

CONCORDIA  
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**Gerhard Aho**  
**1923-1987**

*Lord, Thee I love with all my heart;  
I pray Thee, ne'er from me depart,  
With tender mercy cheer me  
Earth has no pleasure I would share,  
Yea, heav'n itself were void and bare  
If Thou, Lord, were not near me.  
And should my heart for sorrow break,  
My trust in Thee no one could shake.  
Thou art the Portion I have sought;  
Thy precious blood my soul has bought.  
Lord Jesus Christ, My God and Lord, my God and Lord,  
Forsake me not! I trust Thy Word.*

*Yea, Lord, 'twas Thy rich bounty gave  
My body, soul, and all I have  
In this poor life of labor.  
Lord, grant that I in ev'ry place  
May glorify Thy lavish grace  
And serve and help my neighbor.  
Let no false doctrine me beguile,  
Let Satan not my soul defile.  
Give strength and patience unto me  
To bear my cross and follow Thee.  
Lord Jesus Christ, My God and Lord, my God and Lord,  
In death Thy comfort still afford.*

*Lord, let at last Thine angels come,  
To Abram's bosom bear me home,  
That I may die unfearing;  
And in its narrow chamber keep  
My body safe in peaceful sleep  
Until Thy reappearing  
And then from death awaken me  
That these mine eyes with joy may see,  
O Son of God, Thy glorious face,  
My Savior and my Fount of grace.  
Lord Jesus Christ, My prayer attend, my prayer attend,  
And I will praise Thee without end.*



## Professor Gerhard Aho, Ph.D.

Professor Gerhard Aho was born on April 22, 1923, in Jersey City, New Jersey, the son of the Reverend Gustaf A. Aho and his wife, Helia. After attending high school in Ashtabula, Ohio, where his father was pastor, he enrolled at Concordia Theological Seminary in 1941 for his junior college education and in 1943 for his theological education. Graduating in 1945, he was ordained into the Lutheran ministry and served Grace Church, Waukegon, Illinois (1945-1946); Betania Church, New York (1946-1953); Lutheran congregations in North Queensland, Australia (1953-1958); and Sion Church, Marquette, Michigan (1958-1960). He was called to the Seminary in 1960 as assistant professor in connection with the National Evangelical Lutheran Church, a Finnish synod, and was promoted to associate professor in 1966 and professor in 1973. Dr. Aho served as chairman of the Department of Pastoral Theology and as Homiletics Editor for the *Concordia Theological Quarterly* and the Director of Graduate Studies. His academic preparation included the University of Chicago (1945-1946), Illinois College (Jacksonville) and MacMurray College (1962-1964), Boston University (M.A. in Theology, 1964), and the University of Illinois (Ph. D., 1972). His dissertation, *The Preaching of F.G. Hedberg*, was recognized as one of the most outstanding discourses in the field of rhetoric by the professional speech society. Dr. Aho had set aside the 1987-1988 academic year for the preparation and writing of a homiletical textbook for seminary students. Coming to the Seminary in 1960 and being one of the three senior faculty members still on active service, he had the distinction of being the oldest Seminary alumnus on the faculty, having enrolled in the pre-seminary program in 1941 at the age of eighteen.

Professor Aho came to the Seminary in 1958 to help prepare Finnish-speaking students for the National Evangelical Lutheran Church. Before its incorporation into the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, he began teaching homiletics. To qualify himself for this task he obtained his baccalaureate, master's, and doctorate degrees while at the Seminary. Recognized as a careful scholar and the Seminary's finest preacher, he attracted students to the Seminary to hear his lectures and learn his methods. Just recently he held concurrently the positions of professor of homiletics, chairman of the Department of Pastoral Theology, homiletics editor of the CTQ, and Director of Graduate Studies. Often in demand as a district and pastoral conference essayist, especially on the topic of the Law and the Gospel, he authored *The Lively Skeleton* (1977), *Don't Be Afraid* (1981), and *Glory in the Cross* (1985) and was a frequent contributor to the *Concordia Pulpit* and *Portals of Prayer*, among other periodicals of the National Evangelical Lutheran Church and the Missouri

Synod. Though he became seriously ill in August 1985, he continued with all his Seminary assignments and was honored by the 1987 Seminary graduating class as the baccalaureate preacher, the first time the privilege was extended to a Seminary professor. Dr. Aho was admired as a teacher, emulated as a preacher, and loved as a Christian gentleman, committed to the faith of his church. He and his wife Irma are parents to Philip, Bruce, Monica, Amy, Jeffrey, and Pamela.

Professor Aho passed away after an illness of over two years on Friday, November 20, in the early morning hours at home. He was buried in Concordia Gardens in Fort Wayne on Tuesday, November 24, after a service at Peace Lutheran Church with his pastor, the Reverend Luther Strasen, officiating and a former student and collaborator in several writing projects, the Reverend Richard Kapfer, preaching. Speaking for the Seminary was Professor Norbert Mueller and representing the Saint Louis Seminary was Professor Francis Rossow, who was also associated with Dr. Aho in sermon projects for Concordia Publishing House. A true Christian gentleman, a dear friend to his colleagues, an example to his students, a prince of a human being, he has earned his rest.

David P. Scaer

# The Historical Context of the Smalcald Articles

Kenneth Hagen

The Smalcald Articles of four hundred and fifty years ago were to serve two purposes. First, they were to provide a Lutheran confessional identity in the face of impending political and religious warfare. In the face of the Augsburg Confession and Melanchthon's Apology and the current crisis, the concern of the Elector John Frederick was to have Luther, and not Melanchthon, express the truth concerning Lutheran identity. The second purpose of Luther's authorship was that the Articles were to be his "testament." Luther, who at the time thought that his end was near, says in the preface:

I have determined to publish these articles in plain print, so that, should I die before there will be a council (as I fully expect and hope...), those who live and remain after my demise may be able to produce my testimony and confession.

There is some concern in the scholarly literature, indeed, importantly expressed by Hans Volz and Ernst Bizer, that the Smalcald Articles be seen as Luther's testament and not as a confessional writing. While there was initial confusion about the acceptance and confessional standing of the Articles, they appear in the Book of Concord as Luther's vigorous "testimony."

## *I. The Political Context*

The literature that I have seen on the historical context of the Smalcald Articles has concentrated on the ecclesiastical-political maneuvering of the emperor, pope, and elector, as well as the theologians assigned to describe and defend the Lutheran position. The discussions about where a papal council was to be held were politically explosive. Much was at stake in the deliberations over Placentia, Bologna, and Mantua. The general background for the ecclesiastical-political maneuvering of the 1530s was the papal decision one more time to call a council in the face of the imperial and ecclesiastical demands for reform. To read the history of the events

that led finally to the Council of Trent, beginning in 1545, makes one dizzy—dizzy not so much from the massive detail, but from the roller-coaster character of Vatican politics. The demands for reform would rise only to drop down in defeat. A major Roman Catholic thesis has been that, if a Council of Trent had materialized at the end of the Middle Ages, there would have been no Lutheran movement. The decision of Pope Paul III to convoke a general council to meet at Mantua on May 8, 1537, set in motion the events that led to the Smalcald Articles. The political context for the Articles will now be reviewed as it is generally presented in the literature.

Much of the maneuvering on the part of the elector and the theologians was occasioned by the fact that the papal bull expressly declared that the purpose of the council would be “the utter extirpation of the poisonous, pestilential Lutheran heresy.” The elector was opposed to even hearing the papal invitation. The Lutheran concern throughout the mid-1530s was whether the council would be free and under the authority of Scripture or whether it would be under papal authority. Except for Luther, the Lutheran strategy was to avoid a papal council, where the Lutherans feared adverse judgment and defeat might ensue. Luther’s attitude was consistently rather flamboyant. He was prepared to go anywhere, even to papal Bologna, with neck, head, and fist.

The Lutheran theologians were concerned to avoid the reproach of having prevented a council by turning down the legate. So they made distinctions between a citation and an invitation and between two kinds of citation, one whereby they could defend themselves openly in contrast to one whereby they would be declared as public heretics. The elector did not like these distinctions of the theologians. The elector was concerned that the theological authority for the council be Scripture while the theologians engaged in politics.

Luther was not concerned about the place or the politics but about his “testimony.” Luther had been instructed to prepare articles that were necessary for Lutheran confessional identity, articles that could not be yielded without becoming guilty of treason against God. He was also instructed to prepare articles, expected to be few in number, that were not necessary and that could be yielded in good conscience. Toward the end of 1536 Luther was ready with the articles for the approval of his colleagues, and early in the new year with their subscription he sent them to the elector, who again supported Luther all the way. Luther did not provide any points that might be yielded.

In fact, Luther was adamant about the necessity of all his articles in their entirety. Luther's articles were adopted by the theologians at the Smalcald meeting early in 1537 and endorsed privately by the Lutheran princes and estates.

These events, then, provided the political-historical context for the Smalcald Articles. The Smalcald Articles, however, are, as stated above, a theological testimony of Luther. The historical context necessarily involves the theology of Luther in the middle and late 1530s. The concern here is that this material and its author be approached in a manner appropriate to its intent, that is, that it be approached as theology in its historical, catholic, and medieval context. In the scholarly literature there is an abundant amount of material on Luther's soteriology, sacramentology, Christology, attitude toward the Jews, contribution to feminism and education, and the like. There is little if any attention paid to Luther's theology—his doctrine of God. At heart and head Luther was a theologian, and at the center of his theology is his doctrine of God. The following pages will look at the theological context of the Smalcald Articles by first looking at Luther's writings at the time and then defining and describing his foundational theological orientation as the grammar of faith based on the Trinity. With such a theological context the final focus will be on the Trinitarian and creedal form of the *prima pars* of the Smalcald Articles.

## II. *The Theological Context*

In the middle and late 1530s, as throughout his life, Luther was concerned about Scripture, theology, and creed. In 1534 his translation of the entire Bible was published. At the end of the decade, in a preface to the Wittenberg Edition of his German writings (1539), Luther gave three rules for the correct way of studying theology, that is, the Holy Scriptures: *oratio*, *meditatio*, and *tentatio*. The rules are derived from David the Psalmist. Thus, Scripture provides its own interpretation. These rules apply only to theology; thus theology is a unique discipline. One does not need prayer or the Holy Spirit to read *Aesop's Fables*. Using David's rules in the study of theology, says Luther in his preface, will lead to singing to the honor and glory of God.

Between 1535 and 1545 Luther was lecturing on Genesis. At the time of the Smalcald Articles he was treating chapter three. This

undertaking was the exegetical context for the first article in the third part of the Smalcald Articles, the article dealing with sin. In his commentary on Genesis three Luther dwells on the immensity of original sin, how "hideous and awful" it is.

In 1536 there appears the *Disputation concerning Justification*. Here Luther reflects on the "mystery of God, who exalts His saints." Justification is "not only impossible to comprehend for the godless, but marvelous and hard to believe even for the pious themselves." To consider justification brings one to the mystery of who God is and what God does. It is "incomprehensible as far as our human nature is concerned." Justification is as *ex nihilo* as was creation. So also theology is *ex nihilo* as far as human possibilities are concerned. A true theologian is created by working frequently on this article.

Something else with which Luther was busy four hundred and fifty years ago was writing a short work published a year later, on the three oldest Christian confessions of faith. He wanted to elaborate on the first part of the Smalcald Articles, "on the lofty articles of the divine majesty." The three symbols or creeds of the Christian faith were the Apostles' Creed, the Athanasian Creed, and Luther's favorite "hymn in honor of the Holy Trinity," namely, the "hymn of St. Ambrose and St. Augustine" (*Te Deum Laudamus*). Luther reviews the heresies that threaten the three articles. All three must be truly believed. If any one is lacking, then all three are lacking. The Christian faith must be whole and complete. In this work he centers on the Trinitarian mystery and the person and work of Christ. The creed sung in the mass every Sunday is to be confessed and not interpreted. Luther is critical of modern, human interpretation. The teaching of Scripture concerning God is to remain uninterpreted and is simply to be confessed as the faith of the church in the form of a hymn.

In the year that Luther published the Smalcald Articles (1538), he also began to write *On the Councils and Churches*, in which he reviews the councils of the early church. In his treatment of the early centuries, Luther does not employ nineteenth-century notions of the development of doctrine. The Christian faith does not develop by the interpretation of theologians or Christians in general. The Christian faith does not become more complete or better understood with the passage of time. The church is a confessing church—confessing, not interpreting, the creed. The creed is a mark of the

church, along with the Word of God, baptism, the eucharist, the keys, the ministry, and the cross.

Thus, Luther's writings concurrent with the Smalcald Articles concerned Scripture, theology, and creed. The next matter which must be considered is Luther's foundational theological orientation. Throughout his life Luther identified with the understanding of theology as the discipline of the sacred page with a unique grammar, what here will be called the grammar of faith.

For generation after generation, from early times on up through the Reformation, theology was practiced as the discipline of the sacred page (*sacra pagina*). The monastery with its daily liturgy, connected to the sacred page, was the place and context of theology. The final goal of theology was to get home, home to God, home to the Trinity (in Augustine's words).

With the rise of universities in the twelfth century, theology shifted to sacred doctrine (*sacra doctrina*) as the place shifted to the schools. The schoolmen wrote Bible commentaries; they also wrote theology. Theology was based on the method of *quaestio* and dialectic. The final goal of theology was still the beatific vision. The shift from sacred page to sacred doctrine is the shift from locating the stuff of theology in Scripture to locating the stuff of theology in doctrine ("faith seeking understanding").

With the arrival of the printing press and the scholarship of the Christian humanists, however, theology was seen not as the monk's work of prayer and praise nor as the professor's academic questions and propositions but as the educative task of reviving the classics, both pagan and Christian. The study of the sacred letter of Scripture was to lead not so much to God as to a better society, church, education, and government. Theology as the study of the philosophy of Christ was to lead to piety, morality, and justice.

These approaches of sacred page, doctrine, and letter were mixed and matched during the early and late Reformation. Luther continued the discipline of the sacred page minus monastic discipline. The Council of Trent continued the discipline of sacred doctrine. The rise of the historical-critical methods of biblical introduction, biblical theology, and biblical hermeneutics during the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries continued humanistic methods. The goal of the historical-critical method is to understand the letter of the text. The goal of sacred doctrine is to understand the faith of the Roman Catholic Church. The goal of the sacred page is to prepare for the kingdom of God.

For some (few) today theology is still allied with the sacred page. For many (most) theology has become allied in the modern era with philosophy, psychology, sociology, politics; in other words, theology becomes interdisciplinary studies in the humanities. Theology is a science with such a plethora of allies; theology has many friends. But does theology today have any enemies? For Luther, if theology is true to its discipline of the sacred page, it will have a whole host of enemies; the demonic forces will be stirred up. Theology is engaged in a cosmic battle in Augustine's and Luther's world (not so for Erasmus). For Luther, theology does not engage in friendly interdisciplinary conversations. It speaks for God in the public arena. In his various commentaries on Galatians throughout his life Luther was conscious of the public character of his work and that the public included the demonic forces. Theology's enemies are God's enemies, the pseudo-apostles who come to the centers of faith. Theology is to speak for God against the false teachers in the public arena.

Luther's understanding of communication of theology was different from his contemporary and our contemporary humanist methods. For the humanist, sacred literature is in print for public edification. Luther was not so interested in printing the Gospel as in publishing the good news which is the Word of God. The church is not a pen house but a mouth house, said Luther. Luther was a leader in advocating schools for boys and girls so that they could learn to read. Education must be publicly supported; otherwise Germany might lose it as did Greece and Rome. But education is not communicating theology.

To communicate or speak for God entails a continual public battle. The cosmic battle between God and Satan does not take place in print. The form that the defense of God takes is the theology of Scripture. The form that the defense of Satan takes is blasphemy. Both are public in nature. To allow blasphemy to take place is to commit complicity. Blasphemy is a continual problem. To be silent in complicity is to support the opposition. There is no neutral zone. Either God is winning or the devil is. One way to understand Luther's opposition to the Jews, rather fierce at the time of the Smalcald Articles, is to understand his view of complicity. He believed that the Jews were perpetrating blasphemy publicly. Luther did not attack particular Jewish individuals. No, it was their Judaism and blasphemy. The Gospel must be publicly defended and the opposition attacked. Then one is true to the discipline of the sacred page.



Why did Luther publish another commentary on Galatians in the same year in which the Smalcald Articles were published? Had he not just published such a work three years earlier in 1535? Had not several editions of Galatians appeared earlier than that? Did Luther change his mind or come up with new interpretations during these years? Absolutely not; it was necessary to publish a commentary on Paul because of Luther's understanding of a *commentarius*.

One cannot assume that a commentary in one century is the same as a commentary in another. When Luther's *Commentary on Galatians* is edited and translated in modern editions, one cannot call it a commentary in the sense of modern exegesis. In fact, Luther himself says that, if one wants a commentary, he should see Erasmus. Luther says that his work is "less a commentary than a testimony to my faith in Christ." Both his so-called commentary and the so-called Smalcald Articles are singular testimonies to his singular faith in Christ. Luther's own word for his public defense of Galatians is *enarratio*. *Enarratio* connotes a public dimension. He is making public the one doctrine, truth, grace, and Christ. Luther is not primarily concerned about the text of Galatians. That would be *narratio*, narrating the text. *Enarratio* is to take out of the text the theology and to apply it in public. It is to publish the doctrine, the soteriology, and the Christology of Paul.

The modern introductions to Luther's various works on Galatians, which are perceived as commentaries in the modern sense, describe them as containing revisions, being shorter or longer, as making progress, or being abbreviated. Such descriptions are ridiculous. When one realizes what Luther's work is, namely, theology, such an idea would be equivalent to saying that Luther revised the doctrine of the Trinity, shortened or lengthened his soteriology, made progress in his Christology, or abbreviated his faith. The treatment of Scripture in the genre of *enarratio* is very old. It goes back to Augustine, the Psalter, and Isaiah. It is to praise the glory of God. A Scriptural *enarratio* is a *catena* (chain) of praises to the glory, the grace, and the justice of God. In the dedication to his commentary on Galatians Luther says that his purpose is to interest others in Pauline theology. Thus, his *enarratio* on Galatians seeks to promote the Gospel that Paul promotes. It is not a matter of interpreting Paul. It is a matter of publishing Paul's theology.

In his various publications of Galatians Luther is always conscious of Paul's linguistic style. Paul's peculiar language must be taken very

precisely. Today we would say that Paul says what he means and means what he says. One of Luther's strongest statements on the interpretation of Scripture is his assertion that Christ Himself gave Paul these special phrases. Luther indeed attempts to describe the various individual aspects of Paul's peculiar language: Paul's mode of argument, Paul's logic, Paul's use of metaphor, Paul's rhetoric, and Paul's grammar. "If you want to be studious in Christian theology, you must diligently observe this kind of Pauline language," says Luther in 1535. If you want to understand this kind of theology, you have to pay special attention to Paul's vocabulary and syntax, the logic and the idioms, the rhetoric and the grammar.

Paul uses a unique grammar as does all of Scripture. The grammar of the Psalter is different from the grammar of Aristotle. Each of these grammars has its place, but one must deal with each in terms of what it is. Paul's grammar is not that of nineteenth-century German idealism. The Bible was not written in Germany. The grammar of the Psalter is not that of nineteenth-century European notions of development, progress, and evolution. There is no progress in the Psalter. There is no development in God. Paul's theology does not evolve.

The challenge to modern historical-critical methods is that of consistency in method. To deal with Scripture on the basis of nineteenth-century philosophical hermeneutics is not consistent. To use modern grammars to interpret Scripture's unique grammar is to cast Scripture into a world that is not its own. One must deal with Scripture in terms of what it is.

What is Scripture? Scripture was written from faith, to faith, about faith, for faith in God. Scripture has its own grammar, meaning, and vocabulary. The basic form of Scripture proceeds from faith to faith. It is the faith of the Christian creed. Scripture comes from God; the mechanics bring us outside the realm of faith. God has a word to say. The promise is unconditional. The promise is given to faith. The promise is validated in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The inheritance is guaranteed by the Spirit who moved over the waters at creation and who moves over the waters of our baptism. It is the Trinity, then, that provides the unity of the vocabulary, the morphology, the syntax, the grammar of faith.

What insights can be gained from the discipline of *sacra pagina* to deal with the grammar of faith? The distinct feature of *sacra pagina* is that it sees sacred matters as a page, not as doctrine and not as literature. Sacred doctrine and literature have their place, but their status is derivative. They come from Scripture but they are not *pagina*. The sacred page is directly of God. It is *divina* and not *humana*. The grammar of assent has to do with doctrine and linguistics. The grammar of faith has to do with *divina* directly. The grammar of Athens has to do with the dialect of the city. The grammar of faith is a unique dialect. Luther often claimed in the face of the medieval four-fold sense of Scripture that Scripture has one single, simple grammatical sense. The grammatical sense most often refers to Christ. The grammar of faith is from God, about God, for God, and finally to God, Three in One.

Luther's foundational theological orientation should now be clear from the preceding aspects of it—the discipline of *sacra pagina*, the public character of theology, his commentary as the publication of Pauline theology, and the uniqueness of Paul's grammar. Luther's theology, then, is derived from the grammar of faith, which in turn comes from God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Having considered Luther's other writings at the time of the Smalcald Articles and his theology as derived from the grammar of faith based on the Trinity, the *prima pars* of the Smalcald Articles takes on a new significance. It treats *divina* in Trinitarian and creedal form:

I. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. . .are one God, who created heaven and earth.

II. The Father is begotten of no one; the Son is begotten of the Father; the Holy Spirit proceeds from Father and Son.

III. The Son became man.

IV. The Son became man in this manner. . .as the Creed of the Apostles, as well as that of St. Athanasius, and the Catechism in common use for children teach.

The Smalcald Articles were to serve two purposes: to provide a distinctly Lutheran confessional identity and to serve as Luther's testament. Luther's testimony based on the grammar of faith is Trinitarian and creedal. Thus, Luther's preface concludes: "Do thou, then, help us, who are poor and needy, who sigh to Thee, and beseech Thee earnestly, according to the grace which has been given us, through Thy Holy Spirit, who lives and reigns with Thee and the Father, blessed forever. Amen."

Kenneth Hagen, Ph.D., is Professor of Theology in Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.



## A Review Article

THE ROOTS OF THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS. By Bo Reicke.  
Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1986. Cloth, 191 pages.

David P. Scaer

The late Professor Emeritus Bo Reicke of the University of Basel had been scheduled to offer two weeks of lectures during the seminary's first summer session in May 1987 on the Pauline epistles and the synoptic gospels. A week before they were scheduled he sent his lectures on the Pauline epistles with the disappointing news that his physician was advising him against traveling to America. The day before he was to begin his seminary lectures, he passed away peacefully. The lectures on the synoptic gospels were to come from the same material which had evolved into his book, *The Roots of the Synoptic Gospels*. Though we had this material, the course was canceled since his positions were so uniquely his.

Professor Reicke had begun his career at Lund in Sweden and turned down a call to the University of Marburg as the successor of Rudolph Bultmann. Subsequently he did succeed Karl Ludwig Schmidt as Professor of New Testament at the University of Basel, Switzerland. He held that chair until his retirement in 1986. An ordained clergyman in the Church of Sweden, he founded the only Lutheran congregation in Basel and assisted in gathering the handful of Swiss congregations of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession into a loose confederation as a confessional witness in the land of Zwingli, Bullinger, and Calvin. Recognized as a scholar for *The New Testament Era* and honored for his scholarship by his election to the presidency of the Society of New Testament Studies, he was a churchman interested in upholding the confession in which he was raised. This churchmanship becomes evident in *The Roots of the Synoptic Gospels*, where he places the origin of the synoptic gospels within the worship services of the earliest Christians.

Fortress Press has established a reputation of producing books on the cutting edge of New Testament scholarship which are challenging the orthodoxy of majority opinion. Fortress authors include not only Reicke, but also William R. Farmer and Martin Hengel. Farmer's *Jesus and the Gospels*, in opposing the two-

documentary hypothesis, restates the Griesbach hypothesis that Matthew and Luke were the first two gospels and Mark the third. Hengel's *Studies in the Gospel of Mark* defends the old church theory that Peter was the source behind Mark. Reicke's book, which appeared about the same time as Hengel's, agrees with it in seeing Peter as the source for Mark. It agrees with Farmer in challenging the two-documentary hypothesis, which sees Mark and the Q document as fundamental for Matthew and Luke. These are only cosmetic similarities.

Essentially different in Reicke's approach is his view that Matthew, Mark, and Luke appeared at the same time and there is no direct interdependency among them. To come to this opinion Reicke has proposed a firm and well-established tradition which each of the writers had at his disposal. The most popular theories of gospel origins assume that all of the gospel writers, with the exception of the first (Mark), wrote with knowledge of at least one other prior gospel. Reicke has circumvented the debate in proposing that each evangelist came to his decision to write independently of the others and that all of them did it within the same time frame of the early 60s.

Fundamental to Reicke's position is his view that the place of the imprisonment mentioned in Philemon and other Pauline epistles is Caesarea and not Rome. According to Philemon 24, both Mark and Luke were with Paul in Caesarea for a period of about two years. Caesarea's proximity to the places of the Lord's life gave them the opportunity to assemble the traditions for their gospels. The witness of Philemon 24 is very strong and perhaps has not been allowed to enter the debate on dating the New Testament documents; but the real problem is whether this fact alone is sufficiently determinative in explaining the similarities and origins of Mark and Luke. Minimally, it does allow and suggest a strong Pauline influence in them, a point which was suggested to this reader but not developed.

Since Reicke is blazing a new trail in gospel studies, his first chapter, "History of the Synoptic Discussion" (pp. 1-23), presents as background several theories: the utilization hypothesis (one evangelist is dependent on another); the Griesbach hypothesis propounded by Farmer; the proto-gospel theory (one unknown document is common to all four); the tradition hypothesis (the gospels come from the common tradition of the apostles), the one which Reicke revives; and the multiple source hypothesis, of which the now popular two-source theory of Mark and Q is a form.

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The next step is to organize the data of the gospels into twelve blocks. Reicke's hypothesis rests on the recognized similarity of those blocks which contain the baptism of Jesus by John and the events of the last week. The data converges on the baptism of Jesus and the final events of His life and is more likely to diverge on the intervening data. The similarity of data is explained by the early church worship with its practice of baptizing and its celebration of the Lord's death. Paul states that the Lord's Supper is the manifestation of the Lord's death at each celebration. In connection with baptism and the Lord's Supper, the early churches rehearsed Jesus' own baptism by John and the account of His suffering. At this point Reicke has made a real contribution, regardless of how the reader will react to his hypothesis that the gospels emerged virtually independent of the other. One only has to think of Luther's baptismal hymn, "To Jordan Came the Christ, Our Lord" [*Lutheran Worship*, 223] to realize how the reformer saw the baptism of Jesus by John as the source of Christian baptism. One could hardly object on doctrinal grounds! How much more appropriate is the study of Reicke, who has demonstrated this point not from Luther but from an historical-critical study of the gospel documents themselves. The sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper are not isolated rituals, but manifestations both derived from and demonstrating the life and death of Jesus. Obviously this idea is Pauline! Reicke does not arrive at his opinion doctrinally, but his approach does have doctrinal and liturgical significances, not that these are really two separate significances.

While in our circles little attention is given to the period of oral tradition from the time of Jesus to the writing of the gospels, it will hardly do to deny it through studied ignorance. Bultmann's multiplicity of forms from scattered communities may have given oral tradition a bad name for those who are committed to the biblical documents as Sacred Scriptures. Still, the matter of oral tradition must be addressed. This Reicke does by seeing the oral tradition as so fixed that it provided writers working independently of each other with similar beginnings and endings for their gospels in regard to the baptism and suffering of Jesus. The different material between the baptism of Jesus and His entry into Jerusalem is accounted for by the different communities from which the evangelists gathered their materials. Luke is connected with the Hellenistic community in Jerusalem, where Philip, Stephen, and Silvanus were active. Mark's

Galilean interest is derived from Peter, who lived in Capernaum. Behind Matthew stands the disciple of Jesus by the same name, though he may not have done the actual writing. Though Matthew is closer to the original source, the similarities between it and Mark and Luke are explained by the conformity to the common tradition which was accessible to all three (p. 160). Matthew, like Mark, shows a certain dependence on Peter. Whereas Reicke can provide an historical connection between Mark and Paul in Caesarea, none is provided for Mark and Peter. The latter problem would be resolved if Mark were placed in Rome with Peter, for which early church attestation is not lacking. This connection is slipped over and Mark's Latinisms are found to be quite common in Palestine. Professor Reicke has produced elaborate chartings detailing his twelve blocks of material, and the reader will have to judge the weight of his argument on its own merits.

Reicke's greatest contribution in offering a more firmed-up rather than a scattered tradition may be his most vulnerable point. It is true that the Galilean churches (Mark's source) preserved data from the Lord's life that happened in their towns and the same could be said about the Judean churches (Luke's source). Still, Palestine is so small that within a period of thirty years, the year 30 (in which Jesus' ministry came to an end) and the 60s (when the gospels were written), the oral traditions would have already been shared among all these churches. By the year 60 the Galilean churches would have known some events of the Lord's birth. These were not the private possessions of the Jerusalem communities. A preferred solution is not that Mark's sources did not know of these events, but that the evangelist for deliberate purposes chose to exclude them from his account. The evangelists were at the mercy, so to speak, of their sources, so far as the extent of their gospels was concerned, but they were hardly hostages to their sources so that they were compelled to include everything which they knew. They were, after all, writers in every sense of the word.

What is striking in Reicke's approach is that the evangelists worked independently. There is no problem as regards their dissimilarities. The problem is with the similarities, which are accounted for by having all the evangelists ploughing the same field (Palestine) at the same time (the 60s) and harvesting the same crop (the gospels) and two of them from the same place (Caesarea). As the Lucan prologue is used by other scholars to demonstrate the existence of other



documents prior to its being written, Reicke uses the passage to support his claim of simultaneous gospel writing. Luke is making a claim that other gospel writings are being produced at the same time (p. 45). Some might find the exegesis a bit forced at this point, but this verdict might be directed at anyone who used this passage to defend his own theory of gospel origins. A seventh and final chapter looks at the gospels in regard to authorship and names from the post-apostolic period.

Though Professor Reicke had reached the biblical three score and ten, his death was untimely. After a career in university lecturing, he was in a position to share his views to a wider circle through writing. Six months before his death and before either of us had seen his *Roots of the Synoptic Gospels* published, we discussed his ideas. Now that I have seen the completed work, I shall not have the privilege of a further in-depth conversation with him. In conversation with him I discussed frankly his view of a virtually simultaneous production of the synoptic gospels. During periods of literary productivity it is not unlikely that certain geniuses produce their works within a short period of time. Even in these cases one spurs the other on and the later ones are taught by the pioneers. The gospel form is so unique, without denying that it is a recognizable form of ancient literature, that it seems unlikely that three men independently "uncovered" it at the same time. The argument requires that the heaviest burden be carried by the similarity of the oral tradition. Editorial decisions by the evangelists as theologians are minimalized. Whether or not one agrees with Reicke in seeing all three gospels evolving at the same time from the worship of the church, he is certainly right in seeing that the first one did come into existence in this way and that the others who followed him had their origins in and purposes for the worshiping church. Since the gospels are studied and dissected in seminary and university lecture halls, the scholars may falsely believe that they originated from the desks of scholars. Wrong! They came from the word about Jesus preached in and for the church. The old church custom of requiring sermons to be preached from gospel, and not epistle, texts maintained that tradition. Professor Reicke was a scholar who belonged to that church tradition. Through his death the horizons of what we could have learned about the gospels will be a little lower. A fitting memorial would be the publication of his *History of the Pauline Correspondence*. Both book and manuscript will reveal a man who was at home in the New Testament era.



# The Pastor and the Septuagint

Steven C. Briel

One Old Testament professor reportedly told his students years ago, "Gentlemen, have you a Septuagint? If not, sell all you have and buy one!"<sup>1</sup> Most pastors probably think this statement borders on fanaticism and is calculated only to make a busy pastor who is already overburdened with a myriad of responsibilities, feel more guilty than he already does. And yet we hope to show that regular study in the Septuagint can be one way in which a pastor can continue to grow theologically, keep himself from becoming stale in his public teaching and preaching, and stimulate himself intellectually and spiritually. There are more than enough reasons for the busy pastor to clear his cluttered desk and set aside a few minutes every week for some regular reading and study in the Septuagint.<sup>2</sup>

One major reason at the very least that the church and pastor ought to give more serious attention to the Septuagint than is often done is the important status it enjoyed in the New Testament and early church. Ernst Wuerthwein is probably not saying too much when he claims that the Septuagint "is a book of such critical significance that apart from it both Christendom and the western culture would be inconceivable."<sup>3</sup> Quite simply, the Septuagint was the Bible for the ancient church. This we must never forget. No other translation was available. And few Christians (or pastors) were able to understand the Hebrew Scriptures. Consequently the apostles had no other recourse than to quote the Septuagint when referring to the Old Testament.<sup>4</sup> This well-nigh exclusive use of the Septuagint by the evangelists and apostles has important implications for New Testament studies as one could probably guess.

We know that many in the early church, in fact, believed that the Septuagint was inspired and actually considered it more authoritative than the Hebrew text itself, which few could even read or believed they could trust! Philo (first century A.D.), in describing the origin of the Septuagint, wrote that the translators "became. . . possessed, and under inspiration wrote, not each several scribes something different, but the same word for word, as though dictated to each by an invisible prompter."<sup>5</sup> Later as prominent a theologian as St. Augustine agreed claiming, "The Spirit which was in the prophets when they spoke, this very Spirit was in the seventy men when they translated."<sup>6</sup> And when St. Jerome in the late fourth

and early fifth centuries took up the task of making a fresh Latin translation of the Old Testament and used as his resource the Hebrew text rather than that of the Septuagint, some accused him of “judaizing.” Initially St. Augustine himself was very upset with Jerome for using the Hebrew text and wrote in one of his epistles that there is “not the same authority for the words” in the Hebrew as for those in the Greek since the apostles themselves used the Septuagint. Jellicoe reminds us, “The LXX will fall into perspective only when it is recognized that for the . . . Christian Church from the time of its birth, this Jewish-Greek Bible. . . held its space as the inspired Scriptures.”<sup>7</sup> This fact alone makes the Septuagint important.

But besides its historical importance, the Septuagint merits regular study for more “practical” reasons. For example, regular reading in the Septuagint can help a pastor grow in his general knowledge of and facility with Koine Greek, the language of the Greek New Testament.<sup>8</sup> Again and again he will recognize familiar phrases, words, and grammatical constructions. One scholar comments that we should remember that “Paul is. . . writing the Greek of a man who has the LXX in his blood.”<sup>9</sup> And certainly for those pastors who, unfortunately, know little or no Hebrew, the Septuagint can at times bring them closer to the original than do our contemporary translations. For example, one could point to Genesis 3 where Adam, showing his understanding of and faith in the promise of a Savior who would restore life to humanity by crushing Satan (the *protoevangelium*), changes his wife’s name from “woman” (*isha*) to “life-bearer” (*chava*). Those reading her name as “Eve” miss the significance of her new name. The Septuagint renders the English “Eve” with the Greek word *zoe*, not only a word which clearly means “life” (and so preserves beautifully the Hebrew), but a word with heavy theological implications. The word *zoe* links God’s promise to Adam of restored life through the work of the Promised Seed with the fulfilment of that promise in Jesus Christ, who proclaimed, “I am the. . . life” (*zoe*)!

There are countless other fascinating little “gems” which are waiting to be mined from the Septuagint by anyone who takes the time to do so. While some must be dug out by careful research many others are lying right on the surface and are discovered quite easily. Some of the more familiar allusions would certainly include St. John’s “*en arche*” in his first chapter; this is obviously reminiscent of Genesis 1:1, which also begins, “*en arche*. . .” As for the so-called “I am” sayings of Jesus one thinks especially of Jesus’ statement to the Jews

in John 8, "Before Abraham was, I am" (*ego eimi*). The words *ego eimi* seemingly had overtones considered blasphemous by the Jews, who, as the text goes on to report, tried to stone Jesus. And this attitude is understandable in the light of the Septuagint. For when God shared His name with Moses in the third chapter of Exodus, He said (in Greek), "*Ego eimi ho on.*"<sup>10</sup> And what Jew was not familiar with Moses' song in the thirty-second chapter of Deuteronomy where God says, "See now that I myself am He! There is no god besides Me" (NIV; the Greek reads, "*idete idete hoti ego eimi*"). And certainly when the Apostle John writes that, following Jesus' miracle at Cana, His disciples began to believe in Him for they saw His glory (*doxa*), it is, once again, the Septuagint which "loads" this word with rich theological significance (see especially Exodus 16:10 and 24:17). And Paul's use of *hilasterion* in Romans 3:25 has obvious roots in Exodus 25:21 where Moses is commanded to make a "mercy seat" on the Ark of the Covenant (a *hilasterion*). But besides these more familiar allusions permit us to mention a few additional examples to whet the appetite.<sup>11</sup>

Moses' words to Israel when the covenant ("testament" is better, for the Greek reads *diatheke*) was ratified (see Ex. 24) are important for a proper understanding of Jesus' words when He ratified the new testament on the night He was betrayed, especially for those who would try to deny that Jesus intended to give His disciples His true body and His true blood in the Holy Supper. The sacred record reports how Moses took the blood (*haima*) of the sacrifice (and there should be no question that Moses was using real blood, howbeit the blood of an animal), poured some of it over the people, and said, "This is the blood of the covenant [testament] that the Lord has made with you." Who can miss the allusion to this event Jesus must have had in mind when He gave the cup to His disciples and said, "This is My blood of the new testament. . ."? When the Greek text of the Septuagint and of Jesus' recorded words are compared, the allusion becomes too clear for mere coincidence to account for it (cf. Ex. 24:8 with 1 Cor. 11:25). Real blood ratified the old testament and the people were given that real blood in testimony of the fact that the benefits of the sacrifice were theirs. Real blood ratified the new testament too, and God's people are still given that real blood of the true and final Lamb of God in testimony of the fact that the benefits of His sacrifice apply to them.

It is unfortunate that the church—largely as a result of the influence of the Septuagint which translated God's personal name, "Yahweh,"

with the Greek *Kurios*—no longer knows or uses that name which is loaded with so much deep theological significance.<sup>12</sup> On the other hand, even a casual reading of the Septuagint shows that *Kurios* certainly must have had much more meaning for the authors (and original readers) of the Greek New Testament than we often give it today, “master” or “sir.” Undoubtedly Paul’s statement that without the Holy Spirit no one can say, “*Kurios Iesous*” (“Jesus is Lord”), probably meant much more than, “Jesus is the master of my life.” One could argue that Paul was really saying that apart from the work of the Spirit no one can believe in our Lord’s full deity, no one can believe that Jesus of Nazareth is Yahweh!

St. John’s repeated references to “bowls” in his Apocalypse (chapters 15-16) is puzzling. Recognizing that the Apocalypse throbs with Old Testament allusions, one wonders what significance the “bowls of wrath” might have. There is no doubt, of course, that they are a symbol of God’s eschatological wrath and judgment. But the severity of this eschatological wrath is even more pronounced when one notes that the Greek word used here, *phiale*, was used regularly in the Septuagint for an object which did not symbolize God’s wrath but His grace and mercy. The *phiale* was used to contain the blood which was shed to atone for Israel’s sin (see Exodus 27:3, et al.). In other words, in the eschatological judgment mercy is ended, for that item which once represented mercy and forgiveness to a sinful people is now filled no longer with the blood of a vicarious sacrifice but with death and eschatological destruction. There is no more atoning blood for those who have hardened their hearts to God’s grace.

The apostle’s striking description of God in Romans 4:5 as being a God who “justifies the ungodly” (“*ton dikaionta ton asebe*”) becomes even more vivid when one notes the background for this statement in the Septuagint, the Bible with which his audience was familiar and which many among his readers had probably memorized. In three texts (Exodus 23:7, Deuteronomy 25:1, Isaiah 5:23) the Old Testament had emphatically stated that one must never “justify the ungodly.” In all these texts the very words St. Paul uses in the Romans text appear—“justify” (*dikaion*) and “ungodly” (*asebe*)! To people familiar with the Septuagint Paul was saying something which must have sounded almost blasphemous when he claimed that God actually does that which the Old Testament had forbidden. C.H. Dodd remarks, “Paul [was] well aware that in using such an expression as ‘*dikaion ton asebe*’ he was uttering a daring

paradox, since the Septuagint uses precisely that expression in censure of unjust judges.”<sup>13</sup> Paul was not, of course, speaking heresy. The Gospel solves the problem; Christ has paid the world’s legal debt to God with His own blood shed on the cross. For Christ’s sake God can and does declare the ungodly righteous, for “God made Christ, who knew no sin, to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Cor. 5:21).

When John the Baptist saw Jesus walking towards him and declared, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29), he was perhaps saying more about Jesus than that He was merely carrying the sin of the world. The Greek verb used here for “takes away” (*airo*) was often used in the Septuagint to mean “forgive” as, for example, in this text from 1 Samuel 15:25, where Saul, having disobeyed God in the matter of Agag and the Amalekites, pleads with Samuel: “I have sinned. . . I beg you, forgive (*aron*) my sin.” It is quite possible that John’s statement about Jesus could be rendered, “Look, the Lamb of God, who forgives the world’s sin!” This would certainly have interesting implications for the Lutheran doctrine of objective justification.

But besides providing helpful insights into the significance of certain words and phrases in the Greek New Testament, the Septuagint often illustrates how texts were understood or applied by some Jewish believers. A helpful interpolation occurs in that familiar Advent text from Isaiah 40 where the prophet writes, “Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem. . .” The Septuagint inserts the word *hierais*—“O priests, speak to the heart of Jerusalem”—suggesting that this command to preach comfort to Jerusalem is the duty of the priests.<sup>14</sup>

On the other hand, the Septuagint often shows how texts were misunderstood or purposely altered to blunt their significance. It is puzzling to note that one of the clearest texts in the Old Testament for the deity of Christ, Isaiah 9:6 (5 in MT and LXX), is never directly quoted in the Greek New Testament. When one reads this text in the Septuagint, the reason quickly becomes apparent. The English reads, “To us a child is born. . .and He will be called. . .Mighty God” (*El Gibor*). This text clearly teaches the full deity of that Child who is the Promised Seed and the Virgin’s Son (Isaiah 7:14). The Septuagint, perhaps reflecting the unbelief of the translator, reads, “His name shall be called, ‘Messenger of the Great Planner.’ ”<sup>15</sup> Such a translation, of course, for all practical purposes

rendered the text useless to the evangelists and apostles, who were writing to people familiar with the Greek Old Testament.<sup>16</sup>

But the Septuagint also proves itself invaluable in making a significant contribution towards a proper understanding of Paul's teaching on justification. Specifically it clarifies and enriches our understanding of Paul's use of the verb *dikaïoun*.<sup>17</sup> Since the Reformation this important word has really been at the heart and center of the controversy between Rome and the Lutheran Church. What does it mean to say that a person is "justified"? Does the sinner become righteous by his own obedience (helped along, of course, by grace provided through the church) or is the sinner declared righteous by imputation of Christ's perfect righteousness? The question remains an issue to our own day.<sup>18</sup>

The *dikaïoun* word-group occurs most frequently, as one might suspect, in the two epistles in which the doctrine of justification is dealt with most thoroughly and systematically—Romans and Galatians. The adjective *dikaïos* is used seventeen times in the Pauline corpus; almost half of these occurrences appear in Paul's letters to Rome and the Galatians. Out of fifty-seven occurrences of the noun *dikaïosune* thirty-seven are found in these two epistles. But the most amazing statistic is this—of twenty-eight occurrences of the verb *dikaïoun* in the Pauline letters twenty-three are found in these two epistles alone! This fact shows quite obviously that a proper understanding of Paul's teaching on justification is closely related to a proper understanding of this important verb.

While the papyri have without any doubt enriched our understanding of the Greek New Testament, in the case of *dikaïoun* it is to the Septuagint we must go for a proper understanding of this important verb. In secular Greek (as far as this can be determined from extant sources) the verb appears to have been relatively unimportant. The classical lexicon of Liddell and Scott lists less than thirty citations for this verb (contrast this with its heavy use in two of Paul's epistles alone). Furthermore, whereas the verb for Paul clearly enjoys a forensic meaning, "declare someone legally innocent,"<sup>19</sup> the verb was used by the classical writers in a much more general way meaning merely "hold or deem something right (but not in a court of law)."<sup>20</sup>

In the Septuagint the verb *dikaïoun* regularly translates forms of the Hebrew *tsdk* in texts where a forensic meaning is obvious; in instances where the forensic sense is weak or absent a different Greek



verb is used.<sup>21</sup> A key text for Paul's understanding and use of *dikaïoun* is Psalm 143:2, which is clearly forensic, "Do not bring your servant into judgment, for no one living is righteous (*yitsdak*) before you." This verse appears to be a *sedes doctrinae* for Paul's doctrine of justification and is quoted both in Romans and Galatians (Rom. 3:20; Gal. 2:16).<sup>22</sup> The verb *dikaïoun* is used both in the Septuagint and in the Pauline passages mentioned; the verb forms and word order are too similar to be mere coincidence.<sup>23</sup> The apostle's selection of this particular verse from the entire Greek Old Testament, the one enjoying the clearest forensic significance, indicates very strongly that it must have been crucial to Paul in establishing the sense he wanted this verb to have as he carefully explained the doctrine of justification.

It also seems more than coincidental that Paul uses *dikaïoun* in the passive voice so often. Out of twenty-eight occurrences of the verb in Paul's epistles, twenty are passives. This fact also seems to reflect the Septuagint, which regularly uses the passive voice to translate the Hebrew "qal" form (which is not passive) of the verb *tsdk*.<sup>24</sup> This passive form reinforces the forensic idea in the word, since one does not pronounce himself legally innocent but *is declared innocent* (passive) by the court. In Hebrew this idea could be expressed by the qal since the verb *yitzdak* is a stative verb, and stative verbs do not describe action, but express a state or quality independent of the will of the subject.<sup>25</sup> The clearest way to express the state of having been declared legally righteous or innocent would be to use the Greek passive voice, which the Septuagint, once again, regularly uses and which St. Paul also adopts.

That the Septuagint and not secular Greek influenced Paul's understanding and use of *dikaïoun* is also evident from the contrast between the way in which the Septuagint uses *dikaïoun* with a personal object and the way in which secular writers generally intended this construction to be understood. When a secular author wrote that someone "justified someone" the sense was always pejorative, meaning that someone chastised or punished the individual.<sup>26</sup> But when Paul writes that God "justifies the sinner," he means that God acquits or pardons the sinner. Contrast Paul's statement, "God justifies the wicked," with a similar statement from the secular writer Pindar, who writes, "The law. . .justifies the violent" (the sense here is obviously pejorative, that the law gives the violent what they deserve—punishment).<sup>27</sup> It seems quite clear that something besides secular Greek prepared this important verb

for Paul's use in teaching the doctrine of justification. This preparation must have been the Septuagint, for apart from the Greek New Testament only the Septuagint uses the verb *dikaïoun* with a personal object in a positive sense, as we see, for example, in Exodus 23:7, where God's people are commanded, "You shall not justify (acquit) the ungodly for a bribe."<sup>28</sup>

But the Septuagint not only helps clarify Paul's understanding of *dikaïoun* as being clearly forensic; it enriches the word because of the Hebrew background. As mentioned above, *dikaïoun* regularly translates the Hebrew root *tsdk*. This Hebrew background gives significant overtones to Paul's use of the word. The concept of justification is never neutral or abstract or static as though God's verdict of justification is only a verdict in which He takes no further active interest. Justification as it comes to us from the Old Testament through the Septuagint is a very "dynamic" concept in which the justified sinner not only can expect freedom from the law's demands and punishments, but can further expect God to act in his behalf to secure all the rights and privileges that are his by virtue of his justification. A Hebrew judge was not only supposed to declare someone's cause just, but was also expected to act in that person's behalf to see to it that the justified person received what he deserved according to his rights. Perhaps the most obvious example of this "Hebrew" conception of a judge is the Book of Judges itself, in which a Samson functions far differently in the role of "judge" than do our contemporary counterparts (if, indeed, there really is any contemporary counterpart). An Old Testament judge would, perhaps, better be viewed as a deliverer (as Samson clearly was for his people). That the verb *dikaïoun* has such dynamic overtones is clear from many Old Testament texts, especially from Psalm 82 where the unjust judges are exhorted to "justify [Hebrew, *hitzdiku*; Greek, *dikaïosate*] the poor and needy"; they must "deliver [them] from the wicked" (*miyad reshaim hatzilu*). One scholar comments in this regard, "The antithesis which in dogmatics we are familiar with is a righteous or just God and yet a Savior. The Old Testament puts it differently—a righteous God and therefore a Savior."<sup>29</sup> And so because of its background in the Old Testament, the verb *dikaïoun* as used by St. Paul carries with it the idea that, since he is justified as the Gospel declares, the sinner can expect God to act in his behalf to secure for him his rights, to defend for him those rights, and to bestow on him all the blessings and benefits which are his by virtue of his justification. St. Paul rejoices in this fact when he writes, "If God

is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but gave Him up for us all—how will He not also, along with Him, graciously give us all things? Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. . . Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us” (Romans 8: 31-34). The Christian must remember that God does not remain far removed from the concerns, problems, and troubles of His people; God remains actively involved in His peoples’ lives always eager, ready, willing, and able to defend His people and deliver them from everything and everyone who would try to deprive them of their rights and blessings as God’s children. Indeed, Christ’s continued gracious presence among His people in the Holy Supper is God’s personal assurance to each believer that He is still living in His Church according to His promise, “Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:19).

Is there reason for the busy pastor to find room on his cluttered desk for a Septuagint? We hope that one can see from the comments above how much practical value there really can be in regular study of the Septuagint. We have, of course, merely scratched the surface. Concluding his chapter on the “Use of the Septuagint,” F. Danker remarks, “Specialists recognize its values, but enough suggestions have been offered to challenge a renewed search of its treasures also by students and pastors. As an aid to Bible study the LXX has few rivals.”<sup>30</sup>

Rahlfs’ edition of the Septuagint (*Septuaginta*) is now available in a handy “pocket” edition (for those with big pockets). This volume is, of course, a basic resource. Unfortunately, no modern lexicon exists specifically designed for Septuagintal studies. While Liddell and Scott’s voluminous *Greek-English Lexicon* can certainly be used, the average pastor probably does not have access to it. Most pastors, however, have Arndt-Gingrich’s *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* in their personal libraries. This volume can certainly be used in reading the Septuagint even though some words will not be listed.<sup>31</sup> Work certainly needs to be done to produce an up-to-date lexicon for Septuagintal studies. Recently Zondervan has republished F.C. Conybeare’s grammar of Septuagint Greek under the title of *A Grammar of Septuagint Greek* (available in paperback). Hatch and Redpath’s classic *Concordance to the Septuagint* has recently been republished by Baker Book House and is available at a reasonable cost. This resource is an invaluable

tool for both Old and New Testament studies, as anyone who has used it will agree.

The more one reads in the Septuagint, by chapters and by books, the more he will probably find himself enjoying it. One will probably realize many benefits and rewards almost immediately. Perhaps a few minutes a day can be set aside to read several verses. Familiar words or constructions should be underlined and noted. Marginal references back to the Septuagint should be noted in appropriate places in one's working copy of the Greek New Testament. The narrative portions will probably generate the most immediate and obvious benefits. One should perhaps concentrate his reading in the Pentateuch.<sup>32</sup> The book of Jonah is also excellent reading. Parts of Joshua and much of Samuel and Kings are helpful. One need not linger regularly over passages which demand detailed study unless, of course, he is researching a particular issue or problem. Rapid and regular reading will keep one's interest high and help him accumulate most quickly a good working vocabulary and "concordance." When preaching on an Old Testament text, one should be sure to read the pericope out of the Septuagint noting any words or constructions which might be significant in the Greek New Testament (Moulton and Geden's *Concordance to the Greek Testament* is especially helpful here). And when preaching on a New Testament pericope, one should be sure to look up any significant words in Hatch-Redpath to see how they were used in the Septuagint. There is no doubt that the Septuagint merits this kind of attention. And there is also no doubt that over the years those pastors who have set aside some time for study of the Septuagint will agree with F. Danker who remarks, "As an aid to Bible study the LXX has few rivals. Like a virtuous woman, her price is above rubies. Blessed is the preacher who has espoused her, for the congregation shall come to hear him regularly."<sup>33</sup>

#### ENDNOTES

1. See F. Danker, *Multipurpose Tools for Bible Study* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1970), p. 63.
2. Septuagintal scholars continue to debate whether or not there ever really was a Greek version of the Old Testament which was known and accepted as the "Septuagint." After having carefully studied the question, Sidney Jellicoe, an eminent Septuagintal scholar, concludes, "The present writer's independent investigations have led him [to the

conclusion] that, from the time of Origen and backwards as far as can be traced there existed a 'standard' translation of the Old Testament in Greek styled that of the 'Seventy'. . .this 'standard' version. . .held its place as the authoritative version first of the Jewish Diaspora and later of the early Christian Church" (Sidney Jellicoe, *The Septuagint and Modern Study* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968; reprint, Ann Arbor, Michigan: Eisenbraun, 1978), p. 341). See also Alfred Rahlfs' introductory comments to his edition of the Septuagint, *Septuaginta*, where he adds, "There is no reason for us to doubt that the LXX text of the period [i.e., second century B.C.] was in general agreement with our present-day LXX text" (p. LVI). In this essay we will be using Rahlfs' *Septuaginta* (Stuttgart: Wuertembergische Bibelanstalt, 1935) as our resource.

3. Ernst Wuerthwein, *The Text of the Old Testament*, translated by Erroll F. Rhodes (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1979), p. 49.
4. A very helpful tool which categorizes the Old Testament quotations in the New Testament (printing in successive columns the Masoretic text of the passage(s) under study, the text of the Septuagint, the reading in the Greek New Testament, and a brief commentary) has been prepared by Gleason L. Archer and Gregory Chirichigno and is entitled *Old Testament Quotations in the New Testament* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983).
5. Philo, *De Vita Mosis*, trans. F.H. Colson (Loeb Classical Library; Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press).
6. 'Spiritus enim, qui in prophetis erat, quando illa dixerunt, idem ipse erat etiam in septuaginta uiris, quando illa interpretati sunt' (*De Civitate Dei*, 18, 43).
7. Jellicoe, p. 352. This veneration of the Septuagint caused some theological problems for the ancient church— e.g. the problem which developed when Arius tried to use the Greek text of Proverbs 8:22 (the Septuagint reads, "*Kurios ektisen me archen hodou autou eis erga autou*") to help prove that the Scriptures themselves teach that Christ is a creature and that there must have been a "time when he was not."
8. In his essay, "The Language of the New Testament" (*Aufstieg und Niedergang der Roemischen Welt*, II [Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1984], pp. 894-970), James Voelz quotes Metzger: "Most of the Semitic influence. . .was exerted indirectly through the Bible which all the authors of the New Testament used. . .To the extent that the authors of the New Testament (including Luke, who almost certainly was not a Jew) had steeped themselves in the characteristic phraseology of the Septuagint, their Greek took on a Semitic cast. In this connection it is instructive to compare the influence which the King James Version has exerted upon the literary style of many an English author" (p. 927).
9. George Howard, *The LXX: A Review of Recent Studies*, p. 161. Some

might argue that Howard overstates his case somewhat, for one would certainly not want to underestimate the value of the papyri in New Testament studies.

10. The Apostle John writes of Jesus in his first chapter, "The only begotten God *who is (ho on)* in the bosom of the Father, that one has declared Him."
11. The examples which follow are drawn from the author's own study of the Septuagint. One may also wish to consult F. Danker, *Multipurpose Tools for Bible Study*, chapter 5 (pp. 81-95) for additional examples of the use of the Septuagint.
12. Scholars are generally agreed on this pronunciation of the "tetragrammaton" (YHWH), the pronunciation "Jehovah" now clearly seen as a mistaken and unfortunate reading of an impossible Hebrew form. The name "Yahweh" is rich in theological content. It is, first of all, a verb form suggesting that God is dynamic; He is a God of activity. Secondly, it is a third person singular hiphil form; the Hebrew hiphil has a causative significance, meaning literally in this instance, "He causes to be" (or, "to happen"). God in Himself is pure "being" or existence and depends on or needs no outside force or reason for His existence (and so as God looks at Himself He tells Moses in Exodus 3, "I am who I am"). But God's people view God in the third person, as the One outside themselves who must act in their behalf, the One without whose grace and power there can be no life. God's name, then, means this: "He makes it happen." It is also imperfect in aspect, implying constant activity. Thirdly, in the context of Exodus 34:6, a text in which God explains the significance of His name, the name takes on very strong Gospel overtones; Yahweh is not merely a God who makes things happen but a God who makes *good* things happen, more precisely a God who makes "gospel-things" happen for His chosen people! Note also the element of grace in this form—God makes good things happen for us without our help or participation or merit. The name further suggests intimacy since it is God's personal name; the author often reminds parishioners that God's people are on such intimate terms with God that they are not only on a "first-name basis" with God but even permitted to call him by a nickname—*Yah*—as the church does regularly in the Divine Service when she sings, "Hallelu-Yah!" ("Praise Yah[weh]!").
13. C. H. Dodd. *The Bible and the Greeks* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1954), p. 57.
14. This writer has often used this text for ordinations and installations, encouraging the candidate to be a Gospel preacher. The Septuagint certainly lends support to such an application.
15. The Greek reads, ". . . *kai kaleitai to onoma autou Megales Boules aggelos.*"
16. See also Isaiah 42:1, where the Greek version applies a Messianic text

- to Israel, making Israel the anointed servant of God rather than Christ.
17. What follows is a synopsis of the author's thesis submitted for the degree of Master of Sacred Theology at Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne, in 1982. The thesis is entitled "The Septuagint's Contribution Towards a Clearer and Richer Understanding of the Pauline Use of *Dikaioo*" and is on file in the seminary library.
18. See an excellent essay on this point by Rolf Preus, "An Evaluation of Lutheran-Roman Catholic Conversations on Justification" (on file in the library of Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne, Indiana). Preus discusses recent Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogues and shows convincingly what has been sacrificed (especially by the Lutherans) to attain "consensus" and the tragic "cost of consensus" which is "nothing less than the Gospel of Jesus Christ" (p. 71).
19. As Eduard Preuss remarks in his classic article, "The Justification of the Sinner before God," "The verb 'to justify' occurs thirty-eight times in the New Testament, and in all these thirty-eight passages it signifies a forensic act. It means to regard as righteous, to declare righteous" (*Concordia Theological Monthly*, VIII: 2, p. 11.).
20. For example, Herodotus writes, "Since the gods have given me to be your slave, it is right (*dikaio*) that if I have any clearer sight of wrong I should declare it to you" (Loeb Classical Library, I, p. 114).
21. See, for example, Daniel 8:14, where the verb *katharizo* translates the Hebrew niph'al, *nitsdak*. The context here is clearly not forensic.
22. While this important text is not italicized in *Novum Testamentum Graece* (twenty-sixth edition), Paul's use of the verse was certainly very intentional and is significant in determining Paul's understanding of *dikaion*.
23. This is clear when the texts are placed alongside each other — Septuagint, "*ou dikaiothesetai enopion sou pas zon*"; Romans 3:20, "*ou dikaiothesetai pasa sarx enopion autou*"; Galatians 2:16, "*ou dikaiothesetai pasa sarx*." Paul substitutes *sarx* for the Septuagint's *zon* to emphasize mankind's sinful condition.
24. In the Hebrew Old Testament out of eight occurrences of *tsdk* in the qal seven are rendered into Greek with the passive form (Gen. 38:26; Is. 43:9, 26; Is. 45:25; Ps. 19:10; 51:6; 143:2).
25. See, for example, Thomas Lambdin, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971), p. 93.
26. See Liddell and Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, p. 429, for references.
27. The papyri available today do not really add anything new to our understanding of the way in which the verb *dikaion* was used in extra-biblical literature. See Mayser's *Grammatik der Griechischen Papyri aus der Ptolemaerzeit, II* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter) where he cites two interesting verbs which occur in the papyri and which indicate strongly that *dikaion* was not understood forensically at all in Koine Greek. These two verbs are *dikaiologeomai* (p. 117) and *dikaiodoteo* (p. 119).

28. Arndt and Gingrich agree when they point out that apart from the New Testament only the Septuagint uses the verb *dikaion* with a personal object to mean "aliquem iustum reddere." *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 212.
29. A. B. Davidson, *The Theology of the Old Testament* (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1949), p. 144.
30. Danker, p. 95.
31. I would not discourage anyone from laying his English version alongside his Septuagint as he reads. The more material one can read, the more vocabulary he will accumulate and the less he will eventually find himself depending on his "pony." Everyone who has learned a foreign language will agree that a limited vocabulary usually causes the greatest frustration.
32. Scholars agree that the Pentateuch was undoubtedly the first portion of the Hebrew Bible to be translated. It is also a very faithful translation and is classified by the famous Septuagintal scholar Thackeray as being "good Koine Greek" (*Grammar of the Old Testament in Greek*, p. 13). S. Jellicoe comments, "Opinion on the LXX of the Pentateuch has tended to favour the view that as a translation it remains, on the whole, close to its original and reflects a high degree of competence on the part of the translators" (p. 270). The pastor familiar with his Greek New Testament will recognize many familiar words and grammatical constructions.
33. Danker, p. 95.

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# Theological Observer

## CARL BRAATEN'S SIXTH LOCUS: THE PERSON OF JESUS CHRIST

*Christian Dogmatics* (Fortress Press, 1984), edited by Gettysburg professor Robert Jenson and Chicago professor Carl Braaten, is an attempt to offer an ecumenical dogmatics for the Lutheran Church within the framework of theological movements prevalent at the end of the twentieth century. As the title indicates, the intended audience is wider than Lutheran students of theology, but it is unlikely that it will overreach its Lutheran boundaries. Braaten, an ELCA minister and professor at the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago, has made a name for himself as a theologian, even with those who can accept neither his procedures nor conclusions. As editor of *Christian Dogmatics*, he has assumed the task of preparing the section on the person of Christ, which is the center and focus of Christian faith and theology.

The starting point for Christology is what the church understands by considering Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ of God (I, 473). In a sense Braaten has adopted a "confessional" Christology. Though it is much narrower than the traditional Lutheran confessional heritage in the Book of Concord, especially as expressed in the second article of the Nicene Creed, Braaten begins his dogmatic discussion with what he finds the church to believe—Jesus is the Christ of God. How he understands "Christ of God" is, of course, another matter.

The first issue is how Braaten establishes his Christology and the second is how he defines it. The early church, as understood from the New Testament, had a high Christology. It understood that Jesus was divine in some sense. To come to this conclusion Braaten begins with the Easter proclamation of the early church (I, 478). At first glance, it may appear that this is only a restatement of Bultmann's position which distinguished between the nonaccessible Jesus of history and the kerygmatic Christ available in the Easter proclamation. Braaten wants to find the roots of Christology in the historical Jesus of Nazareth, whose preaching of the kingdom brought God's power into the world. This kingdom is to be understood not in the moralistic sense set forth by nineteenth-century theologians but in the eschatological terms set forth by Schweitzer and Bultmann. The church assigned to Jesus such titles as Messiah, Son of Man, and Son of God, but Christology does not depend on whether Jesus understood Himself in these terms. "The root of christology in the ministry of Jesus is not located in a particular title of honor he claimed for himself"

(I, 490). The Easter appearances are the border between the historical Jesus and the Christ of faith. What Jesus was and what the church thought about Jesus are interwoven in the gospel narratives. Braaten concedes the identification of Jesus with God was not the dogmatic result of a later Hellenized Christianity, but one made by the most primitive Palestinian community. Here the break with Bultmann is more apparent than real, since docetism with its devaluing of Christ's humanity is an ill gain from this identification of Jesus with God (I, 499-500). More serious is Braaten's redefinition of the human and divine in Christ as our "giving expression to the knowledge of faith that God has entered history as the power of final salvation of humanity and the cosmos" (I, 514).

In pursuing dogmatics, Braaten wants to take into consideration the nineteenth and twentieth century exegetical understandings of Jesus without having to choose between the several options and at the same time without surrendering the classical Christology, or at least its terms, even if he has to redefine them. This was the mark of neo-orthodoxy. Braaten's confidence in such diverse and contradictory exegetical methods and conclusions, developed by an almost premeditated evolutionistic development and blended into monolithic conclusions, is either brilliant or just naive. To add the classical expression to his Christology, Braaten reviews the dogmatic concerns which lead up to the early church councils, the Lutheran Confessions, and the discussions raised by the Erlangen theologians in the nineteenth century. In his breadth of knowledge and historical procedure, Braaten is not unlike Francis Pieper, whose title, *Christian Dogmatics*, Braaten and Jenson borrowed without giving appropriate credit. Braaten wants to work within Lutheran boundaries. Whether he succeeds is another matter.

Since Braaten is versed in the classical Christology and wants to preserve its terminology, he is led into a discussion of the sinlessness of Christ. This dogmatic concern for Christ's sinlessness is quite amazing, since for Braaten Jesus' own self-understanding did not go beyond His proclamation of God's kingdom for which "he never offered a definition or straightforward description" (I, 486). Is it really possible to deduce Christ's sinlessness from a definitionless proclamation of God's kingdom? Christ's sinlessness is problematic for Braaten, since it detracts from His complete identification with fallen humanity. For contemporary New Testament studies this is hardly an issue; but Braaten supports it not from the classical position of the incarnation and the impossibility of God sinning, but rather as "a retroactive type of judgment based on the role of Christ in the mission of God's approaching kingdom" (I, 522). The approach here is reminiscent of Pannenberg who makes eschatology, i.e., what God will do in Jesus, rather than incarnation, i.e., what God has done in Jesus, the standard for Christology. As close as Braaten comes to proposing a high Christology, especially in his use of terms, he faults early church theologians for

interpreting John's mythological terminology of the Word becoming flesh in ontological terms. Such "ontologizing the incarnation" was well intentioned and perhaps the only possibility within the mind-set of the early church fathers which was defined by Greek philosophy, but still a regrettable intrusion of alien elements into Christology" (I, 530). This is, of course, recognizable as first von Harnack's position and then Bultmann's. This does not mean that Braaten finds it impossible to call Jesus God. Such a confession does not involve the entering of the pre-existent Logos into the world by incarnation, but in Jesus "the power of God's absolute future—*basileia*—was shown to be effectually present in his person and humanity" (I, 538). We are left with a functional Christology, borrowed from Moltmann and Pannenberg. Jesus' unity with the Father is no longer understood in Trinitarian terms, but in terms of the theology of history as the representation of "a perfect realization of the humanity of humankind" (I, 539). Jesus is God in name only and not ontologically. Regardless of Braaten's dogmatic inadequacy in his understanding the incarnation as "a perfect realization of the humanity of humankind," his language and categories are hardly recognizable as biblical. His judgment against the early church fathers in understanding mythological language in philosophical terms might be adjusted to fit Braaten, who has surrendered biblical terms and categories for philosophical ones. This becomes clearer when Braaten presents his understanding of the articles of faith in the Apostles Creed.

The virgin birth is seen as a sign of Christ's humanity which does not require the denial of human paternity (I, 546-7). Sadly missing from this all too brief discussion on an article so basic to faith that it was included from the very beginning in the precursors of the Apostles Creed is any exegetical presentation. This lack of biblical discussion is characteristic of Braaten's dogmatic writing throughout. To be sure, His birth from Mary is Christ's link with fallen humanity, as Braaten contends, but His *virgin* birth is understood both by Matthew and Luke as the sign of His being God and on that account it is by both evangelists intimately tied with the incarnation, a point missed by Braaten. In his failure to connect virgin birth and incarnation, Braaten is consistent as he defines the preexistence of Jesus as His never being "an individual person apart from the incarnation of the Son of God" (I, 545). This definition of preexistence contradicts what the word means. Preexistence is prior to incarnation, but not dependent on it for its meaning. Braaten's rhetorical question, "Is God the Father in competition with the role of our human father?" (I, 547), leads to no other conclusion than that he does not accept the virgin birth as the evangelists and the early church fathers understood it. For them it was a real event.

In his interpretation of the descent into hell he sees a double meaning: a symbol of Christ's suffering, the view offered by Calvin, and a symbol of final salvation to those "who have never been confronted with the preaching of his salvation in his name" (I, 549). This is nothing other than universalism, a position directly borrowed from Pannenberg. The resurrection accounts for the transition of Jesus from the *announcer* of the kingdom to the *announcement* of the kingdom (I, 524); this is pretty much standard exegetical opinion. In spite of its popularity, Braaten's assumption of it into his theology should not remain unchallenged. Without denigrating the importance of the resurrection in the thinking of the disciples about Jesus (so that He became the announcement of their preaching), Jesus before the resurrection was *both* the announcer and announcement of the kingdom. Unless this is said, the early church and not Jesus becomes *the* determinative factor in the Christian religion. To use more traditional terms, it must be said that Jesus is at the same time the revealer and revelation of God. For Braaten the resurrection is an historical event because it happened at a certain place and time. His resurrection appearances were interpreted by the witnesses as an eschatological event and became foundational for Christianity (I, 551). Granted that Braaten's position, which is borrowed from Moltmann and Pannenberg, does emphasize an oft forgotten understanding that the resurrection of Jesus belongs to both our history and the eschaton, it does not adequately define the historical dimension. Placing it within time and space does not adequately answer the question of *what* really happened in the resurrection. We can come no closer to the resurrection than the first witnesses' interpretation of the appearances of Jesus. These suspicions of Braaten's doubts about the resurrection are confirmed when Braaten sees no "sound historical arguments" for distinguishing the ascension from the resurrection (I, 552-3), a position similar to Bultmann's.

Braaten's Christology is a map of his own theological pilgrimage as a child of his times. He wants to preserve the Lutheran heritage of his youth, but his Christology reflects neo-orthodoxy, Bultmann's hermeneutic, and the dogmatic approaches of Moltmann and Pannenberg, in all of which he became well versed. Braaten wants to preserve the traditional language, but like neo-orthodoxy he redefines the terms before he incorporates them in his theology. Not as radical as Bultmann, who is virtually agnostic about the historical Jesus, Braaten sees the classical Christology as coming from the early Christians and not from Christ himself. With Pannenberg and Moltmann, he sees eschatology as the clue to understanding the person and work of Jesus. The student trained in classical Christology is capable of interpreting Braaten's approach. Others are left with philosophical speculations put forth in Christian language. Such verbal confusion is always damaging to the faith once delivered to the church by the apostles.

David P. Scaer

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TAKING UP ZWINGLI ON THE CONSECRATION

Having recently authored a volume on Martin Chemnitz's views of the Sacrament of the Altar (*The Lord's Supper in the Theology of Martin Chemnitz*), it has hardly escaped my notice that it has raised discussion of several issues, and not among the least is the doctrine of the consecration. Since it is my view that both Martins (Luther and Chemnitz) agree on their understanding of Luke 22:19 and 1 Corinthians 11:24-25 and that their understanding has been incorporated into the Book of Concord, I submit a brief summary of my findings of both Martins on this aspect of the Lord's Supper.

There can be no doubt that in a legitimate observance of the Lord's Supper Luther confessed that the consecration achieved the Real Presence. When Zwingli objected to Luther's doctrine of the consecration, Luther gave a clear answer as to what he believed, taught, and confessed, and also the biblical basis for it. Zwingli declared that "although in the Supper Christ gave His body when He said, 'This is My body,' it does not follow that if I repeat the same words, Christ's body would immediately be present; for Christ nowhere commanded that His body should come into being out of my word" (LW 37, 181). Thus challenged, Luther answered, "Let us take him up on the first point."

Luther refers to Christ's command to do what He did in the first Supper: "But when He said, 'Do this,' by His own command and bidding He directed us to speak these words in His person and name: 'This is My body' " (LW 37, 187). Luther is so certain of this that he asserts that, "if there were an imperative that I should speak to the water these declarative words, 'this is wine,' you would see indeed whether wine would not appear" (LW 37, 183).

Significantly, part of Luther's answer to Zwingli on this occasion has been incorporated into the Formula of Concord as part of the Lutheran Church's confession (SD VII, 78): "When (*wenn, quando*) we follow His institution and command in the Supper and say, 'This is My body,' then (*so, tunc*) it is His body, not because of our speaking or our own declarative word, but because of His command in which He has told us so to speak and to do and has attached His own command and deed to our speaking" (LW 37, 184).

The other Martin (Chemnitz) confessed in his *Fundamenta* (chiefly directed against the Philippists) that he had no desire to bring in anything new but was "simply trying to retain the old fundamental and simple teaching and to repeat it out of Luther's writings" (*The Lord's Supper*, Concordia Publishing House, 1979, p. 21). And he virtually did repeat Luther's doctrine of the consecration. For example, he confesses for the

benefit of the Philippists: "Thus the other fathers hold that before the consecration there is only one substance there, namely, the bread and the wine. But *when* the Word and institution of Christ comes to these elements, *then* not only one substance is present as before, but at the same time also the very body of Christ" (LS, 156; emphasis added).

In the *Examination* (Concordia Publishing House, 1978) Chemnitz presents this doctrine in greater detail (II, 224-231). Any fair examination of this section will reveal that the central point of Chemnitz here is that "our bread and cup become sacramental by a certain consecration; it does not grow that way" (II, 225). He finds the basis for the recitation of the Words of Institution as the consecration which effects the Real Presence in the command of Christ Himself: "In short, Christ has commanded us to do in the action of the Sacrament what He Himself did. He did not, however, perform a mute action but spoke. And what He said is reported to us in Scripture, as much as the Holy Spirit judged to be necessary for us" (II, 226). Later he precludes the possibility of misunderstanding him as though the consecrated bread and wine were going to be the body and the blood of Christ upon their oral reception: "The meaning is not that the blessed bread which is divided, which is offered, and which the Apostles received from the hand of Christ was not the body of Christ but becomes the body of Christ when the eating of it is begun" (II, 248).

Chemnitz's Scriptural basis for clinging to this point so tenaciously is also Matthew 26:28. He writes "on the use of the particle 'for.' 'Drink,' He says, not because it is a common cup, nor because you are thirsty, nor because it is a typical or symbolic drink; for He had now put an end to all these. But 'Drink, *because* this is My blood' " (LS 99; emphasis added). It is quite striking to observe that the eagle-eyed NIV translators (chiefly of Calvinistic persuasion) omitted the *gar* in their translation, while back in 1611 the KJV men saw it with Chemnitz, as did in the modern day both the NKJV and the NASB translators.

As a final note, a Lutheran theologian of Germany, Pastor Frank-Georg Gozdek has recently made a valuable contribution to the understanding of Martin Chemnitz's doctrine of the Lord's Supper, a volume commemorating the fourth centenary of the death of Chemnitz: *Der Zweite Martin der Lutherischen Kirche: Festschrift zum 400. Todestag von Martin Chemnitz* (ed. W.A. Junke, Braunschweig, 1986). Pastor Gozdek made a most intensive study of Chemnitz's first book on the Lord's Supper, *Repetitio sanae doctrinae de vera praesentia corporis et sanguinis Domini in coena* (1561). This book is a sort of first edition of the *Fundamenta* (1570), which has been translated by J.A.O. Preus under the title of *The Lord's Supper*. Pastor Gozdek put the results of his scholarly research into the essay, "Der Beitrag des Martin Chemnitz zur lutherischen Abendmahlslehre" (pp. 9-47). He discusses the consecration in section 5 under the rubric "Das Ereignis der Realpräsenz." Pastor Gozdek's essay is worthy of serious study.

# Book Reviews

EXAMINATION OF THE COUNCIL OF TRENT. By Martin Chemnitz. Translated by Fred Kramer. Volumes III and IV. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1986.

When I was with Prof. G.C. Berkouwer of the Free University of Amsterdam in 1970, this redoubtable Dutch professor and prolific author (multiple-volumed *Studies in Dogmatics* and numerous other theological works) expressed genuine amazement over the projected publication of Chemnitz's *Examen Concilii Tridentini* in English translation by Concordia Publishing House. His surprise had mostly to do with the financing of a project of this size. I assured him that it required a church body deeply committed to confessional theology, along with a like-minded publishing house, to underwrite an enterprise of such magnitude. With the appearance now of Parts III and IV the task is completed, and Concordia is to be congratulated for seeing it through to a successful end, along with kudos of the highest kind for the able translator, Fred Kramer, who had the satisfaction of being there from beginning to end. A monumental task well done!

Part I (published in 1971) and Part II (published in 1978) contain beyond all argument the chief *doctrinal* articles of interest to modern readers in the four-volume set. Chemnitz simply follows the order of topics as they were treated by the Council of Trent and as reported by Payva Andrada, in the session which met, with some gaps or intervals, between the years 1545-1563. The first two parts thus include the very significant responses of Chemnitz on topics like Scripture and tradition, original sin, free will, justification, faith, good works, Baptism, Lord's Supper, penance, church orders and ordination. In Parts III and IV Chemnitz deals with celibacy, purgatory, invocation of saints, relics, images, indulgences, and fasting. Obviously the nitty-gritty of Christian doctrine is in the first two parts. Yet it was important that the translation include the last two parts, in view of the fact that many of the divisive abuses which the Reformation exposed involved these latter topics, so intimately woven into the piety of Roman Catholic life and teaching to this day. "It is not the intention," Dr. Kramer notes with the appearance of Parts III and IV, to open old wounds and "to stir up troubles," but the fact simply is that, if there is to be any rapprochement between the churches, it will have to begin with an honest, forthright facing-up-to of the critique which Chemnitz brings on the basis of sound biblical exegesis and also very careful citation from the early church fathers. In an ecumenical age like ours, therefore, it ought not be too much to hope that Roman Catholic scholars will also take seriously the incisive critique of Trent brought by Chemnitz. It is incredible and inconceivable, therefore, to see contemporary Roman Catholic scholars simply ignoring and bypassing Chemnitz's incisive dissecting of Trent's theology now that Kramer's translation is available. Chemnitz's *Examen* does not even receive



mention in Catholic University of American professor, David N. Power's, *The Sacrifice We Offer* (Crossroad, 1987), which purports to be a reinterpretation of Tridentine dogma! Rome has not to this day answered Chemnitz's challenge. But then, why should the Romanists bother, as long as the heirs of the Reformation on the Lutheran side haven't taken Chemnitz seriously either, not to mention Protestantism in general? Genuine Christian theology, including much that passes for Lutheran, is in a deep state of desperate malaise.

My comments above are not intended in any way to discourage readers' expectations as regards the content of Parts III and IV. When Chemnitz treats subjects like chastity, celibacy, and virginity, he deals with the whole area of sexual relations for the married and the unmarried in a splendidly biblical way, not in the style of Ann Landers. Chemnitz may be wordy to some readers, but the plus is that he leaves few stones unturned. The great theologian, for many years superintendent of the Brunswick territorial church, has been faulted for requiring so much time to produce his *Examen*, eight years between 1565 to 1573, midst his multiple duties. This is to lose sight of the mammoth production at Trent and all that is implied with the counter-Reformation theology. Chemnitz took his task very seriously and his scholarship is nowhere more evident than in this four-part *magnum opus*.

Dr. Kramer worked from the very best early editions, notably the Frankfort of 1578, comparing it with the 1861 Latin edition of Eduard Preuss (produced in St. Louis), and the German translation which had already been produced in 1576 by George Nigrinus and which Dr. Kramer describes as "excellent." Readers will find state of the art excellence in all four of the volumes issued by Concordia, a true monument of scholarly accomplishment that ought to serve the church for years to come. A minor inaccuracy seems to be included on the jacket accompanying each volume, namely, that Andrada, the Portuguese Roman Catholic scholar and expert (*peritus*) doing the reporting on Trent, is described as a Jesuit, an error repeated also in the New Catholic Encyclopedia and other sources. The German scholar, Reinhard Mumm (*Die Polemik des Martin Chemnitz gegen das Konzil von Trient*) argues convincingly that this notion keeps on appearing from one source to another, apparently because Andrada is confused with later men by the same name who were Jesuits.

Certainly libraries (college and university) throughout the world cannot afford to be without these volumes which exhaustively sift through the canons and decrees of the Council of Trent. Nor can individual pastors, theologians, and students of the Reformation and its theology ignore them either.

E.F. Klug



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DIVERSITY AND COMMUNION. By Yves Congar, O.P. Mystic, Connecticut: Twenty-Third Publications, 1984. 232 pages. Paper. \$9.95.

Rosemary Ruether has coined the term "post-ecumenism" for the manner in which church unity and communion can be anticipated today. To a significant degree, this volume reflects such "post-ecumenical" thinking—not in the sense that the contemporary ecumenical movement has accomplished all of its goals or that continued formal dialogue between traditions is irrelevant, but that the primary presuppositions for the establishment of unity among the churches now exist. Consequently, the actual shape of the one Church can be concretely envisioned.

Yves Congar stands with Karl Rahner and Bernard Lonergan as a giant of 20th century Roman Catholic theology; indeed, in the areas of ecclesiology and ecumenism he surpasses them in influence. *Diversity and Communion* only enhances his stature as Rome's leading ecumenical scholar. Yet, the fundamental thesis of this particular book is one familiar to even the most casual Lutheran observer of the ecumenical scene: fidelity to truth as perceived by individual confessions is not incompatible. Agreement on the central truths of faith exists but diversity is possible, even desirable, in this unity.

Father Congar elucidates this thesis through a series of carefully ordered, largely historical discussions beginning with questions of diversity and communion in the early church and ending with Vatican Council II. His approach is to highlight significant episodes in the tradition which demonstrate the long-standing acceptability of the concept of "diversity in unity." Thus, the debate over the date of Easter and communion in the churches during the second to fourth centuries is viewed by Congar as pivotal for the distinction between unity and uniformity. The history of relationships between the Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church is examined for a similar purpose as is seventeenth century Lutheran distinctions between fundamental and non-fundamental articles of faith (e.g., the contention of Hunnius that differences with the Calvinists are over the *fundamentum dogmaticum*, not the *fundamentum essentiale*).

Much which emerges from Congar's study will be appreciated by the Lutheran reader. Augustana VII is a clear reminder that uniformity of practice ("ceremonies instituted by men") is not necessary for true unity. However, the confessional insistence that external unity in the church is constituted by agreement on the marks of the church—the purely taught Gospel and the rightly administered sacraments (FC X)—must finally shape one's reaction to Congar's work.

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**WE HOLD THESE TRUTHS: UNDERSTANDING THE IDEAS AND IDEALS OF THE CONSTITUTION.** By Mortimer J. Adler. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1986. \$16.95.

This is not a theological book; but clergymen should read it. Adler writes about the American Testament: The Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution, and The Gettysburg Address. The author is lucid and provocative. Without intending to do so, he confronts theological issues for the Lutheran theologian today.

Lutherans have always struggled with the correct theological relationship between state and church. The kingdom on the right and the kingdom on the left present the Lutheran church of our day with certain dilemmas. Is it acceptable for the Christian to march on the Pentagon, to stage a "sit-in," break civil laws in search of the higher good, etc.? Clergy and laymen alike remember the Viet Nam years and the agonies that touched the lives of the young American Lutherans who did not want to fight in Viet Nam. The doctrine of the just and unjust wars was hotly debated. The pressure has not eased in this moral and theological battling, whether discussing war, sex education for children, or abortion. What can or should an individual Christian or an entire church body do in these cases? What does God expect of His people in the political realm?

No, Mr. Adler will not solve the theological problems for the Lutheran church, but he does offer a clear interpretation (albeit his own!) of the three documents that give political life and structure to our land. If the Lutheran clergyman and layman seek to find answers to some of the political, moral and theological questions confronting the church in the world, then he must understand the nation's political documents.

On occasion Lutheran pastors demonstrate an abysmal ignorance concerning the political sphere. This book will remedy that deficiency on a very primary level. The reader will have a much better grasp of the content, goals, and failures of the American Testament.

George Kraus

**JOSHUA, JUDGES, RUTH: THE NEW CENTURY BIBLE COMMENTARY.** By John Gray. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986. Paper. 427 + xi pages.

*The New Century Bible Commentary* being newly issued in paperback, this volume is a partial revision by John Gray of his earlier commentary, first published in 1967 and revised in 1977. Unexplainedly, the previous publication history of this third edition is omitted from the copyright page. This edition has been expanded especially by additions in the introductory chapters, list of abbreviations, and general index and by the addition of an index of modern authors. Sections in the commentary receiving more

extensive attention are Joshua 10:1-41; Judges 5:1-31; 13-16; 19-21, and a number of verses throughout, especially in Ruth.

A well-known higher-critical scholar, Dr. Gray has also authored notable commentaries on Exodus and Kings. His works are typically shallow in theological insight and reflect the usual presuppositions of source and form criticism, such as the documentary hypothesis, the Deuteronomistic history, religious evolution, aetiological interpretation, a late date for the exodus and conquest, and the subordination of archaeological data to source analysis (p. 26). However, he is one of the more cautious higher critics in respect to textual emendation and the more radical theories of composition.

Gray gives a peculiar twist to the postulated gradual infiltration of Canaan by "Israel" (Alt, Mendenhall): The original core of Israel was spearheaded from north Sinai (Kadesh) into Ephraim and Benjamin, then joined by tribes to the north and east, some of whom constituted groups of under-privileged serfs (*habiru*), attracted by Israel's social ethic. The inclusion of southern Yahweh-worshipping tribes, including Judah, was first affected by David (pp. 9-34). Judges reveals certain progress of the settlement, growth and eventual consolidation of Israel (p. 189). Thus, source analysis bends the internal and external evidence to suit the predetermined theories. Similarly, Ruth is related to the settlement of the exiles returning from Babylonia who found it difficult to reoccupy their ancestral lands. This discounts the admitted possible affinity of Ruth to the confident climate of the age of David and Solomon and its good classical Hebrew narrative prose (pp. 368-9) that lacks examples after the Exile.

Otherwise, Gray's commentary retains significant reference value through a generally solid exposition, especially of many practical matters and details. However, the conservative would prefer Martin Woudstra's *Joshua (New International Commentary on the Old Testament)* and *Judges and Ruth* by Arthur Cundall and Leon Morris (*Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries*), with the confessional Lutheran having recourse in C.F. Keil's commentaries and Horace Hummel's introduction for theological considerations.

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**HISTORICAL COMMENTARY ON THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION.**  
By Wilhelm Maurer. Translated by H. George Anderson. Philadelphia:  
Fortress Press, 1986.

The translation of Wilhelm Maurer's *Historical Commentary on the Augsburg Confession* is a landmark event in these days of renewed interest and research into the Lutheran Confessions. We are grateful to Fortress

Press and to George Anderson, who gives us a clear and readable translation, for making this classic available.

Maurer's work is not just another theology of the Augsburg Confession, nor is it a mere historical commentary on the Augsburg Confession like Leiv Grane's excellent *Confessio Augustana* just recently translated and published in English by Augsburg Publishing House. It is a thorough and definitive isagogics to the Augsburg Confession. Maurer traces the theology and development of the Augsburg Confession not only back to its earlier drafts by Melancthon, but more importantly back to the formative theological concepts in the writing of both Luther and Melancthon. In doing so he demonstrates a prodigious comprehension of the theology and output of Luther, to whom he devotes much more attention than to Melancthon. The reader is greatly rewarded by this procedure in two ways. First, he gains deeper insight into the theology of the Augsburg Confession. Second, he becomes familiar with the relationship of Luther's theology to the Augsburg Confession.

Like Elert and others, Maurer sees differences in the approach of Luther and Melancthon as they construct confessions for the church. For instance, Maurer finds that the doctrine of the Trinity, which is the foundation for Luther's Confession of 1528, together with the doctrine of the incarnation of the Son, presupposes all the Reformation principles, including justification by faith. To confess the Trinity is to describe the course of revelatory events that run from Christ to us, including our justification before God. And so the atonement is our justification. But Melancthon in the Augsburg Confession presents a separate doctrine of justification. Whether this approach, which became more pronounced as time went on (but not in the Apology), indicates a dangerous deviation from Luther's Trinitarian approach Maurer leaves an open question. He concludes that Melancthon's article of justification, unlike Luther's, belongs under the framework of pneumatology. I would dispute this notion in the light of Melancthon's Apology IV as well as from Luther's scattered writings on justification. I think the evidence Maurer himself supplies would lead one to the conclusion that both Luther and Melancthon in the Augsburg Confession place justification *propter Christum* under the second article of the Creed rather than under the third article. Maurer's *Commentary* requires patient and studious reading, but the student who wishes to know more of the background, development, and theology of the Augsburg Confession will be greatly rewarded and challenged.

Robert Preus

THE TRUTH OF CHRISTMAS BEYOND THE MYTHS: THE GOSPELS OF THE INFANCY OF CHRIST. By Rene Laurentin. Translated from the French by Michael J. Wrenn and associates. Petersham, Massachusetts: St. Bede's Publications, 1986. 569 + xx pages. Paper. \$29.95.

If this study had not been translated, one would be tempted to suggest that learning French just to read this book would be worthwhile. In contrast to the widespread historical devaluation of Matthew 1-2 and Luke 1-2, Laurentin repeatedly and emphatically affirms the historical reliability of these infancy narratives. His exposition of Luke 1: 1-4 is a model of brevity compact with substance. He concludes: "We are not contesting the religious intent of Luke, but this intent cannot be dissociated from a concern to express the truth about events relating to the real person of Christ. For the evangelists, truth and meaning do not oppose each other. They are correlative" (p. 318).

Laurentin deals with the two opening chapters of Matthew and Luke in depth and detail, giving attention to textual criticism as well as literary criticism, and also using techniques of structuralism and semiotics in his study. He supplies an introduction to semiotics, which he characterizes in these words: "This is a new field, and it is still in the stage of proving its worth, yet it seems to offer surprising resources for further progress in understanding the Gospels" (p. 111).

The parish pastor may be skittish and skeptical, suspecting that something like semiotics is bound to be remote from the realities of congregational life and appropriate only for disportings in academe. I am convinced that such an attitude is wrong. Within three pages I found stimulation for three sermon themes: (1.) To Praise God is to Be Provocative. (2.) Can You Stand It Out of the Limelight in the Shadows? (3.) The Time of God vs. the Time of Caesar. Not very much farther along the way, two more themes came to mind, triggered by Laurentin's exposition: (1.) Mary, Exemplar of the Meditative Witness. (2.) Jesus in Utopia. This latter theme was inspired by Laurentin's observation: "The child was laid in a manger, because there was no place—*ou topos*—for them in the inn. The Messiah was born in an *ou topia*, in the etymological sense of the word which signifies a 'non-place' " (p. 178). Bored listeners and bogged down preachers should welcome the prodding stimulation Laurentin provides.

Several important features of Laurentin's philosophy of history must be noted, however briefly. His basic commitment is to historicity/facticity in these opening chapters of Matthew and Luke. Thus concerning the canticles he challenges: "Why not then evaluate these texts according to their content rather than according to fragile presuppositions which seek to attribute the canticles to the 'creative Christian Community' (itself a lovely myth, generously exploited by the *Formgeschichte* school)?" (p. 380). A fairly long section on the virginal conception affirms the historicity of our Lord's miraculous conception and brings the argument up to date with helpful references to recent literature.

At several points Laurentin makes some concessions to a less than literal interpretation which I find unacceptable. Perhaps the problem derives from what he does with two principles he enunciates. (1) Concerning the writing of history he says: "The transfiguration of recollections is the law of all memory and all history. It is not necessarily betrayal. It is interior illumination of an event, and thus implies a degree of stylization" (pp. 376-377). (2) Concerning the Holy Spirit's use of human instruments he contends: "He [the Holy Spirit] does not interpose himself, but rather awakens the subject from within to what is best in himself..." (p. 441). "The intimate activity of God, who does not manipulate human beings but inspires them to what is best in their desires and in their hope..." (p.442). Both statements, I believe, contain an important truth. However, without more precise definition and delimitation they invite distortions.

A series of nineteen "quasi-excursuses," which Laurentin calls "Special Notes on the Text," range from "Kecharitomene: The Name Given Mary," to "Is Mary the Source of Luke 1-2?" These alone would make the book eminently worthwhile.

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**WOMEN IN THE CHURCH: A BIBLICAL STUDY ON THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE CHURCH.** By Samuele Bacchiocchi. Biblical Perspectives 7. Berrien Springs, Michigan: Biblical Perspectives, 1987. 295 pages. Paper. \$12.95.

The present debate over the proper role of women in society and the church, along with the attendant issue of ordination of women into the pastoral office, has for a long time transcended denominational lines. It is a truly "catholic" issue. At its 1990 General Conference the Seventh-Day Adventist Church will decide on the ordination of women to the priesthood. This book by a professor at Andrews University hopes to influence that body so that it will resist the pressure to ordain women as pastors. Two appended essays, by Rosalie Haffner Lee (Chapter 9: "Is Ordination Needed to Women's Ministry?") and by William A. Fagel (Chapter 10: "Ellen White and the Role of Women in the Church"), are of interest and of importance to Adventist readers, but beyond that communion hold no special significance.

The body of the book presents a thorough and thoroughly traditional interpretation of the relevant biblical evidence concerning women in the church. In his "Introduction" Bacchiocchi states the ruling "vital biblical principal" of his study: "men and women are equal before God by virtue of creation and redemption. Yet God assigned distinctive and complementary roles for men and women to fill in their relation to each other. These roles are not nullified but clarified by Christ's redemption and should be reflected in the church" (p. 26). Indeed, the phrase "equality

in being and subordination in function," which recurs in variant form throughout the book, may be regarded as the byword of Bacchiocchi's book.

Bacchiocchi breaks no new ground but does offer in an orderly and clear manner the arguments both of "feminist" scholars and of his own conservative viewpoint. He is fair and equitable and does lay out an adequate defense of traditional church doctrine and practice. His chapter headings indicate the scope and thrust of his presentation: Ministry of Women in the Old Testament; Ministry of Women in the New Testament; The Order of Creation; The Order of Redemption; Headship and Subordination; Women and Church Office; The Role of Pastor. Perhaps most helpful are Bacchiocchi's discussions of Genesis 1-3 and of the major New Testament passages (1 Tim. 2:9-15; 1 Cor. 14:33-36; Gal. 3:28). His treatment of the concepts of "headship" and of "subordination" is also of interest.

Nevertheless, the book is finally not satisfying. This book may well serve the discussion within the Adventist Church, but it is too dependent upon earlier (conservative) treatments to commend itself to the general reader as a new, meaningful contribution to the discussion. Moreover, there are occasions where the argument is overplayed and methodologically skewed. I really doubt whether Jesus was a revolutionary in his attitude toward women as is often asserted. Certainly to imply that Judaism held women to be "second-class citizens in Israel" or of unequal spiritual status (p. 91) is simply a crass inaccuracy. But whatever difference Jesus represented vis-a-vis Judaism, it cannot be expressed as a restoration of "human dignity and worth" (p. 90f.). Here Bacchiocchi is merely adopting the rhetoric of pop sociology, as is prevalent in feminist circles, and it frankly does not gain cogency just because a conservative says it.

Bacchiocchi argues strongly that "headship" means "authority" and not "source" (pp. 114-118). Certainly he is right that "headship" can and usually does entail the meaning of authority. Yet his argument against the meaning of "source" lacks persuasiveness, and when Bacchiocchi simply reduces "headship" to leadership (p. 224) it becomes clear that that notion of authority has achieved too high a status in Bacchiocchi's argument. Methodologically Bacchiocchi places too great an importance on the husband-wife relationship and the church as an extended family. On the other hand, Bacchiocchi's discussion of the pastor as representative of Christ has much to commend it, even though I think he unnecessarily rejects what he calls the "sacramental" view of the pastor as *in persona Christi*.

The book reveals the marks of hurried production. There are numerous errors of spelling and of syntax. Overall, *Women in the Church* is a reasonable survey of opinions with an informed conservative outcome. Women ought not be ordained into the pastoral office for it is against the



divine will and the divine ordering of creation and of redemption. Certainly Bacchiocchi's heart and mind are in the right place.

William C. Weinrich

THE LETTERS OF ST. CYPRIAN OF CARTHAGE. Volume III: Letters 55-66. Translated and Annotated by G.W. Clarke. Ancient Christian Writers, Volume 46. New York: Paulist Press, 1986. 345 +vi pages.

The writings of Cyprian (+258) are the writings of a bishop fully involved in the ecclesiastical and pastoral problems of his day. Cyprian was a practicing Christian thinker whose theology was wrought in the fiery furnace of church life. No letters from the early church are more charged with the drama of pastoral practice than are those of Cyprian. And episcopal oversight in third-century Carthage (North Africa) was no easy task. The Roman Empire was increasingly unstable as military men fought for the imperial purple; the Christian population was beset by threat of persecution; deadly plague wreaked havoc in the cities; the sin of apostasy was creating difficulties in the practice of penance; the church at Carthage suffered schism. All these problems and more provide the plot and story of these letters. The very energy and vitality of Cyprian as he leads his people, guards his people, and struggles for his people are evident on every page. Cyprian remains a model for every churchly pastor. I would recommend Cyprian to anyone, but especially to our pastors. His letters are a 'how to' book written in the vivid colors of real pastoral oversight, not in the faded hues of managerial manipulation.

The series, Ancient Christian Writers, presents excellent and readable translations of early Christian works. This translation of Clarke is superb, and it is accompanied by an informative introduction, an extensive bibliography, and exceptionally thorough notes for a fuller understanding of the text. For those interested in Cyprian and for everyone else who ought to be interested in him, this is a welcome addition to the previously published Cyprian volumes of ACW.

William C. Weinrich

LUTHERAN HIGHER EDUCATION IN NORTH AMERICA. By Richard W. Solberg. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1985. 399 pages. Paperback.

Almost never can an historian cover such a broad topic as *Lutheran Higher Education in North America* with a degree of objectivity acceptable to every family and branch sharing in the enterprise. But Richard W. Solberg has done just that, penetrating the inner workings of every branch of the Lutheran family and capturing the spirit of the diverse and complex Lutheran subcultures, yet never offending in his description of them.



Lutherans seem to have no better record than other religious groups as they air differences and stake their claims. But Solberg remains a respected historian because he respects his subjects.

By identifying with his subject Solberg accurately reflects the decisional premises of the organizations, yet maintains sufficient distance to analyze the diverse groups. Lutherans, including some professional workers who despair of threading their way through the complex story of American Lutheranism, will find that Solberg has written a clear history of Lutheran higher education, superimposing it upon an overall view of American Lutheranism, sketching the essential history in bold comprehensible strokes, often including significant political, economic, and cultural history. Masses of facts are introduced without boring the reader because the interpretive wrapping holds them together. Solberg's generalizations, undergirded with well chosen examples, stand up under scrutiny. The subject is so well researched and the author's grasp of information is so complete that he appears capable of dipping into the huge reservoir at will and producing the precise illustration to make his point.

For those who put history in the category of *adiaphora*—interesting to know but not really essential—Solberg's *Lutheran Higher Education in North America* clearly shows that if we are to understand ourselves and our challenges today we must know from where we have come and how we have become what we are. Perhaps nostalgia coupled with a search for identity as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is being launched has resulted in several recent excellent historical studies within the American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church in America. The LCA, the ALC, and now the ELCA are to a great extent the result of divisions and mergers. The essentially monolithic nature of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod until the mid-twentieth century may have resulted in less interest and less need to probe the past. However, Missouri Synod historians ought to pick up the challenge now as the Synod recognizes the anniversaries of C.F.W. Walther's birth and death, the Saxons' immigration in 1839, and a number of less known but equally significant events.

Wilbert Rosin

**GOD AND HUMAN SUFFERING.** By Douglas John Hall. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1986. Cloth. 223 pages.

Theological readers thank Augsburg Publishing House for encouraging the author, Douglas John Hall, to develop this book which interrelates so many different topics which help us interpret human suffering. Hall has provided an update of this perennial subject. The main section of the book deals with different aspects of the doctrine of God which help us understand how God can help us face human suffering. The valuable contribution of

this book is Hall's showing us how the theology of the *cross* reveals a merciful and compassionate God in our situation of tragic suffering.

We also find Hall's rational interpretation of four natural levels of suffering as understandable as they participate in the becoming of the life enrichment process. He includes anxiety, loneliness, temptation, and experience of limits under this section. He applies the doctrine of creation to these four dimensions of suffering. He exhorts us to transcend these four tolerable and understandable dimensions of suffering as part of the human process moving toward our more satisfying degrees of the biblical view of the abundant life. He advises us to accept these in so far as they can be experienced as "integrative suffering," but we should not let our natural sufferings become exaggerated or distorted into "disintegrative suffering." For example, we should not permit anxiety, loneliness, finite limits, or temptation possess us to the point where we lose our direction toward the abundant life. We should assume our responsibility to use our freedom in helping others bear their suffering as taught in the account of the Good Samaritan and "...inasmuch as you have done it unto these..." in Matthew 25. Hall uses the theology of the cross and a deep interpretation of the tragic element involved in suffering to combat the outdated progressivism of liberalism. He criticizes all escapes from suffering, such as Christian Science.

The author analyzes the orthodox approach to pain and suffering, as exemplified in C.S. Lewis, and hammers away on the inadequacy of the orthodox Christian defenses of anti-patipassionism. God the Father can look after his own aseity, Hall says. Moreover, orthodox trinitarians need not use propositions to rationalize the two natures of Christ and the persons of the Trinity, he continues. "The alternative, rather, is to *return* the *whole* discussion of 'the godhead' to Jerusalem!...At bottom, it would entail eschewing the substantialistic frame of reference in favor of a relational representational understanding of the Christ. The important message of the church is not to demonstrate that the *being* of God and the *being* of Jesus are identical (with distinctions!), but as presenting Jesus as God's mode of *being-with* us; Emmanuel...Something like this, I believe, is what Dorothy Sölle has done in her book, *Christ the Representative: An Essay in Theology after the 'Death of God'*...The God who is arraigned because of the suffering of the innocent is really the omnipotent God, the king, father, and ruler, who is above the world. Modern man rightly indicts this God" (pp. 215-216).

Hall also criticizes "evangelicalism," "empirical Christianity," the "empirical church," the classical doctrines of the atonement, references to "heaven," "paradise," and the resurrection in the context of suffering. In place of these appeals to a transcendent dimension in the old orthodox and substantialistic ways of thinking he puts an approach which continually repeats the suffering God in Jesus, the theology of the cross. He says there

is too much Easter without Good Friday in modern church triumphalism. He argues that it is enough to say that "...nothing can separate us from the love of Christ."

When one understands Hall's position as a professor of Christian theology at McGill University in Montreal he can more readily engage in this book's arguments at the speculative, theoretical level. But even then one questions whether Hall's and Sölle's "relational-representational" theology will optimistically field test on the front lines of suffering where pastors of the so-called "empirical" church comfort the suffering, dying, and grieving. The main problem that the so-called "shallow evangelicals" and "orthodox" and "empirical church" pastors and laity are going to have with Hall's book is that it is unnecessarily condescending to such a large segment of the Christian tradition which has found it authentic to the Bible and functional in pastoral care to refer to dimensions of the transcendent. Few of us will be persuaded by Hall's defense of patripassionism in his redefinition of the Trinity in the context of "relational-representational" thought categories. The specific audience of this present review will also find Hall's historical-critical evaluations of the major sources of relevant doctrine in the Bible as "myths," "sagas," etc. to be inadequate in theological method. Hall's work should provide a stimulant for an orthodox Christian author to provide a modern book on God and human suffering.

Harold H. Zietlow

2 KINGS. WORD BIBLICAL COMMENTARY, Volume 13. By T.R. Hobbs. Waco, Texas: Word, 1985. 388 + xlviii pages.

T.R. Hobbs, professor at McMaster Divinity College, Hamilton, Ontario, has written a solid work. He follows the prescribed format for the *Word Biblical Commentary* consisting of, for each chapter, a special bibliography, fresh translation, text-critical notes, discussion of form-structure-setting, verse-by-verse comment, and expository explanation. Hobbs is particularly strong in the areas of Hebrew syntax, textual criticism, explanation of words and phrases, and literary considerations. In the useful introduction, he defends the hypothetical "deuteronomist" as the single author of the books Joshua to 2 Kings, argues for a narrative hermeneutical approach, interprets the general outlook of the author, and discusses the chronological problems.

Hobbs frequently takes issue with less conservative higher-critical commentators in the areas of textual criticism (avoiding most temptations at emendation), form criticism, and literary criticism. He employs the narrative approach to hermeneutics to great advantage, emphasizing the unique peculiarities of Hebrew literary conventions and the final form of the text as what is relevant for the interpreter. Not only on this basis does he so regularly dismiss more radical arguments, but also because they even

frequently violate principles of logic, being rife with value judgments, circular arguments, begging the question, etc.

Hobbs' outstanding theological contribution delineates the author's purpose as interpreting the future of the monarchy—apostasy brings defeat (p. 38) but with God shaping Israel's history through His Word (pp. 164, 173, 283f.). He freely brings judgment despite attempts at reform and is also the basis of hope as the One who can freely offer grace (pp. 343, 368f.).

As valuable as this may be, however, for the conservative Lutheran reader, Hobbs' preoccupation with higher criticism's basic agenda all too often assigns essential theological insights to the human faith or piety of the "deuteronomist" writer rather than to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Also, apart from the author's theological purpose, this approach precludes recognizing much of the theological content of 2 Kings, especially in the Elisha stories, which is generally expounded better by such all-round commentators as C.F. Keil and K.C. W. F. Bahr (in *Lange's Commentary*).

Hobbs' usually reliable, painstaking work (aside from numerous errors in the titles of German sources), especially with the text, literary form, and narrative aspects of 2 Kings, will ensure that his commentary will long enjoy a place among the greater ones for both the scholar and the discerning lay reader. However, its disadvantages underlie the need for conservative Lutheran scholars to produce their own commentary series.

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A HISTORY OF ANCIENT ISRAEL AND JUDAH. By J. Maxwell Miller and John H. Hayes. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1986. 523 pages.

Miller and Hayes expand on the book they co-edited in 1977 for the Old Testament Library entitled *Israelite and Judean History*. Miller is the primary contributor of materials concerning the geographical and chronological context of Israel, the origin of Israel and possible connections with non-biblical sources in terms of history and archeology. He also wrote the sections about the period of the judges, early monarchy, David, Solomon, the division of the kingdoms, the Omrides, and the Jehu dynasty. Hayes is the primary contributor for the time of the end of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, the era of Assyrian domination of the Southern Kingdom of Judah, and the last years of the Davidic Kingdom. He alone is responsible for the material about the time of Babylonian domination and the Persian period. A planned second volume will cover the Jewish and early Christian communities.

A major question which comes up in any history is the nature of the historical task in its use of biblical and non-biblical sources and archeology. They expect "this volume to receive negative responses...from those who regard our treatment as overly skeptical of the biblical story, and from those who regard it as overly gullible" (p. 19). The collection of non-biblical sources which are used in this text is simply enormous. From all the major ancient centers of civilization, the last hundred years has yielded numerous texts and inscriptions. These have provided much more than just names. The authors do a very good job of employing these (and include about twenty major text excerpts) to fill in the major events which impact on Israelite and Judean history. They freely admit that much is still in the realm of guesswork. One can certainly feel the time periods of the Arameans, Assyrians, Babylonians, and Persians come more alive. They suggest that David's pattern of administration follows the Late Bronze Age city-state model and departs radically from a tribal pattern, a problem David never completely can solve. They seem to be at least somewhat critical in their evaluation of these texts, though gaps in data are their chief problem. Archeological data is also dealt with critically. They question whether the four-room house and collar-rim stone jars can be identified as uniquely Israelite, since they recognize that the invasion of the Israelites did not result in a complete replacement and annihilation of the previous population.

Their methodology, however, treats the historicity of biblical texts, particularly before the time of David, with great suspicion. They suggest that Samuel is sometimes written into stories about Saul, that Elisha was not a direct follower of Elijah, that Ahaz and Manasseh were not as bad as they seem nor Hezekiah and Josiah as good. These are just some examples of their very negative view of the text due on account to its "theological bias." In other words, if a theological insight concerning God's activity in history or a significant personage such as Naboth or Jacob is presented, the historical veracity may be in doubt. Unfortunately, even though we need and can profit from historical data being discovered and assimilated into our picture of Old Testament times, to doubt the existence or importance of unique personages is simply without foundation. They put too much weight on what is "verifiable" or what seems to sound right, using more of a sociological yardstick than a theological one. It may be proper for historical research, but religious factors are the center of the message and the probable cause for much of the other data being left out of the biblical record.

The biblical data within the Scripture itself has brought forth much discussion concerning the dates and synchronizations of the kings of Israel and Judah, the role of the high priesthood and tension within the Aaronic family, the role of the Levites, and the relations between Israel and Judah during the period of the divided kingdoms. (They see Judah as under the thumb of Israel during most of its history.) If one wants to know about

the wider historical picture, particularly from 1200 to 500 B.C., this can be a help. Certainly their view of the biblical history is much too negative.

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**CELSUS ON THE TRUE DOCTRINE: A DISCOURSE AGAINST THE CHRISTIANS.** Translated with a General Introduction by R. Joseph Hoffmann. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1987. 146 and xiii pages. Cloth, \$18.95. Paper, \$7.95.

During the first decades of the church's history pagan notice of Christianity was largely sporadic and uninformed. Tacitus, Suetonius, and Pliny are early witnesses to general Roman hostility (c. 100 A.D.), and Fronto's testimony shows Roman loathing at perceived Christian immorality (c. 140 A.D.). However, the first truly frontal assault upon Christianity came from Celsus whose *True Doctrine* was written, according to Hoffmann, in the last quarter of the second century. The work of Celsus is itself no longer extant. However, an estimated seventy per cent of *True Doctrine* is accessible through Origen's massive response to Celsus' arguments, *Against Celsus* (c. 240), in which Origen quotes from Celsus at length.

In this volume Hoffmann presents a handy, readable (if sometimes overly popularized) English translation of Celsus' polemic. He wisely foregoes any attempt to restore the original order of Celsus' work, opting rather to present Celsus' writing thematically (the unoriginality of the Christian faith, Christian doctrine compared to that of the Greeks, the Christian doctrine of God, the Christian doctrine of resurrection, etc.). Indeed, the critique of Celsus is a wide-ranging indictment against Christianity. Yet certain themes are central and recurring: Christian perversion or plagiarizing of Greek thought; the simple-mindedness of Christian thought and the arrogance of the Christian attitude; the poverty of the Christian view of God as Creator and incarnate Redeemer; the absurdity of Christian hope, especially the resurrection of the body. Hoffman's translation nicely retains the vigorous force of Celsus' sarcasm (pp. 102f.):

[Silly] is the way the world is supposed to have come about...Isn't it absurd to think that the greatest God pieced out his work like a bricklayer, saying "Today I shall do this, tomorrow that," and so on, so that he did this on the third, that on the fourth, and something else on the fifth and sixth days! We are thus not surprised to find that, like a common workman, this God wears himself down and so needs a holiday after six days. Need I comment that a god who gets tired, works

with his hands, and gives orders like a foreman is not acting very much like a god?

Disappointing, however, is the "General Introduction." While (given the scope of the book) Hoffmann gives adequate treatment to the identity of Celsus and to his argument, other introductory issues are scantily mentioned, if at all. Celsus is clearly "middle Platonist," but where does this show up in *True Doctrine* and how does it affect his attitude toward Christian belief? More difficult, perhaps, is the question of Celsus' understanding of Christianity. He evidently gained much of his information from "heterodox" or even "heretical" sects such as that of Marcion. Although Hoffmann's notes reflect this, a short treatment of this important issue in the introduction would have been appropriate.

More disconcerting is the largely skewed picture of early Christianity which Hoffmann gives to explain pagan reaction to the new faith. Here he completely overplays the importance of apocalyptic enthusiasm for early Christianity and is wholly wrong when he speaks of "the alliance" between Christianity and the mystery religions as "accomplished fact" (p. 15). Strangely, too, Hoffmann attributes the existence of both ascetic and libertine ethics among "Christian" groups to "eschatological thinking" (p. 14) rather than to docetism. Finally, Hoffmann quite exaggerates the extent of early Christian antinomianism, leading him to silly if not jaded interpretations (i.e., that of Tertullian, *Apol.* 39, on p. 19). Yet, despite all of this, the translation is welcome.

William C. Weinrich

**RESURRECTION AND MORAL ORDER: AN OUTLINE FOR EVANGELICAL ETHICS.** By Oliver O'Donovan. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1986. 284 pages.

Seldom does a volume vindicate the effusive promotional blurbs on its dustjacket. This is such a book. Intended as an exploration of "Christian moral concepts," Oliver O'Donovan expressly anchors Christian ethics in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Specifically, Christian ethics arises from the New Testament's good news of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. The resurrection both vindicates the objective created order and points forward to our own eschatological participation in the same. The Holy Spirit forms and calls forth the appropriate pattern of human response to God's objective—and hence universally valid—natural order. The particular merit of this work is its author's resolute insistence that morality is related to salvation; indeed, that Christian ethics is necessarily evangelical in character. Along related lines, O'Donovan is adamant that the formal questions of ethics must be addressed theologically and their proposed resolution subjected to theological interpretation and criticism.



In this context O'Donovan rejects both legalism and relativism as well as facile traditional distinctions between teleological and deontological ethics. O'Donovan opts for an "ethic of character," wherein love is the principle conferring unifying order upon the moral field and the character of the moral subject. Love is the fulfillment of the moral law as well as the form of the classical moral virtues. Authentic human love will conform to the image of God's love, and it must always entail an integration of will and reason in a "rational and comprehending affection" that accords with the truth of its object.

O'Donovan unifies his argument with the affirmation that all Christian love, from the universal to the most particular, finds its singular fount in Jesus' resurrection from the dead—the act by which God designates Jesus as the Christ and (note especially well) vindicates creation in Him. For precisely this reason, O'Donovan avers, St. Paul groups love, as the form of the moral life, with faith and hope, and not with the other assorted spiritual gifts. The latter have their own intelligibility, whereas the former depend for their intelligibility upon the end of history disclosed in the resurrection.

This volume is a careful prolegomena to an unabashedly Christian ethics. The sometimes complex presentation is interspersed with helpful excurses in a smaller typeface on more technical matters in the history of ethics. One can follow the argument without studying the excurses, but such a procedure will impoverish the reader. To be sure, confessional Lutheran readers will voice an occasional *caveat* (e.g., the occasionally imprecise use of "gospel" and "evangelical moral law," though in the case of the latter O'Donovan notes the verbal paradox involved). Yet these will be far outweighed by the author's overt commitment to the revealed Christian tradition *in toto*, his affirmation of the ontological priority of the created order, and his pervasive concern to keep soteriological themes central in moral reflection.

David A. Lumpp  
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**SKILLFUL SHEPHERDS.** By Derrek J. Tidball. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1986. 368 pages.

Tidball, presently the minister of Mutely Baptist Church in Plymouth, England, is the former Director of Studies at London Bible College. The text demonstrates the scholarship typical of his academic background yet breathes a spirit of pastoral authenticity which demonstrates an admirable synthesis of the two realms in which he has carried out his ministry.

Subtitled "An Introduction to Pastoral Theology," in reality it is an



overview of the history and development of the pastor as shepherd. After a brief yet adequate discussion in defining what pastoral theology is, in which he shows pastoral theology to be a special discipline within the area of practical theology, Tidball meticulously develops the concept of "shepherd," reviewing the biblical literature in both testaments of the Scriptures and, in the New, specifically considering the concept in the synoptics, the Johannine literature, the Pauline corpus, and the general epistles. He then traces the church's understanding of the concept beginning with the early church fathers and bringing it through the various periods of church history to the present day.

In an insightful concluding section Tidball makes application to five areas of ministry in our day that are challenging pastoral authenticity—the biblical paradigm of what a skillful shepherd is to be. Particularly appreciated are the chapters on belief (13), forgiveness (14), and suffering (15). In the chapter on unity (16) the author resorts to general truths which cannot be disputed but which fail to give clear principles and directives with regard to ecumenical involvement and church fellowship questions.

Tidball supplies a rather complete and extensive bibliography. Significant in its absence is the lack of any sources by Lutherans except for a few selected monographs by Luther. In passing he incorporates a significant amount of material giving Luther's pastoral insights. This lack of citing of Lutheran sources and including them in a bibliography may well be a commentary on the church's deficiency in this area of writing rather than Tidball's oversight or Reformed predilection. The Missouri Synod has for years been in dire need of a pastoral theology reflective of the needs of our society and responsive to contemporary needs and opportunities.

Norbert H. Mueller

**DESIRING GOD: MEDITATIONS OF A CHRISTIAN HEDONIST.** By John Piper. Portland, Oregon: Multnomah Press, 1986. 262 pages.

Piper touches on a vital ingredient of the faith for our day and life. Joy, or should I say *hedonism*, is the central concern of this book. I hasten to say the book was enjoyed by the reviewer and despite some reservations he profited withal. Piper centers his claim on an old theological proposition—the chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever. The author changes the axiom to read thus: the chief end of man is to glorify God *by* enjoying Him forever. The volume stays with that theme from beginning to end. If nothing else, the author is consistent; he writes about Christian joy, its content, its need, its lack, its blessings, its fulfillment.

A few of the chapter headings will give the potential reader a clear idea of the subject material covered: "Worship: The Feast of Christian Hedonism," "Marriage: A Matrix for Christian Hedonism," etc. Surely

the child of Christ desires to experience and express that joy which Christ has given in His redemption and resurrection. While God's pilgrims must be aware of Christian suffering and the theology of the cross, they will not fail to exhibit the triumphant joy the Savior has won for all by His Easter victory.

However, some caution should be expressed. The author strives to make "hedonism" an acceptable substitute for "joy." This reader was not that impressed. "Hedonism" is defined by Webster as "living for pleasure." Piper endeavors to cover this worldly morsel with a Christian dress. One simply cannot empty a word of its familiar context and give it new meaning, no matter how noble the effort. In short, one cannot make a silk purse out of a sow's ear. Yet this criticism should not deter one from reading this splendid volume. It is a much desired focus for the people of God who are called upon to endure much in this vale of tears. It is worth the price and the reading.

George Kraus

**HOW TO MANAGE YOUR CHURCH.** By Edgar Walz. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1987. 220 pages. Paper, \$8.95.

Author of *Church Business Methods* over twenty years ago, Walz uses his rich experience as a pastor, college administrator, and adjunct seminary professor to write this practical manual for pastors and lay leaders. Based on a biblical theology of the church's mission and a pastoral sensitivity in the Lutheran context, the book provides simple descriptions of leadership positions found in most churches, articulates principles of church management for congregations of various sizes, and addresses special church management problems such as communication, conflict management, and leadership styles.

Especially helpful are the sections on writing church constitutions and bylaws, establishing sound financial management, and managing the church office with computer possibilities. The appendix includes organizational charts, a sample constitution, and other useful forms. Pastors and lay leaders will find this manual a useful tool for training leaders, sharpening organizational arrangements, and planning for mission. With the changeless Gospel of Jesus Christ at the heart of a congregation, Walz sees church management as a supportive tool with the flexibility to serve in a variety of community contexts. This practical manual belongs on the pastor's shelf along with theological treatises on church and ministry.

Stephen Carter

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DEATH SET TO MUSIC: MASTERWORKS BY BACH, BRAHMS, PENDERECKI, BERNSTEIN. By Paul S. Minear. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1987. 173 pages. Cloth, \$14.95.

Lutherans are accustomed to call Johann Sebastian Bach "the fifth evangelist." Though the title is obviously intended in an honorific sense, there may be a measure of truth in the appellation. From the perspective of their religious attitudes, Yale professor Paul S. Minear analyzes musical compositions from each of four composers: the St. Matthew's Passion of Johann Sebastian Bach; the Requiem of Johannes Brahms; the Passion and Death of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke by Krzysztof Penderecki; and "A Cry for Peace," a mass by Leonard Bernstein. Perhaps many who have heard these kinds of religious musical works have wondered whether these compositions carried a religious message in the combination of the words and the music. The St. Matthew's Passion by Bach is broken down into four elements: the narrative, the chorales, arias and recitatives, and the six dialogues. In the narrative, the evangelist is recognized with his tenor voice as playing a prominent role in providing a commentary on the events and introducing them. Just how dependent Minear is on the recent approach to the gospels as narrative cannot be determined. The role that Minear sees assigned by Bach to the Evangelist seems identical to the role assigned to the original evangelist, Matthew, by Jack Kingsbury. In hearing the gospel read or in reading the gospel, the role of the original evangelist as narrator is not evident. In the St. Matthew's Passion, he is seen to be everywhere, so to speak. Bach developed an approach to gospel studies that is only now being uncovered. The baritone voice of Jesus distinguishes it from the tenor of the evangelist and is the most important. The chorales were probably not sung by the congregations, but they were recognizable at once by them and carried the Lutheran and Pauline motifs that Christ's work was *for us*. Arias are used for individual emotional response to the events of salvation. The dialogues, which always have the Daughter of Zion as one of the conversational partners, provide an overview of the occurrences. Penderecki's work reflects such Roman Catholic themes as the adoration and veiling of the cross and the place of Mary at the cross and as intercessor. Bernstein's work is more complex since it blends the traditional mass and unbelief as symbolic of the crisis of faith. Though some parts are sacrilegious in the struggle of the celebrating priest caught between salvation and unbelief, the message of divine peace is victorious at the end.

Unlike contemporary New Testament studies which see a virtually unbridgable gap between the contemporary man and the original events of salvation, all four composers approach the gospel texts at their apparent meaning to tell their story. The verbal texts of their compositions can only be understood in conjunction with the musical score which form an indissoluble unity. Those who know these works will have their hearing

enriched by Minear's study and those who read this study will make every effort to hear them again or for the first time.

David P. Scaer

**MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE.** By John Stott. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1985. 32 pages. Paper.

Although one must surely praise the growth of "singles ministry" in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, as evidenced by the June 1987 issue of the *Lutheran Witness*, the ecclesiastical observer must wonder whether the biblical teaching on divorce is being taken seriously by these groups and their pastoral leadership. What pastor today would dare to consider disciplinary action for any divorce situation in his parish in light of the sure alienation of most of his congregational membership. The lure of American Protestant congregational polity has at last trapped its clergy prey, with the result that the clergy are unable to prevent the subtle undermining of the authority of Jesus and the apostles in ethical matters such as divorce.

The only solution to this problem is good biblical teaching on this topic from the pulpit and Bible study podium. Stott's booklet gives perhaps the clearest exegesis to date of a topic that has often foundered into casuistry. After outlining the divinely instituted purposes of marriage and sketching contemporary attitudes toward the same, Stott presents an analysis of the Mosaic laws regarding divorce. This is followed by an analysis of Jesus' modification of this legislation for the Christian church, and Paul's commands regarding the marital status of converts. The booklet concludes with the issue of "covenantal disloyalty" as grounds for divorce, as well as a discussion of the practical and pastoral applications of the biblical teaching about divorce and remarriage.

Stott is quite clear about the two grounds for divorce and subsequent non-adulterous remarriage by the innocent party: (1) sexual infidelity by the guilty party; (2) insistence on divorce by the unbelieving spouse on religious grounds in a "mixed marriage" (pp. 22-23). Stott's careful discussion resists all attempts to expand the grounds for divorce and remarriage to cover desertion, cruelty, or temperamental incompatibility. He rejects the grounds of "covenantal disloyalty" with the insight that the covenant of marriage is so deep and profound that nothing less than sexual infidelity can break it (p. 25). Stott's attention to the context of Deuteronomy 24:1-4 reaps the exegetical insight that the intention of the Mosaic law "permitting" divorce was to forbid remarriage to a former spouse (p. 9). The intent of the law was not to sanction divorce, as Jesus Himself noted.

The only weakness in this fine work is that Stott sees the need for *some*

“concession to human fallibility and failure” in the Christian church similar to what Moses gave to Israel (p. 29). Stott is caught between the demands of forgiveness to penitent sinners and the divine ordinances on marriage. An understanding of the distinction between Law and Gospel at this point would help Stott and his readers see that forgiveness never means concession—it means calling a spade a spade *and* burying the spade six feet under only where there is repentance. In light of the modern attitude toward divorce and remarriage, the call to repentance and attempted reconciliation for divorced Christians is perhaps the most urgent message of the Christian church on this subject. This booklet is highly recommended for the pastor’s own study, as well as for Bible classes, youth groups, and singles groups. At its low price, it is a practical choice for putting the biblical teaching on divorce into every interested lay member’s hands.

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**THEOLOGY OF THE LUTHERAN CONFESSIONS.** By Friedrich Mildenerger. Translated by Erwin L. Luecker and edited by Robert C. Schultz. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986.

I approached this book with the question: Does anyone today need a new theology of the Lutheran Confessions? After all, we have the excellent volume of Edmund Schlink, offering a synthetic approach to the Confessions, which at times offers us more of Schlink than the Confessions themselves, and the valuable volume of Holsten Fagerberg, which provides an analytic approach to the Confessions, including useful word and concept studies and little more. Together these two fine books, complementing each other as they do, leave no more to be done by a commentary on the Confessions except to fill in *lacunae* and correct aberrations where necessary. Mildenerger’s book fills neither of these functions, but after careful reading of the book I must affirm that the author is more than justified in offering us a new study of the Lutheran Confessions—although I hope that the aforementioned useful theologies of the Confessions do not thereby fall into disuse. For Mildenerger understands the Confessions well and he expresses himself clearly and effectively as he summarizes, synthesizes, and explains them to us.

Mildenerger’s study of the Confessions is synthetic like Schlink’s. But his is basically an historical study, whereas Schlink’s is systematic. Mildenerger provides us with the historical background to the Lutheran Confessions, Schlink more with the theology itself. Thus, Mildenerger fills a real gap in confessional studies for the American reader. To mention just one of many instances of this: he goes into the history leading to the Christological and Trinitarian formulations of the Ecumenical Creeds more than any other commentary of the Lutheran Confessions, and his conclusions and observations seem all to be very well taken. He also ferrets

out and discusses very thoroughly Luther's theological contribution to the Lutheran Confessions.

Mildenberger's research is vast and very informative, and his understanding of the Lutheran Confessions is accurate and profound at times. However, we cannot always accept his conclusions and observations, especially as he assesses the modern role of the Confessions as Lutheran, faithful to their confession, relating to other churches. For instance, he actually thinks that the Leuenberg Concord expresses unity between Lutherans and Reformed on the articles of the Lord's Supper and Christology sufficient for fellowship. On the other hand, after presenting an excellent delineation of the monergistic Lutheran doctrine of justification *propter Christum*, he maintains, contrary to many American and European Lutheran theologians and ecclesiastical magnates today, that the chasm between the Lutheran doctrine of justification and the synergistic Roman doctrine of sanctification is as vast as it was four hundred years ago. And he does not even bother to consider the recent spate of dialogs and discussions between Roman Catholics and Lutherans on this critical subject. As an historian he probably sees no real lasting significance in all these recent conversations, at least as they affect the article of justification through faith. Any confessional Lutheran interested in a new and interesting and perceptive study of the Lutheran Confessions will be rewarded as he reads this latest contribution to confessional Lutheran studies.

Robert Preus

**DEATH: CONFRONTING THE REALITY.** By William E. Phipps. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1987. 219 pages. Paperback.

William E. Phipps is Professor of Religion and Philosophy at David and Elkins College and is an active member of the American Academy of Religion. *Death: Confronting the Reality* is a fairly complete overview of the material normally embraced in the discipline of thanatology. He also includes a unit on "Violence and Death" discussing such things as the death penalty, gun control, and war. The book is provocative in nature. It is targeted in part for lay groups. Thus it is written, at least in part, as a discussion starter. In order to facilitate this goal Phipps makes an attempt to present various positions on the issues discussed. I say "attempt" because the treatment is not evenhanded. The author's predilection to the liberal rather than orthodox theological view is evident. Although having a certain theological perspective, this is frequently sacrificed to the sociological.

Three cases in point are these: In "Suicide" Phipps gives complete and helpful definitions but comes, in this reviewer's opinion, to some unwarranted conclusions. He says, for example, "after the couple died, a committee of the Presbytery of New York City wisely concluded that

'for some Christians, as a last resort in the gravest of situations, suicide may be an act of their Christian conscience' " (p. 86.). In "Body Disposal" the author finds little if any value in current methods employed in the United States. He carries on with a vengeance much of Jessica Mitford's detailed attack on the funeral industry in her *American Way of Dying*. Yet the other side of the question receives only terse mention and treatment. In "Life after Death" Phipps presents an incisive overview of the perceptions and beliefs of various religions and cultures concerning life after death. Biblical Christians will have difficulty with the author's open-ended acceptance of views and tenets clearly antithetical to orthodox Christianity and with the implied hermeneutical views leading to this position.

One of the more helpful and constructive chapters is "Grief and Bereavement." In his definitions, analysis, and guidance Phipps provides material that is helpful to bereaved persons in working through their grief. A wholesome emphasis is the encouragement for the "religious community" to take its historic responsibility "for burying the dead rather than leaving it to secular surrogates" (p. 153).

For the pastor who needs to get his feet wet and be introduced to the discipline of thanatology, this book would be helpful. For that group of pastors who have done some reading and perhaps some course work in the area, nothing particularly new would be found. As to use with lay people in the congregation, the pastor must be satisfied that the group is biblically literate and possesses some degree of theological discernment. Otherwise, he is going to have a lot of explaining to do.

Norbert H. Mueller

**THE RESTLESS HEART: THE LIFE AND INFLUENCE OF ST. AUGUSTINE.** By Michael Marshall. Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 1987. Cloth. 151 pages.

The sixteen hundredth anniversary of Augustine's conversion and baptism (386-387) has produced a two-year spate of conferences, books, and articles on the bishop of Hippo. Many, of course, were for the professional student and scholar. But many were not, and of these *The Restless Heart* is the most attractive. It is a book more for the coffee table or the living room than for the study. Yet it is a book both of delight and of real substance.

The author and publisher assert that this is the "first fully illustrated life of St. Augustine in English." There are some very nice color photographs of ancient ruins in North Africa and Italy which vividly illustrate the places of Augustine's life and work. Were that there were more of these! However, many illustrations and photographs are artistic renditions of Augustine's life which, to my mind, serve no illustrative purpose or value.

Chief among these are the photographs of a sentimentalized life of Augustine in nineteenth-century glass windows in the cathedral at Annaba (the modern name of ancient Hippo).

On the other hand, the text of Marshall is very good. It is simple yet elegant in style, directed quite intentionally for the layperson. A repeated theme is that Augustine was a man of words, rhetorically schooled to move the mind and to move the heart. It is a proper emphasis and Marshall enhances his own presentation by allowing Augustine to speak through well-chosen, apposite quotations. Marshall has allowed Augustine's *Confessions* largely to determine the outline of Augustine's life. In doing so he ignores some historical problems. But no matter, Marshall has already warned us that the specific aim of the book is to popularize and make "attractively accessible the character and features of one of the greatest saints of Christian history" (p. 8). Corresponding to this aim, Marshall does not dwell upon Augustine the philosopher or Augustine the theologian, although these aspects are not lacking. Rather, as the title attests, Marshall wants to depict the man Augustine in his attempt to love God and then to love God more purely.

It is in his intense introspection that Augustine is most like our own age. For Augustine his whole life was a pilgrimage, a journey from birth to death, but a journey which by the grace of God would issue into life again. For that reason, Augustine always remained a theologian of hope, not of a rigid determinism which is the view of many about him. He knew his restless heart would at the end find its rest in God. Through his own fine text and the choice words of the saint, Marshall has allowed our hearts to be stirred in the discovery that in Augustine's life and hope we may see also our own.

William C. Weinrich

THE NEW TESTAMENT IN ENGLISH. First Exact Facsimile of the First English Bible with an Introduction by Donald L. Brake. Portland, Oregon: International Bible Publications, 1986.

Visitors to the campus of Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne are sometimes surprised by the street names: Martin Luther Drive, of course; but what are Coverdale, Tyndale, and Wycliffe streets doing on a *Lutheran* campus? They are a tribute to those through whom God worked to put His Word into English. And as English-speaking Lutherans committed to the Word, we treasure the Bible in our native tongue. It is a thrill therefore to have at hand a facsimile of the first fruits of English Bible translating, the Wycliffite version of the fourteenth century.

To commemorate the six hundredth anniversary of the first translation of the entire Bible into English, Donald Brake and International Bible



Publications have reproduced one of about two hundred manuscripts of the Wycliffe Bible, the Rawlinson 259 in the Bodleian library, a non-illuminated copy of the New Testament written around 1430. The result is a handsomely bound, gilt-edged, and clearly reproduced text of nearly five hundred pages, including a thirty-page introduction to John Wycliffe (c.1330-1384) and his Bible.

For the most part Brake's introduction is adequate since he notes that scholars are still wrestling with the question of Wycliffe's precise connection to the Bible that bears his name. Although the earliest written accounts (by Wycliffe's near contemporaries) are unanimous in attributing the English Bible to him, modern scholars have raised serious doubts about this attribution largely on the basis of manuscript evidence that reveals various dialects in the translation instead of just one and that even names one of Wycliffe's disciples, Nicolas Hereford, as the translator. However, the evidence is far from conclusive and so the debate rages; but virtually all agree that Wycliffe was at the very least the prime instigator of the translation since his disciples both used and promulgated it and his theology justifies it (a medieval *sola scriptura* principle and a repudiation of the visible hierarchy as necessary mediators of divine grace).

The facsimile itself produces the second or late version of the Wycliffe Bible, done around 1390 just a few years after the original work and sometimes attributed to Wycliffe's amanuensis, John Purvey. The first version is practically a word-for-word rendering of the Vulgate; but the second is in much more readable English. Two columns fill every page of this copy, and the printing is remarkably clear, revealing both skill and dedication on the part of the anonymous copyist. Although written in middle English hand employing archaic characters like the thorn, most readers will be able to recognize the texts as English. They should not be surprised, however, if what they can read is unfamiliar since the language of our most common English Bibles (King James and RSV) goes back only to Tyndale in the sixteenth century. Besides the text of the New Testament itself, the Rawlinson manuscript also includes brief prefaces to each of the books, a calendar of the church year, a tale of epistle and gospel lessons, and translations of Old Testament lessons.

Although scholars will continue to make use of the critical editions of the Wycliffe Bible (Forshall and Madden, 1950, and the still incomplete *Middle English Bible*, edited by Conrad Lindberg), libraries and Bible lovers will want to obtain this beautiful and fitting tribute to six hundred years of the English Bible.

Cameron A. MacKenzie

MARK: A NEW TRANSLATION WITH INTRODUCTION AND COMMENTARY. By C.S. Mann. The Anchor Bible, Volume 27. Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company. 715 pages. \$20.00.

It can be safely said that the acquisition of Mann's commentary on Mark will preclude the purchase of any other during the purchaser's normal life span. The data assembled by the author in the introduction cover nearly the first two hundred pages. At the end of the volume are exhaustive indices of commentators, subjects, and Old Testament, intertestamental, New Testament, classical, and early church writers. The preacher, scholar, and Bible class teacher will want to have this commentary simply because of the enormous amount of information put between two covers. This might be said about any number of commentaries appearing in *The Anchor Bible*.

What is "new" and important is that Mann operates under the old church hypothesis that Matthew and Luke were first and that Mark was third. Of course, this leaves no place for Q or the Markan priority, the sacred cows of modern gospel scholarship. The priority of Mark's gospel was even endorsed in an LCMS insert for Sunday bulletins in the summer of 1986. This new and sharp turn of events entitled Mann's commentary to a special article in *Time* magazine. Whether Mann will make any converts to his position from the established critical orthodoxy remains to be seen, but his thesis will cause a few heads to be turned. It must be taken seriously. Established scholars will hardly offer up their written offsprings, which like Athena sprang from the mind of Zeus, on the altar of academic fairness, but a new breed of scholars may come along who will recognize Matthew and not Mark as the premier gospel.

Mann lays out his terms in a lengthy introduction providing the definition of a gospel, their composition, the required disciplines for their study, synoptic relationships and the supposed superiority of Mark, the evangelist's purpose, his concept of the kingdom, principal texts, word usage, notes on transliteration, and suggestions for the arrangement of the gospel. In his section on the supposed superiority of Mark, thirteen reasons were laid out for dispensing with the two-documentary hypothesis and for accepting Matthean priority. In his own words, "The majority view that Mark was written first and that Matthew is substantially dependent upon Mark cannot be adequately proved; indeed, the premise of Markan priority allows for too many obstinate surds in the calculations of relations to be sustained" (p. 51). Problematical for Mann is Luke's failure to use Matthew's infancy narratives. This is not an insurmountable difficulty. For example, he might have found Matthew's approach a bit too negative and wanted to include accounts which had a more universal appeal. Mann will be able to resolve this problem in another volume.

Matthew 12:14 is used by Mann to demonstrate the different results from using Matthean in place of Markan priority. Rather than Matthew and

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Luke using Mark, Mark conflates the texts of Matthew and Luke. With Markan priority, Matthew is said to change the order of events. Luke retains some of Mark's order and some of his wording and omits the other wording. Mann prefers seeing Luke using Matthew by rewording, reordering, sometimes radically, and omitting. Luke supplies "you do not consider a person" for Matthew's "you pay not attention to outward appearance." Mark generally followed Luke, but in the case of significant difference chose the longer text of Matthew. Mann comments that Markan priority "results in Matthew and Luke acting at whim and in an almost irrational manner" (p. 471). Too much scholarly and academic investment has been placed in the Markan priority to expect a quick turn of events. The least we can expect is that another scholar with the same outlook will provide us with a commentary on Luke. Perhaps the commentary on Luke should have come first, but things do not happen in the most logical order. *The Anchor Bible* series for Luke is provided by Fitzmeyer who uses Markan priority and Q. Perhaps the editors will allow a competing commentary by Mann on Luke.

David P. Scaer

ETHICS: BASIC ELEMENTS AND METHODOLOGY IN AN ETHICAL THEOLOGY. Volume I. By Trutz Rendtorff. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986.

As prelude to another volume promising to treat specific moral problems, Rendtorff presents this proposal for an "ethical theology" and a discussion of theoretical issues in the construction of such an ethic. The result may lead one to wonder, however, whether theory is best discussed in such detachment from specific issues; for this volume, despite its richness in certain places, remains finally unsatisfying in its generality.

For Rendtorff, ethics must be neither deduced from within the premises of Christian theology (in Barthian fashion) nor a discipline which does nothing more than show the futility of human striving (as in many Lutheran hands). It is harder to say what, in his view, ethics should be. Rendtorff seems to be drawing on several different theological emphases—a stress on creation like that found in Logstrup (and, perhaps, Wingren), and an emphasis on eschatology taken from Pannenberg. How these come together in his ethical theology remains unclear to me. But one of the strengths of the book is its attempt to recover and emphasize what Rendtorff calls "the givenness of life"—an emphasis on the natural world and the moral significance to be discerned within it. This in turn leads him back to a concept of "order," though he wants to understand them in historical and functional terms. There is much here that is thought-provoking and worthy of attention.

This volume first outlines the "three basic elements of the ethical reality of life" and then moves from these elements to "methodological aspects" of ethics suggested by each. Thus, the elements of life that have moral significance are its givenness, the giving of life to which its givenness in turn calls us, and reasoned reflection on life. These in turn suggest that theoretical reflection must concern itself with received rules for moral conduct, with responsibility for one's own life, and with the justification of moral language. In my judgment, Rendtorff's discussion is both richer and clearer when he is phenomenologically investigating the elements of ethical reality than it is when he turns to questions of method. This last section of the book is rather sketchy, attempting too much in short compass.

The normative ethic that emerges is a utilitarian one, emphasizing the need for discernment and responsibility on the part of moral agents. This grows chiefly out of the second element in ethical reality—namely, the call to giving. How it coheres with the first element—the givenness of life and its natural structures—is not easy to see. Rendtorff does not clarify how we are to resolve the tension between the limits placed upon us by the created reality within which we live (and within we are to find moral significance) and the free exercise of our responsibility for shaping a world.

This volume is likely to be of interest chiefly to scholars in theological ethics. It is not the place to start, though it may be one place to which one might later turn.

Gilbert Meilaender  
Oberlin College  
Oberlin, Ohio

**NEW TESTAMENT THEOLOGY.** By Leon Morris. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1986. 386 pages. Hardcover.

There is a strong tendency in modern biblical scholarship to accent the diversity and to speak of "theologies" within the New Testament. Leon Morris, former Principal of Ridley College in Melbourne, Australia, and a well-known conservative New Testament scholar, reasserts the validity of examining the New Testament Scriptures as a unity and the "theology" these documents present. His purpose is to present an overview of the theological contents of the New Testament while staying clear of technical discussions. Morris addresses his topic by individually examining four main groupings of New Testament literature—the Pauline writings, the synoptic gospels and Acts, the Johannine writings, and the general epistles. No common organizing principle is employed in examining these groupings; rather, the author randomly highlights the major theological themes of the individual authors. Keeping with his purpose, Morris limits footnotes to a minimum and alludes to, but does not debate, historical questions.

Ironically, Morris' "encyclopedic" approach to the theology of each individual author does not give the reader the unified perspective of New Testament theology that is expected. In order to discuss each New Testament writer, Morris' treatment tends to be extremely terse and at times too brief (for example, the theology of the Revelation to St. John is discussed in just five pages). In the opinion of this reviewer, an author cannot overview such a broad subject without realizing the danger of "saying little about much." I often found myself skimming the numerous short discussions of theological concepts. Although an attempt is made to synthesize his findings in the conclusion, Morris still focuses on the individual writers rather than their common message.

This is not a volume for the pastor or advanced theological student. Its value lies in its accessibility to the layman and beginner. While it is weak on the sacraments (e.g., "the Holy Spirit makes the believer a member of the church, not the use of water," p. 81) and there is occasional Law-Gospel confusion (e.g., "judgment belongs to the good news," p. 28), this study is a basic, sound treatment with many valuable insights (e.g., his examination of word usage, the corporate character of Paul's "in Christ," his discussion of Matthew's genealogy, his analysis of Luke's use of "the Lord," and his perceptive comments regarding Luke's focus on women, children, and prayer). Because of his respect for the text, Morris' writing takes on a "devotional" quality. For these reasons this volume may prove a helpful addition to a church library.

Charles A. Gieschen  
Traverse City, Michigan

LUTHERISCHE FREIKIRCHE IN SACHSEN. Geschichte und Gegenwart einer lutherischen Bekenntniskirche. By Gottfried Herrmann. Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1985. 600 pages.

This large paperback, published in the German Democratic Republic, is a welcome treatment of our sister church in Germany. It tells the story of the Independent Evangelical Lutheran Church in Germany, both East and West. It is an exceedingly thorough and well-documented example of historical research, of great interest to the Lutherans in America. Herrmann reveals the warm interest of the Saxons in the development of Lutheranism in America. While many people were traveling east and west across the Atlantic, the interest in each other was mutual. While the leaders in Germany could theorize about the nature of a free Lutheran church, the leaders in America could put theories into practice. This was reflected back to Germany in 1876, when Ruhland took over the so-called "congregational principle" (*Gemeindeprinzip*) of the Missouri Synod.

In preparation for the Saxon church in Germany, a meeting was held in March 1868 in Dresden in the publishing house of Heinrich Immanuel Naumann, grandfather of our deceased colleague, Dr. Martin Naumann, after whom a dormitory has now been named. Dresden in 1871 considered calling a pastor back from the United States but did not believe that anyone would accept such a call as long as the Saxon church had not declared its separation from the *Landeskirche*.

The author traces many names of the early immigrants whose families are among us. In 1876 Carl Manthey-Zorn and Friedrich Zucker attended a convention in Baltimore (August 16-23). They were received without the customary colloquy. Zorn wrote many popular commentaries, and Zucker taught in Fort Wayne in 1879, accepted the leadership of a Missouri mission in 1894, and died in Fort Wayne in 1927. Karl George Stoeckhardt was very active in Germany before he came to America to become the leading exegete in the St. Louis seminary.

This history is important for our time when Lutheran churches are reorganizing and establishing new patterns. It becomes apparent that the Missouri Synod wants to continue the ideal of keeping Lutheran practice and Christian doctrine pure, while the "evangelical" commingling with other traditions, called ecumenical today, remains the aim and the style of the fifty or more American synods coming together in the ELCA.

Otto F. Stahlke

**THE SUPPER OF THE LORD.** The New Testament, Ecumenical Dialogues, and Faith and Order on the Eucharist. By John Reumann. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985. Paperback, 225 pages.

There is nothing sadder than apostasy thinly veiled by jocund ecumenical optimism and pious-sounding formulae. In certain quarters, Reumann's book will doubtless be hailed as yet another catalyst of the ecumaniac-cum-syncretist's Shangrila where much is "celebrated" and nothing confessed and where sugary sentiments of unbounded fellowship with all and sundry can cheerfully coexist with open blasphemy. A sober reading of this volume will render inescapable the melancholy conclusion that Reumann's theme is something other than the one Holy Supper instituted by our Lord in the upper room for the refreshment of His Christians until His visible reappearance. Lest this judgment seem unduly harsh, let it be pointed out that Reumann invites the same strictures against himself as have been leveled by orthodox commentators on the Lima BEM Document; in company with the latter Reumann digresses at length on sundry peripheral dimensions of

the Lord's Supper, while pointedly failing to state the one thing necessary, namely, that Christ has commanded us to consecrate, distribute, and consume bread and wine as His body and blood. The opening chapter, "Biblical Motifs as Foundations" (pp. 1-52), gives the game away; Dr. Reumann considers the church's eucharistic celebration to be rooted in such things as the earthly Jesus' granting of table fellowship with Himself and, in certain aspects, what is reported concerning His resurrection appearances. Reumann's attitude towards the catechetical statement "instituted by Christ Himself" is sceptical, to say the least. His scholarly methodology explains all: "Perhaps the most profound impact from biblical studies is the growing realization that we cannot today with surety ascertain exactly what Jesus did, said, or intended historically" (p. xii). Again, "one of the ironies resulting from all the intense modern study of the Gospels is that scholars are more and more certain that *we do not know exactly what Jesus said that night*" (p. 2; author's emphasis). Having put a question mark behind the *verba testamenti*, Reumann offers a fanciful reconstruction of the allegedly competing interpretations of them given in various strata of the New Testament writings. Thus, he can quote approvingly Eduard Schweizer's desperately flippant dictum that, "if asked to explain 'the elements,' a Jewish Christian would have answered as a Reformed pastor does now, a Hellenistic Christian as a Lutheran does!" (p. 95). Levity of this kind opens the door for the displacement of Christianity by churchianity, and it comes as no surprise that Reumann offers the following insipid gloss on 1 Corinthians 10:16, " 'a participation in the body/blood of Christ,' that is, in Christ himself" (p. 42).

Interestingly, Reumann finds fault with the currently popular view (overtly expressed in the NEB translation) that the "body" Paul bids us "discern" in 1 Corinthians 11:29 is the ecclesial community rather than the Lord's physical presence in the elements (pp. 44-45). Of course, on his understanding the latter is merely the view of the apostle and the Hellenistic Christian community! Moreover, Reumann is unconvinced of the exegetical strength of arguments in favor of more frequent eucharistic celebration than has been the case among Lutherans in recent generations. Acts 2:42 does not convince him, since Luke gives a "romantic reconstruction" of the life of the primitive church in Jerusalem (p. 48). Nor does Augustana 24 make much of an impression on him (p. 66) for, as he candidly observes in his closing chapter, "The strongest argument for regular Sunday celebrations seems to be the claim that Jesus instituted this meal and that it remains the uniquely Christian form of worship, elsewhere unparalleled. That argument will be evaluated on the degree to which one feels we can work back to words and intent of the historical Jesus and will be judged in light of what one thinks about cult meals in the history of world religions, in Hellenism or elsewhere, as an influence" (p. 196).

Reumann's unwillingness to take the New Testament seriously carries over into his attitude towards Christian tradition in general and the Lutheran



tradition in particular. The chapter entitled "Some Developments in the History of Holy Communion through the Centuries" (pp. 53-76) is an insult to the discipline of historical theology. The passing reference to Luther's contributions in the area of eucharistic theology (pp. 64-65) do not betray much acquaintance with the Reformer's sacramental writings. Just as folk have wondered why anyone would bother to crucify the "historical Jesus" of Harnackian liberalism, so it would be difficult to see why Zwingli and the Reformed saw the need to differ with Luther as presented by Reumann.

The greater part of the book is devoted to an encomium on the church-political wheeling and dealing which Reumann describes under the heading of "Ecumenical Motifs: Dialogue and Convergence in Recent Decades" (pp. 78-182). Recounted in detail is the record of Lutheran-Reformed, Lutheran-Roman Catholic, and Lutheran-Episcopal dialogue on matters eucharistic, Reumann's narrative reaching its crescendo with a hymn of praise to the Lima BEM document. One is inclined to suspect that many of the participants in these dialogues cannot with accuracy be regarded as true representatives of classical Lutheran, Reformed, Anglican, or Roman Catholic positions. The manipulating ecclesiastical bureaucrat has replaced the churchman and the theologian. Lest this review appear overly negative, it is fitting to close on a note of agreement with the author. Reumann appositely remarks that, although the term "eucharist" runs the danger of turning the Sacrament of the Altar into our work rather than God's, nevertheless it has the advantage over other labels for the Lord's Supper that it "yields a convenient adjective, 'eucharistic' " (p. 2).

John Stephenson  
Lewiston, New York

**THE TRIUMPH OF THE MEEK: WHY EARLY CHRISTIANITY SUCCEEDED.** By Michael Walsh. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1986. 256 pages. \$17.95.

This is a beautifully illustrated book about the rise and development of Christian thought and practice until the triumph of the church with the coming of Constantine (313 A.D.). The illustrations, which occupy perhaps one-fourth of the book, offer visual aid to the text's discussion of the background and context of the early Christians and of their life and experience. Many of the illustrations are color photographs which enhance the attractiveness of the book. The selection is good—pagan depictions of emperor deification, geography (the Judean wilderness, Ephesus, Qumran, Masada, Caesarea, modern Edessa), Christian iconography (catacombs, sarcophagi), pagan and Christian graffiti, a Manichaean text, an early baptistery, an example of Roman insula, and many more. There are also photographs of early texts, a reasonable number of helpful maps, and interesting drawings (such as a cut-away of a Christian house-church in Dura Europa).

The illustrations make for interesting and informative perusal. It is the narrative which falters. There are, to be sure, sections which summarize



early Christianity with clarity and fairness. It is simply that it is not clear just what the author intends. Certainly his intention cannot be to answer the question implicit in the subtitle, "Why Early Christianity Succeeded." That issue is never broached, let alone explained. Indeed, the narrative suffers from a pervasive lack of theme and internal coherence. For example, chapter 6, entitled "Christians of the East," contains subsections devoted to the churches of the Apocalypse, Ignatius and Polycarp, Christian origins in Syria, Marcion and the problem of the canon, Montanism, Mani and Gnosticism, the Quartodeciman controversy, and Dura Europa. Nothing in the discussion indicates how any of these relates to the "triumph of the meek" or, for that matter, to each other.

The weakness of the book is revealed, I think, in the assertion on the jacket that the author "brings together the latest findings of archaeologists, historians, and New Testament scholars." The text is, in fact, pock-marked by the interests, biases, predilections, and obsessions of recent scholarship. Now there is an obvious legitimacy to incorporating recent research into one's narrative. However, when in a book of this limited size and large chronological scope the author expends seven pages on the uncertainties of gospel origins (two pages on Q!) and dedicates no discussion to Irenaeus, it is clear that the author's interest in the "latest findings" of scholarship has beclouded his vision. This is evident as well in the inordinate space allowed for discussion of Jesus and the New Testament in comparison to the two centuries from 100 A.D. to 313 A.D.

Furthermore, some of the latest findings are dubious. The full significance of Marcion for second-century Christianity needs to be appreciated, but it is doubtful that Marcion "contributed to the high status which the letters of Paul have been accorded" in the canon (p. 130). Also the Pastoral Epistles were not directed against Marcion (p. 128). Finally, Walsh's statements concerning women in the early church reveals the tendentiousness of much modern writing. Although he mercifully does not develop the theme, Walsh partakes of the current view that the position of women in the early church evolved from a full equality in the period of the New Testament to a position of increasing subordination in the early patristic period. This idea is certainly exaggerated. Specifically, the claim that Montanism restored women to the leadership positions they enjoyed in the first-century church and further offered women celibacy and virginity as a "means of escape from male domination" (p. 133) is nonsense. Although without a meaningful thematic, individual sections can be read with profit. Unfortunately that is not enough to warrant the price of the book, even with the beautiful pictures.

William C. Weinrich

WORD BIBLICAL COMMENTARY, VOLUME 40: 2 CORINTHIANS.  
By Ralph P. Martin. Waco: Word Books, 1986. Cloth, 527 pages.

This weighty volume on 2 Corinthians will certainly serve as the “water mark” by which successive New Testament volumes in this new commentary series will be measured. Ralph P. Martin, Professor of New Testament and Director of the Graduate Studies Program at Fuller Theological Seminary, is a prolific author who wrote this volume while also serving as the New Testament editor for this entire Word Books series. Thus, this treatment of 2 Corinthians is characterized by clear organization, careful documentation, completeness in addressing questions, an emphasis on grammatical exegesis before theologizing, and a very high standard of evangelical scholarship.

A primary concern when using a commentary is format. Martin organizes his research in an appealing manner. After addressing a number of introductory questions, he presents a detailed analysis of each pericope in this pattern: (1) bibliography of scholarship on the specific pericope; (2) a fresh translation of the Greek text; (3) notes on the Greek text; (4) an overview of the pericope’s form, structure, and setting; (5) extensive verse-by-verse comments; and (6) a brief explanation of the pericope. The indices which conclude the volume are superb. A clear strength of Martin’s work is his grasp of current scholarship; his bibliographies are extensive and are used in his interpretation (even Leo the Great and John Chrysostom grace his writing). Only two minor criticisms of his format arise: The versification sometimes gets lost in the print (bold numbers would help to locate a specific verse quickly). And the use of secondary material (current scholarship) is so prevalent that the verse-by-verse comments become, at times, overwhelming and hard to follow. The busy pastor will appreciate the terse explanations at the conclusion of each pericope.

A more important concern than format is content. Martin’s treatment is, in a word, complete. Although he is theologically conservative, he draws on a wide spectrum of scholarship and addresses the sticky questions of this epistle (e.g., the composition of 2 Corinthians, which he views as originally two letters, chapters 1-9 and 10-13, that were later joined). His approach is strongly focused on detailed exegesis; his analysis of sentence structure and word usage is impressive (e.g., the presence of Jewish exegesis and antithetical parallelism in 3:7-18 and the Greek rhetorical patterns and devices of a “Fool’s Speech” in 11:16-12:20). His Reformed theology is visible in his handling of the conversion of Israel (pp. 258-70). He correctly identifies *theologia crucis* versus *theologia gloriae* as a primary theme of this letter and Paul’s apostleship. He states convincingly (p. 475):

But the cross is not simply a past happening; it is caught up in his present risen life where he remains the crucified one, as the crucified Jesus is now the risen Lord ... the cross [is] not

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a station on the way to his final glory, but the *esse* of that lordship, so that always his lordly power is conditioned by his continuing weakness, obedience and humility.

This commentary is not meant for the layman or church library; it is definitely a technical volume of quality for the library of the pastor, teacher, or scholar who desires to probe this Pauline letter carefully and deeply.

Charles A. Gieschen  
Traverse City, Michigan

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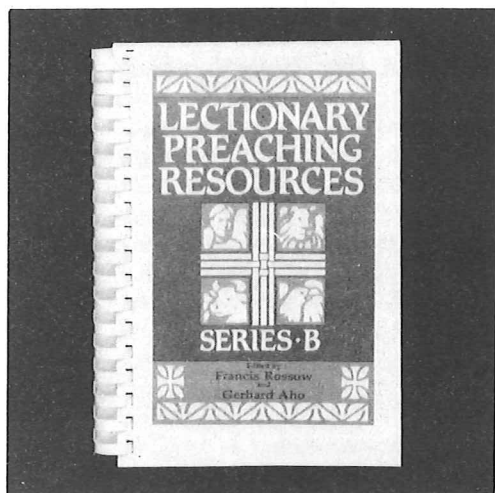
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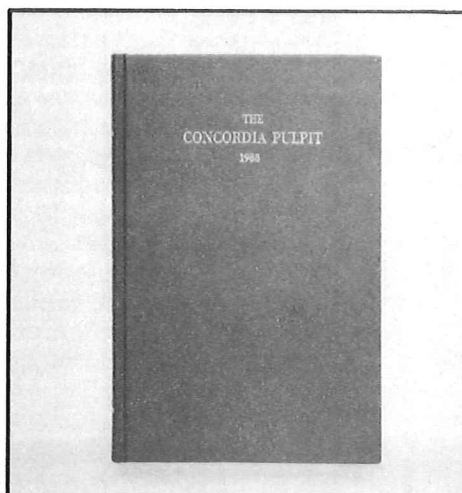
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