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CURRENTS in theology and mission

The Shape of our Context
Martin E. Marty

Augustana in Reformed Tradition
Arthur C. Cochrane

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Change in All Around I See

Five years ago few of us knew the definition of Ayatollah or the whereabouts of Kabul, Kampuchea, or Three Mile Island. A year ago we were debating SALT II; today we're debating whether women should register for the draft. It is hard to resist the temptation to put the words "and decay" back into the title of this introduction though we all know, deep down, that change is a bit more complicated than its description in Henry Lyte's grand old hymn.

Martin E. Marty opens the discussion by shifting our vision from Grand Avenue (by which the seminary sits) to a grand-scale view of the Christian world. Our changing context for mission and ministry is formed both by the many who (almost literally) pick up the cross and follow, and by the great spurts of Christian growth in the Southern hemisphere and among women. The context of today's separatist or tribal church has hard edges: discipline, zeal, absolutism, conformity, and fanaticism. Surely there's no need for us to serve up more hors d'oeuvres from Marty's usual five-course spread, but we urge you to memorize his bottom line: "There is no danger of evangelically catholic ministry running out of needs or opportunities — only out of vision and courage."

The Augsburg Confession sums up the catholic faith of those sixteenth century change-agents we call the Reformers. **Arthur C. Cochrane** echoes back the Augustana to us from the Reformed or Calvinist tradition. He views the Augsburg Confession as one among many "reformed" confessions and urges study of them all to see their common witness to the free grace of God in Jesus Christ, to grow from their complementarity, and to pinpoint their differences in order to resolve them once and for all. The confessions in the Book of Concord, he reminds us, are not final or complete, but open to future acts of confessing. Can we who have experienced the German confession against Hitler at Barmen ever read the old confessions unchanged?

Appalachian religion has had to face legions of attacks by outside

change agents and the challenge of a great out-migration of people. **Richard A. Humphrey** tells us where these people and their religion came from. Too often we mainliners have looked down on movements like the Later Rain Revival or its contemporary offshoots in evangelical consciousness or in that Zionism that tries to restore the primitive Christian community. The mountaineers in Appalachia and the mission prospects in your community cry for some sign of approval or understanding of their way of life. Do we try to change them without first knowing them?

Talk of infant communion suggests change, or even reform. **David L. Pearcy** moves beyond his survey of the historical practice (February, pp. 43-47) to examine the barriers that are often thrown up against a return to the church's former practice. Some of these barriers represent for him an intellectualization of the faith, a misunderstanding of St. Paul, an arbitrary use of the age of reason, an excessively conservative attitude toward liturgy, or even the product of an indiscriminate baptismal policy that neglects both commitment and the community of faith. Pearcy saves his own recommendations for change until the August issue.

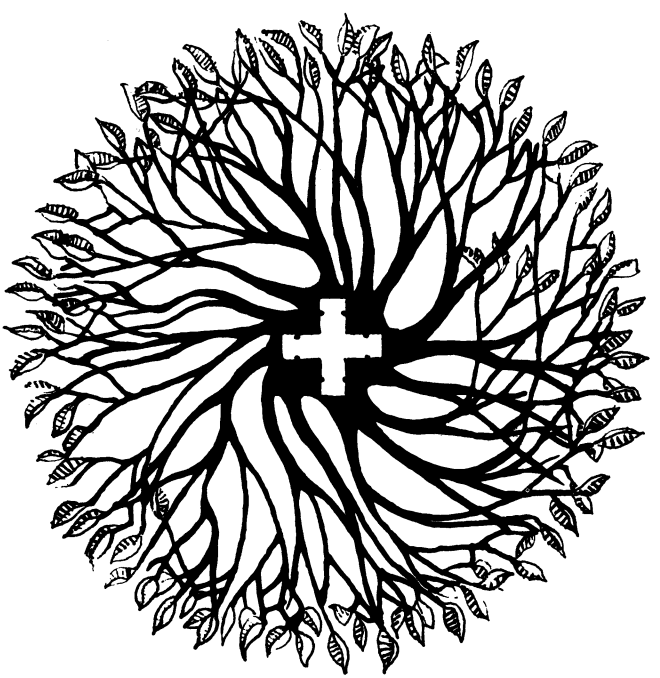
Speak of truth in the Old Testament or the New, and you'll come up with synonyms like constancy or efficacy or gospel. The opposite of truth, **James A. Rimbach** suggests, is not error, but deception, deceit, dispute, slander, unfruitful works of darkness. Finally, it's not so much a question of what is truth, but who is the way, the truth and the life.

Second among the Augsburg Confessors described by **Kurt K. Hendel** is Martin Luther. Though absent from the Diet, Luther fretted about it, fearing unnecessary changes or compromises. Because he had been responsible for the source documents which gave form to the Augustana (Schwabach and Torgau Articles), this confession is, finally, his theology; he approved of and rejoiced in the finished product.

For the sickly Henry Lyte, battered by tuberculosis and by change and decay, the only hope seemed to be the changeless cross of Christ. We've all stood in his shoes. But sometimes change is much more ambiguous, or even good; then the Christ who embodies both God's fidelity and his freedom is our necessary companion. The pious, at such times, are moved to pray: O thou who changest too, abide with me!

Helplessly yours . . . and his,

Ralph W. Klein
Editor



The Shape of Our Context

Martin E. Marty

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My assignment: to help us enlarge our imagination beyond Grand Avenue to a grand-scale view of the Christian world, to step beyond post-Saxondom to post-Christendom, and to look at church and world as they impinge on us and our mission. In many respects it is easier to transcend place-consciousness than time-boundedness. That is, one can in imagination soar to Tanzania or Siberia more readily than to the outlook twenty years ago or, most assuredly, to the vantage of twenty years from now. *When* one asks the question of 'our' context determines as much as *where* one asks it and *who* that one may be.

I

I mention the problem of time-boundedness and the use of the present or immediate past for a specific reason. It is hard to talk about the churchly context in 1980 without making reference to the worldly obsession of 1979: the energy crisis. To do so subjects one to the charge that the same 'now' that can enlighten us can also produce blinders. Some of us who some years ago assumed various apathetic roles as delinquents of the Commission on the Year 2000 learned much about this from Fred Charles Ikle, who headed its sub-committee on values. The Commission met in 1965 and 1966. It made no real effort to understand Vietnam, the Middle East, or other topics that were on the verge of preoccupying futurists. Instead, as Ikle was ornery enough to remind everyone, the agenda of the Commission's predictions was almost identical with the one-year-old and since forgotten dream of President Johnson's "Great Society." We have, he said, a tendency to select our topics for predictions from among our concerns of the most recent past.

In the year of the lines at gas pumps, the political vicissitudes of a president beleaguered by citizens angry over his inability to help them fill their tanks, and associated prophecies of heating fuel shortages, the context seems beguilingly clear: energy shortage is forming and will make up the secular context. Forewarned by Ikle, we retreat from making too much of it, but dare we make too little of it? Herman Kahn and the energy-optimists provide one script, a scenario that foresees some immediate hardship and then new technological triumph. The pessimists, like Victor Ferkiss and Barry Commoner, however, forecast a changed way of life and doom. Somewhere between them it is safe to say that "energy" should remind us of what C.H. Dodd called "non-theological factors" on the ecclesiastical scene. Alfred North Whitehead liked to say that one could in the end write the history of the modern world in two words: "steam"

An address delivered at a conference on the Shape of the Church, marking the fifth anniversary of Christ Seminary — Seminex, June 29, 1979

and "democracy." Democracy represents ideas, and steam the brute forces.

Brute forces of environment and energy, world economics and domestic inflation, have begun to determine more of our religious life than most of us have realized. They show up now in inflated church heating budgets in northern climes and in air-conditioning expenses in southern ones. They are likely to take their toll of transporation miles for church attenders who drive distances, and may determine days and hours of future worship. Energy-shortage-based inflation may lead to new tentmaking ministries and to reduced religious institutions. It will heighten domestic and international conflict. Shall we learn to live with limits, with "small is beautiful," or shall we dream that somehow, somewhere, technology will rescue us by providing better use of remaining energy resources? Are we born too late to enjoy the last generations of dependence on non-renewable resources and too soon for reliance on renewable ones?

II

There are psychic corollaries to these physical and political brute facts, and they all have a bearing on ministerial context right now. Let me picture three responses people have been making. Daniel Bell has spoken of the growth of a sense of 'entitlement' in an affluent population. The public feels entitled to social security, health care, its share of goods, instant gratification. Intractable problems over energy and environment have, it seems to me, been part of the trend that helped produce aggressive spiritual entitlement in the past few years. Robert Heilbroner has suggested that in a post-industrial society, in which conquest of the material domain through science and industry is less and less feasible and attractive, more and more people will do what pre-industrial folks did. They will develop and explore inner experiences.

This they are doing, though not necessarily with the disciplined inwardness that would have pleased the monk, the pietist, or the virtuoso mystic. "I'll get mine!" has become the word for religious drop-outs who were once activists, for Christians who could not remake the public world and so wanted their private world to be born again. A kind of spiritual discomania afflicts many of the more hedonistic mainline Christian therapy groups, the more worldly pentecostalists, and the positive thinkers in pursuit of success.

A second response when nothing works in the physical realm is millennial and apocalyptic. But just as the hedonism of the experientialists would not be recognizable to classical experiencers of God, so the new cataclysmic thought has little in common but words and images with biblical eschatology. The man who gave up on the world before God did, Hal Lindsey, has sold

about 10,000,000 copies of *The Late, Great Planet Earth* with its message that promotes evangelism, demotes stewardship of the earth, and at least accidentally makes room for new hedonism. Once, the eschatological call led prophets to the locale of locusts and the haberdashery of leathern girdles. But Lindsey tools his Mercedes-Benzes and beams a message cherished by the Fort Lauderdale Easter beach bums and other affluent people, who accept the message that they can do little to spread care because Jesus is coming soon, and then all will be well for purchasers of the book and the theme of *Planet.* A ministry to reorder hopes among millennialists will take as much cunning and skill as will one designed to divert people from the aggression of a spiritual "I'll get mine!"

A more hopeful script sees a minority, at least, turning from pure entertainment to some sense of concern for the common good during the years, few or many, that the Lord of history gives to his children, through whom he would work his ways. Heilbroner has complained that concern for private morale has almost displaced thought for public or social morale; as in politics, so in religion. Yet here and there are alternative communities, experimenting groups, congregations that move beyond their own needs and help their members reconceptualize the larger world. My next remarks are an effort to participate in such a reversal of form and a rehearsal of new preoccupations.

III

The Germans used to talk about *Kirchturmgeschichte,* writing church history and assessing their contexts from the vantage provided by their own church tower. Our case would be even worse if we wrote with only the view from our tentflaps in mind. Evangelically catholic ministry should always begin with thoughtfulness about the universal bearing of a catholic gospel, the global context of our "en-worlded" evangel.

On this front there are some signs of a move from purely private morale to global concern. For the sake of the integrity of the gospel and the perceptiveness and morale of its hearers we should hear the announcement: the sign of the cross is over the Christian world. Some of you who felt called to special sacrifice or deprivation may have immediate empathy for what most of us in our gadget-filled exception called American Christianity are given few occasions to see. Christ is alive, and we can know it in his suffering church. The marks of persecution, torture, and exile are upon the church to the left and right, whether in the USSR among the dissenters, in Poland among the faithful and defiant Catholics, under the new black tyrannies that replace white repressions in southern Africa, or under the right-wing regimes of the Chiles and Koreas. Five years ago people paid little attention to voices from these churches, but today

Christ is alive, and we can know it in his suffering church.

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they are coming to be living and living-room presences in the West.

Ministry in this context will impel us in the West to bring forth the best fruits of imagination, empathy, and energy. Where the Christian concern for human rights transcends narrow churchism (e.g., the Reverend Bill Bright saying that suffering Christians in Korea *deserve* suffering because they seek rights beyond freedom of worship, a freedom most repressors allow), it has to deal with suffering born of famine, poverty, and hunger. Christ is present in his church among these sufferers and in the sufferers themselves. Christian people can often be stimulated to sympathy and generosity, only to come then to understandable confusion over know-how. What about triage? What about feeding the hungry only to produce more hungry ones? What about foreign aid that inhibits development, development that detracts from necessary revolution? Our context impels us to become alert to the issues, to seek counsel as to how to instruct others and what to do ourselves.

If the sign of the cross is apparent in the Christian world, so are the signs of victory. I have no taste for mere statistical boasting in Christendom, but much taste for discerning where the Spirit might be moving to form new communities. In one cosmic generalization: there seem to be compensatory gains to the south where there have been losses in northern Christendom.

Let me say a few cross and cross-marked words about that north. In 1939 triumphalist Catholic Hilaire Belloc, in both a boasting and warning mood, said, "The faith is Europe. And Europe is the faith." I know that there are Taizés and L'Abris — to each his own — in Europe. The *Kirchentag* movement survives, and there are little evangelical outbursts in the environs of Oxford. Two per cent of the faithful *do* come to church in Finland and many more twist dials to get a religious message there. Theological Europe still has its Rahner and Küng, its Pannenberg and Moltmann, but except for Küng these are not household or churchhold names to match Maritain and Barth and a score of others more only decades ago. We still remember Trocmé and Bonhoeffer. The Pope is also aware that troublesome northwest Europe and America do exist. Yes, there are presences.

But statistical recovery has not come to Europe yet. Its Christian monuments often look like vestiges in the city of the dead, much as the old ruins in North Africa recall a once vital faith. The Christian heroes now are the Solzhenitsyns and Teresas, the Bikos and Naudes, the Camaras and murdered missionaries of Africa, the imprisoned. The churchly models come from elsewhere than Europe. If no grand theology has yet replaced the European, Christians elsewhere have a sense that they must develop indigenous expressions.

To compensate, we look to the not-untroubled southern spheres. The

southern hemisphere, some say, following present trends, will hold within a decade the Christian majority. Africa, we are told, saw a growth from its base of 25 to 100 million Christians between 1950-75, and in the last five years has seen a trend from chaotic independency toward evangelical catholicity. I am not sanguine about the future spread, given growing competition by Islam from the North and from anti-Christian regimes. But we who assess contexts beyond our tentflaps and towers do well to begin anyhow with Africa. Or Latin America, where a Catholicism once labelled pagan is turning more evangelical and expressive. The signs are ambiguous there, too. Some of the use of Christianity may be just that, the *use* of vital symbols, while ideologies actually predominate. But much Catholic social thought, voiced even by the Pope, sides with and gives hope to the poor and oppressed there. Catholic and Protestant pentecostalisms are revitalizing forces, less socially quiescent than in the northern hemispheres.

Even in the United States, where the Sunbelt has grown twice as fast as the Frostbelt since 1950, there are strong, if again ambiguous, signs of Christian prosperity. The arrival of millions of Hispanics, the presence of poor blacks, the return of unemployed whites, all lead to poverty alongside Sunbelt affluence. The old otherworldly evangelicalism of the dispossessed is turning out to be most worldly among the prosperous. But one cannot look southward without noticing indications of Christian surges.

I cannot leave these words about growth in ministerial need and potential without making reference to the symbolic doubling of the cohorts thanks to the changes in understanding of the role and definition of women. The day is likely to come a hundred years from now when the Christian world will look back on the years pre-1960 or -1970 with as much wonderment as we do now on the years pre-1860. How did we ever justify selective prooftexting to keep slaves 'down' in world and church? This question will be matched by a similar one directed to the issue and cause of women. I do not want to demean the slave-world's suffering by suggesting that the suppression and limitation of women worked the same kind or degree of hardship as did the holding of slaves, but there are a thousand horror stories to match each million tales of missed opportunity through miscasting of the female majority of Christians.

Lest it be thought that my words are nothing but catering to the liberated *Zeitgeist,* some of whose winds also blow ill on the radical feminist front, let me suggest that much of the impulse behind my hopeful words comes from two other sources. One is the theological impetus from biblically-based evangelical and catholic women. The other is from the examples set by the very women that feminists regard as their enemies and vice versa. Give the conservative young a half-generation and ask them whether

There are a thousand horror stories . . . of missed opportunity through miscasting of the female majority

they heard the submissive injunctions of Mesdames Phyllis Schlafly, Marabel Morgan, Anita Bryant (Green), and a hundred women of the CBN broadcasters or the CBA bestseller groups, *or* whether they remember the expressive roles such women played. If their message to others was to stay at the hearth, these women went to the platform to propagate it highly visibly. Even some who opposed the ordination of women became forthright pulpiteers to make their point. (The hearth, by the way, demands and deserves defense — but it dare not become the symbol of submission and muteness.)

Growth in the southern and womanly spheres has often led to demoralization of northern and male Christianity, and that situation in our context makes new ministerial demands. Those who serve the cause in barren New England or in the pagan west are as often as not led to depression, envy, or a questioning of their own competences when they hear stories of successes elsewhere. They need to hear the message that "behind every story there is a story," that situations differ — and then to be charged anew for their ministries on the sparse or lush landscapes where the cross now seems to be less cherished.

IV

How grand it is to talk in global terms, of a cosmic Christian consciousness, with an ecumenical hope. And how far removed it seems to be from the reality of how Christians do relate to other Christians on that scale. Our context has bred a tension between the universal ideal and the particularist pull in world and church. Hook the ecumenical dream to the bureaucratic style, the global excitement to encompassing *Rationalität,* and you suggest to most people an engulfing web of which they want no part. They cannot begin to grasp it.

This was to have been, and in some dimensions is, the age of the global village and spaceship earth, of UN and WCC and NCC and Vatican II and Lausanne. This was the first generation that could realistically live under the universal mandates and live out something of the universal promises of the gospel.

Yet it does not even take alert ministry to display how people have psychically backed away. "I shall never leave the House of Muumbi," is the oath members of a Kenyan tribe take; Harold R. Isaacs makes that the title and theme of a book chapter in *Idols of the Tribe.* He is right in contending on page one that our tribalism commits ever more of us to be initiated into one tribe and to be aggressive against interactive others. "We are experiencing on a massively universal scale a convulsive ingathering of people in their numberless groupings of kinds — tribal, racial, linguistic, religious, national. It is a great clustering into separatenesses that will, it is thought, improve, assure, or extend each group's power or place, or keep it safe or safer

from the power, threat, or hostility of others."

In the world eighty-two new nations formed between 1945 and 1976. The ecumenical movement was upstaged or downgraded during the years of its realization. The Church Growth people — not really the enemy in a day of many enemies — complicated the universalist picture with their Homogeneous Unit Principle, the rule that says Christian congregations will grow only Muumbi-style and not when they mix races, classes, or other unlikenesses, — as the Gospel of Mark, the Acts of the Apostles, or the letters of Paul evidently propose. Let me add that I have no complaint with, indeed I share the Homogenous Unit *Observation,* but not the Principle. I am cheered when the Church Growth folks recognize that they are talking only about "natural man and woman," or when they like finding life in congregations, or when they recognize they are being penultimately Christian in their communal expressions.

Why the tribalism? Some of the reasons are psychological, not theological. Modernity universalizes, refines, chops up existence; it sunders primordial ties to soil and kin; it calls for civility and tolerance in a pluralistic world. For many it therefore impels a need for new boundaries around the psyche. Eric Erikson has told us how in a time of diffusion people seek specific personal identities. Will Herberg was a specialist on the psychic need for human social location. Robert J. Lifton says that people seek "boundaries" and therefore cherish constrictive, narrow, even "fundamentalist" outlooks. They devise rites of passage, to be "born again" into the House of Muumbi, and will have little to do with those not of their kind.

Linked to these psychological reasons are sociological ones, which also appear without a trace of biblical warrant or theological rationale. "Boundary maintenance" calls for people to form groups to share their defensiveness and aggressions, to stage conflict in order to make the love of their own and hatred of others feasible and delicious. On these terms, doctrine becomes a weapon, power matters more than truth. There can be no room for humanizing arts (see Acts, on the Council of Jerusalem) that involve mutual listening, compromise, and the like. In such an approach there is no intermediate political zone between the military conquest of others or familiar sharing with one's own.

We now see this new Muumbist tribalism, which has nothing to do with the gospel, in Iranian Islamic Fundamentalism, in the Gush Emunim putsch in Israel, in the Lefebvrist Catholic schism, and the fundamentalist Protestant "battle for the Bible." The issue is not archaism *versus* innovation, not conservatism *versus* liberalism; Christian univeralism is as old as any other Christian idea. There are some signs that the old lines are being transcended. Pope John Paul II is a man of conservative

Our years have seen a shift from faith in intrinsic views of truth to nurture of instrumental ones.

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theology and liberal spirit, who in 1975 spelled out succinctly what must now be realized: "the Church possesses a special interiority and specific openness." Many of the civil mainline Christians in America are now recovering commitment without losing civility, and many committed evangelicals are gaining civility without losing commitment. Expect the latter, however, to have to face Muumbists who will use doctrines as weapons, and determine truth through power.

Alongside the psychological and sociological boundary-setting, then, there comes a theological temptation. None is stronger in our present context than this one: for establishing boundaries and for the expansion of the corrals within them, our years have seen a shift from faith in *intrinsic* views of truth to nurture of *instrumental* ones. Whatever produces success, growth, or muscle is true; whatever does not must be false. The very church groups that twenty years ago asked us to believe that they were true because they were *small* — and thus, presumably, faithful — have, with the new blowing of the *Zeitgeist,* reversed themselves and asked us to find them true because they are *growing.* They have the most listeners, subscribers, purchasers.

Shortly before the five years about which we are speaking, Dean M. Kelley wrote on *Why Conservative Churches Are Growing.* His became the book of the decade for the instrumentalists, whether he intended it to or not. One, holy, catholic, and apostolic were henceforth not the true marks of the church. Six new ones replaced them: commitment, discipline, zeal, absolutism, conformity, and fanaticism. The "truest" churches, then, were, on his own chart, the mutually exclusive Black Muslims, Jehovah's Witnesses, Orthodox Jewish, Church of Christ, Latter-Day Saints, Seventh Day Adventists, and the Church of God, *inter alia.* The need for a ministry that would restore intrinsic views of church is apparent; any success it might have would be surprising, astounding.

The instrumental view of truth has also imposed a new agenda on the churches in our context. Christianity was preoccupied with the doctrine of the Trinity and Christology in ancient times, with grace and faith in Reformation ages. Today, for psychological and sociological reasons of boundary-setting and maintenance, the preoccupation is on the *legitimation of personal experience* and the *objectification of authority.* Catholic infallibilists realized the latter one of these in the 1870s, just as Protestant inerrantists caught on to it in the 1970s. Formal theology is preoccupied with, say, Christology (as the work of Edward Schillebeeckx suggests), but the larger public concern instead focuses on being "born again" or with the human subject speaking in tongues, and not with the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

V

Modernity and post-modernity, with their universalist diffusions and particularist ingatherings, combine to produce a new sociological context for churchly ministry. I have begun to work out a little ladder of institutions to suggest a scale of relatively increasing difficulties in achieving realization. Spelling out the details might call forth a booklength exposition, but citing them should be suggestive.

It is easiest today, first, to promote purely individual *consumerist* religion. These are the days for private faith, or what Thomas Luckmann calls "invisible" religion, the religion of the high-rise and the long weekend, utterly personal in its packaging.

Next easiest to develop is an apparent but unrealized communalism, thanks to what sociologists call *convergent selectivity* — dial twisting, for example. One turns the airport newstand to find the religious best-seller, or tunes to the channel of one's choice and thus through selection converges with others who share some notions but no deep experiences.

It is easier, next, to produce *clienteles* than to promote causes. Sometimes the convergently selective do find each other momentarily, as in the studios of the Electronic Church, or at conferences summoned by celebrities with charisma. So long as the celebrity satisfies, the clientele remains.

Yet one can also get people to gather into *causes,* which are more ad hoc in character than are congregations. They produce instant commitment without intimacy. Pro- and anti-abortion causes or "the battle for the Bible" are examples of the way otherwise heterogeneous mini-publics find each other, even if only one obsessive aspect of life calls them to be bonded together.

The *congregation,* which should be the main testing and nurturing ground for Christian faith and expression, has less going for it than do the previously mentioned four, but it has powers that non-local Christianity does not have. More power to it!

It is easier, next, to cluster individuals and congregations in *movements* than in "churches" (denominations), or in caucuses than in confessions. "Concerned" churchmen or -women become quasi-denominations, and they determine boundaries for many.

Still, *churches* (denominations) provide some functions even today, from pension-planning to vestigial custodianship of traditions. They are not boundary-setting as movements are, but they still tell us something about who one is.

Churches have it easier than *confessional groups.* People are more ready to spell out what it is to "belong" to a Lutheran denomination than what the Augsburg Confession asks them to witness to in the "family of aspostolic churches."

Finally *the Church,* the *una sancta,* re-

mains, as a kind of Platonic ideal, the one thing that the Lutheran confessions will not let it be.

Developing the congregation and moving beyond it toward more realizations of the church universal are patent ministerial tasks (in biblical revelation).

The context in *our* time: who is the "our"? I have implied that "we" would help represent an evangelical catholic ministry. To be evangelical is to find our special interiority in the gospel of Jesus Christ; to be catholic is to show a specific openness to the times, places, and people in whose midst he would go and where he beckons us boldly to come. There is no danger of evangelically catholic ministry running out of needs or opportunities — only out of vision and courage.

Reading the Augustana from the Reformed Tradition[1]

Arthur C. Cochrane

Professor, Wartburg Theological Seminary

Permit me to begin with a personal explanation. Although I was reared and ordained in the Presbyterian Church of Canada and since 1948 have been a member of The United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., and for twenty-seven years have taught systematic theology in two of its seminaries — in Dubuque and Pittsburgh — before being invited to be a Visiting Professor on the faculty of Wartburg Theological Seminary in 1976, I am well aware that no single theologian can speak for the particular Reformed church to which he belongs, much less for the family of Reformed churches throughout the world. Therefore, I can only give my own understanding of how the Augustana should be read. But I trust that my understanding will be faithful to the way in which a Reformed church would or should approach the Augsburg Confession.

To be sure, certain church fathers, notably Luther, Melanchthon, Zwingli, Calvin, and Knox, made tremendous contributions toward shaping various reformed traditions. Yet none of them ventured to speak for the church in his own name. None of them usurped the relative authority of the church speaking through its confession of faith under the absolute authority of Jesus Christ as attested in Holy Scripture. Luther wrote:

> In the first place, I ask that men make no reference to my name; let them call themselves Christians, not Lutherans. What is Luther? After all the teaching is not mine (Jn 7:16). Neither was I crucified for anyone (I Cor 1:13). St. Paul in I Cor 3:17, would not allow the Christians to call themselves Pauline or Petrine, but Christians. How then should I — poor stinking maggot-fodder that I am — come to have men call the children of God by my wretched name? Not so, my dear friends; let us abolish all party names and call ourselves Christians, after him whose teaching we hold.[2]

Similarly, in our own day Karl Barth denied that he was a Barthian. He never attempted to form a Barthian school, much less a Barthian church. Though a member of the Reformed Church in Switzerland, he sought to be simply one teacher in the one holy, catholic and apostolic church.

Yet in spite of Luther's vigorous admonition, the Lutheran churches gave themselves, or allowed others to give them, the name 'Lutheran.' Am I in error when I have the impression that some Lutheran churches and theologians have appealed more to the authority of Luther

[1] A paper published in *Currents in Theology and Mission* in commemoration of the 450th anniversary of the Augustana, and in the volume published by the faculty of Wartburg Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, in commemoration of the 125th anniversary of the seminary.

[2] "A Sincere Admonition by Martin Luther to all Christians to Guard against Insurrection and Rebellion," 1522. *Luther's Works*, (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg, 1962), 45, 70-71.

— especially at certain periods — than other reformed churches and theologians have to Calvin? One thinks of the distinctly un-Lutheran inscription on the walls of Wartburg Seminary in Dubuque: "Gottes Wort und Luthers Lehr' vergehet nun und nimmermehr." The other side of the picture is that in the Book of Concord there is no reference to a Lutheran Church or to the Church of Luther. Although the Augsburg Confession was written by Melanchthon and later approved by Luther, it was in no sense the confession of these men: it was the confession of the church in various German states and cities. Moreover, even fifty years later the Formula of Concord referred to "our reformed churches."[3]

Thus the church of the Augsburg Confession was a reformed and reforming church, and its confession is to be read as *one* among many reformed confessions. It cannot be read *from* the Reformed tradition, as if it somehow stood outside that tradition. It can be read only as an authentic part of that tradition, as a genuine confesion of faith of a reformed church. There are historical precedents for this position. First, Calvin declared in his "Exposition" of "The Mutual Consent in regard to the Sacraments" of 1554 that "readers will find in our Agreement everything contained in the Confession published at Ratisbon and called the Confession of Augsburg."[4] He reiterated that "in the Confession . . . there is not a word contrary to our doctrine."[5] Moreover, the earliest collection of Reformed confessions, the *Corpus et syntagma confessionum fidei* of 1612, edited by Gaspar Laurentius, contained the Lutheran Augsburg, Saxon and Wurtemberg Confessions.[6] They were also included in the *Harmonia confessionum fidei orthodoxarium et reformatarum* of 1581, familiarly known as Salnar's *Harmony*.

In 1930 a committee of the German Evangelical Church published the two-volume work, *Die Bekenntnisschriften der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche* in celebration of the four-hundredth anniversary of the Augsburg Confession. This same committee planned to issue a similar collection of Reformed confessions and appointed A. Lang, Hans Lietzmann, and Otto Weber as editors to carry out the project. Weber died before the project was completed. But he has observed that there are special impediments to making a collection of Reformed confessions that do not pertain to

[3] *The Book of Concord*, ed. T.G. Tappert (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1959), p. 504, para. 4.

[4] *Tracts*, Vol. 2, Edinburgh Translation Society 1948, p. 225. Cf. "Second Calvin Defense of the Sacraments," *ibid.* p. 277.

[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 306 and 355.

[6] The *Book of Concord* contains all the Lutheran symbols which are still in force. The Saxon and Wurtemberg Confessions, both written in 1551, were superseded and now enjoy only historical importance.

Lutheranism.[7] With the *Book of Concord* the Lutheran Church has a canon of confessional literature that is widely acknowledged and was officially approved by certain state governments. Nothing similar is found among Reformed churches. There is no such thing as a Reformed *corpus doctrinae*. There is no book of confessions to which all Reformed churches have subscribed, nor is there any one confession of faith to which all subscribe. That is why we stated above that we may recognize the Augsburg Confession as *one* among many Reformed Confessions. We have noted that the *Corpus et syntagma* and the *Harmonia* did contain the Augsburg Confession, but these collections, as well as all subsequent collections, have no official standing among Reformed churches. They have remained private collections with a more or less limited sphere of influence. This is in keeping with the nature of the Reformed churches. From time to time efforts have been made to produce a universal Reformed confession in the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (Presbyterian and Congregational). But these efforts have been abortive.

Any collection of Reformed confessions must serve the purpose of illustrating the variety and diversity of Reformed confessions, depending upon the time, place and circumstances in which they arose, rather than of demonstrating their complete uniformity. It will attest to the freedom with which many particular churches have confessed Jesus Christ quite independently of the others. Anything like a universal Confession imposed on all congregations and churches is foreign to the genius of Reformed churches. Although Reformed churches are concerned about union and have been in the forefront of establishing ecumenical relations with other churches, they do not wish this to be achieved at the expense of the particularity and concreteness of a church's confession. There has been "the *usus* of mutual recognition of Confessions that were not directly authoritative in both churches. But there has never been a universal authoritative body that could make doctrinal decisions binding for all."[8] More-

[7] *Vorerwägungen zu einer neuen Ausgabe Reformierter Bekenntnisschriften* in *Hören Und Handeln* (Chr. Kaiser Verlag, Munich, 1962), 389 ff., cf. Arthur C. Cochrane, *Reformed Confessions of the 16th Century* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1966), pp. 14-18.

[8] Weber, *op. cit.*, p. 390. "The specific local or national church makes its Confession of Faith: the church of Berne, of Basel, of Bremen, or Bentheim, of France or Scotland. Each looks for his direction first in direct appeal to the Bible. They greet one another, from Basel to Strassburg, from Geneva to Zurich, rejoicing over every possibility of mutual understanding. But every church lives its own life; and with surprising independence, each church, marked off by the accidental boundaries of the authority of the various states, goes its own way, even in the matter of creed-making. So there results that diversity of formulae which led Luther to judge that the doctrine of South Germany was certainly from Satan (Enders, *Luthers Briefwechsel* 5, p. 294)," Karl Barth, *Theology and Church: Shorter Writings, 1920-28* (Harper and Row, 1962), p. 120.

The Book of Concord itself does not reflect such a static view of a confession of faith.

over, right down to the present time the Reformed churches have produced *new* confessions and have amended certain articles in their confessions. The *Book of Confessions* (1967) of The United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., for example, exhibits both continuity and development in doctrine. The Reformed churches take a dynamic rather than a static view of creeds and confessions.

For these reasons Weber argues that for all their diversity and variety the Reformed confessions as a whole constitute a real "Harmonia" in which the voice of the Lutheran Augsburg Confession has been and should still be heard. He claims that were the Lutheran Confessions not already in an excellent collection, it would be necessary to include the Augsburg in a new edition of Reformed confessions in the interest of a proper understanding of the nature of a Reformed confession. Recently Dr. James I. McCord, president of Princeton Theological Seminary, expressed to me his profound regret that the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. did not include the Augustana in its *Book of Confessions* of 1967. And I now publicly express my embarassment that I did not include it in my collection, *Reformed Confessions of the 16th Century* (West minster, 1966). Fortunately in the introduction I did quote Weber's words cited above.

Now the question must be asked whether Lutheran churches and theologians look upon the Augustana as one among many reformed confessions, and whether they regard their churches as reformed and in the process of being reformed by the Word of God. Do they regard the *Book of Concord* as a closed confessional canon? Do they believe that it bears the character of "sufficiency" and "completeness" as a doctrinal standard? Do they hold with Wilhelm Loehe (1808-1872) that the Reformation is "completed in its *doctrine;* it is incomplete in the *consequences* of the doctrine"? Whatever may have been or may yet be answers to these questions, one thing is certain: the *Book of Concord* itself does not reflect such a completed and static view of a confession of faith. It is not a depository of timeless truths. On the contrary, it teaches that a genuine act of confession at a particular time and place is a confessional explanation or explanatory confession of earlier confessions.[9]

The first article of the Augustana, on the doctrine of God, makes it abundantly clear that it was not an act of confessing at the expense of the early church creeds, but for their sake and in fidelity to them. As the authors of the Formula of Concord later insisted, "we do not intend, either in this or subsequent doctrinal statements, to depart from the afore-

[9] Cf. Arthur C. Cochrane, "The Act of Confession — Confessing" in *The Formula of Concord Quadricentennial Essays. The Sixteenth Century Journal,* Vol. VIII, No. 4, 1977, pp. 72-76.

mentioned Confession or to set up a different or new confession."[10] Nevertheless, the Augustana was a clarification of the ancient creeds. Its doctrine of justification was a necessary explanation of the article of the Apostles Creed: "I believe in . . . the forgiveness of sins." The Apology "was prepared and published in 1531 to set forth clearly the true and genuine meaning of the Augsburg Confession."[11] The Smalcald Articles were held to be "an explication of the Augsburg Confession."[12] Although the Formula of Concord understood its agreement "as a certain and public testimony, not only to our contemporaries but also to our posterity,"[13] this was not intended to prevent future generations from doing exactly what it did. It recognized the Augsburg Confession and the Apology "as our symbol *in this epoch.*"[14] It sought agreement "concerning the chief and most significant articles which were in controversy *at this time.*"[15] Phrases like "various times," "ancient times," and "at the present time" by no means reflect a static conception of confessing.[16] Thus the confessions in the *Book of Concord* do not look upon themselves as final or completed, but open to future acts of confessing.

We now hasten to add that a reformed confession of faith like the Augustana is an explanatory confession *on the basis of Holy Scripture.* Unlike many other confessions it does not have an article on the Scriptures. Yet from beginning to end it is exposition of Scripture and declares that its "teaching is grounded clearly on the Holy Scriptures."[17] In its conclusion it states: "If anyone should consider that it is lacking in some respect, we are ready to present further information on the basis of the divine Holy Scripture."[18] As the Formula of Concord states

> . . . other symbols and other writings are not judges like Holy Scripture, but mere *witnesses and expositions of the faith, setting forth how at various times* the Holy Scriptures were understood in the church of God by *contemporaries* with reference to controverted articles, and how contrary teachings were rejected and condemned.[19]

Nevertheless, we ask again whether Lutheran churches have read the Augsburg (and the other confessions in the *Book of Concord*) in the way they wish them to be read. An answer may be found in the differing attitudes of Lutheran churches to the Barmen Theological Declaration of 1934. On the

[10] Tappert, p. 502, par. 5; cf. 503, par. 2.

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 504, par. 6.

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 505, par. 7.

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 507, par. 16. Cf. 636, par. 40.

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 504, par. 3.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 506, par. 16.

[16] See *Ibid.*, pp. 465, par. 1, 2, 3, 4, 8; 501, par. 2; 502 par. 2; 504, par. 4; 507, par. 16.

[17] *Ibid.*, p. 47, par. 1.

[18] *Ibid.*, p. 96, par. 7.

[19] *Ibid.*, p. 465, par. 8.

"Whoever knowingly separates himself from the Confessing Church in Germany separates himself from salvation." *Dietrich Bonhoeffer*

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positive side certain points should be made. 1) Barmen was drawn up by representatives of Lutheran, Reformed, and United churches, of whom the overwhelming marjority were Lutherans. 2) It did not confess Lutheranism or Calvinism; much less was its "intention to found a new church or form a union." Its confession was "of the one Lord of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church." 3) It dealt with "controverted articles," namely the errors of the "German Christians" and the Reich Church government. 4) It commended to God what its confession may mean for the interrelations of the confessional churches, for example, such questions as the Lord's Supper, law and gospel, and predestination. 5) "Precisely because we want to remain faithful to our various Confessions, we may not keep silent, since we believe that we have been given a common message to utter in a time of common need and temptation." 6) Thus Barmen was an explanatory confession of Reformed confessions. It was a theological declaration concerning the present situation of the German Evangelical Church. (The German word *Erklärung* may be translated declaration or explanation.) 7) Barmen represented a clarification, supplement, and even a corrective of the Reformation doctrine of the Church: its nature (Art. 3), its task (Art. 6), its order (Art. 4), its relation to the State (Art. 5), its ground (Arts. 1 and 2).

How, then, should the Augustana be read from a reformed tradition, especially Articles V, VI, VII, XIV and XVI? Only in the light of the Barmen Theological Declaration. One cannot go behind Barmen to the Augustana any more than one can go behind the Augustana to earlier creeds and confessions, that is, with respect to "controverted question."

On the negative side, the Barmen Declaration and the Confessing Church were vigorously opposed by Lutheran confessionalists. Men like Hermann Sasse, Werner Elert, Paul Althaus, and Bishop August Marahrens took the position that Barmen had no "authority in matters of doctrine for Lutherans . . . since the Lutheran Confessions do not recognize an evangelical church that is above the Confessions or the teaching office of such a Church."[20] Sasse went to the length of referring to the Confessing Church as a "sect, and indeed the worst that has appeared on the soil of German Protestantism."[21] On the other hand, we have another Lutheran, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, taking the position that "whoever knowingly separates himself from the Confessing Church in Germany

[20] See Arthur C. Cochrane, *The Church's Confession Under Hitler*, p. 193, n. 9. For a full account of The Confessing Church's Struggle against the Lutheran Confessionalists, see pp. 183f., 191, 193, 201, 205.

[21] *Ibid.*, p. 193, n. 11.

separates himself from salvation."[22] Either the Barmen Declaration is a true confession to the Lord Jesus which has been wrought by the Holy Spirit, in which case it has the capacity to build or split the Church, or it is the expression of certain theologians binding on no one."[23]

Following the war Barmen was incorporated in the constitutions of thirteen *Landeskirchen.* The United Church and its member churches in the Rhineland, Westphalia, Brandenburg, and Saxony adopted Barmen along with the confessions of the Reformation. The Evangelical Church in Hesse and Nassau professes the Barmen Declaration as its basic article of faith. On the other hand, there has been a strong tendency in the Lutheran *Landeskirchen* to subordinate Barmen to the old Lutheran confessions and to restrict its significance to the historical "event" of the Synod of 1934. Dr. Heinz Brunotte explains: "The Evangelical Church in Germany and its member churches do not affirm (what he strangely refers to as) Barmen 'theories' but Barmen *deeds,* the decisions taken there aginst the 'German Christians'." The constitutions of the Lutheran Churches in Mecklenburg, Thuringia, and Saxony contain no reference to Barmen at all. It was adopted by the Second Reformed Synod, in Siegen, March 26-28, 1935. Outside Germany it has been adopted by the Lutheran Church in Austria and by the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. in its *Book of Confessions* in 1967. It was also included in the *Proposed Book of Confessions* of The Presbyterian Church in the U.S.

In this paper we have insisted that the Augustana is one among many different reformed confessions. How should they be read? Certainly not in isolation from one another. Lutheran, Melanchthonian, Zwinglian, and Calvinist reformed confessions should be read and studied together in order that we may learn from one another. First, they should be read in the light of their common witness to the free grace of God in Jesus Christ who alone is the unity of the Church. Secondly, to observe how the various Confessions complement and clarify one another, as indeed the gospels and apostolic letters complement and explain one another in the New Testament. Thirdly, to note the sharp differences among them, with the prayer that through renewed study of Scripture under the direction of the Holy Spirit these may be resolved. We have the promise: "The sheep hear his voice . . . and the sheep follow him. A stranger they will not follow" (John 10:1-5).

We conclude with two words of caution. Because the Augustana was one of the earliest of the Reformation confessions, because of Calvin's wholehearted endorsement of it, and because of hints that the Roman Catholic Church may

[22] *Ibid.*, p. 193, n. 12.

[23] *Ibid.*, p. 193, n. 13.

recognize it as a genuine Catholic confession, Lutherans may be tempted to look upon the Augustana as a rallying point for Western Christendom.[24] If such a mutual recognition of the Augustana were to occur, let it not be without a theological explanation concerning the present situation of our churches. Let it not be a substitute for our own confessing of Jesus Christ before the world.

Secondly, let us not regard the Augustana (or the church itself) as a divine-human work and thus as a sacramental means of saving grace. Let us bear Luther's words in mind: *Nos sumus salvi propter Christum, non propter confessionem aut ulla alia opera* ("We are saved on account of Christ, not on account of a confession or any other works."). A confession is a very human and fallible work of pardoned sinners, in response to what God has done in Christ *pro nobis*, yes *pro mundo* and *in nobis* by his Spirit.

[24] Recently George Lindbeck is reported to have suggested that Lutherans rather than Anglicans are the "bridge church" between Protestantism and Roman Catholics. (*News Now*, Vol. 5, No. 19, October 1-15, 1979).

Traditional Religion in Southern Appalachia

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No aspect of Appalachian life is more misunderstood and misrepresented than religion. Missionaries from mainline churches, since they re-discovered Appalachia in the 1880s, have described Appalachians as heathen, superstitious, traditional, conservative, fundamentalist, unchurched, and sectarian with a Puritan ethic.[1] Professional scholars have interviewed, surveyed with questionnaires, and castigated the Appalachian for not changing and becoming more like mainstream America. The one thing that scholars, missionaries, and the Appalachian people do agree on is that Appalachian religion today appears to be the most traditional Appalachian social institution, one which has steadfastly resisted change. Loyal Jones goes further: "One has to understand the religion of the mountineer before he can begin to understand mountaineers."[2] Southern Appalachian religion is a key to understanding Appalachian culture and individuals. Yet it has been consistently been under attack by those outside the region. Very few attempts have been made to present traditional Southern Appalachian religion from within, nor have attempts been made to understand this religion as it sees itself, in the context of the American religious experience. This may be impossible to do; but with a great sense of inadequacy, I will attempt to represent the traditional religion of Southern Appalachia in the context of the American religious experience. Hence, I will examine the following stages of history which the people of Appalachia and other Americans share in their religious experiences:

1. Immigration and Settlement
2. The Great Revival
3. Civil War
4. Rediscovery and Invasion
5. World War II
6. The Present

Immigration and Settlement

In the settling of America, our ancestors came from many religious backgrounds. Most settled on the East Coast within particular religious communities gathered in particular places. The Dutch Reformed were in New York and New Jersey. The Congregationalists and Presbyterians dominated New England; Quakers were in Pennsylvania; Catholics were in Maryland; Anglicans settled in Virginia and further south.

[1] The most representative study is Thomas R. Ford's *The Southern Appalachain Region: A Study* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1967). In fact most studies since 1960 have used materials gathered in 1958 by the Southern Appalachian Studies which formed the data of Ford's 1967 study. This viewpoint is found in George L. Hicks' *Appalachian Valley* (New York: Holt Rinehart & Winston, 1976; Jack Weller's *Yesterday's People* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1966). The theme is echoed, re-examined and challenged in John D. Rhotiadis' *Religion in Appalachia* (Morgantown: West Virginia University Press, 1978).

[2] B.B. Maurer, *Mountain Heritage* (Morgantown: Morgantown Printing and Binding Co., 1974), 107.

Settled communities had their own church and pastoral leadership.

When the Americans first began to enter Appalachia through the Shenandoah Valley in the 1730s to 1750s, the twelve churches of German origin and the Scotch-Irish Presbyterians continued this pattern. The Germans primarily stayed in the valley. The Scotch-Irish and those Germans who did move were quickly joined by others, mainly of English descent, from Virginia and Carolina, who were seeking religious freedom and free land after the American Revolution. They generally were not of an established religion. They moved into the Appalachian frontier where there was not a strong religious tradition or leadership among its settlers. From what evidence we have, especially from the history of the State of Franklin, the Scotch-Irish Presbyterians had the advantage with twenty-three churches established in southwest Virginia and east Tennessee.[3] However no bishop, minister, or priest went with these early settlers or was there to greet them when they went further into the mountain wilderness. In fact, from what records we have from religious leaders and observers who traveled through the region during the last two decades of the eighteenth century, the region was full of free thinkers, deists, and atheists.[4]

The Great Revival

For many Americans the years immediately following the birth of our nation were years of religious crisis. The first Great Awakening had spread Christianity throughout the colonies, even into the Shenandoah Valley of Appalachia. These prayers were first answered at Hampden-Sydney College in Virginia in 1787. It was in this revival that the Presbyterian clergyman, James McGready, was converted. It was through McGready and his former students, referred to as "McGready's Army," that the revival spread from a sacramental meeting at Gasper River, near Russellville in Logan County, Kentucky, in 1798, throughout the nation — North, South, and Western frontier.[5] This Great Revival of the early nineteenth century, though shared with the whole nation, was to leave an indelible imprint especially on the religious tradition of Appalachia. Mainstream Christianity molded and shaped the revival in settled religious areas, giving it a social dimension, a sound theological base, and power to send out missionaries. In Appalachia and in other parts of the South, the revival found no settled religious tradition with which to anchor itself. Even today, Appalachia has not moved very far from the frontier religion

[3] Samuel Cole Williams, *History of the Lost State of Franklin* (New York: The Press of the Pioneers, 1933), 272.

[4] John B. Boles, *The Great Revival 1787-1805* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1972), 12-35, 43.

[5] *Ibid.*, 48

of the Great Revival.

This revival gave Appalachia its tripartite theology of immediate repentence, faith, and regeneration, which can be traced to McGready's exhortative preaching. This theology modified the Calvinist emphasis on God's electing only some to salvation, and emphasized that Christ died for all people's sins. McGready (and the revivalists who have followed him into the present day) modified the Calvinist emphasis on conversion as a process which took from six months to two years to a call for immediate repentence. This modified Calvinism was compatible with the Arminian doctrine of the Methodists. The dominant theology was no longer based on doctrine or on a systematic interpretation of Scripture as the Presbyterians affirmed. The preacher continued to stress Calvin's emphasis on using the Ten Commandments as a hammer, to convict one of sin and so drive one to Christ. Calvin's systematic theology, however, was replaced by a theology which emphasized the personal religious experience of the Baptists and the Methodists. Then, as now, in Appalachia, one became a Christian not by having correct doctrine but by attesting to one's conversion experience. Mountain preaching was seen now as good if it was exhortative and brought one to conversion. Along with a new theology and way of preaching, this revival introduced the camp meeting, song schools, gospel songs, mourner's pit, and an emotional religious setting in which revivals were actually more likely to happen. Revivals and their methods now became a part of all forms of worship in traditional Appalachian churches. Their rhythmic, exhortative style of preaching, their "concert prayers," their gospel singing and conversion theology are all part of a religious setting in which revivals took place. Revival methods are not limited simply to services that are labeled revivals. The religious settings for sacramental meetings, regular worship services, homecomings, memorial and funeral services, and association meetings all have the Revival methods present within them.[6]

One fascinating example of the influence of the Great Revival on the religious setting can be seen at the annual communion services of Union, Regular, United, Separate, Free Will, and even some Primitive Baptist Churches. Even today, when one describes these annual gatherings of people, one is reminded of the descriptions of McGready's sacramental meetings at Gasper River in 1798. The one noticeable difference is that the traditional mountain churches never have communion without footwashing. (Most traditional Appalachian churches emphasize "Biblical ordinances".) Elder Willie Hamm, a Union Baptist preacher for the past sixty-one

[6] Richard A. Humphrey, "Mountain Revival Methods," *Appalachian Heritage* (Spring, 1978), 23-28.

If Jesus did it, and he told his disciples to do it, then you and I had better do it.

years, gives a descriptive definition of a Biblical ordinance: "We oughten to vary from the teachings of Jesus. If Jesus did it, and he told his disciples to do it, then you and I had better do it."[7] Accordingly, traditional churches in Appalachia practice two, three, or as many as seven ordinances. Southern Baptists practice Baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper. Some Southern Baptists also practice foot-washing in the same manner as the Separate, Regular, United, Primitive, Free Will, Union, General, Christian Unity, Double Seed Predestinarian, Duck River Baptist, and others. In addition, some Methodists, Primitive Advent Christians, Mennonites, Church of Brethren, Church of God, and other Pentecostal Holiness churches also wash feet.[8]

Many Mountain people stress that two things really separate the "Old Timey" mountain religion from mainline American churches. First, the old time religion in the mountains baptizes in a river or stream, not in "bath tubs" or by sprinkling or pouring. Remember, Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River. Second, all "old-timey" churches practice foot-washing. Some go further and emphasize that the veiling of women, praying for and annointing of the sick, marriage, and flower services are also ordinances. They quickly point out that real mountain churches have annual memorial services and practice church discipline. Another common characteristic within these churches is never to leave the church after a service until all the worshipers have shaken hands, blessed, embraced, and in many cases, given the kiss of peace. It is not unusual for a regular service to last several hours. These services include a lot of singing and at least one "concert prayer" (each praying her own prayer aloud, at the same time kneeling at the front of the church). Sermons may number from one to seven, depending on how many preachers are present. Testimonies may be offered, and there is a closing hymn with fellowship greetings. Such a service may start at eleven a.m., but it usually continues far into the afternoon, unlike most mainline American churches. Some of these churches have services on only one Saturday or Sunday a month, a practice which they have continued since the early 1800s. Regular Baptist services can last three hours. I attended a Union Baptist annual Communion service where three hundred people from three states sang, prayed, preached, had communion, washed feet, and baptized converts in the creek. This service lasted six hours. It would have lasted longer, but only six preachers were present to preach.

[7] Interview with Elder William Hamm of Alleghany County, North Carolina (June 9, 1977).

[8] Richard A. Humphrey, "Foot Washing in the Southern Appalachians", *Appalachian Heritage* (Spring, 1977), 48-52. Also "Biblical Ordinances Found in the Southern Appalachian Region" to be published by *Mountain Review.*

Civil War

The period between 1840 and 1880 was a time of disruption and isolation in Southern Appalachia. It was in these decades that the above influences of the Great Revival and the Biblical ordinances became firmly implanted in Southern Appalachia.

The Great Revival, with its emotional camp meetings, its called, unpaid, uneducated, exhortative preachers, its conversion theology; the rise of organized missionary societies; and the slavery issue brought great disruption into the new nation and into Appalachia.

As early as 1804 the Presbyterians were into bitter debate and schism. Several of the leading Presbyterian clergy formed the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. Barton Stone started the Christian Movement, and several others were drawn into the Shaker Society. Methodists had a schism which led to the formation of the Methodist Protestant Church in 1830. The Baptists, after more than a decade of battles over missionary organizations, split when the "Old Baptists" found such organizations unscriptural. Thus Primitive Baptists of several descriptions came into existence.

The issue which was destined to have even greater effect on all of the churches, and especially on the churches of Appalachia, was slavery. The Methodists divided on this issue in 1844. The Baptists divided in 1845, the Presbyterians in 1857. Then following the Civil War, in 1867, the Union Baptists came into existence when Union League Men were excommunicated from Primitive and Southern Baptist Churches.[9]

Many Southern Appalachian people were loyal to the Union. During the Civil War, many suffered when families and communities split over loyalties. In some mountain districts the presence of both armies intensified the tension, suffering, and hostility in these families and communities. This was experienced religiously in individual communities because Northern and Southern Presbyterians, Methodists, and Union, Missionary, and Primitive Baptists all were present in the same districts. This left many communities split politically and religiously after the war and lead to battles between home guards and feuds between families. West Virginia seceded from Virginia and forty counties of East Tennessee tried unsuccessfully three times to re-establish the State of Franklin.[10] Wilkes County, North Carolina, was called "the Old

[9] Elizabeth R. Hooker, *Religion In The Highlands* (New York: The Home Missions Council, 1933), 45-46. Sidney E. Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), 659-65. The splitting of these churches may be studied in depth in Methodist Conference histories, Baptists Association minutes and Presbyterian records.

There has been no intensive research done on the Union Baptists. My own research has so far indentified fourteen Union Baptist Associations in five states. Their greatest strength today is found in northwest North Carolina.

The homegrown but unlettered preacher helped the people understand their suffering and attempted to preserve the culture of their forebears.

United States" because of its well-known Union sympathies. At one time there were as many as five Union Baptist Associations in Wilkes County.[11] During Reconstruction many men who had been loyal to the Union held political office. Probably the most famous of all of these was Parson Brownlow, the Methodist preacher who was a Reconstruction Governor of Tennessee.[12] The Southern states resented the Union League men, many of whom were Union Baptists, because of their involvement in helping Negroes with education and voter registration and their membership in the Republican Party. The Union Baptists helped the Blacks of Wilkes and Alleghany Counties in North Carolina to organize a Black Union Baptist Association in 1868, called the New Covenant Baptist Association.[13]

With the end of Reconstruction it was not uncommon for Appalachian counties within the so-called solid South to be neglected. In fact the counties in northwest North Carolina in the 1890s were referred to as the "lost provinces." Obviously the people from "off" did not reward the mountaineers for their role in the Civil War. Thus the Southern Appalachians, whose region had been ravaged by the Civil War, after Reconstruction, found themselves either in isolation or at the mercy of the Democrats in the county seats. Education was poor in the whole South but it was almost non-existent in Southern Appalachia. Illiteracy became common and an oral and folk culture solidified. A key figure in the culture at this time was the homegrown but unlettered preacher who helped the people understand their suffering and, with his congregation and the use of church discipline, attempted to preserve the culture of their forebears. The preacher constantly reminded people of Jesus' words in Matt 28 — that they were called to baptize, make disciples, and maintain the tradition until Jesus came again. He also exhorted them with 1 Cor 11 in which the Apostle Paul called them to be imitators of Christ and to maintain the traditions, "even as I have delivered them to you."

These preachers and their flocks did their job well, as folk religion exists yet today in the conversion theology, revivalism, Biblical ordinances, and "the Bible as the sole rule of faith and practice." Common statements one still hears in the mountains are: "We haven't changed from the old ways." "There is just too many modern Churches." "I like the

[10] Eric Russell Lacy, *Vanquished Volunteers* (Johnson City, Tennessee: Overmountain Press, 1971), 114-15, 121-22, 181-82, 227-33.

[11] Ina W. and John J. Van Noppen, *Western North Carolina Since the Civil War* (Boone, North Carolina: Appalachian Consortium Press, 1973), 8.

[12] Steve Humphrey, *"That D - - - d Brownlow"* (Boone, North Carolina: Appalachian Consortium Press, 1978).

[13] Mark S. Sexton, *The Chalice and the Covenant: A History of the New Covenant Baptist Association, 1868-1975* (Winston Salem, N.C.: Hunter Publishing Co., 1976).

Old Ways." One woman complained that people today are too "suffocated" (she meant sophisticated).

A late outgrowth of this period of disruption and isoloation was the coming of the "Later Rain Movement." This was a movement which started with a holiness emphasis in Monroe County, Tennessee, in 1886 when the Christian Union was organized with eight members. Richard G. Spurling was upset with the deplorable state of the church in his area. The example of Jesus was not evident in the church members' lives. These mountaineers accepted from Spurling the invitation "to be free from all man-made creeds and traditions . . . willing to take the New Testament or law of Christ for their only rule of faith and practice, giving each other equal rights and privileges to read and interpret for themselves as their conscience may dictate and . . . willing to set together in the Church of God to transact business as the same . . ."[14]

From this noble beginning the Holiness movement came into the mountains with an intensification of the Great Revival's theology. In 1896 at Shearer Schoolhouse in Cherokee County, North Carolina, the "Later Rain Revival" and Pentecostalism began. The Holiness Church quickly joined with the Pentecostals in their emphasis on the second blessing or Baptism of the Spirit, evident in speaking in tongues. The Revival spread especially after A.J. Tomlinson joined the Church and was chosen pastor. In 1907 the Church changed its name to the Church of God and by 1910 there were 1,005 members. The Church quickly spread to northeast Georgia and into the mountains of Alabama. The Church gained over eight hundred new members as the revival continued. In its beliefs and practices it held all the basic characteristics of the traditional church except for its unique emphasis on speaking in tongues and the Baptism of the Spirit. As if this new, and in many ways logical, continuance of the Biblical ordinances were not enough, in 1916 some members of this Church interpreted Mark 16 as a command to take up serpents along with the other spiritual gifts. They were excommunicated and subsequently started their own churches.[15] The serpent-handlers today are found in six Appalachian states with thirty-six churches. They can practice their faith legally only in West Virginia. Tennessee has once again recently outlawed serpent-handling. The Penticostal-Holiness movement has gone through many schisms, and many independent churches have arisen in Appalachia. Since many of these churches do not keep records, their exact size is unknown. However, their present

[14] Charles W. Conn, *Like a Mighty Army* (Cleveland, Tenn.: Pathway Press), 8.

[15] Conn., 189, 430; also Stephen M. Kane, "Holy Ghost People: The Snake Handlers of Southern Appalachia," *Appalachian Journal 1, IV (1974)*, 255-62.

The major challenge to Appalachian religion came from the churches of mainstream America.

growth is undeniable.[16]

Rediscovery and Invasion

The traditional religion of Appalachia was not only challenged by the "Later Rain Revival" but also by the world outside Appalachia in mainstream America in the late 1880s and 1890s. The lumber and coal industries discovered Appalachia's great natural resources. Rich Southerners discovered the cool summers of the mountains, and the tourist industry began in places like Blowing Rock, North Carolina. The hillbilly, with his beard, funny hat, jug of moonshine, corn cob pipe, and long rifle became an established character on the American scene through the novels of Charles Craddock and John Fox, Jr. Newspapers delighted in recounting tales of family feuds in the back hollows. The communications media continue to find profit in Snuffy Smith, L'il Abner, Beverly Hillbillies, Mayberry RFD, and Gomer Pyle, to mention but a few.

The major challenge to Appalachian religion came from the churches of mainstream America. Nearly all of these denominations and individuals were convinced that no lasting religious results would be obtained without educating people, especially without training leaders through teaching the young. Many would have agreed with Dr. Edward O. Guerrant, who characterized the highlanders in this period as "practically without the Gospel."[17] The mainline churches did not look upon the traditional churches of the mountains as having much value. Many of those denominations still feel the same way today.[18] By the 1880s both Northern and Southern denominations were beginning work in the Southern Appalachians as part of their home mission work. The Northern denominations primarily established mission schools with some attention paid to community centers and health centers. The Southern denominations focused their work on evangelism with some interest in establishing mission schools.

The Northerners' interest in Southern Appalachia came from knowledge of their needs and the fact that many Southern Appalachians had been

[16] Photiadis, *Religion in Appalachia,* 1, 108, 206.

[17] Hooker, *Religion in the Highlands,* 200.

[18] Max E. Glenn (ed), *Appalachia in Transition* (St. Louis, Bethany Press, 1976), 77, 112, 115. Max Glenn, Executive Director of the Commission on Religion in Appalachia, states that mainline churches must make "A shift in emphasis from a kind of paternalism . . ." 112. In the same volume Jack Weller warns, "There is the danger of playing God of cultural and religious imperialism, of paternalism," 133. Loyal Jones amplifies this in his article on "Old-Time Baptist and Mainline Christianity," *An Appalachian Symposium* (Boone, North Carolina: Appalachian State University Press, 1977), 120. "No group in the country, in my estimation, has aroused more suspicion and alarm among mainstream Christians than have Appalachian Christians, and never have so many Christians than is the case in this region."

Northern sympathizers and had sent many soldiers into the Union Army. From 1885 to 1905 the Presbyterian women organized a total of sixty-five schools. The Congregational American Missionary Association in 1884 appealed for a special fund to carry on mission work in the mountain regions of Kentucky and Tennessee and subsequently established schools and small churches in various areas. In 1889 the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia started missions and schools, and were later joined by four other dioceses. The Womens' Home Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church began work in 1891. Others to establish schools were the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in 1895, the Reformed Church of America in Kentucky in 1900, and the Lutherans at Konnarock, Virginia.

Numerous individuals of the Quaker, Mennonite, Brethren,and Moravian Churches also worked in the mission field, and a number of Northern philanthropists worked or funded mission projects in the mountains.

In 1882 Dr. Guerrant was authorized by the Southern Presbyterian Synod of Kentucky to devote his whole time as a "mountain evangelist" to Southern Appalachia. In 1885 the Southern Baptist Convention began sending eight to fourteen "enlistment men" to evangelize the weak churches in the highlands by holding evangelistic meetings. "Association missionaries" still carry on some aspects of this work throughout the mountains today. They also established a few schools to train Baptist leaders. As early as 1886 the Southern Methodists began mission evangelism and founded a few schools.[19]

Any one who knows the history of Southern Appalachia can appreciate the important role the mission and boarding schools, community centers, and health services of these denominations played in the life of the region. However, they did and still do think of the people of Southern Appalachia as "yesterday's people."[20] Too often the mountaineer's dialect, clothes and culture have been put down. Frequently the missionaries taught the people with the intent of helping them leave the region. As one very angry mountain man said, "People come from off with promises of wealth, better ways, and salvation, and they take our lumber, coal, land, and children and leave us with empty promises or feelings of being dogs instead of God's children."[21] With the improvement of public education most of these early mission schools have been taken over by the public education system. However, these earlier attitudes in the mission schools are still found in public schools and in many of the mainline churches in

[19] Hooker, *Religion in the Highlands*, 199-202.

[20] Jack Weller, *Yesterday's People* and Max Blenn's *Appalachia In Transition.*

[21] Interview with Joe Begley on April 7, 1978, in Letcher County, Kentucky.

The denominations did and still do think of the people of Southern Appalachia as "yesterday's people."

Southern Appalachia.[22] Hence, the mainline churches, the Methodists, Southern Baptists, American Baptists, Northern and Southern Presbyterians, Roman Catholics, Episcopalians, and Lutherans have become established, especially in the county seats, towns, and cities of Appalachia, like their counterparts in New York City, Detroit, Atlanta and San Francisco. World War I brought wages to Appalachia and great pressures to pay the preacher a salary and to have churches raise funds for programs besides preaching. Sunday Schools and Sunday School materials, missions, and benevolences began to be promoted. Eventually, the Social Gospel and evolution struck like a whirlwind. The traditional Appalachian person in many ways still is hostile, confused, or frightened of this invasion of his way of life. The rural subsistence farming way of life changes more every day as an organized occupational structure enters the mountains. The mainstream American churches began to gain numbers after World War I. By 1916 the Baptist with 779,998 members and the Methodist with 609,537 members made up 60% of the mountain peoples' church membership.[23] Yet many of these churches, although affiliated with mainline American denominations, still practiced the old-time religion. The followers of traditional mountain religion began to feel extreme alienation during this period. The great depression saw the National Forest and Park Services, Public Works, and the beginnings of the T.V.A. add more salt to the wounds of an already confused and alienated people. Charles Reynolds' poem expresses these feelings well:

I am Appalachia
God is my Father, I am His child
and curse the man who won't let me be
what He would have me be.

World War II

As in the first World War, many young men went off to fight in World War II. However, many other mountain men and their families went North, to the defense plants of big cities in the East and Midwest. Thus began the great out-migration that lasted through the sixties. During this period from 1916 to 1957 the Baptists (Southern, American, and United) were the only denominations to show great growth. The Methodists were the only ones to show substantial losses in membership (58,000 members).[24] Other denominations stayed about the same. The Baptists have continued to grow since then and the Methodists have continued to lose members. Between two and three million people left Appalachia in the decades following World War II. This drain on mountain communities

[22] David N. Mielke, *Teaching Mountain Children* (Boone, N.C.: Appalachian Consortium Press, 1978), 49-58, 59-60, 138-39, 166.

[23] John C. Campbell, *The Southern Highlander and His Homeland* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1979), 170.

and the traditional churches had a devastating effect. Predictions were made that these denominations would die out in a generation or two. The membership of these churches was increasingly only the older generation left behind, while young people left for jobs in cities or joined the mainline American churches. Southern Baptists and Methodists continued to attract over 60% of the church members in the region. Yet, as noted above, the Methodists were losing members. As the region began to consolidate schools for various reasons in this time period, so the Methodist began to consolidate their churches. As many mountain people opposed consolidation of their schools, so too the Methodists opposed consolidation of their churches. In Johnson County, Tennessee, the Methodists went from fourteen to seven churches, and in Ashe County, North Carolina, at least fourteen Methodist churches were closed. Many of the members, instead of going to a church outside of their own community, joined one of their community's Baptist churches. This illustrates how many churches in Southern Appalachia are family- and kin-churches; the people resent having their churches and church graveyards taken from them.

The erosion of the indigeneous culture and religion in Appalachia has been accentuated even more by radio and television since World War II. Religious programming by Appalachian radio stations fills an estimated 25-40% of air time. Studies are just beginning on the effects radio and television have upon religion in Appalachia, and for that matter, on the nation as a whole.

The Present

The 1970s have brought a turnaround in Appalachia. For the first time in years more people are moving into Appalachia than leaving it (55,000 annually).[25] The Appalachian states are being studied and given funds by the Appalachian Regional Commission. Appalachian needs are being studied by CORA, the Commission on Religion in Appalachia, and by other organizations.[26] Even academe in Appalachia is waking up. Centers for Appalachian Studies have been established; interdisciplinary programs and courses are being offered; bachelor's degree programs are now available; master's degree programs are in preparation. Appalachian values and cultural units are being planned and introduced into the public schools at both the elementary and secondary level. Television, record, film, and theater companies now exist. Scholars in 1978 formed the Appalachian Studies Conference. The region has a number of

[24] Ford, *The Southern Appalachian Region: A Survey*, 202.

[25] *Appalachia*, Vol. 10, No. 2 (1976), 6.

[26] Glenn, *Appalachia In Transition.*

journals and periodicals.[27]

Southern Appalachia is going through a period of growth, self-examination and re-evaluation that it has not known since frontier days. Traditional Southern Appalachian religion, like mainstream American religion, also is going through self-examination and re-evaluation. One of the curious effects of this study has been that many scholars are finding positive things in the traditional religion of Southern Appalachia.

Sociologists of religion in Southern Appalachia note that in this decade the traditional churches are growing. They attribute this to the fact that the religion of the region is the one institution that has withstood rapid change in the culture. In fact, the Bible and religion have been the means by which the mountaineer has been able to keep his identity and sense of place amidst the onrush of mainstream America, mass communications, federal and state programs, missionaries, tourism, coal, and other industries.[28] Tedra Harmon of *Fox Fire* fame expressed this when he said:

> "The Bible is my map. It shows me the roads, the paths, the valleys, the mountains, the hollers, the people, the sin and troubles. But most important of all it shows me the way to the end of the road and how to live to get there. Without the Bible a man is lost. No preacher, no church or anybody else can plot my path . . . I have to."[29]

Mountain religion with its Biblical ordinances, its Biblical patterns for living, its personalism, extended families, sense of community, and just plain caring, is gaining appreciation and respectability. Mainline preachers, like Presbyterian Jack Weller, may wish mountain folk were more in line with the Social Gospel. However, after his book, *Yesterday's People,* Weller no longer believes mountain religion to be fatalistic; in fact, he now agrees that the mountaineer is a realist as he deals with nature, people, government and industry.[30]

Today in Southern Appalachia there is a diversity of religious consciousness. The churches from mainstream America have a major role to play in the future of the region. Their role can be destructive, neutral, or positive. To be positive they must seriously examine both their own prejudices and the traditional Appalachian religion. For too long the mainline churches have failed to understand or appreciate Southern Appalachian religion. Within traditional Appalachia, in addition to mainline American religion, two other kinds of religious consciousness

[27] A useful guide for the resources available and the research being done in Appalachia is found in the *Appalachian Journal,* Vol. 5, No. 1 (1977).

[28] Photiadis, *Religion in Appalachia,* 125, 171-72, 285, 30 306, 395, and 401.

[29] Interview with Tedra Harmon at Beech Creek, Watauga County, North Carolina, in October, 1977.

[30] Interview with Jack Weller in Harlan County, Kentucky, April 8, 1978.

exist in conflict and overlap, much to the confusion of scholar and outsider.[31] The evangelical consciousness is best known to scholars because of the conversionist theology, preaching, and revivals. The Southern Baptists are most representative of this position. However, existing alongside the evangelical emphasis is the religion of Zion. In the consciousness of the religion of Zion, great emphasis is placed on restoring the primitive Christian community. The "Old Baptists" (Primitive, Old Regular, United, and Union) are representative of this position. Like other traditional religions, the religion of Zion centers on the repetition of archetypal patterns established by the acts of God. Thus the emphasis on Biblical ordinances, Christmas, Easter, the "Old Time" or primitive religion, revivals, exhortative preaching, and the Bible as the sole rule of faith and practice are attempts to live the life established by the God of Zion, until Jesus Christ comes again and establishes the new Zion. Many mountain people plant gardens by the signs, "work with the hands, eat plants and animals because Genesis tells them to." They do not eat in churches because Paul in 1 Cor 11 tells them not to. Many do not have church bulletins or musical instruments because they are unscriptural. The Primitive Baptists also are anti-revival and anti-Sunday School on the same grounds. While the churches of Zion are small in the mountains, they are well represented by United, Regular, Union, Primitive, Duck River, Free Will, Christian Unity Baptists, Separate Baptists, Primitive Advent Christians, Church of Brethren, Mennonite, Holiness, and Pentecostal denominations. Thus in speaking of the traditional churches of Southern Appalachia, we must not label all "evangelical" and exclude those churches trying to live "in Zion" and "sing the songs of Zion as they have ever been sung in these hills, until Jesus comes again."

While most Southern Appalachian folk stress salvation through personal regeneration and stress the Bible as the sole rule of faith and practice, the worldview of some may be more in keeping with mainstream American religious experience. Others' worldview may place greater emphasis on traditional religion by emphasizing personal rejuvenation or the restitution of primitive Christianity in the new Zion.[32] In any case, as John Fetterman in his book, *Stinking Creek* wrote:

> The mountaineer would like to have one person — one day — come into his hollow and show some signs of approval of the way he has lived over the decades, and the way he wants to live forever. And not try to change him without first knowing him.[32]

[31] For further development of this thesis see Charles Thomas Davis and Richard Alan Humphrey, "Appalachian Religion: A Diversity of Consciousness," *Appalachian Journal*, Vol. 5, No. 4 (1978), 390-99.

[32] John Fetterman, *Stinking Creek* (New York: E.P. Dulton and Co., 1967), 33.

This paper will conclude with quotations from two articulate Appalachians. The first is from Loyal Jones, director of the Center for Appalachian Studies at Berea College:

> It is not my intention to say that Appalachians are better, in their religious life or in other ways, than mainstream Americans, but I feel strongly that they are as good. We all know that there are some strange forms of worship in the mountains and some narrow-minded Christians. There are many who may have earned some of the criticisms that have been leveled against them, but there are others who are just as devout and just as ethical in daily life as mainline Christians. I grew up in a pleasant mountain community among some good and devoted church members who were daily concerned about what was right and wrong. I have met many other exemplary mountain people, common, everyday and sometimes poor people — who had a strong faith, an integrity and a spirit that impressed me. I think it is high time that writers examine themselves and their motivations more carefully before they write, and consider the implications and results for the people they, without doubt, wish to help. Religion in the mountains, even for the non-church members, is a serious business. When you attack it, you attack the very essence of the spirit of the mountain people.[33]

The second quotation is from Jim Wayne Miller's long and insightful poem, "Brier Sermon — You Must Be Born Again." A Brier is a Southern Appalachian migrant who lives in the midwestern industrial centers of America.

Let me go back a little, let me tell you
how we got in this fix in the first place.
Our people settled in these mountains
and lived pretty much left to themselves.
When we got back in touch we started seeing
we had to catch up with the others
and people came in telling us:
You've got to run, you've got to catch up.

Buddy, we've run so fast we've run off and left ourselves
We've run off and left the best part of ourselves.

And here's something peculiar:
running we met people on the road
coming from where we were headed,

[33] Photiadis, *Religion in Appalachia*, 407.

wild-eyed people, running away from something.
We said, What'll you have? and it turned out
they were running away from what we were running after.
They were on their way to sit a spell with us.
We had something they wanted.
When they got here a lot of us weren't to home anymore.
We'd already run off and left ourselves.

So they set to picking up
all the things we'd already cast off —
our songs and stories, our whole way of life.
We couldn't see the treasures in our own house,
but they could, and they picked up what we'd abandoned.

We've lost the ground from underneath our feet,
lost the spiritual ground.
We've run off and left the best part of ourselves.

You say, Preacher, we have to change.
That's right.
But we're forgetful.
It's our forgetfulness that's a sin against ourselves.
We don't know any more about our history
than a dog knows about his daddy.

We're ignorant of ourselves,
confused in what little we do know.
All we know is what other folks have told us.
They've said, You're fine Anglo-Saxons,
pioneer stock.
Then we went to the cities.
They said we were trash, said we were Briers.
They said, You're proud and independent.
They said, You're narrow-minded.
They said, You're right from the heart of America.
They said, You're the worst part of America.
They said, We ought to be more like you.
They said, You ought to be more like us.

You've heard the prayer that goes:
Help us to see ourselves as others see us.
Buddy, that's not a prayer we want to pray.
I believe we want to pray:
Lord, help us to see ourselves — and no more.
Or maybe: Help us to see ourselves,

help us to be ourselves
help us to free ourselves
from seeing ourselves
as others see us.[34]

[34] Jim Wayne Miller, "Brier Sermon — You Must Be Born Again," *Appalachian Journal*, Vol. 5, No. 4 (1978), 383, 385-386.



Infant Communion
Part II: Present Barriers to the Practice

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It is no accident that Lutherans have come to face the question of infant communion. One by one the other denominations which continue the practice of infant Baptism are coming to address the issue as well. The association between infant baptism and infant communion has always been extremely close, not only because they were both part of the early unified rite of initiation, but also because they share a similar theological foundation. So today infant communion is given serious consideration where the understanding of "sacrament," "grace," "faith," "community," and "baptism" mandate infant Baptism. The recent return of baptismal practice from the periphery to the center of the church's life and the recovery of a deeper baptismal theology have prepared the way for infant communion.

Of the several remaining barriers to infant communion, the first relates directly to the practice of infant baptism. The underlying difficulty is that "faith" as it applies to infant baptism is unique and therefore is unable to provide the necessary theological foundation for infant communion.

The Understanding of Faith

Many reject infant communion because it stands in conflict with a mistaken, though widespread, intellectualization of faith. Ever since the church encountered Pietism and Rationalism in the eighteenth century, faith has often been understood as something an individual does or possesses. Where knowledge of God was of primary importance, as in Rationalism, the great danger was justification by religious knowledge. Although infant baptism continued in the church, the "faith" it conveyed was regarded from a pietistic and/or rationalistic point of view. Confirmation was expanded to assure *true* faith and repentance. Religious education was to transmit as much information as possible, thus creating faith in the child, almost as if more information would produce more faith.

This intellectualization of faith resulted in the distorted notion that Christian worship is for adults only. Children are often dropped off at a classroom during the liturgy; later they will be mature enough to participate in adult worship. The problem is seen to lie with the children, and only rarely is the liturgy adjusted to meet their needs. Children are tolerated because they are perceived as members-in-training, but not yet full members. Where the intellectual and psychological difference between adult and child is considered a significant factor, is not faith understood as something other than participation in the death and resurrection of Christ?

The dilemma created by the intellectualization of faith reaches its extreme in infant communion. Infant communion challenges the church by asking if it really believes what it claims for infant baptism, or whether it takes seriously the im-

plications of these claims for the baptized child. As Dr. Theodore Matson, who served as president of the Wisconsin-Upper Michigan Synod of the LCA, observed: "If we really took Baptism seriously, we would have fewer problems with a baptized child receiving Holy Communion." By forcing children to wait to commune, the church clearly implies that communing is largely an intellectual exercise.

In communing for more than ten centuries those *incapable* of understanding the eucharist, the church showed that the faith of the child is valid during the whole rite of initiation — baptism, anointing, and eucharist. Although the church continued the practice of infant baptism, it required "something more" for reception of the eucharist. Lutherans, in particular, have leaned heavily on 1 Cor 11 to support this practice.

1 Corinthians 11

One barrier to the practice of infant communion reflects a pastoral concern: Does not St. Paul, in 1 Cor 11:27-29, require self-examination and discernment of the "body" before participation in the sacrament?

> 27 Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of profaning the body and blood of the Lord. 28 Let a man examine himself, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. 29 For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment upon himself. (RSV)

Aware of a serious problem in the Corinthian congregation (vv. 17-21). Paul frames his warning with a description of the problem (vv. 20-22) and a solution to it (vv. 31-34). The difficulty that Paul identified was a problem of unethical conduct, but he describes it in terms of the eucharist (vv. 23-26). The question raised, therefore, is whether the only problem which was affecting reception of the sacrament was disregard for fellow Christians , or whether there were two problems, one disregard for the brother or sister and the other a failure to recognize the Lord in the sacramental elements.

Some members of the Corinthian church claimed to possess a special "gnosis" which placed them above the other members. They could be characterized as libertine but at the same time were excessively sacramentalistic. They believed that through the sacrament they had achieved full and complete unity with the Lord. Since they had already achieved this goal, they were free of worldly responsibilities and the need for ethical conduct.

It becomes clear that Paul constantly addresses himself in the wider context to the unity of the community, where cliques had formed as a result of either an elitist attitude or unethical and unloving behavior. The overarching theme in Chs. 10 - 14 is unity. Paul wants to move the Corinthians to different behavior toward their fellow members. The crude "sacramentalism" of the Corinthians explains the necessity for Paul to speak continually of unity in terms of the eucharist.

In the previous chapter (10:16), Paul used "body" in its traditional sense, the sacramental "body of Christ." But in 10:17, for the first time, he uses the word in what we know as its ecclesial sense. So he uses the word in adjoining sentences in two different ways. This pattern is repeated in ch. 11. This suggests that "body" in v. 24 and v. 27 is used in its traditional sense of Christ's actual presence in the sacrament, while in v. 29 it has the ecclesial sense. The sacramental

"body" of v. 24 serves as the basis of the ecclesial "body" in v. 29.

Although Paul does not define specifically his meaning of "unworthy" in v. 27, he seems to understand it as relating to the community's divisions. The conclusions in vv. 33-34 are steps to be taken in order to correct this "unworthiness." He calls for the Corinthians to share the food, wait for everyone to arrive, and to eat at home to satisfy hunger. The unity of the Church is so central, Paul says, that by inconsiderate or selfish conduct the eucharist is placed in question and becomes impossible. Selfish and greedy irreverence for the brother or sister is incompatible with Christ's gift of unity.

The "unworthiness" of the Corinthians was not based on their failure to *recognize* the eucharistic bread and wine distinct from common bread and wine. Rather, they failed to observe fraternal charity. Their contempt for the poor and weak is what Paul disapproves. "Guilty of the body and blood" is to be interpreted in exactly the same way as in 1 Cor 8:11-12: whoever sins agains the brother or sister is sinning against Christ, who died for this individual. In 11:27, Paul formulates the same statement in the context of the eucharist.

Materials outside 1 Cor confirm our understanding of Paul's words. Didache 14:1 requires reconciliation before coming to the table (cf. Matt 5:23). Given the liturgical custom of the "holy kiss," also mentioned in the Didache and several NT passages (Rom 16:16; 1 Thess 5:26; 2 Cor 13:12; 1 Pet 5:14), the words used by Paul would have been familiar to the Corinthians. Perhaps he formulated these words in close dependence on parts of the introit liturgy. Establishing complete harmony before the meal had become a fixed liturgical usage already within the biblical period.

There is serious doubt that Paul's words, addressed to specific abuses, can be applied universally or used to indicate that a person is old enough to participate in the eucharist. Paul's words, struggling for unity and for building up the whole body of believers, have been used to divide and exclude. His words have a legitimate use only when they are applied to situations in the church today that approximate those of the Corinthian church. They cannot be rightly applied to a cognitive understanding of the "real presence," which a child must be able to express before being admitted to Communion. Rather, we might better ask whether this text applies to our congregations' continual disregard for the weak and poor.

The Age of Reason

The age of reason, also referred to as the age of discretion or age of discernment, has carried a variety of meanings throughout history. Generally it has meant the age at which a child becomes capable of certain reasoning powers; the specific chronological age has varied greatly depending upon what was to be reasoned. The church has struggled with this problem since the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 establishd an age of reason as a prerequisite for first communion. In 1910, Pope Pius X, reacting against the influences of Jansenism, which believed that the sacrament should be received only after serious spiritual preparation, directed that children should be communed when they are able to distinguish between the eucharistic bread and the bread of an ordinary meal. This was generally interpreted to be seven years old in Roman Catholic circles. Lutherans raised the age as high as fourteen for a while, but now suggest that age ten is acceptable.

If the criterion is to be a distinction between regular bread and sacramental bread, this can happen well before the age of ten, and probably more like age three or four. If, in the sense of 1 Cor 11, a child should have some sense of community or of relationship, that too can take place well before age ten. A more basic question about the Cor passage, however, is whether it has anything to say about young children and the eucharist. If the full force of the Cor passage applies to children, as some proponents of infant Communion are sure to maintain, then they must also deal with the advances made in developmental psychology, which show that a child of fourteen has only begun to develop the capacity for formal operational thought and, with it, the ability to explore the abstract complexities of ethical decisions. Thus any age of reason lower than sixteen or eighteen is completely nonsensical and no one is asking that eucharistic participation be delayed so long.

Wherever an age of reason is established as a prerequisite of first communion, it assumes a degree of maturity or a level of instruction that has too frequently been completely arbitrary. The basic question remains: why must any level of understanding be achieved?

Conservative Nature of Liturgy

Another barrier to the practice of infant communion is the conservative nature of liturgical patterns and sacramental practices. Liturgy stands in a tradition that seeks to reflect and give meaning to the historic faith of the church. With one eye fixed on the past traditions of the church's worship, it seeks to be consonant with that past. Since liturgy and worship deal with those things in life which are given ultimate value and worth, their rites and ceremonies are held in great reverence. Out of necessity, people will allow many things in their lives to change, but one should not tamper with their worship practices unless prepared to do battle. This is only amplified by the sociological nature and cultural values attached to such events as confirmation, examination Sunday, and first communion. The combination of these influences makes the liturgical tradition one of the most conservative aspects of the church's life.

Unaware of the constant gradual evolution that takes place within the liturgy, some people respond to liturgical change with cries that the theologians are now trying to change everything. The idea that liturgy is static, that this or that way is the only proper way to do things, prevents the liturgical tradition from responding to present needs and insights. Unaware of a long-term erosion of the teachings of the church, many people will not even consider infant communion.

Indiscriminate Baptisms

The indiscriminate baptism of everyone who is presented to the church for initiation has led to a distortion that sees baptism as almost magical, without commitment and unassociated with a community of faith. Not only does this create a barrier to the practice of infant communion, but it has caused many to question the whole practice of infant baptism. Where the promises of baptism are given without serious intent, children grow up in an environment in which the church confronts them as a stranger. As baptismal requirements are relaxed, access to the altar is tightened. Choosing not to offend anyone by refusing their request for baptism, confirmation, and first communion came to bear the

burdens of tougher membership requirements. But taking a stand at the point of confirmation does not solve the problem either, since families can come "out of retirement" long enough to push a child through the confirmation process.

The church now seems prepared to deal seriously with the problem of indiscriminate baptisms by not automatically baptizing every person presented. The observance of baptismal festivals four to six times a year provides a natural pattern for the instruction of parents prior to their child's baptism. The Roman Catholic Church has stated flatly: no parental instruction, no baptism.

Infant baptism, in the context of a community of faith where growth and nurture take place, makes it possible to view infant communion from the same perspective. Once a conscious concern for growth is established in parents and congregation, then celebration of the eucharist as a whole family can profitably take place.

Concerns for Uniformity

The concern for denominational uniformity is the final barrier to be covered here, although it is frequently the first cry to be heard. Appeals are made out of pastoral concern for those families moving from one congregation to another, or for the sake of harmony within a local area. Through pastoral concern, however, families can be brought to understand that other congregations may follow different practices. The task of working through such a variety of practice may be a very healthy process at both ends of the situation.

Aware that calls for uniformity are also used to hold back and suppress every effort of renewal, there comes a point when other considerations are more important, regardless of the response of others. Concern and sensitivity are needed, not uniformity.

The Episcopal Church made the decision to allow each bishop to determine for his diocese whether children would be confirmed and communed in the traditional sequence and age, or whether they would commune infants and follow with confirmation at a later age. This arrangement has not been without its problems, especially in areas where the membership is highly mobile, but it does speak against the necessity of absolute uniformity before the practice of infant communion is permitted. There is hardly uniformity within the Lutheran churches now concerning confirmation and first communion.

As for ecumenical concerns, the practice of infant communion would not affect the relationships with those denominations which do not practice infant baptism. With Lutherans, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and Roman Catholics all moving toward the recovery of infant communion, the ecumenical response among these denominations can only be positive. The final article in this series will outline arguments in favor of infant communion.

Truth: A Biblical Word Study

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> To most modern people, truth is the agreement between the intended subject matter of a word or sentence, on the one hand, and the nature of the fact to which the word or sentence refers, on the other. (Piper, *IDB* 4, 713)

This everyday working principle is fraught with difficulties. *Webster's Unabridged* lists no fewer than twelve distinct categories of meaning all assumed under the one word "truth." The following four statements, for example, illustrate four quite different philosophical bases:

"It's twenty degrees and cold outside!"

"Two plus two equals four."

"Honesty is the best policy."

"Jesus is Lord!"

The first is existential and verifiable by observation; the second, formal and logical, dependent solely on definition; the third, ethical, pertaining to value; and the fourth an assertion of metaphysical or transcendent reality. It is not our intent here to develop a theory of truth; but it should be clear at the outset that in defining even the *use* of the word "truth," one must first formulate an epistemology or theory of apprehension. The theologian's epistemology will, of course, include a role for revelation. And since this is so, two further notices are in order. First, the concept of revelation implies that "truth" is hidden and "not apparent." Secondly, all considerations of revelation are hampered by questions of origin, transmission, and reception.

The Word Truth in the Old Testament

In the OT we are concerned with a cluster of words derived from the Hebrew verbal root *'mn,* which means "to be firm." The nouns derived from this verb are translated in a variety of ways in our English Bibles: steadiness, unchangeableness, stability, soundness, faithfulness, etc. We will employ "truth" in our translations to illustrate the basic meaning behind the various connotations.

Again and again one happens upon the accent of "constancy and reliability." Thus, a sickness which persists can be called "true" — constant (Deut 28:59). And when God is said to be "true," he is the reliable or faithful God, who keeps his promises.

> *The rock, his work is perfect;*
> *for all his ways are justice.*
> *A God of* ***truth*** *and without corruption*
> *just and right is he.* (Deut 32:4)

He keeps truth (Ps 146:6), i.e., he "executes justice for the oppressed and gives food to the hungry" (cf. Isa 55:3; Ps 89:28).

One particular context of truth is the legal world. Practitioners of the law are urged to examine allegations to determine if they are true, that is, confirmable by investigation, or whether they are born of deceit and calumny (Deut 22:20). Indeed, the Scriptures almost

uniformly assert the opposite of truth to be "deception" and not "error." Witness the following:

A wicked man earns deceptive wages, but one who sows righteousness gets a reward of ***truth.*** (Prov 11:18; cf. 12:17)

True *are the wounds of a friend, profuse are the kisses of an enemy.* (Prov 27:6)

Consequently:

Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord, but those who act in truth are his delight. (Prov 12:22)

There are many such passages, usually contrasting truth with "deceit" and "corruption." A quotation from Jer 9 will illustrate the contrast:

They bend their tongue like a bow; ***deceit*** *and not* ***truth*** *has grown strong in the land; for they proceed from evil to evil, and they do not know me, says the Lord.* (v. 3)

Every one ***deceives*** *his neighbor, and no one speaks* ***truth.***

They have taught their tongue to speak ***deceit;*** *they commit* ***corruption*** *and are too weary to repent.* (v. 5)

A second general observation is that "truth" belongs to a constellation of words which comprise "covenant language." There are a number of instances of this in Ps 89:

I will not remove from him my covenant fidelity, and not be deceitful to my ***truth.***

I will not profane my covenant or alter the word that went forth from my lips. (vv. 33-34)

In this and other instances, the assertion that Yahweh acts "in truth" or "does truth" is an affirmation that he acts in conformity with his essential nature. He *does truth* because he *is true* — he is committed to Israel through covenant. This character of God is visible in grace, in judgment, in love, in abhorrence of sin and unfaithfulness. Truth in this respect, as in others, is related primarily to action and not to information.

For the word of the Lord is upright and all his work is done in ***truth.***

He loves "rightness" and "justice" the earth is full of the covenant fidelity of the Lord. (Ps 35:4)

The term "your truth" may refer on occasion to the *torah,* also in its written form (Scripture). One such reference is probably Ps 86:11: "Teach me thy way, O Lord, that I may walk in thy truth." And references to God's law, statutes, commandments, ordinances and truth in Ps 119:142, 151, 160 are also probably references to written *torah.* God's truth demands truth from man. "You desire truth" (Ps 51:6). And (Ps 15:2) "who may dwell on Yahweh's holy hill? — the one who speaks truth in the heart," who does not slander, violate an oath, take a bribe.

As the truthfulness of God's nature is displayed in its activity, so the truthfulness of his word is displayed in its efficacy. The word of Yahweh in the mouth of his prophet is "truth," that is, it is truly present and operative. The Lord speaks through Jeremiah: "Let the prophet who has a dream tell the dream, but let him who has my word speak my word as "truth" (23:28) — meaning this word will show itself in operation, as opposed to the speculative mouthings about dreams: "What has straw in common with wheat? says the Lord. Is not my word like fire, says the Lord, and like a hammer which breaks the rock in pieces?" (23:28-29)

The Word Truth in the New Testament

The primary word for truth in the NT is *aletheia.* Etymologically, *aletheia*

means "non-concealment" — note the privative prefix *a.* As in the OT, the truth is something solid and certain, and as such a valid norm for living. So Paul writes to the Galatians (2:5) "we did not yield submission even for a moment [on the matter of circumcision] so that the truth of the gospel might be preserved for you" (cf. Gal 2:14). The revelational truth of the gospel is such a basis for living so that the appropriate phrase is not to stand *on* it, but stand *in* it. (1 Pet 5:12) Consequently, the NT can speak frequently of "doing the truth" (John 3:21; 1 John 1:6).

Of interest are passages which speak of true teaching and true faith. A prime example might be 2 Cor 13:8 (We cannot do anything against the truth, but only for the truth). A "false gospel" (2 Cor 11:4) cannot exist in fact, being a contradiction in terms. "False" and "gospel" are mutually exclusive. In 2 Cor 4:2 Paul describes the program of his ministry as follows: "We have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways; we refuse to practice cunning or to tamper with God's word, but by the open statement of the *truth* we would commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." This programmatic statement is labeled in the following verse as Paul's "gospel." He can appeal to his hearers equally to "obey the gospel" (Gal 5:7) and to "obey the truth" (Rom 10:16). Petrine phrases such as "obedience to the truth" (1 Pet 1:22) and "the way of truth" (2 Pet 2:2) demonstrate a comprehensive concept that embraces beliefs, attitudes, actions — a way of life.

Does truth ever equal Scripture in the NT? The only real candidate would be Jas 1:18, but a comparison with 3:14 and 5:19 indicates that the better understanding of "word (of truth)" in James is simply "Christianity."

It is the proclamation of the gospel — and by this we mean the announcement of God's decision of forgiveness through Christ appropriated by faith — that is called the *logos aletheias,* the word of truth. "Of this you have heard in the word of truth, the gospel." (Col 1:5) "In [Christ] you who have heard the word of truth, the gospel." (Eph 1:13). To become a Christian is to "come to the knowledge of the truth." To know the truth is to know the gospel. This emphasis is clear in the pastorals: "(God) desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim 2:4). In 2 Tim 3:7, in a manner reminiscent of the OT, it is asserted that those who live by deceit and deception will "never come to a knowledge of the truth."

It is informative to glance also, as in the OT section of our study, at the things which stand in contrast to the truth. In 2 Thes 2:10-12 the revelation of the antichrist is characterized as "deception," "delusion," and "unrighteous," since, far from leading to salvation, it leads to perishing — "so that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth." Note the extraordinary language of I Tim 6:

> If any one teaches otherwise and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching which accords with godliness, he is puffed up with *conceit,* he *knows nothing,* he has a morbid *craving for controversy* and for *disputes* about words, which produce *envy, dissension, slander, base suspicions,* and *wrangling* among men who are depraved in mind and bereft of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain.

Deceit, dispute, slander, venality — these are the opponents of the truth.

People who oppose the truth are the subjects also of 2 Tim 3.[1] In contrast to the true, reliable, and sound teaching of the gospel, as it reflects the truth that is God, stand fables, myths, genealogies, and the like. (See 2 Tim 4:4; Tit 1:14; 1 Tim 1:4; and 2 Tim 3:7 where the apostle reminds his young friend in ministry that some people will listen to anything.)

In Scriptural terms, then, the constant character of the opponents of truth is not that they are mistaken, but that they are pernicious (see Rom 9:1 "lies"; 1 Cor 13:6 "iniquity"; Phil 1:18 "pretense"; 1 John 1:8 "deception"; 1 John 2:4 "liars").

Johannine Usage

Being of God, truth is not accessible by ordinary means of learning because of sin; it must be revealed. As sin leads to death, so truth leads to life and freedom *via* the forgiveness of sins.

> If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free . . . Every one who commits sin is a slave to sin . . . but if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed. (John 8:31, 32, 34, 36)

By putting faith in the proclamation of forgiveness one receives the freeing truth, and is empowered to live. John 8 goes on to accent the connection between a life of "lies" and the existential origin of "lie" (the very nature of Satan), and a life of freedom and truth and the existential origin of freedom and truth (the very nature of God). Jesus reveals the truth about God's work, attitude and decision — all of which are in conformity to God's essential being. The gospel is the truth about God.

In John 18:37 Jesus testifies before Pilate that he has come "to bear witness to the truth," that is, to reveal God's plan of salvation. Those who "are of God" receive the testimony and acknowledge it as revelation or truth. Thus John can make the further equation: *truth* = *Christ,* the revealer of truth. Jesus prays to the father that he "sanctify" (set apart as his own) the disciples *in the truth.* This is followed with the clarification: "your word is truth" (John 17:17). Compare this with another Johannine assertion of Jesus: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life" (14:6).

and *embody* the truth. It/He is *the revelation* (word become flesh). He is the true light, because he really does enlighten; he is the true vine, because he really does bear fruit; he is the true bread, because he really does sustain unto life eternal. He makes the divine truth real and operative in this world through his life, words, actions, death, resurrection. He *is* the truth.

According to 1 John 4, 2, and 3 John, the *spirit* is the witness to the reality of the incarnation of the word because the spirit is the truth (1 John 3:19-24). People are moved by either this spirit or by some other "spirit," notably the spirit of error, which gives rise to factious behavior in the brotherhood. "We are of God. Whoever knows God listens to us, and he who is not of God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error." (1 John 4:6; 2 John 4, 5; cf. 3 John 4, 5) The same statement is expressed with a different vocabulary in Eph 5:9-11 and provides a fitting close for our study:

[1] I am able to identify only four specific "doctrines" labeled "false," in opposition to the truth: perversion of the doctrine of justification (2 Cor 11); denying the resurrection (2 Tim 2:18); denying the incarnation (1 John, *passim*); and a wrong attitude toward money (1 Tim 6).

Once you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), and try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful words of darkness, but instead oppose them.

Bibliographical Note: A number of excellent study helps are readily available, and I have profited greatly from them. The reader might wish to consult the following: E.C. Blackman, "Truth," in *A Theological Word Book of the Bible,* ed. Alan Richardson. New York, MacMillan, 1959, 269-270.

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Martin Luther: Impatient Confessor

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When Emperor Charles V called the Diet of Augsburg in 1530, the Lutheran reform movement faced a critical moment in its relatively short history. The shape of its future and perhaps its very existence would be determined by the deliberations at Augsburg. The decisions of the Diet could result either in imperial exoneration and recognition, or in the initiation of a determined effort by Charles to suppress and even eradicate the evangelical movement. The time was a particularly critical one for the evangelicals because Martin Luther could not personally be present at Augsburg.

Luther was, of course, the undisputed spiritual leader of the evangelical movement. He had not only initiated it but had also become its chief architect. It was Luther who provided the necessary charismatic leadership for the movement. He shaped its program of reform and articulated its theology, a theology drawn from Scripture and informed by his own ardent spiritual struggles. He served as its most capable and diligent proponent, as its authoritative spokesperson and as its chief apologist. It is not surprising, therefore, that both friend and foe identified the evangelical cause and its immediate future with Martin Luther.

Characteristically, the Reformer gave all the glory and credit for the successes of the evangelicals to God and considered himself to be merely an instrument of the Lord. Together with his followers and his opponents, however, he did recognize his profound significance for the reform movement that already bore his name. As that movement prepared for the Diet of Augsburg, therefore, his leadership was absolutely essential. After all, the Lutherans faced a crucial challenge, the challenge of defending their reforms and explicating their theological convictions. Luther, of course, had faced that challenge throughout the 1520s, and he had responded with a faithful and effective witness. He must have wanted to go to Augsburg, for it was basically his theology and the reform he had initiated which were being attacked and examined and whose orthodoxy and acceptability were to be determined at the Diet.

However, Luther could not be present personally at Augsburg in 1530, despite his preferences and those of his supporters. He had been placed under the imperial ban. Therefore, he could not stand before the Emperor and boldly defend his convictions, as he had done at Worms nine years earlier. For the moment, at least, he could not be at the forefront of the battle. Others had to speak for him while he remained within the safety of Saxon territory. But as he labored impatiently in Coburg from April until October, 1530, Luther did make his impact on the Diet. His witness and his leadership of the evangelical movement continued.

On April 24, the same day that Elector John, Philip Melanchthon, and the remainder of the Saxon party embarked on

their journey to Augsburg, Luther took up residency in the Coburg Castle together with two companions, his nephew, Cyriac Kaufmann, and his secretary, Veit Dietrich. Luther had much confidence in Melanchthon and in the Elector John, the theological and political leaders of the evangelicals at Augsburg. Although he did worry about Melanchthon's inclination toward compromise, he was at the same time confident in his friend's abilities and in his loyalty to the evangelical cause. The Elector had been a faithful supporter of Luther and the evangelical movement throughout the 1520s, and Luther was certain that he would not compromise his faith even in the face of imperial pressure. With this confidence and living in surroundings which he describes as "extremely pleasant and most suited for studying," Luther planned to make his Coburg days profitable and productive ones. In the first letter written from his "Sinai," as he referred to the Castle, Luther indicated that he would devote his energies to producing translations and commentaries on the Psalms, the prophets, and Aesop's fables. He was able to fulfill these intentions. In addition, he wrote numerous letters, through which he kept in touch and shared his opinions with the evangelical representatives at Augsburg.

Luther indicated his contentment in a letter to the Elector John on May 20, 1530, in which he assures the Elector: "No, I do not find the days to be long. We live like lords, and these [last] weeks passed so quickly that they seem like no more than three days." He went on to empathize with the Elector, who, he presumes, must be "in a tiresome situation" at Augsburg. The Reformer obviously recognized the positive aspects of his own situation.

However, Luther's initial contentment did not persist. By the beginning of June, his letters gave evidence of growing annoyance and impatience. Two factors, in particular, explain this change of attitude. Since he could not be personally present at Augsburg, Luther depended on his friends for regular news from the Diet. However, from May 22 to June 12 he apparently received no letters and, therefore, no detailed information concerning the developments at Augsburg. Messengers continued to arrive at the Coburg, but they brought no specific news, only assurances that the Wittenbergers were fine. Luther was justifiably concerned. He wondered whether his friends were simply negligent or whether they were angry with him for some unknown reason. More importantly, he also worried about what was happening at Augsburg, how the preparations for the Diet were proceeding and what direction they were taking. The level of Luther's frustration and impatience is evident in a letter written to Melanchthon on June 7. "I see that you all have decided to torment us with silence," Luther complained, "Consequently, so that we don't pine away unavenged, we announce to you by means of this letter that from now on we shall compete with you in the matter of silence." Letters from Augsburg began to arrive shortly after this outburst of frustration, and from then on Luther was regularly apprised of developments at the Diet. Nevertheless, for a time he contined to chide his friends for their thoughtlessness and for having "crucified" him by their silence. Luther's contentment had been disturbed and impatience had set in.

That impatience was heightened by his growing concern that Melanchthon would compromise too much for the sake

of peace and unity. When Melanchthon inquired what concessions could be made to the Catholic party during negotiations which followed the presentation of the Augsburg Confession, Luther responded bluntly: "For me personally more than enough has been conceded in this *Apologia.*" Further concessions would be possible only if they were clearly justifiable on the basis of Scripture. Otherwise, "I shall not permit anything further to be taken from me, come what may." While Luther deeply respected his friend, he was wary of Melanchthon's irenicism. He, too, wanted peace and unity. However, he was convinced, and justifiably, that there was little hope that these ideals would be achieved at Augsburg, and he feared that the gospel might be compromised in the continuing negotiations with the Catholics. This he could not allow.

Luther's impatience and concern became so pronounced that he expressed the hope and desire to participate directly in the deliberations of the Diet. "I wish an opportunity would present itself to me to come to you," he wrote to Melanchthon. "I am eager to come even without having been asked or invited." Luther must have known that this was highly unlikely. The Emperor had no intention of offering Luther another safe-conduct, and the Elector would not allow him to travel to Augsburg without one. Indeed, he himself did not persist in his hope.

Luther had been integrally involved in the Saxon preparations for the Diet. On March 14, 1530, three days after he had received the Emperor's rather irenic invitation to attend the Diet, the Elector John requested that his Wittenberg theologians, including Luther, prepare a document which would explain the theological and ecclesiastical reforms initiated in Saxony. Because the Schwabach Articles, written in preparation for theological discussions with the South German cities, already summarized the evangelical doctrines, the theologians concentrated on defending the evangelical reforms in the document which came to be known as the Torgau Articles. These two sets of articles served as the major literary sources of the Augsburg Confession. Although Luther was not their sole author, he participated in their production, and both documents reflected his convictions. In addition to contributing to the two main sources of the Augustana, Luther also resided with the Elector at Torgau and Coburg during the three weeks before the Saxons journeyed to Augsburg. He, therefore, had ample opportunity to strategize with the Elector and the Wittenberg theologians concerning the upcoming Diet.

Through his correspondence Luther continued to participate in the deliberations and decisions of the evangelicals at Augsburg. In his letters, which make for fascinating and informative reading, Luther offered advice concerning pressing issues, suggested strategies to the Wittenbergers, provided spiritual encouragement and council to the Elector and Melanchthon, assured them that they were laboring for the Lord's cause, warned against excessive compromise, and steadfastly encouraged the evangelicals to make a faithful confession. Luther's friends repeatedly sought his advice and counsel, but he offered them even when not specifically requested. His correspondence was carefully considered by and made a significant impact on the evangelicals.

Luther's letters influenced primarily his friends. As if to assure his impact also on a wider audience, he produced his "Admonition to all the Clergy assembled at the Diet of Augsburg" shortly after he took up residence in the Coburg. The

work was an unflinching call for reform which carefully delineated specific abuses within the church. It reached Augsburg by the beginning of June and was widely disseminated. Its popularity was reported to Luther by his friend Justus Jonas and is attested to by the Emperor's prohibition of its continued dissemination. Luther's voice had been heard with striking clarity at Augsburg, even though it was through the printed page rather than the spoken word.

Most significantly, however, Luther's presence and influence are evident in the Augsburg Confession itself. The faith so carefully summarized and confessed in the Augustana is the faith which had been formulated and defended by Luther since 1517. This cannot be questioned and is clearly affirmed by Luther's reaction to the Confession. Although he expressed some serious reservations about the document because of its failure to treat such issues as the papacy, purgatory, and the veneration of saints, his response to the Confession was generally a very positive one. This is already evident in his initial reaction to the first draft of the document, which the Elector had sent to Luther for his evaluation and possible correction. Luther responded to the Elector: "I have read through Master Philip's *Apologia,* which pleases me very much; I know nothing to improve or change in it, nor would this be appropriate, since I cannot step so so softly and quietly. May Christ, our Lord, help [this *Apologia*] to bear much and great fruit, as we hope and pray. Amen." Had the Confession not accurately articulated his faith and his theological convictions, one can be certain that Luther would have edited or rewritten the document. Although he was somewhat uncomfortable with its irenic style, he obviously approved its content. The final version of the Confession evoked similar reactions. While he continued to critique the document for its omissions, he described the Augustana as a "most beautiful confession" and rejoices that "Christ has been proclaimed through this public, glorious confession."

Although Luther worried and impatiently bided his time at the Coburg Castle, his concerns were largely unnecessary. Of course, there had been attempts at compromise, but ultimately his friends and supporters had remained steadfast. Their faithful stand was a tribute to their own convictions, but it was also a tribute to their leader who had been and continued to be an example and an inspiration to them. The Confession that they presented to the Emperor, though written by another, was clearly Lutheran. No doubt the style and the character of the Augustana would have been different had Luther been its primary author. But the faith it confessed was clearly Luther's faith. In reflecting on the Diet of Augsburg, Martin Luther rejoiced that he had lived when Christ was proclaimed so faithfully by "staunch confessors." Certainly he must be numbered among them, for he rightfully considered the Augustana also his confession.

Book Reviews

JAHWES ENTGEGNUNG AN IJOB. By Othmar Keel. FRLANT 121. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1978. 192 pages. Cloth. DM 48.

The first divine speech in Job replies to the charge that the earth is nothing but chaos (ch. 3) by claiming that creation is a wisely planned enterprise (38:2-3, 36-37; 39:26). God is always busy at the task of creating cosmos (38:4-38). Time and again he pushes back the threatening wilderness by bringing rain, or he brings to an end the deeds of criminals by ushering in the light of dawn. God concedes that there are wild and destructive evil powers in the world, but he is lord over these powers. Similarly, ancient kings were viewed as lords of the wild animals. keeping them in check without altogether destroying them. The ten animals described in 38:38-39:30 were thought to be hostile to humans in Job's world, but they were also the objects of the kings' hunting expeditions as they carried out their vocation of protecting their people. So a dynamic picture emerges: the world is wild and alienated from mankind, yet God is lord over it. The world may appear chaotic, but it is firmly in Yahweh's hands.

The second divine speech replies to Job's charge that God is evil (9:24). The rebuttal in this case rests on God's defeat of diabolical beasts (Behemoth or hippopotamus and Leviathan or crocodile), a task which Job cannot begin to match. As victor over these incarnations of evil, Yahweh carries out an assignment which in Egypt was ascribed to the god Horus (40:15-41:26). Yahweh is righteous in that he always leads the fight against the evil ones (40:9-14).

Job's idea that both good and evil come immediately from the hand of Yahweh is denied in the divine speeches. Though they concede a place in the world for evil powers, they affirm that Yahweh is not directly responsible for these powers' existence. But Job's friends are judged to be wrong, too, in tracing all evil back to human guilt. Forces of evil exist independently of God and of human beings.

The preceding paragraphs summarize Keel's understanding of the divine speeches of Job. What makes his book especially convincing and interesting, however, is that he bases his interpretation of the ten animals and of Yahweh as the lord who must ever win victory over them (the first speech), and of Yahweh who alone has the power to fight against evil incarnate in hippopotamus and crocodile (the second speech), on art preserved from ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt. More than a hundred drawings and pictures demonstrate that the ten animals were known as wild, but also as objects of the royal hunt: they were ever hostile, but kept in check, according to the drawings, by kings in their role of "lord of the animals." The Egyptians never tired of depicting hippopotamus and crocodile as hostile creatures who were vanquished by the god Horus.

While Keel includes about fifty pages devoted strictly to exegetical issues, the great and refreshing strength of this book is its exploitation of ancient art (often as found on cylinder seals) to unlock the biblical text. His previous *Symbolism of the Biblical World* (Seabury, $24.50; cf. *Currents* 6 [1979], 113-114) used ancient art to elucidate the Psalter. Other, untranslated German works have applied this approach to visions (Isa 6; Ezek 1 and 10), the role of birds as messengers (Gen 8:6-12), and other aspects of the Old Testament. All of these studies merit detailed attention and rapid translation into English.

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THE BOOK OF JOB: COMMENTARY, NEW TRANSLATION, SPECIAL STUDIES. By Robert Gordis. New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America/KTAV, 1978. xxxiii and 602 pages. Cloth. $25.00.

Rabbi Gordis brings a lifelong preoccupation with the book of Job to completion with this exhaustive and masterful commentary. After an introduction in which he presents methodological principles and outlines his new contributions, he supplies a translation of all the sections or speeches, each outfitted with brief introductory summaries. The bulk of the work is textual and philological commentary, which reviews the history of interpretation and provides many new insights and approaches. Forty-two special notes on content, structure, and language complete the book.

Gordis often proposes new explanations for, or fresh defense of, the meaning and integrity of the Massoretic text, a field to which he brings massive erudition, but about which there are yet countless disagreements, especially on a book as difficult as Job. He points out the poet's use of allusiveness and analogy and his preference for implication over explicit utterance. Gordis claims that the biblical author often used "virtual quotations"; that is, certain lines in the speeches are citations of another character in the book even though there is no explicit indication of this. Thus the words of "Job" in 12:6ff., 12; 13:14; 21:19a, 22, 28, 30a, and in ch. 24 are to be understood as a citation of the *opponents'* arguments, in order to refute them. Though Gordis has proposed this solution in previous publications, he has not yet persuaded the majority of scholars of its accuracy.

For Gordis, as for many others, the book's basic answer comes in the divine speeches. They imply that man cannot grasp the world, much less can he pass judgment on its creator. Man cannot fully comprehend either the natural or the moral order. But the poems in chs. 38-41 are also full of joy and praise: "The beauty of the natural order in which man can rejoice suggests the existence of a pattern in the moral order, in which man may believe and be comforted." Gordis, who has also published major studies on Koheleth, the Song of Songs, and Lamentations, holds the Elihu chapters to be an essential part of the book. Influenced by the theology of Second Isaiah, the poet, in his later years, has Elihu argue that the righteous may suffer at times as part of a regimen of education.

Commentaries, of course, are almost impossible to review critically. One must finally evaluate the author's stance on dozens of broad questions and hundreds — or thousands — of points in detail. Nevertheless, this must be said: Here lie priceless treasures of Jewish exegetical tradition, of exhaustive comparison with other canonical writings, and of wide acquaintance with the literature of the ancient near east. Here is a deep and consistent — if not unquestioned — approach to what Carlyle called "the grandest book ever written with pen."

Ralph W. Klein
Christ Seminary — Seminex

THE FUTURE OF PARTNERSHIP. By Letty M. Russell. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1979. 200 pages. Paper. $6.95.

Russell says that she is following her own advice in trying to find out what it would be like if "they" gave a revolution and everybody won. While she never really attempts a final scenario, she does give a thorough, scholarly look at pertinent biblical references, examining the roles of people in partnership with each other and with God, who makes partnership possible through Jesus. The reader is left to her own conclusions and visions about the possibilities and future of partnership, restrained only by her own limited views and fear of change.

In Pt. I, "Partnership with God," Russell discusses the freedom of God for us and from us. She looks at God's arithmetic of partnership ($1 + 1 = 3$ or more) and reminds us that the gifts of the Spirit are neither equally distribu-

ted nor determined by gender. By calculated inefficiency (e.g. Jonah, Saul of Tarsus), partnership grows through grace. Russell's discussion of *oikonomia,* used in reference to both the divine plan of salvation and to household management and stewardship, is extremely interesting in the context of partnership of male and female. She demonstrates that God, and human partnership with God, transcends sexuality. One begins with the salvation plan for gender-role definition, and then looks at the creation accounts for clues to partnership, not the other way around. These themes tie together as Russell leads us to examine God's self-presentation, that is, the roles of Christ in partnership with us: Lord, servant, liberator.

Pt. II, "Partnership with Others," looks at the meaning of human sexuality in terms of God's true plan for humankind, and the ways in which we are hindered in our attempts at partnership. "Advent shock," or maladjustment with the present, leads us to defend the status quo. Russell explains the "flight from ministry," leading us to ask questions such as "Why should anyone try this impossibly possible form of service?" rather than "Why should women or gays or handicapped be ordained?" There is one call and one ministry; Russell tries to present the possibilities for partnership in that call and ministry. She sees clergy and laity as both oppressed and oppressors and tests out the clues from Pt. I as a means to achieving partnership. An important idea in this discussion is that we need to develop the love for questions. This is difficult, when we are taught to be competitors rather than partners, conformists rather than questioners. We need to educate each other, share each other's roles, and live out, not just figure out, the questions. While we all realize that no one human relationship is sufficient to nurture a person, we often behave as though we thought the traditional parish structure were sufficient in the spiritual sense. Russell presents a multitude of alternatives for life, fellowship, and partnership styles for both laity and clergy.

Pt. III, "Beginning from the Other End," discusses a theology of partnership with a view to the future, affirming hope as a key to understanding partnership and living out the new equality ("a pattern of equal regard and mutual acceptance").

This book is helpful in broadening perceptions of and tolerance for the worth and dignity of all persons, and of alternative styles of life and ministry. Russell does this by presenting real-life examples of partnership and of how it was achieved, and many biblical interpretations providing clues to God's intention for partnership. The book is a positive statement suggesting reason and action rather than justification and recrimination.

> For I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for *shalom* and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.
>
> (Jer 29:11)

Kathleen Danker
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TODAY'S CHURCH: A COMMUNITY OF EXILES AND PILGRIMS. By George W. Webber. Nashville: Abingdon, 1979. 160 pages. Paper. $4.95.

This book is one man's analysis of how the church should respond to the needs of the world. Webber has impressive credentials: he is the president of New York Theological Seminary and has been involved in the East Harlem Protestant parish. But I read the book with mixed emotions. He got me to think through some of my traditional Lutheran attitudes towards the church and social problems. At the same time, however, I can't accept all that he says.

First of all, I found myself challenging some of his exegesis. For instance, he accepts the interpretation that when Paul speaks of "principalities and powers", he means human institutions and ideologies. Yet according to Eph 6:12 and Col 2:15, the principalities

and powers that Christ has defeated are more than mere human organizations or evils. I also found problematic what seems to be a Christianity with an absentee Christ. Often Webber exhorts Christians to follow Christ's example of ministry, or to let their lives be shaped by his life. But he does not mention the presence and power of Christ to do things in and through us. Christ is more than a source of inspiration; he accomplishes reconciliation and love between people.

But the positive more than balances these negatives. I was so stimulated by what he said on Jer 29, his text for the book, that I preached a sermon on it and used many of his ideas. He proved that there is much that we should be doing as Christ's representatives in the world, and he has given many useful examples of churches in action in this area.

Finally, Webber writes in a balanced way on a subject that too often is dealt with in an all-or-nothing fashion. He is aware of these extremist attitudes and tries to deal responsibly with both the call to "seek the peace of the city" and the Biblical basis for our standing as exiles and pilgrims, who have no abiding city, but look ahead to where our real citizenship is.

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THE CENTER OF CHRISTIANITY. By John Hick. New York: Harper and Row, 1978. 128 pages. Cloth. $6.95.

John Hicks attempts to deal with two important phenomena which have contested the claims of the Christian faith: the growth of science and the awareness of global religious pluralism. He especially wants to counter the responses given these challenges by many "evangelicals." In a clear, succinct and very readable way Hick re-examines and re-explains "the center of Christianity." The question is whether, in his attempt to dialogue with these modern challenges, he actually embraces them at the expense of the "center" *as it has always been confessed in the Church.*

Hick rejects the traditional dogmatic formulation of the incarnation. Jesus was not divine in any metaphysical sense, but he exhibited in his life and death perfect consciousness of God's self-giving love. The resurrection experience was essentially an event in the minds of the disciples, whereby they came to the conclusion that Jesus was a man chosen by God for a special work. To call Jesus God is to use the poetic language of personal commitment and devotion, to show that one is supremely committed to the vision of God and the way of life revealed in Jesus.

Hick's attempt to deal with a religiously plural world shows how far he has gone to embrace the outsiders. Since God is creator and has limitless love toward all people, he refuses to limit God's love to the Judeo-Christian tradition. What Hick is really proposing, despite his insistence on the necessity of Christ, is a Christianity with "God" at the center, and not Christ. Christ is only one particular disclosure of a universal reality which has always manifested itself in the life of mankind. He no longer considers Christianity the touchstone with which all other world religions must be measured.

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DANCE AS PRAYER. By Lucien Deiss and Gloria Gabriel Weyman. Chicago: World Library Publications, 1979. 66 pages. Paper. $2.00.

In this short book, Deiss and Weyman have done a thorough and competent job of discussing all aspects of dance as a legitimate and edifying means of prayer. The book is divided into two main parts. The first is a justification of dance in the liturgy. According to Fr. Deiss, the industrial era has so stifled the human festive spirit that the liturgy in our churches lacks any truly joyful celebration. But

now a rebellion against this oppressive force is brewing, both within and outside the church. Just as people in their secular lives dance to reflect joy and festivity, so also dance in the liturgy is an outward expression of the joy and festivity inherent in the worship of God. Deiss defends dance as the natural outward expression of the inner prayer of the soul; people must pray with both soul and body, just as God has created people with both souls and bodies. "Created by God, the body is not a donkey that one must subdue so that it will stay in the stable while the soul will frolic with angels in celestial meadows in the presence of the Lord."

Another significant portion of the book is devoted to the historical basis for dance as a part of the worship experience. Included are Old and New Testament references to dance, along with evidence that early church fathers were familiar with dance in the liturgy. Deiss concludes the first half of the book with proposals on where dance fits into the liturgy and how it is most easily incorporated into the total worship experience.

The second part of the book deals with very practical questions of how to make dance work — who should dance, how to dance, where to dance, etc. Having been involved in liturgical dance, I found Ms. Weyman's suggestions extremely helpful and most useful for my own performances. Among other things, she emphaizes that a congregation must be prepared for dance; it cannot be thrust upon them without warning. Just as dancers must rehearse and prepare, there must also be an educational process within the congregation. Throughout the book, both authors emphasize that liturgical dance is prayer, and it must enhance the worship life of the congregation. It should not be used if it only distracts or destroys a prayerful attitude.

I found this book an excellent study, discussing both pros and cons of liturgical dance in church. For anyone interested in exploring the possibilities of integrating dance into his or her worship life, I recommend it heartily.

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THE GOD WHO CARES: A CHRISTIAN LOOK AT JUDAISM. By Frederick Holmgren. Atlanta: John Knox, 1979. 144 pages. Paper. $4.95.

It was the second World War, particularly the horrors of the Holocaust, that shocked Christians into reality: confronted by the extermination camps of Europe, they could not evade the question of Jewish-Christian relationships. The Holocaust happened in a land steeped in Christian tradition and nurtured by the spirit of Luther. Of course, there were Christians who protested Nazi oppression, but most were either apathetic about what was taking place, or openly sympathized with Hitler's attitude toward the Jews.

> How does one explain the existence of hostility to the Jews within the Christian tradition? Why did people, who rejoiced in the unmerited love of God in Jesus Christ, deal so harshly with them? Why were so many restrictions placed upon them? Why did good Christians support the burning of the Talmud and, finally, allow the burning of the people who read the Talmud?

Holmgren maintains that misinformation ranks as one of the most important of the many reasons for this behavior. "The various accusations against the Jews would not have been seriously considered if people had been informed about the nature of Jewish faith and life."

Over the years since that era of terrors, Christians have attempted to erase the misunderstandings and tackle the difficult and often controversial questions involved. An important initial step was taken by the General Assembly of the World Council of Churches at Amsterdam in 1948. It declared that "to the Jews our God has bound us in a special solidarity linking our destinies together in his design."

The message has taken a long time to sink in. It was repeated at the Second Assembly held in Evanston in 1954, and again at the Third in New Delhi in 1961.

In 1964 the Lutheran World Federation Consultation on the Church and the Jewish people at Logumkloster, Denmark, added its voice to the growing chorus of those repudiating anti-Semitism and calling for new understandings. "Anti-Semitism," the Consultation said, "is primarily a denial of the image of God in the Jew; it represents a demonic form of rebelling against the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and a rejection of Jesus, the Jew, directed upon his people. 'Christian anti-Semitism is a spiritual suicide.' " To eradicate it, the Consultation urged Lutheran congregations "to fight against discrimination or persecution of Jews in their communities ... and to make common cause with the Jewish people in matters of spiritual and social concern, especially in the fostering of human rights."

All these attempts to promote understanding and cooperation are commendable. Yet little has happened at the local level. For the most part, congregations are not even aware of the new directions towards understanding affirmed by their respective church bodies.

The God Who Cares is the best resource I am aware of for helping Christians take a fresh look at their Jewish neighbors and at themselves — well written, informative, and enlivening, with a rich and reliable bibliography. It is a book that can confidently be handed to those who are unfamiliar with the teachings of Judaism, but it also addresses the concerns of pastors and scholars, and makes an excellent discussion piece for adult or youth groups.

Holmgren has no quick and easy answers to the questions we Christians face each time we encounter our Jewish neighbors. But he does have a bit of welcome advice: "At this point in history, it will be wise to exercise restraint and to obey the old proverb 'listen twice, speak once.' " Before answers are formulated, "we need to know more about who we *really* are and who Jews *really* are. In friendly but serious confrontation with Jews we may gain insights that will help us better understand boty Judaism and Christianity."

The genius of Holmgren's approach lies precisely in his ability to help us "listen." Convinced that we Christians have over the centuries tended to caricature Judaism as a tired and lifeless religion of law, and to exaggerate and idealize the contributions of Christianity, he helps us explore central themes in ancient and modern Judaism with open and hearing ears. His treatment of the law as a response to love is particularly refreshing. So is his assertion that the merciful God is no stranger to Israel. In both instances he reaffirms a truth many of us have never recognized: that "grace" is as central to the understanding of Judaism as it is to Christianity.

I am not as convinced as Holmgren that misinformation is the chief cause of Jewish-Christian resentment. The real issue, as I see it, is whether or not it is possible for a Christian to accept the Jew as a person, without conveying a superior, imperialistic attitude. Too often it is the "theology of glory," rather than the "theology of the cross" which has influenced Christian relations to other cultures and other faiths. Yet it is the way of the cross which leads to reconciliation. But that ought not deter us from taking a closer look at *The God Who Cares.* "To see ourselves as others see us and others as they see themselves" is a step in the right direction. You cannot read the book without becoming excited about the future of Jewish-Christian conversations.

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THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES. By Samuel Sandmel. New York: Oxford University Press, 1978. xxi and 552 pages. Paper. $7.50.

Sandmel writes an introduction to the Old Testament (Tanak) which attempts "to acquaint the reader who goes on to become a biblical scholar in the fullest sense with basic material that he will not have to unlearn (vii)."

The author surveys each book of the Old Testament, and in each book he carefully introduces the reader to the critical issues which scholars have debated in the past. He divides the Tanak into the three traditional divisions (Pentateuch, Prophets, and Writings), but his arrangement of the materials is somewhat different than that found in traditional introductions. He begins with the prophets (chapters 1-17), because the classical prophets represent the oldest extant record of Hebrew religion. Next follows a discussion on the Writings (chapter 18-24), most of which are dated to the post-exilic period, although they may contain materials which were quite ancient. Chapters 25-41 deal with the various history narratives which Sandmel divides into three major sections: the Pentateuch (which is actually a Tetrateuch, Genesis to Numbers, containing three sources, J, E, and P), the Deuteronomic Histories (D and P), and the Chroniclers' Histories (containing two editions, 1 & 2 Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah). It was the P redactor(s) who assembled and edited these three older histories and shaped them into their present form, sometime in the last post-exilic period.

For Sandmel, the Tanak is not pure history, but theology. Historical events in the Old Testament do not come to us as pure fact *(Historie),* but each editor of the Tanak interpreted and embellished the facts of history to serve some particular purpose or slant. For example, in the Deuteronomic revision we find two contradicting viewpoints concerning the monarchy. One Deuteronomic historian, writing during the time of the monarchy, was pro-monarchy, and he lamented that the sordid sins of the period of the judges are to be attributed to the fact that the monarchy did not exist. Each man did what was right in his own eyes, because there was no king (Judges 17:6). Yet in the same narrative we also find anti-monarchy passages like 1 Samuel 8:11-18 where Samuel really doesn't want Israel to have a king, because Yahweh is their *only* king. Acording to Sandmel this anti-monarchy strand comes from a P writer during the post-exilic period when the monarchy had disappeared. Two different authors edit and assess history according to their own particular slant, and in this case P corrects an earlier deuteronomic revision.

Sometimes Sandmel can be a bit too casual in his comments. He chides Rowley for trying to find relevancy in apocalyptic literature, and Sandmel simply dismisses the book of Daniel as "antiquarian" (p. 238). Yet at the same time Sandmel struggles valiantly to relate the relevancy of Pentateuchal legislation (Exodus 21 through Numbers). It seems to me that what's fair for Pentateuchal legislation ought also to apply to apocalyptic literature! The quest for relevancy, which is the task of every interpreter, must apply to the whole Tanak and not to just those sections that appeal to us.

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JESUS, THE STRANGER By Joseph G. Donders. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books. viii and 290 pages. Cloth. $8.95.

Here is a book of sermons based on the gospels, written in a semi-poetic/vignette style. The sermons are airy at best and tedious at worst. Full of personal reflections and specific African places and peoples, the book fails to provide practical value for preachers, and compared to the work of, say, Herb Brokering, who writes in a similar style, it lacks the sense of drama necessary to sustain 290 pages. There seems to be little striving for compactness of thought or expression of emotion, so

needed when writing in this style. On the plus side, the vignettes are short enough so that they might be useful as bulletin inserts on special days; they might also prove useful for supplementary reading in Sunday School.

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BIBLISCHES REALLEXIKON. Edited by Kurt Galling. Second, revised edition. Handbuch zum Alten Testament, Erste Reihe, Band 1. Tuebingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1977. xvi and 388 pages (including 93 illustrations, 3 chronological tables, and 2 fold-out maps). Cloth. DM 96.00.

Here is an old and valued friend brought up to date. *Reallexikon* in the title means a lexicon that deals with all the tangible items that are a part of the life of the people of the Bible. The major concentration is on the Old Testament period, but New Testament topics are also treated (synagogue, ossuary, house, etc.).

It is both much more and much less than a standard Bible dictionary. It is *less* because it does not deal with people, ideas, or historical events. The only article that is somewhat outside the scope is the article on excavation history and technique. It is *more* than the average Bible dictionary because it gives extensive information about topics usually treated more cursorily in those works. The *realia* covered include agriculture, animal husbandry, places, cities, religious and cultic implements and places, house and home, diet, clothing, warfare, architecture, tools, technology, business, shipping, and manufacturing.

All articles are signed, provided with an international and up to date bibliography, and based on surviving materials. Many are illustrated with plans or drawings of surviving artifacts from the material culture of the time. (It is curious that two different drawing techniques are used, straight line drawings and drawings done by the "stippled dot" technique which gives an excellent three-dimensional effect.) No photographs are used.

Some examples will illustrate the method. Places are described on the basis of the excavated remains, with some attention to the literary evidence. Only sites inside Palestine or mentioned in the Old Testament are treated; for example, Babylon, Damascus and Byblos get articles. Some city plans are given, in block format. The article on temples is detailed, covers the temple in the Middle East for millennia, and includes block plans of thirty-two different temples (including two from Tel Mardik or Ebla). The bibliography includes dozens of references to books and articles in three languages. Burial practices are discussed in articles on tombs, sarcophagi, burial urns, and ossuaries. The article on spinning shows pictures of spinning weights, spindles, and the technique of using them. Practically every tool the Israelites used is described and pictured.

In short, the work has a clearly marked out area to cover, covers it well, and illustrates it with excellently selected materials. Users will find their comprehension of the Bible, especially the Old Testament, markedly increased by constant use of this major work of reference. There is no substitute for it.

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Christ Seminary — Seminex

RECLAMS BIBELLEXIKON. Edited by Klaus Koch, Eckart Otto, Juergen Roloff and Hans Schmoldt. Stuttgart: Reclam, 1978. 521 pages. Cloth, DM 45.00; Paper, DM 36.80.

There is no shortage of aids for the scholar who studies the Bible, but the interested lay person often has trouble finding helps that are well informed about recent philological, archaeological and theological study. That makes the present book all the more significant, for now lay readers have the treasures of scholarship available in clear and concise form. In some 2,700 articles, all signed, the current state of knowledge on the facts of biblical

history, the physical objects of daily life, the results of modern biblical scholarship, the nature of biblical interpretation, and the use and influence of the Bible in church and synagogue is laid out.

The articles under the German letter "K" will illustrate the coverage: the Kabbala, Caesar cult, Cana, Canaanites, Ceramics, Corinth (with a city plan), communism in early Christianity, the letters to Corinth and Colossae, cross, cultic implements, etc. High quality illustrations and plans clarify the written word. No consistent bias in favor of any one exegetical school is discernable though the historical approach is consistently used. In short, this work is practical, useful, informed and attractive in format.

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HOW TO CHOOSE THE WRONG MARRIAGE PARTNER AND LIVE UNHAPPILY EVER AFTER. By Robert L. Mason, Jr. and Caroline L. Jacobs. Atlanta: John Knox, 1979. 170 pages. Paper. $4.95.

How is it possible for a marriage to succeed if the choice of partners was a mistake in the first place? To paraphrase some of this book's conclusions: There is no way such a marriage could have succeeded so stop faulting yourself; you have made a mistake in choice, admit it and get on with the process of living; a mistake in choice does not make you a failure as a person or as a spouse in remarriage.

These conclusions seem built on the assumption that personality is formed and frozen in shape long before the age of marriage and no change after marriage is likely. If that assumption is true, what are therapists and counselors of any stripe about, and what happens to our concepts of growth in grace, emotional maturity, conversions, salvation or any other hope of the Christian tradition?

Perhaps another chapter is needed as a corrective. Certainly spouses are not expected to turn each other from frogs to princes. It is reasonable to assume, however, that spouses can have either a positive or a negative effect upon each other. Therefore, if I do not like the person my spouse has become in our marriage, I may need to look at the effect I have had on him/her and take responsiblity for helping to create the environment of our marriage that shapes each as a marriage partner. Absolutions for making an original "wrong choice" may be inappropriate for those who are guilty of being a less than good environment for the healthy development of their spouse.

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THE LIVING WORD OF THE BIBLE. By Bernhard W. Anderson. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1979. 117 pages. Paper. $4.95.

This little book contains the text of four lectures justifying the expression "Word of God" for the Bible. It constitutes something of an updating of concerns and concepts with which this premier Old Testament scholar has been associated since the 1950s and '60s.

Anderson's first lecture, "Word of Imagination," argues that the one who takes Scripture as Word of God must expound the final form of the text within the larger literary context of Scripture and for the believing community. The act of interpretation must involve imagination — a poetic, dramatic interaction between text and reader.

In his second lecture, "Word of Narration," Anderson grapples with the shift from "history" to "story" among Biblical theologians. He holds that this shift should not be pushed too far, for we cannot abandon the claim that God is present in history.

In the third lecture, "Word of Liberation," Anderson enters into dialogue with liberation theology. Although sympathetic, he rejects the identification of partial causes and histories with God's saving action. In his final lecture, "Word of Obligation," he endeavors to overcome the schism be-

tween "social gospel" and "personal salvation" Christians by relating them to the prophetic and apocalyptic strands of Biblical literature.

Anderson's writing is clear and easy to understand, moderate on all questions, respectful and irenic toward opponents, and well-calculated to compel conviction. Yet despite its virtues, the book is unsatisfactory. Its softness and vagueness gives the impression of solving problems not faced concretely. For example, how can one admire the imaginative character of Biblical communication without facing the radical challenges this poses to all traditional concepts of inspiration? How can one speak of God's presence in history without agonizing over the difficulty of saying "God did that"? The book, thus, as much exemplifies the crisis in Biblical authority as resolves it.

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Briefly Noted

Sociology is one of the most useful tools to be applied in recent times to the Bible, and Frank Crüsemann's study on the resistance to the Israelite monarchy (**Der Widerstand gegen das Königtum** [Neukirchener Verlag, DM 44]) illustrates the great potential of this discipline. The strong anti-monarchical tendencies in Judg 8:22-23 and 1 Sam 8:11-17, for example, are attributed to the reactions of land-owning, upper-class citizens who had much to lose from the changes brought about by the monarchy. This reaction occurred primarily during the reigns of David and Solomon. But there was also a counter-position, more favorable to the monarchy, represented by such documents as the account of David's rise to power (1 Sam 16ff.), the Joseph story (defending bureaucratic rule and royal tax policies), Judg 17-21 (calling the time before the formation of the state anarchy), the Yahwist stratum in the Pentateuch (a mediating document), and the Succession Document (2 Sam 9-20; 1 Kgs 1-2, with its loyal, but critical, prophets and court counsellors). Eventually the more wealthy citizens and the kings realized that their interests coincided, and this led to a division within Israel between the rich and powerful on the one side — supported by and supporting the king — and the poor and oppressed on the other, setting the stage for the critique of the prophets. While much of the book is devoted to detailed exegesis of the pre-canonical setting and meaning of various pericopes, a final chapter attempts a sociological descripton of pre-monarchical Israel, the monarchy itself, and the limitations eventually placed on the monarchy, due in part to the opposition referred to above. Crüsemann does not pretend that such interpretation exhausts the significance of the biblical text, but all can profit from the ways his sociological analysis gives added, dynamic perspective to the theological questions which the biblical text addresses.

The **Compact Bible Atlas with Gazeteer** (Baker, $3.95) describes the principal geographical features of Palestine and the ancient world and indicates their locations on nineteen four-color maps (originally published by Hammond). Useful, inexpensive, non-technical.

Adrian Hastings surveys the history of Christianity throughout sub-Saharan Africa during the third quarter of this century. He begins in 1950 at a time when the churches were still part of the colonial order, for the most part, and traces the story on from there across the coming of political independence and the transformations of the 1960s and early 1970s. His **A History of African Christianity** (Cambridge, cloth, $34.50; Paper, $9.95) tells the recent story of 100,000,000 Christians!

Baker Book House has just reprinted Gesenius' **Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament** ($11.95) in the translation by Samuel P. Tregelles. The only change since the 1857 edition is the addition of marginal code numbers referring to **Strong's Exhaustive Concordance.** Now, according to the publisher, a student with no knowledge of Hebrew can mine the riches of Gesenius using **Strong's Concordance** as a port of entry. While Gesenius' work was the basis for the famed Brown, Driver, and Briggs lexicon, the latter scholars (in 1907!) considerably expanded and improved the work of their German predecessor who had died in 1842. The Baker reprint, therefore, gives us biblical philology of 135 years ago, that is, before the recovery of Assyrian, Babylonian, and Ugaritic and before the magnificent advances due to intensive internal and comparative studies. Worse yet, the translation of Tregelles often supplements the original entries with theological comments of a rigid fundamentalist bent. It is highly doubtful that a student with no Hebrew knowledge, working with an antiquated and theologically marred tool, will glean much that is worthwhile from Gesenius, who was, to be sure, the most oustanding Hebraist of his generation.

The five-volume work of F.J. Foakes Jackson and Kirsop Lake on **The Acts of the Apostles** has been reprinted by Baker Book House ($49.50 for the set). Though somewhat dated, their discussion of the historical and theological setting of the New Testament and the early church, of isagogical questions and the textual criticism of Acts, their translation and commentary of the book itself, and their elucidation of prominent events, names, and places were a high water mark in early twentieth-century critical scholarship.

He may not yet have touched your life directly, but Dom Helder Camara, a frail Brazilian bishop, has long been a thorn in the side of conservative Roman Catholicism and right-wing government in his country. Eighteen hours of interviews with him have been edited and published by Jose de Broucker in **Dom Helder Camara: The Conversations of a Bishop** (Collins, $9.95).

The paperback series called **Mission Trends** contains reprints of articles on the cutting edge of the church's life. **No. 4: Liberation Theologies** (Paulist/Eerdmans, $3.45) provides choice reading on such topics as mission and liberation, the black experience, and the feminist experience. Liberation theology has been described as "an attempt to look at the world in terms of involvement with the under-privileged and oppressed, and to find within the Christian gospel both the analytic tools and the energizing power to work for radical change in that world." This volume is edited by Gerald H. Anderson and Thomas F. Stransky, C.S.P.

In **The King James Version Debate** (Baker, $3.95) D.A. Carson tries to show that the KJV is not necessarily the best English version now extant nor that its retention should be a standard of orthodoxy. Half the book shows the inadequacies of the Greek text used by the translators in the 17th century, while the second half counters the claim that KJV is the most accurate, durable, reverent, Christ-honoring, memorizable, and readable version.

Scholars honor their distinguished colleagues by writing books in their name. **Text and Interpretation** (Cambridge, $29.50) is dedicated to Matthew Black, long-time principal at St. Andrews (Scotland), and perhaps best known for his investigations into the Aramaic background of the gospels. The twenty essays deal with, among other things, New Testament textual criticism, another specialty of Black's. He served as one of the editors fo the United Bible Societies' text of the New Testament. **On Language Culture, and Religion** (Mouton, American Bible Society, $30.50) is a jubilee volume marking the 60th birthday of Eugene A. Nida. His theories on dynamic equivalence translation (the meaning and purpose of the original is to be recaptured insofar as possible *within the different language patterns of the*

translation) are best known through their application in the Good News Bible. Pt. I (edited by Matthew Black) consists of articles dealing with the text of the Old and New Testaments; Pt. II contains papers on other linguistic, cultural, and religious themes.

Harold Lindsell is still "battling for the Bible," and his new book, **The Bible in the Balance** (Zondervan, $9.95), reapplies the litmus test of inerrancy to the "evangelical," ecclesiastical scene. Naturally he rejoices over the Preus purge of the Missouri Synod (quoting only books by pro-Preus sources), but his target is really elsewhere: the Southern Baptists, for instance, and Fuller Seminary. Those familiar with the Missouri Synod conflict might be reminded by this book of Herman Otten and his influential *Christian News.* There is the same simplification of issues, the same use of innuendo, the same shift of the Bible's authority from the gospel to a doctrine of inerrancy. How different the word evangelical sounds in Lindsell's telling! Gone — or played down— are its gospel-centrism, pastoral concern, its connotations of love, freedom, mission, unity. No one can be evangelical for Lindsell if he *(sic)* cannot affirm the Bible's inerrancy. Evangelicals must believe Peter wrote 2 Pet (p. 309). "Evangelical" translates as accusatory, defensive, mean, aggressive, divisive. Lindsell laments the defection from his self-declared Bible battle of such well-known and admired conservatives as Bernard Ramm, Carl F.H. Henry, and Clark Pinnock. He even questions the accreditation of Seminex since it allegedly lacks property, library, assets, and endowment (p. 269). A library we have. Are the other traits really the necessary marks of an evangelical, accredited seminary? What a pity!

For Thomas Coates the Sermon on the Mount is a consummate example of the ongoing interplay between law and gospel in the Christian life. In **The Sermon on the Mount for Today** (Clayton, $2.95) he provides forty-six brief meditations on it, ideal for home devotions. Each selection provides a capsule commentary on the biblical text.

Foreboding is the only word which fits the title **Chrooma Theou** (Altötting: Coppenrath, 1976, for Catholic Church Music Associates, $17.95), the first volume of a series entitled *Musicae Sacrae Melethmata.* Anyone venturing beyond the stuffy Germanic style will find Robert Skeris' book useful (if you're a music scholar or into patristics) and/or interesting (if you're not). Skeris presents a musico-theological investigation of musical imagery in ecclesiastical writers from the sub-apostolic period until the age of Constantine.

What's really *useful* is the collection of excerpts (in both original and translation) which comprise the first section of the book. Of *interest* is a concluding chapter describing the figure of Orpheus in Christian iconography and literature. As Orpheus came to symbolize Christ, so music in general served as a point where pagan cultures and revealed religion converged. One suspects the same holds for today: there is a great deal of religion being taught via non-churchly music; the challenge is to harness the neutral for ecclesiastical use.

Profuse notes (a mini-bibliography, e.g., on the dance of Jesus in the Acts of John) and opportunities galore for your and my favorite aphorism on music are crammed into this book. Try this one from Arnobius (c. 304): Was it for this he sent souls ... that they should swell out their cheeks in blowing the flute ... raising the loud din of castanets ... finally raising the haunches and hips, and float along with a tremulous motion of the loins? (Mark Bangert)

The Old Testament is currently being translated into some 150 languages. In addition to all the other skills and resources needed in these projects is some method for dealing with textual criticism, for finding the most reliable text. **A Preliminary and Interim Report on the Hebrew Old Testament Text Project,** so far extending to four volumes (United Bible Societies, $2.60; $4.35;

$4.40; $2.40), is an attempt to provide competent text critical data. An international committee has evaluated readings which are significantly different and which have played a role in the RSV, the French Jerusalem Bible, the revised Luther Bible in German, and the NEB. The primary focus is on the second of four phases of the text's history, that is, in the period before 70 A.D., when we may speak of the "earliest attested text." Discussions of readings is bilingual (all comments in English and French) and a model of clarity and precision. The Massoretic text and the variant in question are given in Hebrew and in English-French translations. Then the four modern renderings (RSV, etc.) are cited, and one or more of thirteen factors are proposed as the reason why the variant arose. A suggested translation completes the discussion. Readings are graded from A to D, with an A reading being the most certain, a D reading the least. Occasionally additional remarks clarify complicated situations. This project, for which a number of subsequent volumes are planned, parallels in many ways the Bible Societies' *Greek New Testament* (edited by K. Aland, *et al.*) of 1966. Despite all the obvious utility fo these Old Testament volumes, I have two reservations: 1) My understanding of "significantly different" readings must be considerably broader than that of the committee. If a person wishes to do close exegetical work, he or she will need to make many more crucial textual decisions in every chapter than the committee. 2) The committee, even in 1-2 Sam where the Massoretic text is usually thought to be quite defective, is *extremely* hesitant to emend the text. Many a translator, nevertheless, will, with full right, rise up and call this committee blessed. blessed.

Profiles in Belief: The Religious Bodies of the United States and Canada is the monumental cataloguing and description of religious America prepared by the late Arthur Carl Piepkorn. Vol. III, **Holiness and Pentecostal** and Vol. IV, **Evangelical, Fundamentalist, and Other Christian Bodies** are bound together into one book (Harper and Row, $23.95). Fifty-seven Holiness associations alone are described with typical Piepkornian precision, detail, and fairness, and the number of trinitarian Pentecostal bodies is in the high seventies. The "other" bodies in Vol. IV include the Friends (Quakers), Seventh-day Adventists, Unitarians, and Universalists, and — as one is forced to say again and again in this series — much, much more.

A Wandering Aramean (Scholars, $8.00 for members, $12.00 for non-members) is a collection of twelve essays by the eminent Joseph A. Fitzmyer. Eight of the twelve deal in one way or another with the New Testament. Items covered include: Aramaic as the language of Jesus, the languages of Palestine in the first century (Latin, Greek, Aramaic, Hebrew), the five phases of the Aramaic language, and the background of the titles *Kyrios* and "Son of Man."

The Manual on the Liturgy: Lutheran Book of Worship (Augsburg, $12.50) is designed to discuss some ways the liturgy of LBW might be done, reflecting the breadth of Lutheran practice and opening a variety of possibilities for doing the services. Four chapters are entitled "Celebrating" (Holy Baptism, Holy Communion, the cross and resurrection [Lent through the Easter vigil], and the Personal Life [confirmation, marriage, burial]). Other chapters deal with Lutheran Worship today, the LBW itself, music and worship, the action and spirit of celebration, and daily prayer (the replacement for matins, vespers and compline). Not only should this be "the Bible" for Lutheran altar guilds and worship committees, but it should also be a well-thumbed, central member of every pastor's working library.

Das Atlas-Tafel-Werk zu Bibel und Kirchengeschichte is planned to be a five-volume project that will deal respectively with the Old Testament and Judaism until the time of Jesus, the New Testament and church history until Charlemagne, church history from Charlemagne to John Hus,

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church history in the time of the reformation, and the history of the churches in modern times. Vol. I, **Altes Testament und Geschichte des Judentums bis Jesus Christus** (Quell Verlag, DM 68), is a 120-page volume, printed on very heavy paper, with helpful maps, charts, and explanations. The maps are filled with square boxes which correlate the geography with biblical or other ancient events, while the charts outline historical events or detail genealogies. There are charts on the Davidic kings and their wives, on places associated with prophets in the monarchical period, and on the chronological order of texts from Isaiah and Jeremiah, and most of these charts employ effective use of color. There are four full-page charts of important people from Greece, a three-page correlation of Dan 11 with hellenistic history, and an absolutely dazzling one-pager that manages to condense historical-critical theories of the origins of Old Testament books into one chronologically arranged chart. There are lists of the passages dealing with high places and the sin of Jeroboam, not to mention a description of the many non-Yahwistic cults during the monarchy. In whichever of its three sections readers have interest — 1) from the beginnings to the judges; 2) from the monarchy to the exile; 3) from the exile to Roman rule — they can open their Bibles, flip open this loose-leaf treasure, and explore. Does anyone have the courage and imagination to bring this into English?

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