than Christological. That is, Mark sought to proclaim how the death of Jesus "saves" those who have been baptized in his name and who are giving their lives, even as Jesus did, for the sake of that baptismal identity.

A Note from History

Premise:
Caleb and Joshua said, "Let us go
Into the land where milk and honey flow."
But ten, a good majority, said "No!"

So, often plans for progress go astray,
When those who doubt breed fears by what they say,
Cause senseless waste, and tears, by the delay.

Conclusion:
The kin of doubters trip while watching fountains;
But Caleb's children climb and conquer mountains!

Ewald Hinck

The Alcoholic Personality — A Human Problem

John W. Ribar

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I remember telling my counsellor at the Treatment Center how complex I was, how sensitive and moody — a real brooding Hunky. After listening very patiently, she said, "Well, John, you sound like a garden variety drunk to me." I didn't really grasp what she was saying at the time. I can't even recall whether I was offended or reassured or what. But her phrase stuck: "a garden variety drunk." It comes to mind regularly when I hear or read about or meet someone who appears to be a carbon copy of myself. I get this uncanny feeling that God made a lot of copies and then in his divine humor let us all believe we were unique in all the world.

The discovery — and it is not all unpleasant — is that we are not all that unique, not as human beings, not as alcoholics. People have long talked about and argued over the existence of an "alcoholic personality," a set of personality traits that is more or less common to alcoholics. It's only a theory, but it's intriguing to me that there should be people predisposed in their personality structure to become addicted to alcohol and whose worst traits are fixed and aggravated by the contined abuse of booze. I would like to suggest that the so-called "alcoholic personality" is a human problem that manifests itself in alcohol abuse for some people and in other ways for the rest. At the heart of the human problem, whatever its manifestation, is perfectionism, the pathogenic need to feel that we are what we are not, without weakness, flaw or blemish, perfect like God.

Most alcoholics will readily admit to egotistical pretentions to perfectionism in their drinking days, and/or as something they are still struggling with. For the perfectionist life is an all-or-nothing proposition: you are God or you are nothing, saint or sinner, Number One or nobody. There is only one way, my way. What is not right is wrong.

> For these people, the drive to excel can only be self-defeating. Evidence is mounting that the price this kind of perfectionist pays for the habit includes not only decreased productivity but also impaired health, poor self-control, troubled personal relationships, and low self-esteem. The perfectionist also appears to be vulnerable to a number of potentially serious mood disorders, including depression . . . and obsessive-compulsive illness. (David Burns, "The Perfectionist's Script for Self-Defeat," *Psychology Today*, Nov. 1980, p. 34.)

David Burns is not talking about an "alcoholic problem," but about a human problem. Dr. Harry Tiebout discusses similar human dynamics in terms of the Infantile Ego. ("The Ego Factors in Surrender in Alcoholism," *QJSA*, 15 [Dec., 1954], p. 610-21.) The cardiologists, Friedman and Rosenman, talk about Type A Behavior. (*Type A Behavior and Your Heart*. New York:

Fawcett Crest, 1974.) The Bible talks about Sin and the Flesh. But it is all pretty much the same thing: perfectionism, the pathological need to be God-like. Perfectionists' primary personal commitment is to themselves. They rely on themselves to secure their own well-being and give their own best efforts to the pursuit of that goal. That is self-deification, but it is also self-defeating.

The glaring difficulty with the need to be perfect is the fact that we are not. Many of our character flaws or disorders are basically ways we cope with that unpleasant reality: denial strategies, compliance, projection, and so on.

When I talk about these things in mixed groups of alcoholics and "earth people," alcoholics will tell me I was right on the button describing them. But one or two non-alcoholics will rather sheeplishly admit that I have also described them to a tee. Pastors counsel daily with the number of non-alcoholics who experience guilt, depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, anger, resentment, fear, and distrust, people caught in their own counter-reality, people who profess faith in God and righteousness with their lips while their hearts are full of self-reliance and self-interest.

What, then, of the so-called "alcoholic personality"? Must we not conclude that it is but one variation on a common theme, namely, perfectionism? Our imperfection forces all who are locked into a perfectionist mind-set towards some form of compulsive-obsessive behavior or coping mechanisms, anything that softens or blunts the distinction between perfectionist pretensions and the stubborn fact of imperfection in us and all around us.

Now that we have gotten to the problem, what do we do with the critter? We all have to do something with it. Perfectionism produces socially disruptive "sins" like dissension, party spirit, envy. (Galatians 5) It is a factor in heart disease and other stress related ailments. It leads to unpleasant feelings within us like guilt, depression, anxiety, low self-esteem. It lies at the heart of the "alcoholic personality." "Selfishness — self-centeredness. That we think is the root of our problem." (*A.A.*, p. 62)

Tiebout suggests we reverse the characteristics of the Infantile Ego by stessing humility, taking things in stride, being open-minded, receptive, and responsive. David Burns urges us to reprogram the unrealistic all-or-nothing thinking of the perfectionist, to lower our standards and goals and derive some sense of satisfaction from doing things in a less than outstanding way. Count the cost agaist the benefits, he urges. Perfectionism may make for excellent work, but on the other hand it may make you too nervous to do your best, unwilling to risk mistakes, afraid to try anything new. It may also rob you of joy, serenity, and openness to other people.

Friedman and Rosenman give advice that sounds like what you might hear at an A.A. meeting. 1) Know that you may



succeed in spite of, not because of your perfectionism. 2) Believe that you *can* change. 3) Face up to your limitations. Self-knowledge frees up. 4) Don't treat the trivial as though it were a matter of life and death; don't confuse life goals and career goals — you are always more than what you do. 5) It is no good for us to live in a spiritual vacuum. Get into the arts and sciences; take another look at myth, ritual, and tradition. 6) Remember that you are in process and in progress. You will stay there until you are perfectly dead. 7) Live and enjoy one day at a time.

Christian theology has a similar goal: self-examination, confession, making peace with brothers and sisters, communion with God, commitment to faith in God, and love for all humankind. Christianity, however, is not sanguine about our ability to repent or to make a radical change in outlook and behavior. If Flesh, our natural self on its own, should undertake to solve its own problems, the solutions would still be of the Flesh, self-reliant, self-interested, and self-defeating. Self-knowledge by itself produces arrogance or despair, but not fundamental change. That comes when the Spirit replaces Flesh as the life principle. A.A. concurs that if change comes, it comes from above, from a Higher Power.

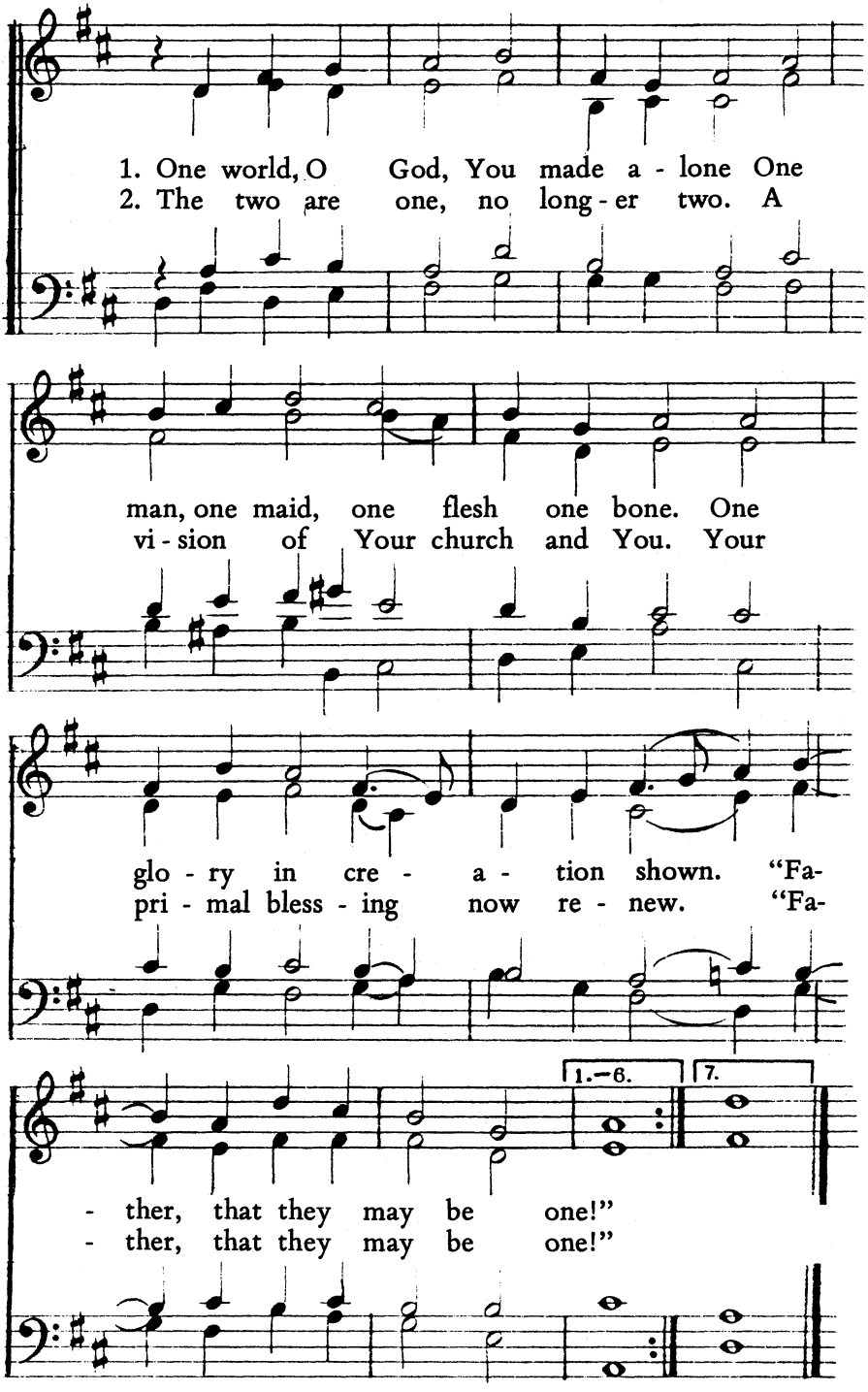
Above everything, we alcoholics must be rid of this selfishness. We must or it kills us. God makes that possible. And there often seems no way of entirely getting rid of self without His aid. . . . Neither could we reduce our self-centeredness much by wishing or trying on our own power. We had to have God's help. (*A.A.*, p. 62)

That is the prescription for the human problem of perfectionism cast in the rhetoric of Alcoholics Anonymous. Those who heed this advice will experience more congruence between the inner life and reality, more enjoyment of an abundant life, more serenity of mind and heart.

But there is an even deeper prescription for the human problem of perfectionism, cast in the rhetoric of Martin Luther:

> At great cost he has saved me from sin, death, and the power of the devil — not with silver or gold, but with his holy and precious blood and his innocent suffering and death. . . .
>
> I believe that I cannot by my own understanding or effort believe in Jesus Christ my Lord, or come to him. But the Holy Spirit has called me through the gospel, enlightened me with his gifts, and sanctified and kept me in true faith.

ONE WORLD, O GOD



Text: Norbert Hattendorf
Tune: Paul Manz

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3. One people claimed and chosen free!
"One God! No others besides Me!"
"O Is-rael, hear, one. . . Lord is He! . .
"Father, that they may be one!"

4. One God and Father above all.
One rebel pride. One sin. One fall.
One Son. One Spirit. . to recall . . .
"Father, that they may be one!"

5. One faith. One water-blended word.
One cup. One bread. One Gospel heard
To rouse one trust. One. . vision stirred. . .
"Father, that they may be one!"

6. Restor Your people. Let them be
Reflection of Your unity.
One reawakened jubilee.
"Father, that they may be one!"

7. One God. One world. One genesis
To loose the human tongue to bless
The Father, Holy Spirit, . . Son! . .
"Father, that they may be one!"

Notes This hymn was written for Tri-Lutheran Convention, Estes Park, Colorado, May 13-16, 1981. The refrain to each verse is from our Lord's "High Priestly" prayer , John 17:21. The reference in verse two is to St. Paul's view of marriage as a symbol of the church. (Ephesians 5:31-32) Verse three recalls the First Commandment, (Exodus 20:3) and the Great "Shema," the creed of Israel. (Deuteronomy 6:4). Verses four and five reflect Ephesians 4:5-6.

Book Reviews

JESUS IN GETHSEMANE. By David M. Stanley, S.J. New York and Ramsey: Paulist Press, 1980. 282 pages. Paper. $7.95.

I read this book on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, a time appropriate not only to the narratives of Gethsemane but also to Stanley's approach. He writes as churchman as well as scholar, intending his book to be both meditation and study, and desiring to edify as well as inform. Before setting his words into print, he had used much of this material in spiritual retreats. He continually defends modern criticism by showing its usefulness, by arguing its congruence with the nature of scripture and tradition, and by referring to papal encyclicals and conciliar pronouncements. From the way he writes, it is obvious that Stanley genuinely cares about both prayer and scholarship and that he winces at uninformed attacks on scientific study of the Bible, as well as at the aridity of some scientific study.

The heart of this book is a series of studies on nine different texts, all of which in Stanley's view interpret the scene in which Jesus struggled in prayer with the Father in Gethsemane on the night of his betrayal: Hebrews 5:7-10; Markan Source A; Markan Source B; Mark 14:26-42; Matthew 26:36-46; Luke 22:39-46; Luke 22:43-44 (a gloss by an early commentator); John 12:20-32; and John 17:1-26.

The author investigates the way in which each evangelist speaks about Jesus as one who prayed and who invited his disciples to pray, and he studies all that each evangelist has to say on the topic of prayer.

Stanley insists on the basic historicity of the Gethsemane event, ridiculing the notion that someone in the early church would have dared invent such a story about Jesus. And he shows how the evangelists and others have used the event in their meditations on Jesus.

Hebrews say Jesus offered his prayer as a priestly sacrifice on behalf of all people and by means of his struggle attained his goal as heavenly intercessor for humankind. Mark portrays Jesus as loving Shepherd filled with pity and concern for his own. Matthew pictures Jesus as Isaac going to his slaughter, trusting the Father and never losing sight of his love. In Luke the disciples are witnesses of the prayer of Jesus and see that prayer is the source of strength for the community of faith in all its future struggles. John has divided the traditional elements, placing the agony and struggle at the end of the ministry (12:20-32) and placing the great prayer before the crucifixion (17:1-26), presenting Jesus' acceptance of his Father's will as the divine answer to the prayer for glorification, the successful completion of his mission, and the disclosure of his identity as son.

There is very much to learn and contemplate in this volume. In dealing with Mark and Matthew the author ventures guesses about the circumstances of the evangelists and the communities for which they wrote. As he approaches Luke and John, however, he speaks of Lukan themes and Johannine topics but is hesitant about suggesting what their circumstances may have been. It is, of course, risky business to venture too much in the way of situation or circumstances. Nearly everyone agrees that the Markan community had experienced the fire of persecution, and that Matthew had wrestled with the synagogue regarding the identity of the people of God. Increasingly it is thought that Matthew faced also Christian enthusiasts of some sort. If Luke was wary of Christian zealotism or revolutionary fervor, and if John was attempting to communicate with people who were attracted to gnostic movements, then rather different conclusions would have to be drawn regarding the use of Gethsemane traditions by those evangelists.

I am very sympathetic with Stanley in his double aim. The scientific study of the Bible and the sterility of some scholarship are under attack in many

quarters. Stanley gives us a glimpse of tensions in the Roman Catholic communion and offers us his prescription for a two-pronged (or wholistic?) approach to the Bible. Nevertheless the most satisfying part of this book (and by far the major part of its bulk) is the careful exegesis of specific passages. Stanley has produced a study which cannot be ignored by future investigators of the prayers of Jesus.

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KERYGMA AND DIDACHE. Society for New Testament Studies, Monograph Series, Volume 37. By James I.H. McDonald. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980. 247 pages. Cloth. $19.95.

During the nineteenth century, the "lives of Jesus" movement produced many different portraits of Jesus which were finally challenged by Martin Kähler and later scholars as being more portraits of the artist than of the Christ. Kähler proclaimed, "The real Christ is the preached Christ, and the preached Christ is the Christ of faith." Thus, apostolic preaching (*kerygma*) became the primary datum by which twentieth-century exegetes understood Christianity in the early church. A second important category, teaching (*didache*), was considered another basic route by which one could enter the thought world of early Christians. The church preached and taught — obviously — and so, by identifying the preaching and teaching one could know the kernel of early Christianity's faith; that position has been axiomatic for much of this century's New Testament criticism.

But when one compares modern views of this preaching-teaching nucleus the with New Testament's own use of these terms, the scholar finds not *one* specific "kernel" but rather a more complex pattern of early Christian communication. This is precisely what McDonald has done in this book, and he suggests that rather than speaking of a basic kerygmatic core of the Christian faith, we need to identify four specific dimensions for early Christian preaching and teaching: prophecy, preaching, instruction, and tradition.

In four chapters, McDonald treats each of these dimensions through identical patterns of exposition and development. First, he covers the Graeco-Roman and Old Testament background for each area. Then (where applicable) he notes John the Baptist's handling and development of this form. Next he treats Jesus' own use of the rhetorical mode. Finally, he studies the apostolic (Pauline, Johannine, etc.) and early Christian treatment and development. In each chapter he concludes his study with a one or two paragraph summary of his findings.

I found McDonald's total treatment concise and thorough. He was especially interesting in his chapter on preaching (*paraclesis*), showing the development of Christian homiletics from midrash to a new literary form in the gospel according to Mark. McDonald should also be commended for his thorough treatment of instruction (*paraenesis*), using the categories developed by William McKane's study of wisdom literature as a basic framework for the whole chapter.

The New Testament student and scholar will find this book's precision, if not its price, appealing. However, several items will get in the way of making this a useful book for some readers. McDonald has a penchant for non-English words and phrases; admittedly, the reader recognizes that many of these are the technical parlance of biblical scholarship, but one cannot help but wonder whether all of this really enhances precision or simply becomes academic hocus-pocus. Secondly, the publisher jams over 70 pages of footnotes into the back of the book. If these were mainly cited references, one could understand this arrangement. But most of McDonald's footnotes are helpful tools for reading his text, and the reader soon tires of

flipping about in the book and being distracted by such foolishness.

But don't let those two points turn you away. If you have the bucks and the inclination, McDonald will provide you with some insight into the development of early Christian theology and rhetoric.

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THROUGH PEASANT EYES: MORE LUCAN PARABLES, THEIR CULTURE AND STYLE. By Kenneth E. Bailey. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980. xiii and 187 pages. Cloth. $15.95.

Bailey picks up where he left off in *Poet and Peasant* (Eerdmans, 1976) by pursuing a literary-cultural approach to the parables in Luke. While not unaware of the approach and results of redaction-criticism, his main interest is to understand the stories in the cultural matrix in which Jesus told them. One might think Jeremias had finished that job, but Bailey brings some new tools to the task: (1) a 20-year experience with the culture of Middle Eastern peasant villages (which he is convinced still function with many of the presuppositions of their first-century counterparts), (2) a broad consultation of the early Arabic and Syriac versions of the Lucan text and the commentaries thereupon, and (3) special attention to the literary structures within the parables.

In the 1976 book, Bailey argued cogently (see *CurTM 5* [1978] 251) for his methodology, coordinated it with recent parable research, and then proceeded to demonstrate the value of that method through the analysis of four parables and two poems in the travel narrative of Luke. In the present volume he extends that project through a study of ten more Lucan parables: The Two Debtors (Lk. 7:36-50); The Fox, the Funeral, and the Furrow (9:57-62); The Good Samaritan (10:25-37); The Rich Fool (12:13-21); Pilate, the Tower, and the Fig Tree (13:1-9); The Great Banquet (14:15-24); The Obedient Servant (17:7-10); The Judge and the Widow (18:1-8); The Pharisee and the Tax Collector (18:9-14); The Camel and the Needle (18:18-30).

Bailey does a careful analysis of the literary structure of each parable, laying out those structures typographically so that the various parallelisms, inverted and otherwise, are visually evident. Though this procedure is somewhat helpful, I found the reconstruction of the cultural contexts by far the most fruitful part of the analysis. Bailey, for example, makes a convincing case that those refusing to attend the Great Banquet are offering excuses which are heard by Middle Eastern ears (now as well as then) as laughable absurdities (buying oxen before trying them out is like purchasing a used car without a test drive). His exposition of the presuppositions of Middle Eastern table hospitality heighten the dramatic actions of the sinful women over against the omissions of the Pharisee host in Luke 7; and that setting, in turn, illuminates the narrative's centerpiece, the story of the Two Debtors. Bailey argues that we are to understand the prayers of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector as public utterances in community worship at the afternoon temple sacrifice. The tax collector's prayer, *hilastheti moi*, is a precise and deliberate participation in that public liturgy, best translated "make atonement for me."

I read this book while teaching a course on Luke-Acts and found myself devoting more and more class time to sharing Bailey's insights. The material is eminently teachable. And when these Lucan parables have turned up as readings in eucharists at which I have presided, I found those same insights profoundly preachable.

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COMMENTARY ON ROMANS. By Ernst Käsemann. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1980. xxix and 428 pages. Cloth. $22.50.

Käsemann frequently opens theo-

logical treasure chests for those who read his works. This commentary will rank as such a theological treasure chest, for it has brought to fruition many of his ideas on the New Testament. Käsemann has sought to open the lock which guards the treasure chest of Romans by using the only key he believes will fit, that very crucial concept, "the righteousness of God."

For Luther this concept provided the liberating tower experience which enabled him to perceive the grace of God, for the righteousness of God was seen as that which God did for us and not what we owe to God. Since Luther the precise nuance of the term has been the source of great debate. Whether the phrase may be a subjective genitive (righteousness as a power which belongs to God and proceeds from him), as objective genitive (righteousness as that which is acceptable in God's eyes and is bestowed by him upon us — the "imputed righteousness" of the Reformers), or a genitive of origin (righteousness as a gift conferred on us by divine grace) has been the topic of discussion in recent exegetical scholarship (cf. Sam William, "The 'Righteousness of God' in Romans," *JBL* 99 [1980]:241-290).

Käsemann affirms the fluidity of the concept in Paul's writings, and he admits that the general tenor of Paul's theology favors the objective genitive in the bulk of the Pauline corpus. But in Romans he believes the term characterizes God's own salvific activity and the divine nature (subjective genitive), as well as the gift aspect (genitive of origin). In the latter aspect the gift never becomes the property of the believers, but always remains the possession of God by virtue of the claim laid on the cosmos by the resurrection. It is primarily the "power which brings salvation," and the gift aspect is subordinate to this. Only as power can it be imparted to believers. Here Käsemann departs from his mentor, Rudolph Bultmann, who placed the emphasis on the gift aspect.

According to Käsemann, Paul thinks in dynamic eschatological or apocalyptic categories. Paul's use of the word righteousness reflects the Old Testament emphasis on *sedek*, which stresses the dynamic relationship of God to his people. God is righteous by virtue of his faithfulness toward the people expressed in the saving acts of deliverance for Israel. This continued faithfulness of God cuminates in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Old Testament categories are behind Paul's usage, for in Romans 3:3-5 Paul connects righteousness and faithfulness. Because God is faithful to his people, he places his claim upon them and transfers them into his kingdom, an act made possible by the resurrection, which claims the entire cosmos for God. (It is the tension between the faithfulness of God toward his chosen people and the rejection of Paul's message by his fellow Jews which leads him to the discussion in Romans 9-11.)

Käsemann's definition leads him to place the emphasis upon the justification of the community rather than the individual. This corporate stress leads him to criticize pietism or any individualistic theology which isolates the faith of believers or bids them come to God on their own. Rather, God comes to the believing community, and the individual is in grace because of participation in the community. Further, righteousness is the power of God which can never become the possession of the believer since it remains the divine gift. Finally, God comes to the believers by virtue of his cosmic claim; they can never approach him.

Käsemann attempts to grapple with the entirety of thought in this epistle rather than dissect it piecemeal. Therefore, the reader is given an interpretative vision into the very heart of Romans and Paul. But to read any one part of the commentary in isolation is to miss the vision of the whole, and to read the entire commentary is a formidable task (as this reader discovered). The commentary is a grand theological exposition rather than a tool to be consulted in sermon preparation. This is not to say it will never affect sermon preparation; no indeed, the commentary will influence the entire theology

of the preacher, and this will manifest itself in many sermons.

The theological exposition will not let this work be soon outdated, for its insights may be the point of departure for theologians and preachers in many future generations. This may be Käsemann's opus magnum. But by the same token the author does not delve into particular issues that confront our generation. Broad theological direction is present, but opinions or direction on specific theological-practical issues are lacking. Sexuality issues raised in Romans 1 are left unanswered except in broad categories. Issues and implications for the Jewish-Christian dialogue are left unresolved after the discussion of Romans 9-11.

The 400-page manuscript might easily have been twice this length; in fact, that might have helped. His arguments and allusions are compact and concise, and frequently the work of previous scholars is mentioned. But one other than a New Testament scholar can become lost in the terse rebuttal of other positions. One wishes that the author could have elucidated his own position on particular points a little more, as well as the positions of others to which he alludes.

This commentary is recommended for anyone willing to grapple with one of the brilliant theologian-exegetes of our age. As Jacob wrestled with God for a blessing, So Käsemann has wrestled with Paul for a theological treasure. Whoever wrestles with Käseman's commentary likewise seeks a treasure, and such treasures never come to the faithful without a struggle.

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THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH. The New International Commentary on the Old Testament. By J. A. Thompson. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980. xxi and 819 pages. Cloth. $22.50.

The commentary series of which this volume is a part is written by scholars who affirm that the Old Testament is God's inspired and authoritative message. The series is, in a word, conservative, and often, as in this case, in the very best sense of that word. Thompson, now retired, displays massive erudition and a fairness to the opinions of others. On critical questions he often admits that it is impossible to arrive at firm conclusions either way, and dogmatism is to be avoided. (cf. p. 117)

Despite the enduring popularity of Jeremiah, we have not had an oversupply of English commentaries. J. P. Hyatt (1956) and E. W. Nicholson (1973-1975) have much worthwhile to say about the deuteronomistic character of the work, but the series for which they wrote shackled them with all too few pages. John Bright's volume in the Anchor Bible (1965) is the only recent full-length treatment, but it is not even half as long as the volume under review. Thompson provides a 135-page introduction, a fresh translation, uncomplicated text critical notes, and an exposition that will be of great value for pastors, and it *requires* no knowledge of the Hebrew language.

That Thompson provides a new alternative does not mean that he has written the ultimate commentary. Part of the difficulty comes in his fence-straddling. He is aware of the case against assigning the new covenant passage to the prophet himself, but holds that the substance, if not the very words, came from Jeremiah. He argues that Jeremiah's remarkable theological insights would have led him to this point, "especially in view of the fact that he was on the verge of stating the doctrine on a number of occasions." But the precise way in which the new covenant is expressed may indicate when and to whom the pericope was addressed.

Similarly, on the prose sermons, Thompson wavers between the views of Bright, who holds they owe a great deal to Jeremiah himself, and Nicholson, who holds that they came from preachers who pressed home the prophet's word to those who were in exile. My own preference is for the position of W. Thiel, who argues that all of the words of the prophet and the

stories about him have been edited by deuteronomistic circles, and that the prose sermons are part of this editing process. Thompson makes no mention of Thiel's work, which was published in 1973.

Textual criticism is another riddle that commentators on Jeremiah must solve, and the author fairly explains the options. Yet his approach is eclectic, arguing that no definite solution is possible. While caution is commendable, the evidence in a passage like 33:14-26 calls for more assertiveness. Thompson notes that the verses are lacking in the Septuagint, yet holds that Jeremiah "no doubt" expounded the message of these verses even if they do not represent his ipsissima verba. In this case, however, the text critical data is supported by content analysis since the prophet's own messianic passage in 23:5-6 has been fully revised to fit a late exilic or post-exilic situation.

Despite these criticisms, this commentary represents a very substantial contribution.

Ralph W. Klein
Christ Seminary — Seminex

A COMMENTARY ON THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS. By Philip Edgecumbe Hughes. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1977. 623 pages. Cloth. $15.95

THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS. By F. F. Bruce. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1964 (7th printing in 1977). 447 pages. Cloth. $10.95.

HEBREWS. By Victor P. Pfitzner. Adelaide, Australia: Lutheran Publishing House, 1979. 256 pages. Paper. $8.95.

Hughes hypothesizes as follows: the readers are contemplating a compromise of disastrous proportions. Faced with daily indignities and the prospect of more severe persecution, they are enticed by teachings threatening the uniqueness of Christ. Specifically they are tempted to assign to angels a dignity above that of Christ and to treat the Mosaic system with its Levitical and Aaronic priesthood as an institution of lasting value.

Hughes together with others (such as Cullmann, F. M. Braun, Spicq, Danielou, Yadin) thinks that Hebrews was written before 70 C.E., while the temple was still standing, to a community of Jewish-Christians in (or near) Palestine who were attracted to teachings like those known from Qumran. The Dead Sea Scrolls testify to the existence of a Jewish community awaiting the advent of two messianic figures, of whom the kingly would be subordinate to the priestly, and both were apparently in some sense to be subordinate to the supreme figure of the archangel Michael, and thus the coming world was thought to be under angelic authority. The new age would see the advent also of the final prophet and the resumption of the sacrificial rites prescribed in the Mosaic law.

To Christians attracted by such beliefs the author of Hebrews has written about

I. Christ superior to the prophets (1:1-3)
II. Superior to the angels (1:4-2:18)
III. Superior to Moses (3:1-4:13)
IV. Superior to Aaron (4:14-10:18)
V. Superior as the new and living way (10:19-12:29)
VI. Concluding exhortations (13:1-25)

Hughes thinks that Hebrews is in form part epistle and part treatise, indeed that it is the most extensively developed and logically sustained piece of theological argumentation in the entire New Testament. That also means, of course, that he stands in the traditional stream of thought according to which the document is primarily doctrinal and theological (as the outline given above also demonstrates).

Hughes believes that the theme of Hebrews is "the absolute supremacy of Christ," and he speaks warmly of "the intrinsic nobility of (the) doctrine" of Hebrews.

Certainly everyone agrees that the work contains theological arguments,

but the error under attack seems to be not so much doctrinal as practical, and the warnings (2:1-4; 3:6-4:2; 5:11-16, etc.) are the heart of the matter and not subsidiary. In keeping with his convictions about the background of the work, Hughes quite naturally believes that the author is more likely to be someone like Barnabas (associated with priesthood and with Palestine) rather than Apollos (associated with Hellenistic eloquence and Alexandria).

Hughes has filled his commentary with good things. He is in constant dialogue with an impressive array of great commentators of the past and present. Especially striking and noteworthy is the continual reference to the fathers and reformers of the church (Chrysostom, Alcuin, Peter Lombard, Aquinas, Erasmus, Lefevre d'Etaples, Luther, Calvin). From the post-Reformation and modern period he cites most frequently Bengel, Delitzsch, Westcott, Moffatt, Spicq, Hering, Bruce, and Teodorico. Conspicuously absent are references to the monographs and commentaries of people like Ernst Kaesemann, Otto Michel, Otto Kuss, and George Buchanan.

There is nothing trendy about the commentary. Certainly nothing in it even begins to approximate the effort popular in some quarters to play down or soft pedal essentialist or high Christologies in favor of functional or humanistic perspectives. There is also no attempt at structural criticism, nor any form criticism such as the kind which sees pre-Hebrews formulas in 1:3; 4:12-13; 7:3. There is nothing about baptismal formulas or confessions (some of the above pieces and also see 3:1; 4:14; 10:19-29) or about eucharistic allusions in 2:14; 6:4-5; 9:1-14,20; 10:19-20; 13:9-11. The author offers just solid, no-nonsense comment.

A few words may be said about the commentary of F. F. Bruce, first published in 1964 and in its seventh printing in 1977, offered by the same publisher.

The works have much in common and share more than a publisher. Both authors are prolific writers, and both are earnest, devout evangelicals. Both are careful scholars, widely read. Both think Hebrews was written before 70 C.E., while the temple still stood in Jerusalem.

A few differences may be noted. Bruce more than Hughes recognizes that Hebrews is not only a theological (or Christological, soteriological) document, but a parenetic or hortatory document dealing with the temptation to relax faith and hope and morals. And while both Bruce and Hughes think of the recipients as having once held Jewish convictions of a sectarian or nonconformist sort (similar to the doctrines and practices of the Qumraners), Bruce thinks it more likely that the recipients lived in Rome rather than in or near Palestine. Furthermore Hughes' book is a much longer volume, and partly for that reason Bruce is easier reading, more pointed, more focused. In both commentaries Greek is in the footnotes, but Bruce's notes are longer and more detailed, and therefore he offers much more help on questions of the Greek text and vocabulary and syntax. Very frequently Bruce devotes a half page to his notes. Hughes comments on the RSV and Bruce on the American Standard Version.

Far shorter than the works of Hughes and Bruce, Pfitzner's volume at first arouses fewer expectations. Designed for a lay readership, it is not only shorter but deliberately avoids the whole technical apparatus of footnotes and foreign languages.

On the question of date Pfitzner has much in common with Hughes and Bruce, agreeing that Hebrews was early, probably written in the mid-sixties while the temple still served Israel. But then with regard to destination he sides more with Bruce, thinking of Rome or Corinth and rejecting the notion that the recipients were former Jewish priests or Qumran sectarians in Judea.

While all three of these commentators agree that Paul did not write the letter to the Hebrews, Bruce and Hughes both go out of their way to interpret Hebrews in what they take to be a Pauline fashion. Their comments on the means of salvation owe much to

Anselm and his penal or satisfaction theory. So the death of Jesus is understood primarily as for sinners, on their behalf, in their place, assuming the burden of their sin and its punishment on himself so that his death is the source of salvation.

The singularity of Hebrews at this point is obscured; for the death of Jesus in Hebrews — at least in some key passages — is the priestly preliminary to his entering the heavenly sanctuary. It is part of the process by which he has now taken his seat at God's right hand where he acts as exalted intercessor and where he has been installed as majestic source of salvation.

Unlike both Hughes and Bruce, Pfitzner interprets the repeated use of the language of "perfection" in Jesus of cultic initiation, takes the death and resurrection together as the one great sacrificial moment, and understands Jesus' death primarily as consecration from defilement so that Christians may enter God's presence.

Pfitzner also tries hard to focus on the practical and hortatory character of Hebrews, and he examines at least briefly the notion that "the confession" (3:1, etc.) may be a primitive baptismal creed.

Thus Pfitzner is in some ways rather more successful than Hughes or Bruce in focusing on the uniqueness of the thought and expressions of the letter to the Hebrews.

All three of these books are substantive contributions to our understanding of Hebrews, valuable guides and useful companions to serious pilgrims, students, and preachers.

Robert H. Smith
Christ Seminary — Seminex

THE SALVATION OF THE GENTILES
By Jacques Dupont. New York: Paulist Press, 1979. 163 pages. Paper. $5.95

It is good to have this set of essays (originally published as a collection in French in 1967) from the pen of an expert who has devoted many years to a study of Luke-Acts. In 1950 Dupont issued a report on studies concerned with the Acts of the Apostles during the period 1940-50 (*Les Problèmes du Livre des Actes d' après les travaux récents*). In 1964 his English book on *The Sources of the Acts* was issued just four years after it appeared in French. That was a technical discussion of the methods and results of source-critical and form-critical analysis of the text.

The present book consists of essays more popular in their appeal and more theological in their orientation. In the first of them Dupont describes Luke's basic purpose as desiring to show how the inclusion of the Gentiles was prophesied in Scripture, that is to say willed by God and guided by the Holy Spirit.

Luke edited his account of "The First Christian Pentecost" (Essay 2) so that traditions of the theophany at Mount Sinai and the giving of the Law can be detected in it. Luke presents the phenomenon of speaking in tongues not as a merely spectacular and enthusiastic moment but as proof of divine ratification of the inclusion of new peoples.

"Conversion in Acts" (Essay 3) is a process of turning away from sin and towards the Lord in a decisive change in life which results in walking in a new way. Dupont recognizes how Luke specifies that the one great sin of the population of Jerusalem and Judea was the execution of Jesus, but exactly how that sin relates to other sins in Luke's thinking is not much illumined by the discussion, so helpful in other respects. Nor does he comment on the fact that in Acts so many of the converts are described not as outcasts but as successful, strong, and good.

Nicely done is the chapter (4) on "Community of Goods in the Early Church". Dupont explores the ways that Luke incorporates and transcends Hellenistic (especially Platonic and Pythagorean themes and ideals concerning the Golden Age and friendship).

In the remaining two essays Dupont investigates Luke's interpretation of the Psalms and other Old Testament passages.

Robert H. Smith
Christ Seminary Seminex

JESUS, POLITICS AND SOCIETY. By Richard J. Cassidy. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1978. 230 pages. Cloth. $15.95.

This extremely interesting book arrived with jacket recommendations from F.F. Bruce, F.W. Danker, D. Daube, R.P. Martin, B.M. Metzger, and others. They commend the book for the freshness of its approach, the seriousness of its intent, and the thoughtfulness and care of the research.

The author is a Roman Catholic priest in charge of a large archdiocesan office on justice and peace. He examines in a mature and penetrating fashion Luke's portrait of the social and political stance of Jesus: his concern for the poor, the infirm, the outcast and women, and his attitude toward priests and political officials.

Against those many who regard Luke as writing a kind of political apologetic meant to reassure the pagans that Christianity is no threat to Roman rule, Cassidy concludes that Jesus was a threat, because he did not yield deference to Roman or Jewish rulers and because his practices constituted a serious challenge to the existing order.

For all its carefulness, the book's conclusions are neither as fresh nor as radical as the author seems to think. He believes Jesus espoused nonviolence and so removes himself from the liberationist camp. What Cassidy most wants to do is rescue Luke from the hands of the otherworldly, and what he does very well is to insist that God is active and interested and involved in human affairs on this planet.

One substantial weakness of the work is that the author has confined his investigation to the gospel and has excluded Acts from his horizon. It would have been both important and interesting to see how Cassidy would deal with that half of Luke's work which is clearly less revolutionary, less fresh, less radical, and less challenging than the gospel on issues of society and politics.

Robert H. Smith

WHERE FAITH AND ECONOMICS MEET. By David M. Beckmann. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1981. 154 pages. Paper. $5.95.

Call it "holy materialism." For Beckmann this blend between religion and economics is a fundamental insight. He holds that the values of economic culture have been shaped by the Lord and reflect, although only in distorted and broken ways, God's own character.

Six values permeate modern, economic culture: this-worldliness, progress, reason, liberty, equality, and fraternity. Stemming from the Enlightenment and the European bourgeoisie, these values are rooted in biblical experience, at least partially. Christian this-worldliness should be hearty in enjoyment, but modest in accumulation. A Christian will work for progress, but be relatively pessimistic about human achievement. The same mixture of godly roots and broken realization characterize the other values as well.

On the basis of these values, the author analyzes the major economic dichotomies of our day: the clashes between right and left, rich and poor. The capitalist right believes in markets, the socialist left in planning or bureaucracy. Capitalism, in his view, fosters liberty, but often at the expense of equality and fraternity; socialism may serve equality and fraternity, but care little about individual liberties. Borrowing a theme from Christians in the German Democratic Republic, Beckmann suggests a critical solidarity for Christians in capitalist societies. We should be grateful for the liberty we enjoy, but critical of the inequality, by race and income, which often characterizes capitalist societies.

This is the fourth book for Beckmann, a graduate of Christ Seminary — Seminex, and a well-trained economist carrying out his ministry at the World Bank. He is a self-conscious Lutheran (the final chapter in this book on economics deals with grace!), who is relatively optimistic about the possibilities of economic development and critical of those who try to duplicate first century economics in our times.

Neither the radical left nor the evangelical right is likely to be particularly happy with his analyses or prognostications. He believes, for example, that the long climb to world affluence is not coming to an end, that simpler lifestyles do not necessarily help the poor abroad, that the worst aspects of world poverty might be overcome by the year 2,000, and that mass reductions in overall consumption actually harm the world's poor. Yet he recognizes the importance of political involvement if we are really to be helpful to developing countries.

There probably cannot be a book on economics which would meet with any reader's unanimous agreement. Even where I disagreed, however, I found myself challenged, and I grudgingly had to admit that David Beckmann just might be right after all. He ends with this zinger: God's persistent presence in the world can give hope for it and a sense of holy joy in material things.

Ralph W. Klein
Christ Seminary — Seminex

CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: SHARING OUR STORY AND VISION. By Thomas H. Groome. San Francisco: Harper and Row. xvii and 296 pages. Cloth. $12.95.

In Part IV Thomas Groome spells out the movements of his Shared Praxis model of Christian Education: 1) the participants are invited to name their own activity concerning the topic for attention (present action); 2) they are invited to reflect on why they do what they do, and what the likely or intended consequences of their actions are (critical reflection); 3) the educator makes present to the group the Christian community Story concerning the topic and the faith response it invites (Story and its Vision); 4) the participants are invited to appropriate the Story to their lives in a dialectic with their own stories (dialectic between story and stories); 5) there is opportunity to choose a personal faith response for the future (dialectic between Vision and visions).

The overall purpose of Thomas Groome is to answer six questions for Christian educators. As indicated, his Part IV answers the question of "How". Part I speaks of the nature of Christian Religious Education, the "What". There Groome supplies his definition of the enterprise by saying that Christian religious education deliberately pays attention to the activity of God in our present, to the Story of the Christian faith community, and to the Vision of God's Kingdom, the seeds of which are already among us. Part II speaks of the "Why" of the discipline, the purpose of Christian religious education. The ultimate purpose is the Kingdom of God in Jesus Christ, while the immediate purpose is the Christian faith as a lived reality. Faith results in human freedom as a concrete outcome in life, a freedom which is spiritual, personal, and social-political.

Part III deals with the "Where," the context of Christian religious education. While he notes the importance of the forces of socialization in the formation of people within and outside the church, he insists that the educational task will often require calling into question the socialization that is taking place. The "When" of the educational enterprise is dealt with in Part V where Groome discusses readiness for Christian religious education. He makes a case, on the basis of Jean Piaget's findings in cognitive development, for the use of his Shared Praxis model with children as young as age seven or eight. Finally, in Part VI, the author speaks of the "Who" in Christian religious education, the partners in the task. Students are always to be viewed as subjects, not objects. The educator, meanwhile, has three responsibilities: to make present the Story; to propose the Vision; and to choose life.

Groome is disarmingly modest when he states that his Shared Praxis model is a way of doing Christian education rather than *the* way. This reviewer is thankful for that modesty and for the gift of this model, which he has already put to use in his own Christian education practice.

Robert Conrad
Christ-Seminary — Seminex

GREAT EXPECTATIONS: AMERICA AND THE BABY BOOM GENERATION. By Landon Y. Jones. New York: Coward, McCann and Geoghegan, 1980. 380 pages. Cloth. $15.95.

This book is important for ministers because it points to the problems that a significant generation is having in the present and predicts what the problems will be in the future. The generation of which Jones speaks is the one born from 1946 through 1964, years in which over 76 million people arrived, comprising one-third of our present population. The peak birth years were 1954-64, years in which over 4 million babies were born annually. Jones contends that this generation is worth studying because its sheer size is having a lasting impact on American society.

Of particular interest to ministers are the problems that the baby-boomers are experiencing. They are marrying less and marrying later. Their number creates a squeeze on jobs and housing. A high proportion of the women work and couples have a high rate of divorce.

Jones hypothesizes that baby-boomers have trouble with commitment. When things don't work out according to expectations they switch. Baby-boomers believe in self-fulfillment. It affects not only their marriages but their parenting. Jones claims that baby-boomers are unavailable to their children. They want to live their own lives and have agreed with their children that they won't kill themselves for the kids now nor will the kids have to look after them later. That attitude can cause problems in old age.

As the generation moves into midlife, many of the career women will face the dilemma of Catch-35: have a child now or never. Men and women will continue to struggle for jobs and housing. Their children, much fewer in number than they themselves, are members of the baby-bust generation with their own more conforming and materialistic values. The baby-boomers will significantly increase the over-65 population, especially around 2010 and thereafter. If there are problems with services for the elderly now, we haven't seen anything yet!

Not all the book's generalizations hold. As one of my students stated, there is quite a difference between a person born in 1948 and one born in 1958, even when they are children from the same family. Nevertheless, there are important findings here for people dealing with marital and parenting problems, and there are indications of important ministry needs for the future.

Robert Conrad

THE HOLINESS REVIVAL OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY. By Melvin Easterday Dieter. Studies in Evangelicalism, No. 1. Ed. by Donald W. Dayton and Kenneth E. Rowe. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1980. 366 pages. Cloth. $17.50.

John Wesley's prediction that one day "sanctifications would be as common as conversions" is borne out in this look at those who sought a "second work of grace" in holiness. The author hails from the Wesleyan Methodist Church, one of numerous present-day Holiness denominations whose roots can be traced back to the early 1800s. Traditional Methodists held that holiness was a gradual process, learned over a lifetime, but in the nineteenth century Charles Finney, the lay evangelists Walter and Phoebe Palmer, the great "second blessing" camp meetings after the Civil War, and scores of "come-outer" churches believed the perfection could be attained instantly and then practiced for one's lifetime.

It is a complex story, and one that Dieter knows well. As the first in a projected series on evangelical religion, this volume is an excellent "in-house" history of the non-Calvinist tradition that contributes much to the neo-evangelical movement in our own day. Lutherans, so long schooled in the justification theology of the Reformation, may find the arguments about cultivating righteousness through en-

tire sanctification missing the mark, or even, as the nineteenth century critics of the Holiness factions maintained, tainted with semi-Pelagianism. But then Lutherans might profit from exposure to those who have always believed that both the church and the world ought more perfectly conform to the standards of God's will.

Milt Sernett
Syracuse University

TRANS-ATLANTIC REVIVALISM: POPULAR EVANGELICALISM IN BRITAIN AND AMERICA, 1790-1865. (Contributions to American History, No. 75.) By Richard Carwardine. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1978. xvii and 249 pages. Cloth. $18.95.

Carwardine has painstakingly collected and evaluated massive evidence. He reaches the conclusion that from 1790 to 1865 the dominant influence in the area of revivalism flowed from the United States to Britain. Part of this movement, Carwardine points out, is due to the fact that revivalism did not gain wide acceptance in British religious circles and, as a result, did not develop any major preachers.

James Caughey and Charles Finney are the main subjects of his investigation, but he has reviewed the writings of more than 100 other evangelists. The quotations from their sermons make this book an important contribution to the history of Christian thought in the United States and Britain.

Herbert T. Mayer
Christ Seminary — Seminex

AND YET IT MOVES: DREAM AND REALITY OF THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT. By Ernst Lange. Translated by Edwin Robertson. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979. 175 pages. Paper. $7.95

No one who has read the New Testament lately can fail to be scandalized by the divisions in the church of the undivided Christ. No one who has a concern for life and peace of the world can be disinterested in the ecumenical movement's painful efforts to shape the World Council of Churches (WCC) into an instrument for the unity of the church and humankind.

Ernst Lange, while serving on the staff of the WCC, was asked to write a report on the 1971 meeting of the Faith and Order Commission at Louvain, Belgium. What he produced is a fascinating study of the anatomy of the WCC, to see whether it had the potential to fulfill its aim "to call the churches to the goal of visible unity in one faith and in one eucharistic fellowship expressed in worship and in common life in Christ and to advance towards that unity in order that the world may believe."

This book could only have been written by an "insider," one who could feel every twinge of pain in the body of the WCC, but who also had a special concern with the preaching of the Gospel and an equally passionate concern that the ecumenical movement keep moving toward its goal.

Lange shows that the WCC is "organized powerlessness." It can produce excellent studies — and has! It can issue stirring calls for inner renewal in the churches and deeper involvement in the life and death issues of humanity — and has! But it has no way to influence praxis. Church leaders, who often participate in ecumenical meetings, assent to and loudly applaud the "consensus" statements brought forth in agony (and they are amazingly many and good), are unable to effect change in the parochialism of their churches.

Ecumenical theologians do not want to be considered stooges or hirelings of the churches. Therefore they must be "out on the edge" in their exploration. On the other hand, churches do not try to control those theologians lest they have to assume responsibility for them and follow through on the results of such studies. This they can do if they are prepared to renounce the besetting sin of institutional triumphalism. There are few who can do that in our "success" oriented society.

We all rejoice over the promising advances made in ecumenism on the local

level. Let us not forget that the climate which made these efforts possible was created by the ecumenical spirit of the World Council of Churches. Reading this account of its problems will open our eyes and hearts to the struggle of the men and women who have engaged in this Sisyphean task to actualize the dream which, if it became a reality, would mean the death of the World Council of Churches.

Martin L. Kretzmann
Wauwatosa, Wisconsin

MISSION AND EXISTENCE: AN INTRODUCTION TO CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY. By Langdon Gilkey. New York: Seabury, 1979. 257 pages. Cloth. $10.95

After various *Whirlwinds* (Naming, Reaping) of specialized theological studies, Gilkey (University of Chicago Divinity School) has stepped back to present what he characterizes as a "simple, reflective statement about the content of the Christian faith." Aware of each generation's need to articulate theology in terms of and to its own age, Gilkey attempts to fill what he feels to be a void in recent years.

The normal tension of the theological task involves clarifying the symbols and traditions of the Christian faith in terms of human existence. Gilkey feels that this tension helps define the task, for human existence analyzed in depth gives clues to the meaning of the Christian faith, and faith gives proper interpretation to human existence.

Gilkey's is hardly a "simple statement." The depth of his inquiry and the categories of process theology preclude that. It is certainly reflective, however, and rewarding, too, at least in the clarity of the questions, and the openness of the response. Is there no way beyond the limitation of sexist language? Must we refer to God as the Parent Almighty and his/her Gospel?

Henry Rowold
Concordia Seminary
Chia Yi Taiwan

Two new books confronting fundamentalism

Born Againism
Perspectives on a Movement
By ERIC W. GRITSCH

Tracing the born-again movement from its origins, this new book gives a critical perspective on what has become one of the most powerful and popular movements of our day. The author's ecumenical focus should promote honest dialog on this vital aspect of contemporary religious life. (June) $5.95 paper

Biblical Authority or Biblical Tyranny?
Scripture and the Christian Pilgrimage
By WILLIAM COUNTRYMAN

A positive statement about the Bible, asking us to read it honestly, as we have it. The author accepts the Bible's authority as God's word, spoken through the inspired understanding of other people, who like us, were also "on pilgrimage." An excellent critical resource for understanding the Bible and how it can cause people to reevaluate their lives. $5.95 paper

At bookstores or from **FORTRESS PRESS**
2900 Queen Lane, Philadelphia, Pa. 19129

Briefly Noted

Companion to Narnia (Harper and Row, $12.95) is just that: an indispensable handbook, containing hundreds of indexed entries to Narnia and the other lands washed by enchanted seas. Most of the alphabetized entries are short, but there are 26 pages on Aslan, with 94 footnotes. Kids (of all ages) will love the illustrations and the maps of the voyage of the Dawn Treader, of Narnia, and of the Silver Chair. The author, Paul F. Ford, himself a former Benedictine monk and now professor at Fuller Theological Seminary, wrote this little encyclopedia so that Lewis might better be our spiritual pilgrim-companion. Put this on the buy list for the church library.

The New Century Bible Commentary is a splendid series based on the Revised Standard Version. The series first appeared in cloth binding, about a decade ago, at relatively high prices. It is a pleasure to welcome and to recommend heartily the following volumes reissued by Eerdmans in inexpensive, paperback editions: **Exodus,** by J. P. Hyatt (1971; $7.95); **The Book of Job,** by H. H. Rowley (1970; $7.95); **I & II Corinthians,** by F. F. Bruce (1971; $6.95). All three well-known scholars live up to their advanced billing; bold type and simple layout make it possible to find information in a jiffy.

In **We Sing Your Praise, O Lord** (Augsburg, $1.75) W. A. Poovey provides dramas based on six favorite hymns: Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me; Take My Life; O Zion, Haste; This is my Father's World; O Master, Let me Walk With Thee; and O God, Our Help in Ages Past. Poovey assures the reader that the plays do not require elaborate settings or outstanding acting performances. They are meant for parish use and could form a series for Lent. An unexpanded edition contains introductions to the hymns and Lenten meditations based on them. Its subtitle is **Dramas and Meditations on Six Favorite Hymns** ($4.50).

Richard A. Norris, Jr. provides the many things needful for a proper evaluation of **The Christological Controversy** (sc. in the early church [Fortress, $6.95]). In thirty-one pages he lays out the issues and describes the players in the drama; and then in some 120 pages he lets the players say their piece in their own way. Editor William G. Rusch points out the importance of in-depth knowledge of the patristic period for proper ecumenical discussion today. The series continues with **The Trinitarian Controversy** (Fortress, $6.95), edited and translated by William G. Rusch. The primary texts here cover the period from 319 C.E. (the preaching of Arius) to 419 C.E. (the completion of Augustine's *On The Trinity*). The main ways in which this controversy were to be resolved were already clear by the Council of Constantinople in 381 C.E.

The Theologia Germanica of Martin Luther, now in a new edition by Bengt Hoffman (Paulist, $7.95) was a treatise first published around 1350, but republished by Luther in 1518. The Reformer prized this volume almost as much as the Bible and the works of Augustine. As a mystical-ethical tract, it describes the soul's relationship to Christ, the wiles of the devil working through our nature, such obstacles to faith as self-will and pride, and the Christian paradox between liberation from rule and obligation to rule.

The Library of Christian Classics presents **Luther: Early Theological Works** (Westminster, $9.95). In this paperback reprint James Atkinson presents English translations of Luther's Commentary on Hebrews, 1517-18, his Disputation against Scholastic Theology, 1517, the Heidelberg Disputation, 1518, and his answer to Latomus of Louvain, 1521. Though not as famous as the 95 Theses of 1517 or the Three Treatises of 1520, these four works round out the picture of the great reformer in his formative period.

Maureen Muldoon has compiled **Abortion: An Annotated Indexed Bibliography** (Edwin Mellen Press, $24.95). There are 3,397 entries arranged alphabetically. An index divides them into 353 headings. These

in turn have been collected in categories such as ethical aspects, medical and social aspects, and legal aspects. Under Lutheranism there is only one entry and that from 1967. Richard John Neuhaus shows up, in addition, with an article in *Commonwealth* though his name is misspelled. Still this index makes accessible a great deal of research and opinion on one of the hottest issues of the day.

One of the most outstanding evangelical exegetes of our day is F. F. Bruce. Now seventy, he has compiled a kind of spiritual and intellectual autobiography, consisting of a rewritten version of 24 articles first published in *The Witness*, a magazine of the Open Brethren, his own denomination. Though conservative, he wants to be called only an evangelical. Why? "On many points of New Testament criticism I find myself differing from such post-Bultmannians as Ernst Käsemann and Günther Bornkamm, but critical differences become insignificant in the light of their firm understanding and eloquent expositions of the Pauline gospel of justification by faith, which is the very heart of evangelical Christianity." Eerdmans is the publisher, **In Retrospect: Remembrance of Things Past** the title, and $13.95 the price.

To mark Professor Bruce's 70th birthday, 16 of his former students at Sheffield and Manchester have written essays for a jubilee volume: **Pauline Studies** (Eerdmans, $19.95). Edited by Donald A. Hagner and Murray J. Harris, the volume focuses on Paul's life and theology and on the study of various concepts and pericopes in the Pauline corpus.

John A. T. Robinson first came to popular attention with his strident *Honest to God*. In **The Roots of a Radical** (Crossroad, $10.95), a series of his essays from the 1970s, he demonstrates that he can still turn a nifty phrase on social ethics, violence, nuclear power, laws dealing with sex, and assorted New Testament concerns (Zacchaeus, the Unjust Steward, Judas). He feels called today to be twice as rooted (the Incarnation is an absolutely non-negotiable doctrine) and twice as radical. Though much of his recent New Testament publications have been conservative (the whole canon was written before 70 C.E.), he finds himself more radical than ever on the key political issues of the day.

1981 marked the centennial of Teilhard de Chardin's birth. Naturally, publishers marked this anniversary with books exploring the life and thought of this Jesuit priest and scientist. In **The Spirituality of Teilhard de Chardin** (Winston Press, $5.95) Robert Faricy, S.J., draws on retreat notebooks and other writings to examine Teilhard's spirituality of Christian life in the world and his focus on Jesus Christ risen. For him Christ formed the Omega of his theory of evaluation. **The Spirit of the Earth** (Seabury, $6.95), edited by Jerome Perlinski, is a collection of essays in response to Teilhard's life and vision. The topics are personal and wide-ranging, dealing with international relations, brain research, personal environment, and much more. Finally, Thomas M. King rummaged through cryptic sayings found in the diaries, notebooks, and correspondence and discovered a strain of mysticism. In **Teilhard's Mysticism of Knowing** (Seabury, $14.95), King recounts a fidelity to truth that lasted until the end, in 1955, though Teilhard was forbidden by the church and the Jesuits to publish his philosophic and religious thoughts. The real significance of Teilhard is his exuberant claim that in the very act of scientifically achieving he knew God.

David Biley Harned believes that the Apostles' Creed is neither a summary of Christian beliefs nor a loyalty oath, but a statement of our identity as people who have been born anew through the Spirit and who now live in Christ. He analyzes the creed as a narrative or recital of the one who as new Adam repairs all that the old Adam has done. These presuppositions form the basis for his **Creed and Personal Identity: The Meaning of the Apostles' Creed** (Fortress, $7.95).

C. Peter Wagner, well-known theo-

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logian and church growth exponent, has prepared a handy condensed manual, **Your Church can be Healthy** (Abingdon, $4.95), explaining some of the basic tenets of this school. Case histories add to the appeal of the book for those who wish to understand the church growth movement better. (Herbert T. Mayer)

In **Festivals and Commemorations** (Augsburg, $15.00), Philip H. Pfatteicher has provided a handbook to the calendar in the **Lutheran Book of Worship**. He provides a biography of each person commemorated, with frequent bibliographic references and suggestions about additional people who could be remembered on the day. Often readings from the persons commemorated or hymns which they composed are furnished. The propers from the Lutheran, Roman Catholic, and Episcopal traditions are listed, in addition to the hymn of the day, suggestions for prayers, the appropriate preface, and the recommended liturgical color.

Looking for reliable, relatively inexpensive reference works on the Bible to recommend to lay people? You could do a lot worse than **Eerdman's Concise Bible Handbook** ($9.95) and **Eerdman's Concise Bible Encyclopedia** ($8.95). These are pocket-sized abridgements of popular clothbound editions. The handbook is a combination one-volume commentary and introduction to each biblical book. Though it is conservative in tone (no JEDP or Second Isaiah, and Daniel is dated to the sixth century, but Mark is held to be the first gospel), it is not obsessed with such questions and contains really excellent short essays on issues like the canon, chronology, miracles, covenants, and sacrifices. Historical charts, maps, and effective use of drawing and modern printing layouts place this book head and shoulders above something like *Halley's Bible Handbook*. The *Encyclopedia* is basically an abridged Bible dictionary. Its brief, nontechnical entries would hardly satisfy someone who had been trained at a seminary, but children and those without advanced education will love it.

What are they Saying about Creation? (Paulist, $2.95) is a recent synthesis of Scriptual and ecclesiastical tradition, addressed to the contemporary world. The Christian evolutionist, writes Zacharay Hayes, O.F.M., finds the unity of the human race in its common destiny in Christ through the gracious love of God, and not in the fact that we are all derived from the same earthly material through a biological chain of cause and effect. As might be expected in a Roman Catholic discussion, the views of Teilhard de Chardin are given high prominence, including his assertion that the last stage of human evolution is to be identified with the convergence of the world on its final point, Christ-Omega.

Myths in the Old Testament (SCM Press, $4.95) is a translation of an important monograph by three Danish scholars, Benedikt Otzen, Hans Gottleib, and Knud Jeppesen. For them myth speaks of things that occur outside historical time and space, and which only coincide with history during the cultic repetition of the primal event, especially at the New Year festival. Since people experience in the cult the reality which myth expresses, the cult forms a bridge between the suprahuman world outside space and time and the historical world of human beings. The three have written chapters on the use of myth in Genesis, in the Psalms, and in the prophetic literature. They recognize the decisive role played by salvation history in Israel, but claim that the presence of such paired opposites as defeat and restoration, weal and woe, and even judgment and salvation shows the decisive influence of the world of myth.

The Son of Man in the Teaching of Jesus (Cambridge, $24.50) is the second book by A. J. B. Higgins on this subject. He believes that authentic sayings about the Son of man in a messianic sense are to be sought only among the future sayings. His thesis: Jesus confidently expected vindication of his mission after his death by being given, in the presence of God, a status of exaltation that involved the judg-

mental functions traditionally associated with the apocalyptic Son of man.

Benno Przybylski contends that the proper background for Matthew's concept of righteousness is the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Tannaitic literature. In **Righteousness in Matthew and his World of Thought** (Cambridge, $24.50), he proposes that Matthew defined as a disciple that person who lived according to the greater righteousness and was saved by means of Jesus. Since such a person was not properly religious in a Jewish sense, Matthew discarded the designation "righteous one" in favor of disciple.

Edward Schillebeeckx provides an **Interim Report on the Book Jesus & Christ** (Crossroad, $9.95). In this book he clarifies the hermeneutical principles on the basis of which his two massive "Jesus books" were written. One could sum up his major endeavor: "In the man Jesus the revelation of the divine and the disclosure of the nature of true, good and really happy men and women . . . completely coincide in one and the same person." In Jesus, God reveals his own being by willing to be salvation for humanity.

Keith F. Nickle invites the nonspecialist to benefit from scholarly inquiry in **The Synoptic Gospels: An Introduction** (John Knox, $6.95). He sketches how the earliest Christians retold the stories they remembered about Jesus and how they interpreted and adapted those stories to meet changing conditions. He also clearly lays out the concerns and motives which prompted Matthew, Mark, and Luke to compose their narrative versions of the public ministry and death of Jesus. This is very high quality popularization.

Jack Corbett and Elizabeth Smith are the authors of **Becoming A Prophetic Community** (John Knox, $7.95). In Part One Corbett defines the prophetic task and relates it to socio-economic, political, and international affairs. In Part Two Smith describes more than 100 contemporary models of the prophetic community. They range from Gleaners Statewide (a California group that salvages food that would otherwise go to waste) to Second Mile House (a drop-in center for disturbed youth in Maryland).

Hermeneutics is one of the current buzz words in theology, and Richard E. Palmer's **Hermeneutics** (Northwestern University, $5.95) provides important orientation to this field. He reviews the work of Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Heidegger, and Gadamer, with the latter two given the most prominence. While many of us interpret as if the text were an object and place high value on our objectivity, Palmer pushes for dialogue with texts in place of dissection and values the subjectivity of the interpreter. The philosophical approach of phenomenology, so important for understanding Paul Ricoeur, receives clear definitions.

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Volume IV of the **Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament** (Eerdmans, $22.50) is now available. Containing seventy-three words (from *z'b* wolf to *hms* leaven), this volume discusses etymology and parallels in other languages, and each word's secular and theological range of meanings. Among the more important words discussed are "remember," "new,", "sin," "life," "wise," "dream," "covet," and "violence."

The Nag Hammadi Library, edited by James M. Robinson, was given an extensive review in our December 1979, issue (pp. 367-370). This important collection of Gnostic documents has now been reissued in a paperback edition (Harper and Row, $9.95)

J. T. E. Renner prepared the commentary on **Psalms** in the lay-oriented and conservative Chi Rho Commentary Series (Lutheran Publishing House, Adelaide, $4.95. The author equivocates on Davidic authorship in the introduction, but follows a moderate form critical tradition in interpreting 50 of the Psalms which are commonly read in the Christian calendar. The psalms are discussed section by section on the basis of the RSV. Each discussion ends with a section entitled "Theological Thrust," in which Renner makes appropriate Christian applications.

The 20 essays printed in **Interpreting the Gospels** (Fortress, $13.50) were originally published in *Interpretation*. They ask: why do we have four gospels and not one? what are the current trends in interpreting each of the four? how does each gospel enrich the message of Jesus? what are the key items on each gospel's theological agenda?

In **Moses and the Deuteronomist** (Seabury, $17.95), Robert Polzin offers a literary study of the first part of the Deuteronomistic history (Deuteronomy, Joshua, and Judges). While not avoiding historical criticism altogether, the methods of modern literary analysis and the hermeneutical posture of Heidegger and Gadamer predominate. Edgar Krentz wrote in 1975 that historical study prevents too rapid modernizing of a text, but Polzin argues against him that to concentrate the search for a text's meaning in the author's original situation and intent may be a contemporary subjective element in the discussion. There *are* merits to the literary methods Polzin employs, but many will find it emphasizes too much the structure of the words over what the words themselves express. For many of us Deut. 29:29 sums up the theology of the Deuteronomistic historian; in this book it is not even mentioned.

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