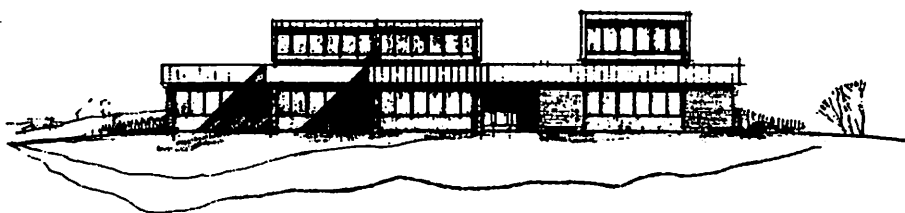


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EDITORIAL NOTES

We have a variety of articles in this issue of *The Journal*.

Rev. Marvin Kamps, pastor of the Southwest Protestant Reformed Church, has submitted an article on "Series Preaching." This article in its original form was presented at an Officebearers' Conference held in South Holland Protestant Reformed Church. The entire Conference was given over to the subject of preaching. The Conference began with a keynote address by Prof. Robert Decker. This was followed by many sectionals on different aspects of this crucial part of the pastor's work. Rev. Kamps' speech was delivered at one of these sectionals.

Prof. Herman Hanko continues his series on "Current Issues in Hermeneutics." This is the third article in the series.

Prof. Robert Decker begins a two-part series on "The Preaching of D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones." These two articles are the substance of Prof. Decker's thesis which was submitted to the faculty of Calvin Theological Seminary as a requirement for his Master's Degree in Practical Theology. Because of the great influence which the ministry of Dr. Lloyd-Jones has had on preaching in Great Britain and in this land, these articles should be of particular interest to many.

We conclude the two-part series by Rev. Chris Coleborn on the subject: "The Errors of Pentecostalism" in this issue. Rev. Coleborn is pastor of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in Brisbane, Australia. These articles were originally given as a speech at an International Conference of Reformed Churches held in Grand Rapids, Michigan during June of 1990. As Pentecostalism sweeps the world, catching many in its net, it will be of value to our readers to consider the serious objections to this movement, which Rev. Coleborn calls to our attention.

Prof. David Engelsma has done a significant amount of work in the area of the trinity. In the last issue he wrote an article on the view of the trinity held by Karl Barth. In this issue he presents material which is found in the book of Augustine entitled *De Trinitate*. Augustine was bishop of Hippo in North Africa in the first half of the fifth century. Building on the creedal formulations of Nicea-Constantinople, Augustine brought new insights into the truth of the trinity which set the direction of all subsequent development of this fundamental doctrine of Scripture.

Included also are book reviews of current books of importance with which our readers ought to be acquainted.



Series Preaching

Rev. Marvin Kamps

When one speaks of preaching he is speaking of a holy task. Surely a mere man is called upon to preach, but the Word preached is and remains the Word of God. Holy too, it is, because its content is Christ crucified and raised from the dead for the salvation of God's elect people. In addition it is a holy work, for it is the public declaration of the Word to the congregation or church of Jesus Christ, which must be strengthened in the faith and led in the service of God. Preaching is, after all, the means of grace to the church.

Preaching is a holy task, and therefore also a most difficult calling for the man called of God, for he is only a man, a sinner, one of the sheep of God's pasture. He is unfit in himself for this task. Yet preach he must.

Preaching is a most difficult work. Each week two new sermons are due. These must be made under all kinds of pressure, and each sermon requires the preacher's very best.

One of the questions the preacher faces each week is, on what text shall I preach this Sunday? How does one go about selecting a text for his sermon? Are these decisions made for him? Or is it so that the Spirit of God mysteriously conveys to him what text to preach? Dr. T. Hoekstra writes: "Some preachers consider those texts to be best, which come before their minds as they are climbing the steps of chancel or stand in the pulpit, and consider these as God-given, and are assured that they can consider this to be the word of the Saviour, who promised his disciples that in the hour of their need he would give them what was needful (Mark 13:11, Luke 12:11, 12)." (*Gereformeerde Homiletiek*, pp. 249, 250)

Or are there objective factors that help one to determine what shall serve as his text? Each congregation has its own particular needs and circumstances, and these in a large measure will determine what the text should be. One Reformed homiletics instructor writes:

This ministry is, after all, certainly the ministry of the abiding Word of the Lord, which is unchangeable, but preached to a congregation of the Lord, to people in a fixed time, also in fixed circumstances of life, and of a definite spiritual character, the ministry of the Word may not be timeless, nor without regard to a specific place; the preaching is truly the actual message of God's grace in the reconciliation through Christ and unto a living in the Spirit, which remains through all the ages the same, but it brings this message in the language of the here and now, according to the needs of today, in the mentality of the day, and ever gives it a variation of color and sound, in tint and tone,

wherein also the variegated wisdom of God reveals itself; the form is not the most important, rather the content of the service, and the question is how this can be delivered most purposefully (*Der Dienst Der Prediking*, pp. 39, 40).

It of necessity must be pointed out that the minister of the Word is not always free to choose his own sermon material. The church and the consistory have something to say, for the church is a body and a confessional entity. Nearly one half of all our text selection is determined for us by the Reformed congregation that has determined that the Heidelberg Catechism must be preached once each Lord's day. In addition we are to preach texts appropriate for certain special services which are imposed upon the preacher.

In regard to the remaining sermons we have opportunity to select texts which have been called "free material" — texts which the Pastor is free to choose for himself as his subject material. Commonly preachers choose what Lloyd-Jones called "odd" texts. Jones makes the following comments:

"What exactly am I going to do: Shall I preach on odd texts?"

What I mean by odd texts is that they do not belong to a series, but that you take a particular verse or paragraph here and another there, so that there is no sequence or connection between the sermons from Sunday to Sunday. Should it be preaching from odd texts, therefore, or should it be a series of sermons?

(*Preaching and Preachers*, p. 188).

Though this is very commonly done in our churches, I believe that there are definite disadvantages to this method (if it can be called that). First, the preacher is faced each week with this very difficult question, what shall I preach? Often, much time is spent, if not wasted, as the preacher casts about for a text. Especially is this true of beginning preachers. Secondly, the congregation never knows what will be preached from Sunday to Sunday. They cannot prepare themselves throughout the week by studying a particular passage, for they do not know what is going to be the text. Thirdly, this method leads to a rather fragmented and highly selective presentation of the Word of God. In the fourth place, it makes it possible for the Pastor to avoid certain texts which may be offensive to him. Or it occasions a steady dosage of sermon texts delightful to the Pastor, but which do not any longer meet the needs of the congregation.

Consequently, we come to our subject which is "Series Preaching."

In general, at least, series preaching is understood as preaching from week to week on material that is a unified whole. How successfully this is done is another question. The sermons that constitute the series represent an organic whole. They have a unifying theme. In one way or another this theme is carried through the entire series of sermons. This is not easy to do; and yet, when done, it can serve as a very powerful and beneficial way to

preach God's Word.

There is one type of series preaching which makes me uncomfortable. That is the so-called topical series of sermons. Yet this word "topical" does not really express what is troublesome. Catechism sermons and a doctrinal series of sermons are in a sense topical. But by topical sermons I mean sermon subjects that are brought to the Scriptures for illumination instead of arising out of the Scriptures themselves. The Confessions are the dogmas of the church and arise out of the Scriptures. Heidelberg Catechism preaching is the preaching of the Word of God through the means of the confession of the church. Such is the case also with a doctrinal series of sermons. Yet the fact remains that topical preaching is the selecting of a subject and then turning to the Scriptures to find a text to hang it on. Rev. H. Hoeksema and the late Prof. H.C. Hoeksema were opposed to topical preaching. I believe that topical preaching was something foreign to our older ministers.

By topical preaching I mean sermons with topics such as "The Christian and Prayer," divided as follows: Personal Prayers, Family Prayers, Public Prayers, Prayer for Unbelievers, etc.; or, "The Christian Family," divided into The Husband's Calling, The Wife's Responsibility, The Father's Duty, the Mother's High Calling, The Place of Children, etc. In this way a Pastor can scan the whole area of life and choose subjects as diverse as The Christian and Recreation, and The Christian Work Ethic. Then, the task is to find a text to serve as a prop. I believe that this kind or style of preaching is common today in Reformed churches but I believe it does not honor Scripture nor will it have any lasting value.

Because this kind of preaching is gaining in popularity with the people and with preachers, I would like to offer reasons why I think it should be discouraged. In the first place, it fails to deal with Scripture as revelation. One's preaching is not revelation. One's great learning and wisdom about a certain subject, very pertinent in itself, can never be the revelation of God. Scripture records God's self-revelation. That is emphatically historical in character, and the revelation of God cannot be divorced from its historical setting. When one lifts a certain biblical ethical principle out of its historical biblical setting, he makes the principle a motto for Christian conduct. But the power of the Word is not found in his sermon. It is no longer the preaching of the living Word of God. Or at least so it seems to me. Secondly, the Word of God reveals to His people who God is — who He is in His attributes. It reveals God to be the God of grace and mercy in Christ to the elect church. Christian obedience of every kind and in every sphere of life must always be motivated by what and who God is in Christ Jesus. If one comes to the Scriptures with his topic for preaching, he is no longer in his sermonizing governed by the fact that every text, every passage, and every

book of Scripture demands that we hear who God is. In the exegesis of Scripture one must above all things listen. Hear the Lord. Learn rightly to know Him. Then preach. But if one comes to the Scriptures looking for a text upon which he can hold forth, then he fails to take the Scriptures seriously. Thirdly, topical preaching is artificial. It is that because it divorces the principle of God's Word from the historical event in which or through which God spake. In the fourth place, topical preaching is mechanical. By mechanical I mean that topical preaching does not view the Christian man and his life as an organism, or a living whole. Out of the heart are the issues of life. If the heart of a man is controlled by who God is in Christ Jesus for His covenant people, i.e., controlled by the Word of God's grace, then the whole of His life in every area and circumstance will be lived in love to God, who speaks to him in and through the Word.

All the applications of God's Word to the various areas of our life (and the Scriptures certainly make these applications, as for instance, marriage, child rearing, master and servant relationship, the duty to the state, etc.) always proceed in Scripture from the truth of who God is in Himself. All the lines of our Christian walk and confession must be drawn out of God. How often the fathers in the Heidelberg Catechism remind us to learn rightly who God is. Then and then only can there be talk of a Christian walk. Topical preaching, it seems to me, is mechanical and superficial because it tries to cover the symptom with a bandaid but fails to discover the cure. Sermons innumerable are given on alcohol, drugs, abortion, infidelity, divorce, the generation gap, the home, etc., etc., but all fail to proceed from the principle: who God is. The kind of preaching that does not bring the regenerated sinner face to face with his Sovereign Lord, in every sermon, will not be of lasting value, for the people will not know God.

Other series preaching comes to mind. First, a series on Christian doctrine. As I mentioned, in a sense this too is topical preaching. But the subject arises out of the Scriptures and confession of the church and need not violate the basic tenet that Scripture is the revelation of God to His people. But we must not overlook the fact that all preaching is to be in the true sense of the word doctrinal. No true sermon can be free of doctrine. I do not believe that doctrine can be placed in antithesis to practical preaching. All true preaching is both. One may say after preparing a sermon on double predestination that he believes this doctrine and teaches it. But if all his sermons are not governed by this truth, then the fact that he has a sermon on it and that he preached it once does not mean that he is a Reformed preacher.

Series preaching can also be a series of sermons on some biblical character such as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, or Samson. These individuals were central to the revelation of God's Word, and a series can be constructed on God's revelation to them. However, one warning is in

order here too: not David or Abraham must be preached, but Jehovah God, His grace, His faithfulness, His love, and His preservation of these saints. One can also preach on the parables of Jesus, or on the types of the old dispensation, including the typical offices, the offerings, and whole temple service.

The Reformation period was characterized as a return to preaching. Calvin and Zwingli had the practice of preaching through whole books of the Bible. They broke with the Romish practice of many centuries of preaching according to various pericopes, which were founded mainly upon New Testament texts, briefly applied and read as sermons to the people in the Latin tongue. These pericopes were standardized messages for every service of the year to be read in every Romish church (cf. *Gereformeerde Homiletiek*, p. 238). Hoekstra writes in regard to the Reformed practice:

In compliance with the homiletes of the ancient christian church some Reformed preachers handled successively whole books of the Holy Scripture in the preaching to the congregation. This had the fruit, that the people were instructed in the Scriptures, which was desperately needed, because ignorance was great.

Zwingli began January 1, 1519 to preach on Matthew, and when he had finished preaching through this book, he began in the same manner to work through Acts, I Timothy, Galatians, etc. Also Bullinger's preaching followed the *lectio continua*.

Calvin preached usually in the same manner over successive material. Even when there were special services for the Christian Church calendar, he did not divert from his practise.

Further Hoekstra informs us that this was not merely the practice of some individuals, but that it became the injunction of the National Synods. "The national synods of the 16th century had advised the churches to expound whole books of the Bible in succession" (*Gereformeerde Homiletiek*, pp. 242, 243). Later, Voetius gave the same counsel.

The advantage of preaching through a book of the Bible for the Pastor would be the following: First, after having selected a book to preach, one's work is determined for the next several weeks, and maybe for more than three or four months, thus eliminating much wasted time and frustration. Secondly, it would give opportunity for in-depth study of the particular book in the light of all Scripture. Thirdly, it would help the Pastor to understand better the historical redemptive character of Scripture.

The benefit for the congregation would be: first, that the congregation would have opportunity to study the book and the particular passage throughout the week. I believe that home Bible study, by the head of the house, is a must, especially in our day of gross apostasy. Second, the congregation would learn very well the unity of Scripture, as one book is

expounded in the light of all of Scripture; and they would be exposed concretely to the developmental character of revelation. Third, they would better come to understand the concept of organic inspiration, as God's use of the "secondary author" would constantly come into focus in the explanation of the book. At least this is true where there is biographical material given concerning the man whom the Lord employed.

It should be obvious that to preach through long historical books of the Old Testament should not be attempted in one long endeavor. Yet one can treat sections of these books very profitably. Hoekstra gives this warning: "The history of preaching has taught, that successive treatment of a whole book, taken in general, is not to be advised" (*Gereformeerde Homiletiek*, p. 254). Dr. A. Kuyper gives the same advice in his *Onze Eeredienst* (p. 296).

In conclusion, we should not overlook the fact that weak preaching usually is that because of superficial exegesis. In addition, a Reformed preacher can not come to Scripture purely objectively and unprepossessed and without a certain perspective regarding the nature of Scripture. Some do not want a creedal perspective when they study Scripture. But is it even possible to be totally unprepossessed when one undertakes the study of God's Word?

When we discuss the advantages and disadvantages of series preaching, then our subject is only a formal one. No one method can exclude other methods of text selection. Sermon construction finds its essence in exegesis, not in the formal question of whether to preach "odd" texts or a series. Dijk summarizes Calvin's view of preaching for us, and I believe that one who strives to preach well can be greatly benefited by this summary.

In addition, he (Calvin, MK) had set as a rule, that the preaching must be directed to the salvation of men, not onesidedly soteriological or benevolent, but so, that through this salvation man comes again to the worship of God unto His honor, whose glory is the highest purpose of all things. In this view of preaching it becomes clearly apparent, not only that Calvin saw the congregation as the gathering of God's people, in the midst of whom God's Word is ministered, but also that he drew the "line of salvation," out of the eternal election, through the way of the covenant, in the redemption of Christ, unto the life of obedience, and that by this the preaching must be ruled; the address of the preaching is the congregation of Christ; upon her must the ministry of the Word be directed, but always in the following manner, that the keys of the kingdom must be administered; because the hypocrite is ever present in the Church, and then at the same time in the actual circumstances wherein the light of the Word of God is cast upon the fiery questions of the present day (*Der Dienst Der Prediking*, p. 57).

References:

1. *Preaching and Preachers*, D. Martin Lloyd-Jones; Zondervan, 1972.
 2. *Gereformeerde Homiletiek*, Dr. T. Hoekstra, Gebr. Zomer & Keuning's, no date.
 3. *Homiletics*, Prof. M. Reu; Baker Book House, 1967.
 4. *Der Dienst Der Prediking*, Dr. K. Dijk; J.H. Kok, Kampen, 1955.
 5. *Homiletics*, Homer C. Hoeksema, Theological School of the PR Churches, 1975.
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Issues In Hermeneutics

(3)

Prof. Herman Hanko

THE ATTRIBUTES OF SCRIPTURE

In the last article to appear in the *Journal* we argued for a method of the interpretation of Scripture which is not the traditional so-called "Grammatico-Historical Method," but the "Spiritual-Grammatico-Historical Method." The word "Spiritual" must be added because of the truth of the inspiration of Scripture by the Holy Spirit and the consequent necessity of interpreting all of Scripture so that the meaning of the Holy Spirit is the object of our search of the Scriptures.

Before we turn to a discussion of the meaning and importance of the "Spiritual" aspect of inspiration, it is important that we understand clearly what is meant by Scripture's inspiration by the Holy Spirit.

It is not our intention to enter into a long discussion of the doctrine of inspiration.¹ We intend only to list a few of the attributes of Holy Scripture with a brief description of each. This will be sufficient for our purposes.

That we have clearly before our minds the truth concerning inspiration is evident from the fact that the rules for the interpretation arise out of the character of Scripture itself. The Bible is not a textbook on Hermeneutics any more than it is a textbook on any other science. It is the infallibly

1 By the time this article appears the RFPA will have made available a new book by the late Prof. Homer Hoeksema on the doctrine of inspiration. This book is available from the Seminary at the address on the inside of the front cover. We urge our readers to purchase this important book.

inspired record of the revelation of God in Jesus Christ. We cannot turn to a particular verse in Scripture to find any rule of Hermeneutics explicitly stated.

But the character of Scripture determines the rules for its interpretation. This ought to be obvious, for, in general, this is true of any piece of writing. A sonnet, an essay, a book on Mathematics, a novel — each, by virtue of its inherent character, determines the rules for its own interpretation. A poem is interpreted in a way quite different from a textbook on biology. The rules for the interpretation of a piece of writing are unconsciously applied by the reader, for he learns these rules as a part of learning language. Yet these naively applied principles can be explicated, examined, organized, and crystallized in one's thinking.

The same is true of Scripture. Scripture is given by God for purposes of communicating. God tells us of Himself and of His great works which He performed and performs through Christ. But, because God *communicates* knowledge to us, He does so in a way in which we who are creatures can understand what He is saying. He stoops low, as Calvin said, to speak to us. He mumbles and talks baby talk. At the same time, however, He speaks in such a way that *truth*, the truth concerning Himself is given.

On the one hand, therefore, Scripture is like any other book written in human language. It is written in Greek and Hebrew. It is written in a language in which all the rules of grammar, syntax, word usage, etc., apply. It is not different from any other book in the genre used for its composition. It was written in historical circumstances as a part of history and with specific purposes. It was addressed to specific historical realities. It spoke to a people at a given time. And this is true because the revelation of God, of which Scripture is the record, was woven into the warp and woof of history.

On the other hand, however, Scripture is also the Word of God. It is God-breathed — as Paul tells us in II Timothy 3:16. Every Scripture is God-breathed. This can be said of no other book. It is not the Word of God *and* the word of man. It is not the Word of God *in or through* the word of man. It is not the Word of God *in spite of* its being also the word of man. It is God-breathed.

This then is the question: What does Scripture mean when it claims for itself that it is God-breathed?

We must distinguish between revelation and inspiration. Revelation came long before inspiration and was, in fact, begun with the dawn of history. Inspiration did not begin until the time of Moses.

Revelation came in many different ways. It came by means of the direct speech of God to man, as in the first pronouncement of the promise of Christ to Adam and Eve immediately after the fall. It came through

angels and prophets who spoke the Word of God. It came in visions, dreams, and trances. It came in the signs, wonders, and miracles of Scripture. It came centrally and principally in Christ in His Person, words, and works. Our Heidelberg Catechism puts it this way: "Whence knowest thou (the Mediator)? From the holy gospel, which God himself first revealed in Paradise, and afterwards published by the patriarchs and prophets, and represented by the sacrifices and other ceremonies of the law; and lastly, has fulfilled it by his only begotten Son" (Q & A 19).

In a broad sense of the word, inspiration did not always differ from revelation. This was especially true of the prophets, for they received what they spoke by the inward inspiration of the Spirit of Christ. The Word of God burned as a fire within them. This was also true of the apostles in the writing of their epistles. They wrote what was revealed to them, and this revelation was itself inspiration.

When, however, we speak of the inspiration of Scripture, we speak of "graphic inspiration." That is, when the men whom God used to write the Scriptures wrote what they did, they were inspired by the Spirit in such a way that the Spirit was the Author of what they wrote. Paul tells us in II Timothy 3:16 that "every Scripture," i.e., every *writing* of the Bible, "is God-breathed." God told the men who wrote the Scriptures what to write. And He did so, through the Spirit, in such a way that God the Holy Spirit is always the Author.

Some ask the question: How is this possible? How can inspiration take place in such a way that every written Scripture is God-breathed, while at the same time Scripture is written in such a way that the literary style, e.g., of Paul differs markedly and noticeably from that of Isaiah or John? How can God inspire the Scriptures so that He did not merely dictate to them what to write as a president of a corporation dictates correspondence to a secretary? How were the personal abilities, characteristics, and stylistic peculiarities of each individual writer preserved?

Whether we can finally answer this question to the satisfaction of a critic is immaterial to our discussion. Scripture is a miracle performed by God in the age of miracles. It is organically connected with the whole of the miracle of the revelation of God in Christ and is a part of that miracle. It is no more possible to explain, in terms of human thought, the wonder of the Scriptures than it is to explain the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead.

That Scripture belongs organically to the wonder of salvation in Jesus Christ specifically means that it is a part of that great work of God whereby He saves His people. Scripture is a necessary part (according to God's wisdom and purpose) of the work of salvation. It not only *reveals* salvation to us, but it is an essential ingredient in accomplishing salvation. Scripture

is written to the church and for the church. Through that Scripture the church is saved. It is not only an objective record of God's work; it is itself the content of the gospel which is the power of God unto salvation. And because the whole work of God in Christ is the miracle, also as Christ's work is applied to the church, Scripture, as a part of that work, is a part of salvation.

Thus Scripture has certain attributes and characteristics, important to understand because these attributes determine the principles of interpretation.

The doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture means that Scripture is verbally inspired. In brief, this means that the words of Scripture are precisely the words which the Spirit wanted to be included in Scripture and by which He chose to record the revelation of God. Every word is the Spirit's Word. Not one word is of man's choice.

This truth does not rule out the obvious fact that other documents that were not inspired were consulted. Perhaps Matthew consulted the genealogical records of the line of David before he wrote Matthew 1. It does not rule out the fact that some of the material incorporated in the infallibly inspired records of Scripture may have been obtained from oral reports. Moses surely knew the oral traditions of earlier periods handed down from generation to generation. Luke almost certainly spoke with Mary, the mother of the Lord. Mark probably received some of his material from Peter. But the accuracy and reliability of Scripture does not depend upon the accuracy of oral tradition; it rests exclusively upon the infallible inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit governed the whole process. He determined the collection of the data when He was pleased to use this. He guaranteed the accuracy and surely made corrections if such were necessary. He determined the arrangement of the material and the order which even narratives follow. He made the choice of words which were incorporated in the inspired manuscripts. He eliminated what He chose to eliminate. He included what He wanted to include. And if there was material which was not available or known to His servants, He provided that material by His own inspiration within them prior to their writing it. The result was that every word of Scripture is the Spirit's Word, guaranteed as to truth and accuracy by Him Who cannot lie.

There are instances when the Holy Spirit deemed it wise to tell the church the name of the man whom He used to write a part of Scripture, Paul's letters being obvious instances of this. There are also times when the Holy Spirit did not consider this important, Hebrews being a notable example. There are times when the Holy Spirit chose to tell us the specific historical reason for a given piece of Scripture. Paul wrote to combat Judaizing errors in the Galatian churches. There are times when the Holy

Spirit chose not to reveal this. We may guess and ponder. We may write learned articles for theological Journals in which we set forth our guesses with scholarly reasons why our guesses ought to be accepted and the guesses of others rejected. But the Holy Spirit makes our guesses look silly, because He did not consider this information in a given situation to be relevant. And all this is true because the Holy Spirit gives us in Scripture the great truths of God's revelation in Jesus Christ as the God of our salvation.

2. Scripture is an organic whole. This follows from the truth of organic inspiration.

An organism is a unity of and in diversity. The organism of an oak tree is the unity of one single living biological plant in and of a diversity of roots, trunk, leaves, branches, acorns, and chemicals which make it up. The organism of a human body is the unity of one rational and moral man in and of a diversity of arms, legs, eyes, ears, torso, etc.

So is also the organic unity of Scripture. Its principle of unity is the one revelation of God in Jesus Christ. Its diversity is the diversity of different testaments, different genera (poetry, narrative, letters, prophecies), different styles of writing. We may compare it all to a portrait. A skillfully done portrait is a picture of one individual. It is composed of many different parts. It has the details of its background, its size, the various elements of the features of the subject, the expression on the face, the pose which the subject assumed, etc. So also is Scripture. It is the one gloriously beautiful portrait of our Lord Jesus Christ in Whom we see the Father. Every part of the portrait is perfect. Every part contributes in its own way to the whole. Some parts are more important than other parts: the eyes of a man are more important than the clothing he wears; the book of Ephesians is more important than the book of Esther. But each is important for a perfect portrait. From a perfect portrait nothing can be taken, and to it nothing can be added, without destroying the perfection of the whole. It is in this way that all of Scripture — from Genesis 1:1 to the last verse of Revelation 22 — is the perfect, Spirit-inspired portrait of Christ.

3. Scripture is perspicuous. That is, Scripture is clear. It is easily understood. It is not the obscure book which the Roman Catholics have always claimed it is, and it is not the mysterious and unintelligible book which the proponents of theistic evolution claim it is when they make the first chapters of Genesis (and more of Scripture) myth or saga. It is so clear that it can be understood by the child as well as by the adult, by the young man and woman as well as by the elder in the church. It is so clear that covenant parents can confidently take their small children on their laps and read to them from it without any hesitation concerning the ability of these children to understand what God says.

a/ But we must be clear on this idea of perspicuity. It rests, first of all,

on the truth that the literal meaning of Scripture is the correct and only meaning. This truth was boldly proclaimed by the Reformers over against Roman Catholicism which spoke of a four-fold level of meaning — if not more levels than four, as some medieval theologians insisted. Any document with deeper and deeper levels of meaning is going to be impossible to understand except by trained theologians who are adept at penetrating various levels and uncovering hidden and obscure meanings. Only a book, the literal meaning of which is correct, is perspicuous.²

We may compare the perspicuity of Scripture to a clear pool of water. I have stood a number of times at the side of Emerald Pool in Yellowstone National Park. A characteristic of this pool is that periodically it erupts. Prior to the eruption one can see the huge bubbles of gases arise from the bottom of the pool and watch them as they make their way to the surface. One can watch these bubbles travel for a long time, indicative of the fact that the pool is very deep and the waters are so clear that one can see deeply into its depths. But the bottom lies beyond sight. In fact, the longer one looks into the pool, the farther down one can see; but never is the bottom visible. So it is with Scripture. It is easy to see the meaning of Scripture. But the longer one studies it, the more profound does Scripture reveal itself to be. And we can never probe its great depths. One can read any book which man has written; and, after reading it, one sets it aside and says: "Now I am finished with that book. I know what it says. I do not have to read it again." But he can never do this with Scripture. Though he reads it a hundred times from cover to cover, and though he makes it the object of a lifetime of study, always there are new truths and riches to discover, new treasures to mine from its bottomless depths. Even a little child can understand the simple words of Luke 2:7: "And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn." But the world's greatest theologians have pondered the mystery of that simple verse and have not been able to understand the depths of the riches of the knowledge of God. Thousands of books have been written on it, but they all fall short of penetrating the mystery of Christ become flesh.

This great wonder of Scripture is possible only because it is God's inspired Word.

A recent feature article appearing in *U.S. News and World Report*

2 We are aware of the fact that this statement as it stands must be understood in the light of the fact that Scripture abounds in figures of speech, symbols, types, parables, etc. We are also aware of the fact that this question of a literal meaning is one of the issues between amillennialists and premillennialists. But it is not our purpose to enter into these things here. Our statement stands.

graphically portrays what is done to Hermeneutics when these truths are denied. The article is entitled, "Who Wrote The Bible?" In an introduction to the article, the editors write:

(The Bible) is often called "The New Testament of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." But Jesus didn't write a word of it. And while some of the writings bear the names of those who walked with Him on the dusty roads of Judea, centuries of scholarship have turned up little convincing evidence that His 12 closest disciples did much writing, either.

In a section devoted to the gospels we find the following:

Yet today, there are few Biblical scholars—from liberal skeptics to conservative evangelicals—who believe that Matthew, Mark, Luke and John actually wrote the Gospels. Nowhere do the writers of the texts identify themselves by name or claim unambiguously to have known or traveled with Jesus. The majority of modern scholarly opinion holds that all four books were compiled from a variety of oral and written sources collected over a period of decades following Jesus' crucifixion, as the prologue to Luke suggests.

Once written, many experts believe, the Gospels were redacted, or edited, repeatedly as they were copied and circulated among church elders during the first and early second centuries.

The article goes on to discuss the whole "synoptic problem" and assures the readers that no one anymore believes that the gospels are of independent origin. Other writings lie behind the gospels, and the form in which these gospels appear in our Scriptures are due to extensive borrowing and editing.

Turning to Paul's epistles, the article states:

For most of Christian history, Paul's authorship of the 13 letters bearing his name was widely accepted. But modern scholarship has raised serious questions, based on content as well as writing style, suggesting that some of the letters are pseudonymous—written by others who used Paul's name to lend them authority. Such was Paul's reputation in the first century A.D.

Paul's authorship of seven of the letters remains virtually undisputed

Who, then, wrote the disputed letters? Most scholars believe that after Paul died, his followers, sometimes called the Pauline school, continued writing in his name

A recent book by Prof. Harold Bloom even goes so far as to state that "the author of the oldest parts of the Bible—the stories of Adam and Eve, Noah, Joseph and Moses—was a woman, a descendant of King David working in the 10th century B.C."

And so the article goes on, citing liberal and conservative scholars. It seems never to occur to anyone that the inspiration of Scripture by the Holy Spirit puts every one of these questions to rest once and for all. But the article is a vivid illustration of what happens when men are considered the authors, when human authorship is introduced into the doctrine of inspiration, and when a human element is found in the Bible. The truth of Scripture is soon lost.

May God save us from modern scholarship.

The truths of Scripture which we have outlined determine its interpretation.

THE MEANING OF THE SPIRITUAL INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE

By the spiritual interpretation of Scripture we mean: the meaning of the Holy Spirit in the text of the Word of God. This is of crucial importance in our interpretation of Scripture. We are not primarily interested in what Paul said, or in what Isaiah wrote, or in what Moses taught. We are interested in what the Holy Spirit has said to the church.

It is precisely here that we part ways with any form of higher criticism. Literary-historical Criticism is concerned with the meaning of the "secondary authors." For the most part such critics are content to ascertain what Peter had in mind when he penned his two epistles. All sorts of literary and historical questions are faced as one attempts to discern Peter's sense. And, because of the very nature of Literary-historical Criticism, exegesis usually ends here. But, as we have pointed out, this is not the chief concern of the exegete of Scripture.

It is true, and we gladly concede the point, that insofar as the Holy Spirit is pleased to reveal these things too in the Scriptures, they enter into our efforts to understand the Word of God. But they are strictly subordinate and of secondary importance. Standing foursquare on the truth of the infallible inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we interpret Scripture to hear what the Spirit says to the church. So important is this latter that it controls and governs all our interpretation. And Scripture is explained only when we have discovered in Holy Writ the Spirit's words and meaning. All the aspects of grammatico-historical interpretation must be subservient to this truth.

This important principle involves us in the question: What does it mean that the Spirit's truth must be ascertained?

Basically, the meaning of the spiritual aspect of interpretation is simply the age-old principle: Scripture interprets Scripture.

The importance of this rule can never be under-emphasized. It stands as the one all-encompassing rule. It is *the* one principle than which there is

no rule more important. It not only stands at the very head of all the rules as rule number one; it is the rule which governs all subsequent rules. If one could state just one rule of interpretation than which there is no other, it would be this simple, yet crucially important rule: Scripture interprets Scripture.

✓ What is the meaning of this rule?

Although it may not be immediately evident, this rule means simply that the Holy Spirit, the Author of all Scripture, is the only Interpreter of Scripture. Being the kind of book it is, authored by God the Holy Spirit, it follows with inescapable logic that the Author is the only One Who can interpret Scripture. No man can do this. And when man arrogates to himself the ability and the right to interpret God's Holy Word, then we sink into the dismal swamp of higher criticism. The Scriptures belong to the Holy Spirit. He authored them. They are His book. He alone can explain them.

✓ But we must give content to this truth. What does it mean that the Holy Spirit is the only Interpreter of Scripture?

✓ This principle means two things.

1) It means, in the first place, that the Spirit is the Interpreter of Scripture objectively. That is, the Holy Spirit explains the Scriptures by means of the Scriptures themselves. Or, to put the matter a bit differently, the Holy Spirit tells us the meaning of any given part of Scripture by means of a study of Scripture as a whole. We are not able to ascertain what a given passage of Scripture means. The Holy Spirit will tell us what He means by telling us what the whole of the Scriptures teach.

Perhaps an illustration of this will underscore the point. Studying a passage in the gospel according to John in class, I once appealed to a passage in Paul's epistle to the Colossians in support of a given explanation of a concept in the text. The response of the teacher was: "Your appeal to the writings of Paul is irrelevant, for we are dealing here with Johanne literature and not with the corpus of Pauline writings." In other words, the teacher was saying that an appeal to another part of Scripture was of no help in the explanation of a text in John's gospel because what John wrote is unrelated to what Paul wrote; both wrote as different men, out of different historical circumstances, with different purposes, and to explain different ideas. From this position arises the whole notion of a Pauline theology, and that in distinction from a Johanne theology. My reaction to this was: Are we not interested in the theology of the Holy Spirit?

✓ The Scriptures, as we have been at pains to emphasize, are an organic whole. The principle of this organic unity is the Spirit-inspired record of the one revelation of God in Jesus Christ. Comprising an organic unity, every part of Scripture sheds light upon every other part; and any given part can be understood in the light of the whole.

We may appeal once again to the example of the organism of a tree. The tree is an organic whole. One may, in a very specialized study, concentrate his attention only on a leaf. But if he studies the leaf only as a leaf, and not as a part of the entire tree, he will never be able to come to a correct understanding of the leaf. It functions as a part of the whole tree and has meaning and significance only as it is related to the whole organism.

That does not mean that the leaf has no characteristics of its own, characteristics which make it identifiable as an individual part of the tree differing from the root and the trunk. But it does mean that the leaf has meaning only in connection with the entire organism of which it is a living part.

So also with Scripture. Each part has meaning in its own right which gives it individuality and unique identity within the whole. But each individual part has meaning and significance only as a part of the whole.

Our critics are probably waiting to pounce on the truth we have outlined above and to accuse us of failing to reckon with the historical circumstances and times in which any given part of Scripture was written. They are more than eager to point out that the Old Testament Scriptures, e.g., were written by men who did not understand as clearly as the saints after Pentecost the doctrines of the Christian faith.

We are aware of this. Certainly Abraham did not understand as clearly as Paul the truth of the resurrection of the body.³ God's revelation, which is infallibly recorded in Scripture, is progressive. Beginning with the revelation of the promise to our first parents, God did not immediately reveal all the truth concerning Christ. In the Old Testament times, the truth concerning the fulfillment of the promise of God was revealed in types and shadows and progressed through the ages until it was fulfilled in Christ. And this must be taken into account in any exegesis. But all this does not destroy our thesis that the Scriptures are an organic whole and that the whole of Scripture must be taken into account in our study of any of the given doctrines of Scripture.

This principle pertains to every aspect of interpretation. The meaning of words, the connotation of concepts, the formulation of doctrines, the determination of principles of the Christian life — all these must be determined by Scripture itself. The Holy Spirit will tell us what He means by a given word when we compare the text in which the word is found with every place in Scripture where that word appears.

To cite but one example. Scripture often in the New Testament uses the word keerussoo, which means, "to proclaim, to preach." This word is,

3 Although we hasten to add that, contrary to some who deny it, Abraham certainly did believe this truth (see Hebrews 11:17-19).

of course, a Greek word which had a certain definite meaning in the Greek used in the day in which Scripture was written. That meaning, in brief, was: "to proclaim as a herald." While Scripture retains that formal connotation of the word (something it would obviously do if Scripture was to be at all intelligible), Scripture also gives to that term a unique connotation which is not found in any secular writing. It applies that word to the specific task of the ordained ministry in the work of proclaiming the gospel, a gospel which is the power of God unto salvation to all who believe. Paul shouts loudly: "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God" (I Corinthians 1:23, 24).

Any given doctrine of Scripture can be determined by an examination of the whole of Scripture. This study of the church has resulted in the great confessions of the church, beginning with the creed of Nicea-Constantinople, and including the Post-Reformation creeds of the 16th and 17th centuries. They contain what has been called, "the rule of faith." And they are called this because they contain what the whole of Scripture teaches with regard to any given doctrine. They are formulated by the church as she compares Scripture with Scripture and ascertains what the Holy Spirit teaches concerning the truth of God in Christ. Anyone, therefore, who ignores the creeds of the church makes it impossible for himself to interpret properly the Scriptures.

Much preaching is done today without paying attention to this great truth. The result is that texts are ripped out of context, dealt with only as individual texts without any consideration of the whole of Scripture, and are horribly mutilated. No one who practices such exegesis can claim to speak authoritatively according to the meaning of the Holy Spirit. And the most bizarre and far-fetched interpretations of Scripture are foisted on an unsuspecting congregation which marvels at the "exegetical insights" of the preacher.

Indeed, much false doctrine has been covertly brought into the church by means of such dealings with the Word of God.

Luther was already profoundly conscious of this. In his book, *Captive To The Word*, A. Skevington Wood shows clearly how important this principle was to the Reformer of Wittenburg. He points out that Luther was conscious of how the heretics refuse to respect the oneness of Scripture, are able in this way to make Scripture teach anything they please, and fall into error because their "fragmented conception" of Scripture brings about failure "to balance one area of biblical teaching with another." He quotes Luther as saying,

At first they deny only one article, but afterwards all must be

denied. It is as with a ring; if it has only one defect, it can no longer be used. And if a bell cracks in only one place, it does not sound any longer and is useless.

And again,

When the devil has succeeded in bringing matters so far that we surrender one article to him, he is victorious, and it is just as bad as though all of them and Christ Himself were already lost. Afterwards he can unsettle and withdraw others because they are all intertwined and bound together like a golden chain, so that if one link be broken, the whole chain is broken, and it pulls apart. And there is no article that cannot be overthrown if it once comes to pass that reason intrudes and tries to speculate and learns to turn and twist the Scripture so that it agrees with its conclusion. That penetrates like a sweet poison.⁴

In another chapter of his book, Wood drives this point home. He writes:

A further elaboration of the Spirit's hermeneutical role is to be found in Luther's axiom that Scripture is its own interpreter. "One passage of Scripture must be clarified by other passages," was a rule which he often reiterated. It was only another way of saying that the Holy Spirit is the true interpreter. To interpret Scripture by Scripture is simply to let the Holy Spirit do His own work . . . "On this manner," he declared, "Scripture is its own light. It is a fine thing when Scripture explains itself . . ."⁵

The Spirit is Scripture's Interpreter, for Scripture is the Spirit's book. But there is also a subjective side to this truth.

The Holy Spirit is not only Scripture's Interpreter objectively in the Scriptures themselves, but He is also the Interpreter subjectively in the hearts and minds of the human exegete.

Of this too Luther spoke; and we turn again to Wood's book to make this clear. Wood writes:

(Luther) began by laying it down as axiomatic that the Scriptures are not to be pushed around at the whim of the commentator. He would have none of such cavalier methods . . . The right apprehension of Scripture, declared Luther, "does not arise from the human heart or mind," since it is "a teaching revealed from heaven." Nor can it be grasped by the self-opinionated. The man who seeks to impose his own will on Scripture will find it closed and barred to him. "He will never

4 Wood, A. Skevington, *Captive To the Word*, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1969, p. 150.

5 *Ibid.* pp. 161, 162.

smell or taste a spark or a tittle of the true meaning of a passage or a word of Scripture. He may make much noise and even imagine that he is improving on Holy Scripture, but he will never succeed."

... The interpretation of Scripture is the prerogative of God and not of man. "If God does not open and explain Holy Writ, no one can understand it; it will remain a closed book, enveloped in darkness." ... "The Holy Spirit must be the Teacher and Guide." It was "the work of the Holy Spirit alone" to illumine the heart of Joseph so as to be able to explain Pharaoh's dreams: it is His function to expound the Scriptures. The disclosures of God "required the Holy Spirit as an interpreter." The "divine and heavenly doctrines" of "repentance, sin, grace, justification, worship to God" to be found in Scripture, cannot enter the heart of man "unless they be taught by the great Spirit."

... "Proper understanding" of Scripture comes only through the Holy Spirit. It is not enough to possess the revelation of the Word: it is also necessary to have the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit so as to know its meaning. . . . He concluded that "in the end only the Holy Spirit from heaven above can create listeners and pupils who accept this doctrine and believe that the Word is God, that God's Son is the Word, and that the Word became flesh, that He is also the Light who can illumine all men who come into the world, and that without this Light all is darkness."⁶

We must understand clearly what Luther is saying here. He does not mean to deny that, because of Scripture's perspicuity, anyone, whether believer or unbeliever, can understand God's Word. Probably the devil understands the Scriptures more clearly than any single man, for he has 6000 years of experience in dealing with the Word and has the benefit of countless saints who have studied Scripture and set forth its meaning in clear and unmistakable language.

But the man who has not the Spirit in his heart is an enemy of God. As such he hates the Scriptures even as he hates God. The result will be that, out of this deep-seated and ineradicable hatred of God, he will pervert Scripture to suit his own purposes. Hence, only the man whose hatred has been eradicated and whose heart has been made holy can be a proper exegete of God's Word.

The nature of Scripture is of such a kind that it is not a book which can be picked up, read, and considered on the basis of its inherent worth. It is

⁶ Wood, *op. cit.*, pp. 159-161.

not like a textbook on astronomy. It is not a history book which professes to record bygone deeds of men. It is not even like Charles Hodge's *Dogmatics*. Every book written by men, we can pick up, read, evaluate, and set down. We may profit from it; we may gain no benefit from the time spent with it; we may admit that it exercises some influence on our thinking and life; we may be skeptical of its use; we may even ignore it and take no position on its contents. But Scripture can never be treated in this way. It is the inscripturated Word of God. It comes with the authority of God Himself. It demands obedience and acceptance. Neutrality towards it is impossible. One can never say about it: I need do nothing about it; I need take no position in relation to it. Even neutrality is opposition toward this one great book of God. Jesus makes that clear: "He who is not with me is against me" (Matthew 12:20). One hates it or loves it. One obeys it or disobeys it. One bows before it or, as Luther so graphically expresses it, one twists its nose.

And this is true because in this book one is confronted with Christ. This is inescapable. Every time one picks up Scripture to read it, every time one hears it read or proclaimed, one stands confronted with the Christ of the Scriptures. To reject the Scriptures is to reject Christ — and God. To mock it is to mock Christ — and God. To set it aside as irrelevant is to set aside as irrelevant Christ — and God. But to believe it, is to believe Christ, and believing Christ is to believe God, for Christ is the Son of God. To bow before Scripture is not "bibliolatry"; it is to bow before the Christ of the Scriptures and to worship God. To take the Bible as a lamp unto our feet and a light upon our path is to take Christ as our only light. To feed on Scripture is to eat Christ. To arm ourselves with Scripture is to arm ourselves with the strength of Christ. It is all one and the same thing.

The issues are not a passing grade in our senior year in college; they are not a step towards a doctorate; they are not even issues which could perhaps enrich our general knowledge of things. The issues are life and death, blessing and cursing, heaven and hell. To reject the Scriptures is to incur the fierce wrath of God almighty, to sink into death, to go to hell. To believe the Scriptures is to walk in God's favor, to have life, to go to heaven.

Apart from the sovereign work of grace performed by the Spirit of Christ, the same Spirit Who inspired the pages of Holy Writ, no man is able to understand the Scriptures or be their interpreter. This is Luther's point. This is the point of all faithful exegetes of Holy Writ. We are, apart from grace, blind and dead. We are unable to see the great light of the Word. We stumble around in the dark night of our death until we trip and fall into the abyss. If you shine the brightest spotlight into the eyes of a blind man, it makes no difference. He cannot see that light. God's Word is a lamp and a light (Psalm 119:105), but not to the blind. A flashlight on a dark night

means nothing to the man whose optic nerves are dead. All the light of the Word cannot be seen by spiritually blind people who grope around in their blindness and congratulate each other on how well they see and how well they are making their way in the world — while they totter on the edge of the chasm of hell. So Scripture means nothing to the spiritually dead sinner, and his blindness prevents him from understanding the truth of God's revelation.

Only when we are so transformed by the amazing power of grace that our wills are coerced by the irresistible work of the Spirit and our minds are enlightened by the cleansing and purifying work of grace, can we also see the Scriptures for what they are. Only when hatred has been banished from our souls and replaced with the sweet love of God in Christ can we in turn love Christ's Word and so properly understand and interpret it.

There is an analogy of sorts in our human relations. Admitting all the while that it does not do justice to our relation to Scripture, we can nevertheless understand the point when we consider a letter written by a husband to his wife of forty years. Another may read that letter, but will understand very little of what it says even though he has a formal understanding of the words. He will know nothing of the allusions made, nothing of the shared experiences referred to, nothing of the intimacy of love which shines in every page. But the wife will read it and understand it all. Each word will bring floods of memories. Each thought will convey to her the love of her husband. Each line will have three lines "between" so that she truly reads "between the lines" and knows exactly what her husband is saying.

On a far higher plane is this true of Scripture. Every one who has not the Spirit will hate that book, for he hates the Christ of that book and hates the God revealed in Christ. But the believer, wedded to Christ, will drink deeply at its refreshing waters and revel in the great mystery of the love of Christ which knows no human bounds.

The true interpretation of Scripture is open to the one who is enlightened by the Spirit because of the very way in which the Spirit works. The Spirit is the Spirit of Christ, Who is promised by Christ Himself as His gift to the church to *lead* the church into all truth (John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7-13). The work of the Spirit is never apart from the Word. All mysticism, subjectivism, Pentecostalism, etc. separates the work of the Spirit from the Word. This never is the way the Spirit works. He works always through the Word. But when He works through the Word in such a way that the believer is enlightened by His work, that very Word is impressed upon his consciousness and indelibly engraved upon his heart. The believer not only hears someone telling of a man who died on Calvary of whom some allege that he died for sin; the believer, by the work of the Spirit, hears of the Christ of God

Who came into the world to make atonement for sin, and for *his* sin. He reads what God has done *for him* in Christ. But this takes on such intensely personal characteristics because of the Spirit's work which, through the Word, brings the truth of the Word into the life and experience of the child of God. That man alone can be an interpreter of Scripture.

When the child of God, be he a preacher, a theologian, a parent, an aged saint, a little child, comes to the Word, he comes to that Word not as to an interesting piece of ancient literature, not as to a book which records the religious experiences of people from long ago, not as to a collection of ancient tales of deeds and exploits of people from the distant past, not even as to a book containing some gems of wisdom handed down over the years. He comes to Scripture as to the very Word of God. He comes with the prayer of Samuel on his lips: "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth."

The proper and appropriate position is to be on one's knees in worship and adoration. How wicked are the arrogant claims of critics who will tell us of all the literary, historical, archeological, rabbinic information which we need if we are to see what Luke means in his writing. How proud the rationalist who sets himself over the Scriptures and ruthlessly passes judgment upon huge sections of Scripture, relegating much to the area of myth and saga, characterizing whole sections as "time- and culture-conditioned" opinions of ancient men. Peter has a word for them: They wrest Scripture to their own destruction (II Peter 3:16). And in contrast to this awful characterization, comes Christ's word to us: "Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness" (II Peter 3:17).

This is the spiritual interpretation of Scripture. It is the chief, the only rule for interpretation. It is the man who uses this rule who will be able to understand and explain the meaning of Holy Writ.

**The Scripture is to be its own interpreter,
or rather the Spirit speaking in it;
nothing can cut the diamond but the diamond;
nothing can interpret Scripture but Scripture.**

Thomas Watson

The Preaching Style of David Martyn Lloyd-Jones

Prof. Robert D. Decker

INTRODUCTION

This thesis considers in brief the life of David Martyn Lloyd-Jones and the times in which he preached. The thesis concentrates on Lloyd-Jones' theology of preaching and his style or method of preaching (Homiletics). Attention is paid to Lloyd-Jones' view of Scripture as that affected his theology and style of preaching. Because he believed Holy Scripture to be inspired and infallible, Lloyd-Jones regarded Scripture as the final and absolute authority for the faith and life of the Christian. For this reason the Scriptures must be preached.

Preaching, Lloyd-Jones believed, must be expository (exegetical) in character. A sermon is "exposition moulded into a message." The thesis finds two weaknesses in Lloyd-Jones' homiletical theory. The first is his lack of appreciation for instruction in the discipline, Homiletics. A second and more serious weakness is his lack of a clear statement of preaching as the chief means of grace.

Lloyd-Jones followed the *lectio continua* style in the sense that he preached long series of sermons on entire books of the Bible. The thesis offers a critique of this style of preaching and concludes that the strength of it is that it takes both the preacher and congregation to the text of Scripture. Its weaknesses are that it fails to convey the message, the main point of the text; and, more seriously, at least in the hands of Lloyd-Jones, this style fails to construct sermons textually. This results, the thesis concludes, in the preacher becoming sidetracked on peripheral matters and in preaching the text out of the context in which it appears.

In spite of the negative criticisms of Lloyd-Jones' homiletical theory and style of preaching, the thesis contends that he made significant contributions to the church of his day in the areas of exegesis, his doctrine of Scripture, and in preaching.

HIS LIFE AND TIMES

Early Life and Education, 1899-1915

Whatever else may be said of him, all agree, friend and foe alike, that Dr. David Martyn Lloyd-Jones was a great preacher. Some go so far as to say he was one of the greatest preachers since the Reformation.¹ "The Doctor," as he was affectionately called by his parishioners, regarded preaching as "the highest and the greatest and the most glorious calling to which anyone can ever be called."² Kenneth Kantzer is correct when he writes of Lloyd-Jones' strong convictions concerning preaching:

His retirement from Westminster Chapel in 1968 marked the end of a line of distinguished Free Church preachers in the British capital. He had worked with, or in close proximity to, well-known figures such as G. Campbell Morgan, W.R. Sangster, and Leslie Weatherhead, yet Lloyd-Jones was an original who developed his own unique type of ministry. Basic to it was his strongly held view of preaching as "the highest and greatest and the most glorious calling." To ignore that conviction is to misunderstand this gifted little Welshman.³

David Martyn, born December 20, 1899 in Cardiff, South Wales, was the middle son of Henry Lloyd-Jones and Magdalene (known as "Maggie") Evans Lloyd-Jones.⁴ In the spring of 1906 the family moved from Cardiff, "a bustling, cosmopolitan, largely English-speaking place," to Llangeitho a small town which was "... rural, isolated, old-fashioned, largely Welsh-speaking and religious."⁵ Iain Murray notes, however, that "By 1906 religion existed in Llangeitho in tradition only."⁶

Indeed, there is very little in Lloyd-Jones' family and religious background which would indicate that this man was destined by God to become a great preacher of the Reformed faith. The great revivals which swept Wales in the 1730s and which gave birth to the Calvinistic Methodist Churches had by 1906 long been forgotten. The church and religion had become quite lifeless, and Lloyd-Jones retained vivid memories of this. His father, Henry, was a nominal congregationalist who joined the Calvinist

1 John Richard deWitt, "David Martyn Lloyd-Jones: A Tribute and an Appreciation," *The Outlook*, 31, (October, 1981):2.

2 D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Preaching and Preachers*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1972), p. 9.

3 Kenneth S. Kantzer, "Martyn Lloyd-Jones: For Whom Preaching Was Paramount," *Christianity Today*, 24 (1980):145.

4 Iain H. Murray, *D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones: The First Forty Years, 1899-1938* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1983), p. 1.

5 John Peters, *Martyn Lloyd-Jones: Preacher* (Exeter, England: The Pater-noster Press, 1986), p. 14, 15.

6 Murray, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

Methodist Church in Llangeitho. He believed that: "Christianity's best work lay in achieving social change through education and political action." This belief blended well with Henry's liberal political views. Martyn's mother, "Maggie," had very little religion in her background. Her father, David Evans, was " ... a thorough pagan who made no secret of his indifference to both church and chapel."⁷ Maggie was Anglican and a Tory voter. Tories were for crown and country.⁸

Martyn received his elementary (through grade six) education in Llangeitho. In 1911 he won a scholarship to the County School in Tregaron, a town four miles from his home. Under the influence of S.M. Powell, one of his teachers, Martyn became fascinated with history, an interest which he retained throughout his life. It was also during his years in Tregaron that Martyn decided he wanted to become a doctor of medicine.

In 1913 there occurred an event which was to have a lasting effect on Lloyd-Jones. The Summer Association of Calvinistic Methodists came to Llangeitho to commemorate the bicentenary of Daniel Rowlands' birth.⁹ Four to five thousand people congregated in the open air to hear several outstanding preachers. Concerning these meetings Iain Murray quotes Lloyd-Jones as saying:

I, and most others present were deeply moved, although that is all I remember clearly about it. The Association had a deep effect upon me, and possibly the most important thing it did was to create in me an interest in the Calvinistic Methodist Fathers which has lasted until today.¹⁰

From January 1914 until August of that year the family was divided. Lloyd-Jones' father, Henry, went bankrupt. Leaving his wife and children in Tregaron so that Martyn could finish his education at the County School, Henry went to Canada in search of a new career. In this he was unsuccessful. Henry returned and settled with his family in London in August, 1914 where he secured a successful milk business. Here the family attended the Chapel at Charing Cross Road which was affiliated with the Calvinistic Methodist or Welsh Presbyterian denomination. Martyn was sent to the Marlebone Grammar School, where he was an excellent student. He attended this school from January 1915 until October 1916. On October 6, 1916, Martyn entered the prestigious medical school at St. Bartholomew's Hospital

7 *Ibid.*, pp. 2-4.

8 Peters, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

9 Daniel Rowlands was one of the leading revival preachers during the revival of the 1730s which gave birth to the Calvinistic Methodist Churches also known as the Welsh Presbyterian Church. J.C. Ryle, *Christian Leaders of the Eighteenth Century* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1978), pp. 180-215.

10 Murray, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

(hereafter, "St. Bart's,") in London. David Martyn was 16 years of age and on his way toward a career in medicine.

His Medical Career, 1916-1925

St. Bart's was a large (600 bed) teaching hospital which had produced a distinguished line of physicians and surgeons dating as far back as the 16th century. Martyn was awarded the Bachelor of Medicine and the Bachelor of Surgery degrees with distinction in 1921. In that same year he began working under Sir Thomas Horder, one of the most brilliant and sought after doctors in London. By 1923 Lloyd-Jones had risen from Horder's Junior House Physician to the position of Horder's Chief Clinical Assistant. Two years later Lloyd-Jones sustained successfully the post-graduate examination for membership in the Royal College of Physicians.

At that point in his life, while on the threshold of what promised to be a highly successful and even distinguished medical career, Lloyd-Jones began thinking of the ministry. There were several influences which led to this. Though Lloyd-Jones had publicly professed his faith in February of 1914 and had become a communicant member of the Calvinistic Methodist denomination, and though he was an active and faithful member of the Chapel at Charing Cross Road, Lloyd-Jones came to the conviction that he had never been a Christian. Said he:

For many years I thought I was a Christian when in fact I was not. It was only later that I came to see that I had never been a Christian and became one. But I was a member of a church and attended my church and its services regularly.¹¹

Lloyd-Jones became acutely aware of the uncertainty of life. One of his brothers died suddenly in 1918, and four years later his father died. Another influence which changed his thinking was the preaching of Dr. John A. Hutton at Westminster Chapel. Hutton stressed the necessity of the new birth or regeneration. This element was lacking in the preaching at Charing Cross Road, where the preacher simply assumed that all in the congregation were already converted. The most powerful influence came through his contacts with Dr. Horder's patients. Most of them were ill, not because of medical problems but because they overindulged in food and drink. Their problems, Lloyd-Jones concluded, were moral, not medical. Parallel with this was a growing awareness in his own heart that he was a sinner, dead to God. He became convinced that he could be and indeed was saved only by grace.¹² All this led to a period of intense personal struggle for the young doctor. From April 1925 to June of 1926 Lloyd-Jones wrestled with the

11 Lloyd-Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 146.

12 Murray, *op. cit.*, pp. 58-64.

question: did his life's calling lie in medicine or in preaching? Some of the factors which led him to choose the ministry were, first, the futility of life apart from God which he witnessed in his wealthy, upper-class patients; second, his sense of his own sin and worthlessness and his assurance of God's redeeming love; third, his conviction that he was saved by grace. And Lloyd-Jones simply had an overpowering desire to preach that!¹³

For a time Lloyd-Jones both preached as a lay evangelist in various Welsh Presbyterian Chapels in London and continued to practice medicine. On November 28, 1926 Martyn was invited to preach at the Bethlehem Forward Movement Church (also known as "Sandfields,") in the South Wales town of Aberavon. His text for the morning service was I Corinthians 2:9, and for the evening Lloyd-Jones preached on I Corinthians 2:2. That same week the congregation called Martyn to be its pastor. On December 22, 1926 he accepted the call as a lay evangelist. He married Bethan Phillips, herself a physician, on January 8, 1927. After a brief honeymoon, the young couple moved to Aberavon, and Martyn was installed as pastor of Sandfields, a Welsh Presbyterian Church, February 7, 1927.

Pastorate at Aberavon (Sandfields), South Wales 1926-1938

The Bethlehem Forward Mission Church was organized in 1897 through the work of two Presbyterian churches. The congregation had little success. By 1926 seven pastors had come and gone. The man who preceded Lloyd-Jones, The Rev. T.J. Lewis, who served from 1921 to 1926, left Sandfields with a "broken heart." The congregation was mired in debt. Membership declined to an average attendance of seventy in a sanctuary which could accommodate four hundred.¹⁴

Sandfields mirrored conditions in the entire denomination of the Calvinistic Methodists in the mid-twenties. Church membership and attendance were on the decline. This was true not only in Wales but in much of Great Britain as well. To arrest this trend, more emphasis was placed on liturgy and less on preaching. The educational standards for the ministry were raised. More emphasis was placed on the needs of the poor, especially in the poverty-stricken mining districts of South Wales. Others thought more emphasis should be directed to the Sunday Schools, so that the children could be reached; while still others thought preachers should get out of the chapels and churches and preach on the streets.¹⁵

Lloyd-Jones would have none of these things. He insisted on having two traditional preaching services each Sunday. In addition, there was a

13 *Ibid.*, pp. 92-101.

14 *Ibid.*, pp. 116, 117, 131, 132.

15 *Ibid.*, pp. 131-135.

Monday Prayer Meeting and a midweek meeting on Wednesday evenings. It was Lloyd-Jones' conviction that the church must not conform to the world, but it must be what God intends it to be. If the church is what God wants it to be, it will gain a hearing. Working under this conviction, Lloyd-Jones carefully prepared his sermons, initially writing them out word for word. He continued this practice until his busy schedule made it impossible. He never took a manuscript into the pulpit, however, preferring to preach from a brief outline. In addition to his preaching twice on Sundays and leading the midweek meetings, Lloyd-Jones taught a Sunday School class. Though he received no formal theological training, Lloyd-Jones was declared a ministerial candidate on April 19, 1927. On October 26, 1927 the Calvinistic Methodist Churches ordained Martyn Lloyd-Jones into the gospel ministry at "Whitefield's Tabernacle" in London.

It was not long before his preaching was much in demand. Lloyd-Jones typically preached two to four times per week in other churches and chapels throughout Wales and England. There were times not a few when his audiences numbered in the thousands.¹⁶ His first visit to North America came in the summer of 1932, when he preached for nine Sundays in the United Presbyterian Church, Sherbourne Street, in Toronto. Huge crowds came to hear his preaching at this church. During this period, Lloyd-Jones was invited to be chaplain at the Chautauque Institution, a summer vacation conference organized by the Methodist Church to aid Sunday School teachers. By 1932 it had become quite secular. The first meeting or chapel at the conference near Buffalo, New York, drew thirty people, the second, one hundred fifty, and the last led by Lloyd-Jones filled a six thousand-seat auditorium.¹⁷ Lloyd-Jones returned to Wales as a "leading evangelical." Both *The British Weekly* and *The Christian World* carried articles about his Canadian trip. An invitation to return to Sherbourne Street in 1933, and calls to be pastor of Jarvis Street Baptist Church and The Trinity United Church, both of which were in Toronto, were declined. A second visit to North America, this time at the invitation of the Evangelism Conference of The Presbyterian Church U.S.A., was made in 1937. On this trip Lloyd-Jones preached in several prestigious pulpits in New York, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, and other cities.¹⁸

In July of 1938 Lloyd-Jones resigned from the pulpit of Sandfields, giving as his reason physical and mental exhaustion. The same week he received an invitation from London's Westminster Chapel to share its pulpit with G. Campbell Morgan for six months. Morgan had heard Lloyd-Jones

16 Peters, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

17 Murray, *op. cit.*, pp. 269-275.

18 *Ibid.*, pp. 279-330.

preach on two occasions, in 1935 in Albert Hall in London and in 1937 in Philadelphia, and liked what he heard. Hence the invitation. Lloyd-Jones accepted and began this work in September in 1938. Morgan took the Sunday morning service and the Friday night Bible Class while Lloyd-Jones preached the evening services on the Lord's day. Thus he ended his eleven-year pastorate at Aberavon in Wales. In April of 1939 Lloyd-Jones accepted the call to become full-time Associate Pastor of Westminster Chapel.¹⁹

Pastor of Westminster Chapel, London, 1938-1968

The beginning of the Second World War on September 3, 1939 had two immediate effects on Lloyd-Jones' ministry at Westminster Chapel. The first was that his induction to the co-pastorate of the Chapel had to be cancelled because of the threat of the German bombing raids. The second was that until 1943 Lloyd-Jones' family lived away from London in Haslemere, Surrey. Sometime during 1944-1945 the family moved into a manse in Ealing, West London.²⁰

During most of the war Lloyd-Jones co-pastored the chapel with G. Campbell Morgan. He became sole pastor in 1943, the year in which Morgan retired. These were difficult years for the congregation. The congregation, which numbered about 2,500 during Campbell Morgan's ministry, dwindled to about 300. While the chapel roof, which had been damaged by a bomb, was being repaired, the congregation met in a borrowed hall (Livingston Hall) with about 150 people. Only about 100 to 200 were left of Morgan's great congregation.²¹ Commenting on the immediate post-war period, a time when thousands began returning to London, Lloyd-Jones said:

But we lost the vast majority of our membership; the pre-war remnant that remained was middle-aged and elderly. We developed a virtually new congregation. In 1948 attendance reached 1,300-1,400 people and we opened the first gallery. The National Centenary Exposition in 1951 brought throngs to London, and for the first time since Campbell Morgan's day the Chapel was again completely filled as 2,500 persons at times crowded the auditorium, first gallery, and balcony.²²

Lloyd-Jones' routine at Westminster varied little for the duration of his thirty-year pastorate. Aside from a two-month summer vacation, he preached two sermons each Sunday and taught the Friday Night Bible Class

19 *Ibid.*, pp. 337-350.

20 Peters, *op. cit.*, pp. 29-31.

21 Carl F.H. Henry, "Martyn Lloyd-Jones: from Buckingham to Westminster," *Christianity Today*, 24 (Feb. 8, 1980):156, 157.

22 *Ibid.*, p. 157.

each week. Often he preached in other parts of Great Britain during the week. When preaching in Wales, Lloyd-Jones invariably preached in Welsh in the afternoon and in English in the evening. Sudden illness, requiring major surgery, led him to believe it to be God's will that he retire. This he did on May 30, 1968.²³

Later Years, Itinerant Preaching, Writing 1969-1981

The thirteen years of retirement were by no means spent in idleness by Lloyd-Jones! He continued preaching and teaching in various pulpits in both Great Britain and North America. In the spring of 1969, for example, he gave at Westminster Seminary in Philadelphia a series of lectures on preaching, which lectures were published in 1971 under the title, *Preaching and Preachers*. He prepared two of his sermon series for publication: the series on Romans and the one on Ephesians. These became thirteen volumes.

This work continued until serious illness forced him in 1979 to cancel all of his engagements. He was able to preach a few more times. His last sermon in Welsh was preached in Aberystwyth on May 14, 1980, and his last sermon in English was preached at Barcombe Baptist Chapel on June 8, 1980.

On March 1, 1981, after several months of suffering in Charing Cross Hospital, David Martyn Lloyd-Jones was delivered by the Lord into glory. The Doctor was buried on March 6, 1981 at Bethel Calvinistic Methodist Chapel in Newcastle Emlyn. A Memorial Service was held at Westminster Chapel on April 6, 1981.

Conclusion: A Preacher For His Times

John Peters is certainly correct when he writes:

When he died at the age of eighty-one, M. Ll-J had lived through some of the most momentous and dramatic years in Britain's history: the post-Victorian and Edwardian eras; the constitutional upheaval caused by the abdication of Edward VIII at the end of 1936; two World Wars, with all the horrific loss of life that is inevitably a part of global fighting; the grimness of unemployment in the 1930s and the post-1945 austerity; the decline in church attendance and organized religion in general; later, the spread of pornography and the casual acceptance of lax, indeed immoral standards; the philosophy of pessimism; the ever-increasing numbers of people seeking divorce; and the inability of churchmen and politicians to provide a solution to Britain's moral degeneration.²⁴

23 Peters, *op. cit.*, pp. 35, 36.

24 *Ibid.*, p. 13.

Lloyd-Jones was born toward the end of the "horse and buggy" days. By the end of his life, man had walked on the moon. He witnessed tremendous advancements in science, industry, and medicine. These were and are a mixed blessing or both a boon and a bane. While they represent a higher quality of life, these advancements also make possible the destruction of the human race with a mere push of a button.

"In this era of voices seeking attention," writes Ralph G. Turnbull, "the preacher has had a difficult time."²⁵ One of the voices with which the preacher had to contend was that of the liberal church and its higher critical approach to Scripture which resulted in a loss of confidence in the Bible. Another was the voice of science and technology. Still another was the voice of education. University training, which formerly had been available only to the wealthy few, was now available to the masses. These voices made for difficult times for the preacher. Lloyd-Jones, however, was a notable exception to this. He simply preached the great themes of the Bible, the doctrines of grace, Christ crucified. Thousands heard him gladly. Donald MacLeod, of the Free Church College, Edinburgh, put it best when he said upon the occasion of Lloyd-Jones' death:

Conservative evangelicalism enjoys a new, and perhaps dangerous, respectability. There is an interest in the literary heritage of English-speaking Calvinism which would have been unthinkable 50 years ago. There has been a significant increase in the number of men preaching the doctrines of grace. These developments owe much to the Doctor. . . . He gave himself unsparingly to labouring in the word and in teaching. . . . That example of total commitment to preaching is his greatest legacy. For it, he turned his back on a brilliant medical career; and from it, he refused to be diverted by the plausible attractions of academic life, ecclesiastical management or a literary ministry. "Preaching," he said, "is the highest and the greatest and the most glorious calling to which anyone can ever be called."²⁶

25 Ralph G. Turnbull, *A History of Preaching*, v. III, (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1974), p. 432.

26 deWitt, *op. cit.*, pp. 2, 3.

The Error of Pentecostalism (2)

or Areas Where We Have a Biblical Problem with the
Pentecostal/Charismatic Movement and See it as Inclined
to Errors

Rev. Chris Coleborn

In the November, 1990 issue of our Journal Rev. Coleborn began his discussion of the error of Pentecostalism with an introduction to the Pentecostal/Charismatic movement. Three of the tendencies of Pentecostalism were further discussed: its tendency to a man-centered rather than God-centered faith; its tendency in the area of authority and the believer's rule of faith and life to base it upon things other than the Scriptures; and its tendency to have a defective view and practice of hermeneutics. We now continue Rev. Coleborn's discussion.

A TENDENCY TO COMPROMISE THE GREAT PILLARS OF BIBLICAL CHRISTIANITY AND PROTESTANTISM, THE "SOLAS"

We believe that the great foundational truths taught in the Bible, and thus the pillars of true biblical faith, are the principles of SOLA SCRIPTURA, SOLA DEO GLORIA, SOLO CHRISTO, SOLA FIDE, and SOLA GRATIA. (For example, Isa. 8:20; II Tim. 3:16, 17; Rom. 11:36; I Cor. 10:31; John 14:6; Eph. 1:19-22; I Tim. 2:5; Rom. 5:1; Eph. 2:8, 9; etc.)

Whilst it is true that Pentecostalism professes belief in Scripture, God's glory, Christ, faith, and grace, few are able to say "sola." For many Pentecostals, it is God's Word plus experience, or new revelations, etc., and not Scripture alone.¹

For many it is grace and faith, but also the addition of our works of experience and the charismata, and not faith and grace alone that saves us. Salvation or justification is made, by some, more than faith alone. They add the gifts! In fact, some teach that one cannot be a true believer, unless he has had the "baptism of the Holy Spirit," and manifests this in speaking in tongues.

1 Butler, C.S., *Test the Spirits*, Evangelical Press, Welwyn, 1985, pp. 71ff.

For many it is Christ, but also the addition of self and a resting on experience or simply a "decision" for salvation, and not Christ alone for salvation. There is also the tendency to neglect the atonement of Christ; and soteriology is not so much concerned with the atonement and work of Christ, as with the gifts and work of the Spirit.

The glory of God is often spoken of, yet the man-centered theology inherent in Pentecostalism denies all the glory of God.

A TENDENCY TO ERR IN THE AREA OF JUSTIFICATION AND SANCTIFICATION

Pentecostalists tend to confuse justification and sanctification. We understand justification, to use the words of our Larger Catechism, biblically to be:

a saving grace, wrought in the heart of a sinner by the Spirit and Word of God, whereby he, being convinced of his sin and misery, and of the disability in himself and all other creatures to recover him out of his lost condition, not only assenteth to the truth of the promise of the gospel, but receiveth and resteth upon Christ and His righteousness, therein held forth, for pardon of sin, and for the accepting and accounting of his person righteous in the sight of God for salvation.

We understand sanctification to be:

a work of God's grace, whereby they whom God hath, before the foundation of the world, chosen to be holy, are in time, through the powerful operation of His Spirit applying the death and resurrection of Christ unto them, renewed in their whole man after the image of God; having the seeds of repentance unto life, and all other saving graces, put into their hearts, and those graces so stirred up, increased, and strengthened, as that they more and more die unto sin, and rise unto newness of life.

Larger Catechism number 77 teaches us that these two great doctrines of God's grace differ.

Although sanctification be inseparably joined with justification, yet they differ, in that God in justification imputeth the righteousness of Christ; in sanctification His Spirit infuseth grace, and enableth to the exercise thereof; in the former, sin is pardoned; in the other it is subdued: the one doth equally free all believers from the revenging wrath of God, and that perfectly in this life, that they never fall into condemnation; the other is neither equal in all, nor in this life perfect in any, but growing up to perfection.

Pentecostalists are prone not to recognize the differences, and to see sanctification as justification, and to base our acceptance by God upon that which is worked in us, or perceived as God's work in us, as distinct from an

act of God once and for all. Or, on the other hand, to see sanctification as an act, rather than a work, and think we are made perfectly holy by the act of faith in Christ. Righteousness is seen by some as a grace "infused" in us, rather than a judicial act of God based on Christ's work alone.

For many Pentecostalists, sanctification is defined in terms of the *gifts* of the Holy Spirit (healings, working of miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, tongues, interpretation of tongues, etc. — cf. I Cor. 12:4ff.). The things most often longed for, esteemed, and sought after are the extraordinary manifestations of the apostolic era, the "power" of the apostles, and the Holy Spirit, etc.

The work often looked for in believers subsequent to conversion is not increase of biblical knowledge, wisdom, grace, and the *fruits* of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, etc. — cf. Gal. 5:22ff.). Holiness and a godly walk as historically understood as the subsequent work of the Holy Spirit are neglected or ignored.²

Sanctification is all too often seen as an emotional state, and "power" rather than a conformity to the objective standards of God's holy law and revelation. Sanctification is tested by a very subjective standard. This is not to say sanctification is not a profound internal and spiritual work, but it is to have objective fruits, and to be judged by an objective standard. Charles Rodman points this out when he writes:

The fact that the extra-ordinary gifts had no connection with the power of godliness is seen in the Church at Corinth. Although the members of the Church possessed a variety of extra-ordinary gifts, yet we read of them being beset with contention and division, etc., of whom the Apostle says they were yet carnal (I Cor. 3:3).³

2 For a historical treatment of sanctification, see for example, Smeaton, George, *The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit*, Banner of Truth, Edinburgh, 1980, pp. 221ff.; Buchanan, James, *The Office and Work of the Holy Spirit*, Banner of Truth, London, 1966, pp. 239ff.; Vaughan, C.R., *The Gifts of the Holy Spirit*, Banner of Truth, Edinburgh, 1975, pp. 211ff.; Bickersteth, Edward Henry, *The Holy Spirit; His Person and Work*, Kregel, Grand Rapids, 1976, pp. 140ff.; Dick, John, *Lectures on Theology*, Applegate & Co., Cincinnati, 1856, pp. 396ff.; Dabney, R.L., *Lectures in Systematic Theology*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, 1972, pp. 660ff.; Hoeksema, Herman, *Reformed Dogmatics*, Reformed Free Publishing Association, Grand Rapids, 1966, pp. 520ff.; Berkhof, Louis, *Systematic Theology*, Banner of Truth, London, 1966, pp. 527ff.

3 Rodman, Charles L., *Facts That the Charismatic Enthusiasts Are not Prepared to Consider*, Article in "The Evangelical Presbyterian Magazine," Launceston.

The blessed peace of justification can be destroyed by the bondage of a "performance syndrome." That is, "If you do this, God will do that," "If you pray and ask for something, and you do not get it, it is because you do not have enough faith," if you do not "save" so many souls, there is something wrong with you.

A TENDENCY TO IMBALANCE IN PROCLAIMING THE WHOLE COUNSEL OF GOD

The Apostle himself declares how important the whole counsel of God is for the church both to believe and to declare.

Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God (Acts 20:26, 27).

In Pentecostalism, there is a movement away from the central doctrines of the Word of God, such as the nature and attributes of God, of Christ the Mediator, God's covenant, sin, atonement, salvation, the law, service, etc., to an excessive pre-occupation with the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, such as extra-ordinary gifts, the extra-ordinary devils, "higher experiences," etc. It is not that these matters are not in the Word of God, it is that they are taken out of context all too often, and dealt with out of proportion and emphasis to how Scripture itself deals with them, and the weightier matters of the Word are all too often overlooked.

There is a selective use of Scripture, not a full-orbed and comprehensive use. This also leads to inconsistencies between biblical doctrine and practice. For example, many Pentecostals make much ado about prophets and their prophecies, yet the tests Scripture gives about true and false prophets (Deut. 13:1-5; 18:22) is all too often overlooked, and many so-called prophets have made predictions that have proved false, yet they have not been rejected. In many circles, women are allowed to minister publicly in the church, and there are also women ministers, in spite of the fact that Scripture forbids women to hold such office (I Tim. 2:11, 12). Another example of an all too common inconsistency is the insistence of many that speaking in tongues is the proof of having received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, though Paul clearly teaches in I Corinthians 12:29, 30, that there are diversities of manifestations of the Spirit in the church, and not all have the gift of tongues.⁴

A TENDENCY TO ANTI-NOMIANISM

Most Pentecostals are dispensationalists. They are thus prone to have a low view of the law of God. The old cliché of "not under the law but

4 See Macleod, Donald, *The Spirit of Promise*, Christian Focus Publications, Fearn, Tain, 1986, pp. 93ff. for further discussion along this line.

grace" and "love, not the law," is heard. God's law as summarized in the ten commandments, is belittled, or ignored. Our understanding of the moral law is summarized in the Westminster Confession of Faith, chapter XIX, Article V, which reads:

The moral law doth for ever bind all, as well justified persons as others, to the obedience thereof; and that, not only in regard of the matter contained in it, but also in respect of the authority of God the Creator, who gave it. Neither doth Christ in the Gospel, any way dissolve, but much strengthen this obligation.

Thus there is a tendency for libertinism, that is, every man does what is right in his own eyes. They would say we are not to be too judgmental. Worldliness, such as sabbath desecration, is common.⁵ The guilt over sin that the law brings is not really evident in such professors. There is little sense of sin and remaining corruption. There is little appreciation of the law as a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, or as a rule of thankfulness for salvation given in Christ.

Many Pentecostalists teach that the law is perfectly kept by Christians (perfectionism),⁶ and this has a tendency to make such people indifferent to the law, and its role in the life of the believer.

A TENDENCY TO AN UN-BIBLICAL WORLD AND LIFE VIEW

It appears from the writings and observable practices of Pentecostals that they are inclined to view life and the world around us as an extraordinary world, and that life exists in a state of perpetual extra-ordinary happenings, and not ordinary. They "look for miracles" every day in daily life, as it were. Thus there is a problem with the use of means and second causes (cf. Westminster Confession of Faith, chapter V, Articles II & III).

Shaw expresses our understanding of God's Word when he writes:

In His ordinary providence God works by means, and according to the general laws established by His own wisdom: we are therefore, bound to use the means which He has appointed, and if we neglect these, we cannot expect to obtain the end.⁷

Practically this means several things. In the area of health, for example, there is a reliance on treatment by prayer and faith-healings and fastings, and to see this as the proper way to deal with such matters.⁸ It is not that we believe we ought not to pray for healing when sick. It is just that

5 Gruits, Patricia Beall, *Understanding God*, Whitaker House, Pittsburgh, 1975, p. 90.

6 *Ibid.*, p. 77.

7 Shaw, Robert, *The Reformed Faith: An Exposition of the Westminster Confession of Faith*, Christian Focus Publications, Inverness, 1974, p. 69.

8 See, for example, Rice, John, R., *The Charismatic Movement*, Sword of the Lord Publishers, Murfreesboro, 1977, p. 187.

we understand, in opposition to Pentecostalism, that we are called of God at the same time to use whatever practical means are within our reach. In the area of guidance, there is a tendency to be led by "signs" or, as some speak of it, as "putting out a fleece." Some extra-ordinary happening will be used to guide in a matter, or an extra-ordinary meaning is read into some quite ordinary happening, and used for decision-making. In the areas of mission work and the support of the ministry, as another example, there is the concept of "faith missions." That is, men believe that if they go out to serve God, He will "just provide." Of course, God can do that, and has at various times done so. But the ordinary way we are to expect help is to use the means of support from the church of God. It is only in extra-ordinary circumstances, such as in times of persecution, etc., that we can expect assistance from God without the use of means.

In this area of sickness, there is also the tendency to see sickness as a result of a specific sin we have committed, and not simply as part of the general curse. It is similar to the view that some Jews had in Bible times.

This world is often viewed as the devil's world. It is not so much the sovereignty of God in the world, but Satan. It is not so much the imminence of God, but the devil. Many are in fear and dread of the devil. They are seeing spirits good and evil around them, and are in bondage to fear of evil spirits and the power of the devil. There is seemingly a preoccupation in some quarters with devil-possession and having evil spirits. Often personal responsibility is denied or weakened by blaming un-Christian habits and actions on the devil or some evil spirit. There is not much appreciation for the natural corruption of the heart.

Whilst the Lord and spiritual things are seen as related to all of life (and this essentially is correct, we believe), there is a tendency to see life only in terms of invisible and subjective concepts.

Pentecostalists tend to neglect or play down, in various ways, the use of means and of second causes.

AN INCLINATION TO ERROR IN THE AREA OF APOLOGETICS

When it comes to the matter of giving a reason for the hope that lies within us (I Pet. 3:15), many Pentecostalists resort to, and rely upon, a "feeling" or "experience" as the basis for their reason. They are essentially subjective or existential in their apologetics. The objective revelation of God in creation and Scripture is often not appreciated. It is not that there is not a place, a necessary place, for feelings and experience; it is just that we believe our apology ought to be based upon objective data. This is surely the Scriptural pattern. For example, Jephthah's argument (Jud. 11:12-28); the way this matter is dealt with in the Psalms (e.g., Ps. 105); Luke's approach (Luke 1:1-4); Stephen's apology (Acts 7); Paul's argued basis of

the gospel (Rom. 1:1- 4); the basis John uses to argue the trust-worthiness of the gospel (1 John 1:1- 4); etc.⁹

A TENDENCY TO AN IMPROPER UNDERSTANDING OF THE TRINITY AND THE WORKS AND PROPERTIES OF THE PERSONS OF THE GODHEAD

The doctrine of the Trinity is a commonly held belief among Pentecostals, though there are exceptions.¹⁰ There is a tendency, however, not to deny, but to distort the biblical work of the “persons” of the Godhead. There is an unbiblical emphasis on the Holy Spirit in many quarters, at the cost of the Father and the Son, and their respective works. The “procession” of the Holy Spirit from the Father and Son is not appreciated. One thus can find Pentecostal writers arguing for “the supremacy of the Holy Spirit,” and “to make Him our Lord and Ruler.”¹¹

It is simply a matter of observation, that nearly all Pentecostals make the doctrine of the person and works of the Holy Spirit to be almost the major Person and work of the Godhead. But this is not the emphasis of Scripture. The Scriptures teach that the Holy Spirit is to glorify Christ (John 16:13, 14); and acts not by Himself, but “proceeds” from the Father and Son (John 15:26), and is called the Spirit of Christ and of the Son (Rom. 8:9; Gal. 4:6). It is soteriology, and the character and person and works of the Father and Son that are preeminently emphasized in Scripture, not the Holy Spirit, though we glorify Him with the Father and Son, the Triune God of our salvation.

A TENDENCY TO ERR IN THE AREA OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH

There are several areas in their doctrine and attitude towards the church where Pentecostals leave themselves open, we believe, for criticism. We mention several.

9 For an excellent discussion on why we cannot rely upon our feelings to guide us into truth, see Edwards, Jonathan, *The Religious Affections*, Select Works of, Vol. 3, Banner of Truth Trust, London, 1961. For a discussion on the objective witness of history to Christ, see Anderson, J.N.D., *Christianity: The Witness of History*, Tyndale Press, London, 1972.

10 Humphreys, Robert, and Ward, Rowland, *Religious Bodies in Australia*, Published by the authors, Melbourne, 1986, pp. 148, 149.

11 *The Holy Spirit*, Maranatha Revival Crusade, Secunderabad, p. 26. See Gaffin, Richard B., Jr., *Perspectives on Pentecost, New Testament Teaching on the Gifts of the Holy Spirit*, Presbyterian & Reformed, Phillipsburg, 1979, pp. 48, 49, for the Trinitarian nature of Gifts, which Pentecostals generally ignore.

The Basis of Unity

Pentecostalists rightly, on the whole, have a catholic view of the church. They believe in its universality and unity. The problem is that all too often their unity and bond is found, not in the common profession of a body of objective doctrines and practices (that is, "the faith once delivered to the saints"), but rather in a common experience. The Pentecostal movement is generally very ecumenical. For example, one can observe Evangelical and Fundamental Pentecostalists quite happily fraternizing with Roman Catholics and Liberals.¹²

Many Pentecostalists are attracted to a strong personality, and set up leaders to be followed even when those leaders have shown themselves all too often to be unworthy of respect and as incompetent undershepherds. The secular media, sadly, is often illustrating this point.

There is little parity of the eldership, the biblical pattern, and the commitment of members is all too often to personality and experience rather than to a body of belief and practice, and the living out of those beliefs and practices. Few if any Pentecostal churches are Presbyterian in government. They are more an oligarchy or an autocratic rule.

The Continuity of the Church

Many Pentecostalists are dispensational, and this affects their view of the church, and presents, in our analysis, various problems with regard to the church. For example, many cannot conceive of the church of Jesus Christ existing before the day of Pentecost. It was as if Abraham never "saw Christ's day and was glad" (John 8:56).

They lose the history of the church in the Old Testament, and see it only as useful, all too often, for illustrating New Testament truths, never as containing data and truths that the New Testament does not contain (for example, Psalm 22 speaking of things that Jesus Christ our Lord thought and felt whilst on the cross that are not recorded in the gospels).

Most Pentecostalists are baptistic in their view of the church and the place of children in it. Few are Covenantal and paedobaptist. They view the church only as New Testament, and so children are viewed as not members because Pentecostalists fail to see their covenantal relationship to the Lord.

Church membership is very individualized, and the family and children are not seen as integral parts of the structure of the church, though Pentecostalists are pro-family and children. All too often children are seen

12 See Butler, C.S., *op. cit.*, pp. 52, 102ff.; Gromacki, Robert G., *The Modern Tongues Movement*, Presbyterian & Reformed, Phillipsburg, 1972, appendix IV; Budgen, Victor, *The Charismatics and the Word of God*, Evangelical Press, Durham, 1989, pp. 153, 207ff., etc. for an example of this sort of thing.

almost as "pagans," and, until they have had a conversion "experience," are not seen as within the church of God. They tend to be vague and uncertain about the salvation of children who are not capable of an intelligent faith and profession, and often say they are saved if they die in infancy, because of God's love. The great facts of original sin, the need of atonement, even for a newborn child, seems to be unappreciated. Many of these things, we suggest, are the result of their dispensational thinking, and their neglect of the Old Testament, and the essential unity of the church and the Old and New Testaments.¹³

They Tend to a Mystical View of the Church

Pentecostalists tend to neglect the visible organized aspect of the church. The church is seen as made up chiefly of those who have had "an experience of the Holy Ghost." It makes classes of Christians, so that even in those instances where they might allow that one can be a true believer, and not have had the baptism of the Holy Spirit, such are seen as "inferior" or "weak" believers. They tend to make the church to exist within the church. This is especially true of this movement when it enters more orthodox denominations. One group is seen as more spiritual than the other. Pentecostalism has a sad record of causing schism in the body of Christ, partly because of their lack of appreciation for the visible church, and the importance of it.

Pentecostalists Neglect Biblically Regulated Worship

Macleod draws out this point. He writes:

The Reformers' approach to worship, for example, was governed by the Puritan principle: Nothing was to be imposed on the worshipping congregation unless it was sanctioned by Scripture. . . . Furthermore, they regarded it as critical. . . . There could be no bishops, no altars, no incense, no vestments, no Prayer Book because there was no authority for such things in the Word of God. Today, however, people . . . want to introduce ballet, mime, and drama into the church's worship. People who claim to be calling us back to primitive, apostolic Christianity are creating a new ecclesiastical office: choreographer. It does not occur to such men to ask, Is there divine authority for this? Far less do they think of asking, On what plane does worship operate? Is it on the horizontal (what people like) or on the vertical (what is well-pleasing to God)? Our plays, mimes, and dramas may be very enjoyable and even

13 For a discussion on how many Pentecostalists (dispensationalists) wrongly view the church, see Crenshaw, Curtis I. and Gunn, Grover E., *Dispensationalism Today, Yesterday, and Tomorrow*, Footstool Publications, Memphis, 1987, pp. 136ff.

deeply moving. But have we any reason whatever to think that God wants them and is pleased with them?¹⁴

THERE IS AN INCLINATION TO ERR IN WHAT THE BASIS OF ASSURANCE OF SALVATION IS

We understand that the basis upon which assurance of salvation rests is the objective promises of God in His Word, though we readily acknowledge that this assurance is also a subjective work of grace in our conscious and emotional being.

Many Pentecostalists, because of the very subjective and emotional nature of their profession, place their assurance upon their feelings, and have a faith based upon that. Of course, feelings fluctuate, and thus their assurance is often shaken and uncertain. They also tend to think that if they have no "sense" of the "presence" of the Lord, they have lost their salvation. Many suffer acute doubts and fears if they cannot maintain an "emotional high" in spiritual matters.

The only sure foundation for our assurance is a faith resting, not upon our feelings, but upon the finished work of God, the Lord of our salvation, in Christ Jesus (cf. Dabney and the example of "will the bridge carry me across?").

Most Pentecostalists, because of this tendency to base one's assurance of salvation upon self and an inward sense, believe that one can truly be saved, but then be lost again, and they deny the wonderful doctrine of the perseverance of the saints.

This tendency to "emotionalism" has rather sad consequences at times in other areas. For example, those with a really credible profession of faith are often all their life in terrors, and with no peace and happiness in believing. Of course, Pentecostalists are not unique in having this problem. Even some "strains" of professing Reformed believers suffer from it as well. It is just that Pentecostalism is more liable to this than are other professions. It can lead to a real spiritual instability of life. Instability not only "spiritual," but also instability in relationships and family and work and life generally. It can tie people up in a world of doubt and uncertainty. Pentecostalists tend to try to make decisions based upon uncertain and changeable promptings, as feelings tend to be. Health, even the state of the weather, etc., thus twist and turn such believers.

Whilst zeal is commended to us in Scripture, it is commended with the

14 MacLeod, Donald, "Has the Charismatic Age Ceased," Article *The Banner of Truth Magazine*, Banner of Truth Trust, Edinburgh, No. 85, October, 1979. pp. 96, 97. See also Budgen, Victor, *op. cit.*, p. 223 for further discussion on this matter, especially the introduction of drama into the worship of the church.

qualification of knowledge (Ps. 47:7). Much of the zeal in Pentecostal circles, because of its emotional base, becomes so much “hype” at times. To be accepted and seen as “excelling,” and to be respected and looked up to, it is expected that one must “perform.” Thus, there is a pressure to keep on a “high,” and meetings for worship and the life of the church are kept on an artificial level of high emotional tension. This often leads to “burn out” or emotional exhaustion, with resultant personality disturbances and depression.

HOW PENTECOSTALISM IS A CHALLENGE TO REFORMED BELIEVERS

J.C. Ryle, when asked on one occasion why the Lord allowed the Quakers to exist, answered along the line that they were not right just because they had success with numbers. Ryle pointed out that we could not deny that God in His providence allowed them to come into existence for a purpose. He saw them as a rebuke in some ways to the “established” churches. So too, it seems to me, there are some aspects of Pentecostalism that we perhaps need rebuking over, and that we should take stock of the state of affairs in our own house.

Bruner also makes a similar point when he writes:

In terms of the church’s theology and mission Pentecostalism’s significance may be that it incarnates a neglected reality of the New Testament church: the Holy Spirit in the experience of believers. What to some may seem an overemphasis of the Spirit and especially of the Spirit’s more noticeable operations may, perhaps, be intended to startle the church into an awareness of its little emphasis of the same Spirit. Perhaps in the divine perspective a church that gives too much attention to the Spirit is no more culpable — perhaps less — than a church that gives him too little. Perhaps the Pentecostal movement is a voice — albeit an ecstatic and at times a harsh voice — calling the people to hear what the Spirit is capable of saying to and doing with a church that listens.¹⁵

I suggest the following examples may be areas in which we can be challenged by Pentecostalism: First, reality of day-by-day walk with the Lord and in His ways. Second, the zeal and commitment and enthusiasm and incentive that they have to serve the Lord and to get things done. Third, their witness and sharing and speaking out. They are very open to speak of the Lord. When together, there is prolonged and serious discussion, not simply chit-chat. Fourth, they are well-organized to gather and nurture.

15 Bruner, Frederick Dale, *A Theology of the Holy Spirit*, William Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1976, p. 33.

And, fifth, their desire to see all of life as spiritual, and the Lord in all things.

CONCLUSION

Pentecostalism is a movement that cannot be ignored today. I believe that only the Reformed faith can satisfactorily answer the claims, and refute the teachings of it. I believe it is not compatible with the theology of the Reformation, and thus not compatible with the teachings of God's Word. Whilst there are some things we can appreciate about it, and can recognize there are true believers in it, yet it contains serious errors, and is inclined to errors, that hamper the cause of truth and the health of the church.

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Augustine's Doctrine of the Trinity in *De Trinitate* (On the Trinity)

Prof. David J. Engelsma

"In no other subject than the inquiry into the unity of the Trinity, of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, is error more dangerous, or inquiry more laborious, or the discovery of truth more profitable."

— Augustine, *De Trinitate*, 1.3.5¹

Introduction

Augustine's *De Trinitate* represents the thinking on trinitarian doc-

1 The translation of *De Trinitate* that I have used for this article is that of Arthur West Haddan in *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, First Series, Volume III, published by Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1956. All quotations from and references to *De Trinitate* are from this translation, unless otherwise noted. I have compared this translation with that of Stephen McKenna in *The Fathers of the Church*, Volume 45, published by The Catholic University of America Press, 1963. I have also compared important passages and expressions in translation with the original Latin. The Latin edition used was *Sancti Aurelii Augustini: De Trinitate Libri XV*, in *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina L, LA* (Turnholt: Typographi Brepols Editores Pontificii, MCMLXVIII). All quotations in Latin are from this work.

2 Vernon J. Bourke, *Augustine's Quest of Wisdom* (Milwaukee, WI: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1947), p. 202.

trine of the mature Augustine. Vernon J. Bourke informs us that Augustine wrote *De Trinitate* "in the first seventeen years of the fifth century."² William G. T. Shedd, in his introductory essay to Arthur West Haddan's translation of *De Trinitate*, asserts that Augustine "devoted nearly thirty years of his matured life to its composition (A. D. 400 to 428)."³

Composed of fifteen books, the work divides into two distinct sections. The first seven books set forth the church's doctrine of the Trinity from Scripture.

First, however, we must demonstrate, according to the authority of the Holy Scriptures, whether the faith be so (1.2.4). In these books, Augustine is exegetical. The last eight books are a rational defense of the doctrine by means of analogies that Augustine thinks to discover in creation, especially in the soul of man. These books are highly speculative. This distinction cannot be pressed too strictly, however, for in Book 13 is found a marvelous treatment of the incarnation, including discussions of man's fallen state and of the atonement which is the goal of the incarnation. This treatment is replete with exegesis, particularly exegesis of John 1:1-14.

De Trinitate is recognized, well-nigh universally, as one of the greatest works on the Trinity in the history of Christian thought, as well as a work of massive influence on the subsequent thinking of the church. M. Schmaus, author of what is regarded by Roman Catholics as the finest commentary on *De Trinitate*, said of it:

It surpasses in profundity of thought and in wealth of ideas, all the other works of the great Doctor, and is the grandest monument in Catholic theology to the august mystery of the Most Holy Trinity.⁴

The Presbyterian, B. B. Warfield, wrote that "at the hands of Augustine . . . the doctrine (of the Trinity—DJE) . . . received its most complete elaboration and most carefully grounded statement."⁵ H. Bavinck, the Reformed theologian, regarded *De Trinitate* as "the most learned discourse on this

3 *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, ed. Philip Schaff, First Series, Volume III (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1956), p. 4.

4 M. Schmaus, quoted in *The Fathers of the Church*, Volume 45: *Saint Augustine: The Trinity*, trans. Stephen McKenna (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1963), p. xvi.

5 B.B. Warfield, "The Biblical Doctrine of the Trinity," in *Biblical Doctrines* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1929), p. 170. Cf. also B.B. Warfield, "Augustine," in *Studies in Tertullian and Augustine* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1930), p. 115: "...the 'De Trinitate' (395-420), in which its final formulation was given to the Christian doctrine of the Trinity."

dogma that was ever written.”⁶

As for the influence of the work, it was formative of the Athanasian Creed. In sections 10-20 of the Athanasian Creed, “The Father eternal: the Son eternal: and the Holy Ghost eternal. And yet they are not three eternal: but one eternal,” etc., the echo is heard of Augustine’s sonorous refrain in 5.8.9 of *De Trinitate*:

For as the Father is God, and the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God . . . yet we do not say that the very supreme Trinity itself is three Gods, but one God. So the Father is great, the Son great, and the Holy Spirit great; yet not three greats, but one great. . . . And the Father is good, the Son good, and the Holy Spirit good; yet not three goods, but one good.

Also, Augustine’s insistence on the *filioque* played a powerful role in the establishing of this doctrine in the Western church. Not only did this lead to the Great Schism in the eleventh century, but it also had very important doctrinal and practical effects in the Western church inasmuch as the work of the Spirit in the church was seen as the work of the Spirit of the Son.

AUGUSTINE’S PURPOSE WITH *DE TRINITATE*

De Trinitate is not simply Augustine’s positive development of the doctrine of the Trinity: The work is also apologetical and polemical. It is directed against the Arians. The original title is *De Trinitate contra Arianos libri quindecim* (*On the Trinity against the Arians in Fifteen Books*). Augustine makes his polemical purpose plain in the opening line:

The following dissertation concerning the Trinity . . . has been written in order to guard against the sophistries of those who disdain to begin with faith and are deceived by a crude and perverse love of reason.

Augustine names the Arians as the “adversaries of our faith” whom he is opposing:

Wherefore,—to being now to answer the adversaries of our faith, respecting those things also, which are neither said as they are thought, nor thought as they really are:—among the many things which the Arians are wont to dispute against the Catholic faith, they seem chiefly to set forth this (5.3.4).

The Arians appealed to the biblical testimony that Christ is less than the Father, especially John 14:28: “My Father is greater than I.” Although he also takes the opposite, Sabellian error into account in the course of the

6 H. Bavinck, *Gereformeerde Dogmatiek*, Tweede Deel, Derde Onveranderde Uitgave (Kampen: J.H. Kok, 1918), p. 291: “Zijne (Augustinus’) 15 boeken *de trinitate* zijn het diepste, wat over dit dogma geschreven is” (“His — Augustine’s — 15 books, *De Trinitate*, are the most profound treatment of this dogma ever written”).

work, Augustine's main concern is the defense of the church's doctrine of the Trinity against the Arian attack on the oneness of the Godhead.

This goes far to explain certain outstanding features of Augustine's trinitarian doctrine—his stress on the oneness of God; his insistence on the equality of the Son with the Father; and his opposition to all subordinationism. By denying the full Deity of the Son (and of the Spirit), while still calling the Son (and the Spirit) "God," the Arians denied the oneness of the Godhead, falling into a form of tritheism. The Father is God and the Son is also a God after a fashion, as is the Holy Spirit; but they are not one and the same divine being. There are, therefore, for the Arians three, different Gods. This is precisely the error of the cult of the Jehovah's Witnesses in our day. Denying that Jesus is one in being with the Father, but yet forced by the witness of Scripture to call Jesus "god," they assert a plurality of divine beings, thus denying God's oneness. Although claiming to be zealous for God's oneness, Arius sinned against the oneness by denying that the Son is the one God, "of the same substance with the Father."

The church can maintain the oneness of God only by confessing the full Deity of the three Persons. Not only is the truth of the three divine Persons in harmony with the truth of God's oneness, but also the truth of the three Persons is necessary for the truth of oneness. The oneness of the God of Scripture, the living, true God, can be held only by confession of the threeness of Persons.

What is required of him by the heretics, Augustine himself expresses in 1.2.4:

(to demonstrate) that the Trinity is the one and only and true God, and also how the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are rightly said, believed, understood, to be of one and the same substance or essence.

In this, he will show himself a faithful defender of the catholic, or church, teaching on the Trinity. This teaching is

that the Father and the Son, and the Holy Spirit intimate a divine unity of one and the same substance in an indivisible equality; and therefore that they are not three Gods, but one God: Although the Father hath begotten the Son, and so He who is the Father is not the Son; and the Son is begotten by the Father, and so He who is the Son is not the Father; and the Holy Spirit is neither the Father nor the Son but only the Spirit of the Father and of the Son, Himself also co-equal with the Father and the Son, and pertaining to the unity of the Trinity (1.4.7).

"This," writes Augustine, "is also my faith, since it is the Catholic faith" (1.4.7).

AUGUSTINE'S TRINITARIAN FAITH

In God are both substance and relations (5.5.6). According to substance, God is one. According to relations, God is three.

Augustine finds it necessary to clarify the terminology by which the church speaks of the oneness and of the threeness of God, especially because there is some difference between the terminology employed by the Greek church and that used by the Latin church. The Greeks speak of "*una essentia, tres substantiae*" ("one essence, three substances"); the Latins rather speak of "*una essentia uel substantia, tres personae*" ("one essence or substance, three persons") (7.4.7; cf. also 5.8.9 and 5.9.10). Since among the Latins "substance" has the same meaning as "essence," "we do not dare to say one essence, three substances, but one essence or substance and three persons" (5.9.10). Besides, substance is unsatisfactory to express the threeness of God since it does not denote relationship (7.4.9). Augustine recognizes that the difference in terminology is merely that, indicating no doctrinal difference between the Greek and the Latin theologians.

Augustine's starting point is the oneness of the Godhead. This oneness is the numerical oneness of the "nature itself, or substance, or essence, or by whatever other name that very thing, which is God, whatever it be, is to be called" (2.18.35). Each of the Persons shares fully this one essence with all its attributes. Therefore, there are not three greatneses, three eternals, three goodnesses, or three Gods; but there is one God, one greatness, one eternal, and one goodness (5.8.9).

It is an essential element of this oneness that the working of the three Persons *ad extra* is indivisible. Time and again, Augustine repeats of all three Persons what he writes of the Father and the Son in 1.8.15: "For the working of the Father and of the Son is indivisible." By a theory of appropriations, Augustine assigns certain works to each of the Persons, e.g., creation to the Father, redemption to the Son, and renewal to the Spirit. Such works are appropriate to the individual Persons in accordance with their relations and order in the Godhead, but in reality what the One works, the Others work also. Perichoresis also contributes to the oneness. This is the mutual inexistence of the three Persons, as taught in John 14:11: "Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me." Basic to the indivisibility of work and to the perichoresis is the oneness of essence.

So rigorously does Augustine conceive the oneness that "for the most part each Person of the Trinity is so named, that the other Persons also may be understood" (1.10.21). The threeness of God may not be made to imperil the oneness. "Trinity" is not 'triple' ("*nec quoniam trinitas est ideo triplex putandus est*," 6.7.9). Augustine seems expressly to state that his chief concern is the understanding of the unity of God: "Wherefore, since we desire to understand the eternity, and equality, and unity of the Trinity, as much as is permitted us. . ." (8.5.8).

Nevertheless, Augustine's approach in *De Trinitate* to the truth of the one God, indeed to the entire doctrine of the Trinity, is noteworthy. It is the approach of proving from Scripture the Deity, first of the Son, Jesus, and then of the Holy Spirit. The question with which Augustine opens up the doctrine of the Trinity in 1.6.9 is the question whether "our Lord Jesus Christ is . . . God, or . . . very God, or . . . with the Father the One and only God." Augustine's immediate answer is that Jesus is the One and only God with the Father on the basis of the testimony of John 1:1-14. In 1.6.13, he likewise affirms and proves the Deity of the Holy Spirit.

One wonders whether there is a significant difference in approach to the doctrine of the Trinity on the part of the Greek Fathers and on the part of Augustine, as is proposed by R. Garrigou-Lagrange:

(Augustine) did not begin with the three persons as did the Greek Fathers but rather with the unity of the divine nature.

In these two, allegedly quite different approaches, Garrigou-Lagrange sees two corresponding difficulties:

In the Greek approach it is difficult to safeguard the unity of nature, while in the Augustinian approach, starting with the unity of nature, it is difficult to safeguard the distinction between the persons and those things which are proper or appropriated to the persons.⁷

Is it not a mistake to suppose that Augustine constructs his doctrine of the Trinity from a conception of the oneness of the Godhead to which is then added the truth of the threeness of God? Does this not imply that Augustine's doctrine is abstract and his method, academic? Does this not misrepresent his approach, to say nothing of his concern of soul, which in fact is the practical, typically Christian approach to the doctrine of the Trinity, namely, facing the question, "Who is this Jesus called the Christ?"

In any case, having demonstrated the Deity both of the Son and the Spirit, Augustine affirms their equality with the Father in the Godhead. The argument against the full Deity of the Son based on the testimony of Scripture that the Father is greater than Jesus, Augustine answers by appealing to the two natures of Jesus after the incarnation:

And not, therefore, without cause the Scripture says both the one and the other, both that the Son is equal to the Father, and that the Father is greater than the Son. For there is no confusion when the former is understood as on account of the form of God and the latter as on account of the form of a servant (1.7.14).

There is no subordination of the Son to the Father, nor of the Holy Spirit to the Son or to the Father. Bavinck says that in Augustine, "all subordination-

7 Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, *The Trinity and God the Creator*, trans. F.C. Eckhoff (London: B. Herder Book Co., 1952), pp. 66, 67.

ism is banished.”⁸ Adolf Harnack speaks of “a complete obliteration of every remnant of subordinationism.”⁹ And Warfield refers to Augustine’s “fundamental principle of equalization in his construction of the Trinitarian relations.”¹⁰

“Equalization,” not identification. As strongly and clearly as Augustine teaches the oneness of God, so strongly and clearly does he teach the threeness of God. Although he recognizes that “human language labors altogether under great poverty of speech” in answering the question, “What three?,” and although he acknowledges that the answer, “three ‘persons,’” is given, “not that it might be spoken, but that it might not be left unspoken,” he declares:

For, in truth, as the Father is not the Son, and the Son is not the Father, and that Holy Spirit who is also called the gift of God is neither the Father nor the Son, certainly they are three (5.9.10).

No matter how firmly the church holds to the oneness of the essence of God, “it could not say that there were not three somewhats (*tria quaedam*), for it was because Sabellius said this that he fell into heresy” (7.4.9).

There are three Subsistences in God distinguished by their relations: of the Father that He begets the Son and spirates the Spirit, but is Himself unbegotten and unspirated; of the Son that He is begotten of the Father and spirates the Spirit; and of the Spirit that He is spirated by the Father and by the Son. “It is one thing to God to be, another to subsist” (7.4.9). The church calls these Subsistences “Persons,” says Augustine,

by which names it did not intend diversity to be meant, but singleness (*singularitatem*) to be denied: that not only unity might be understood therein from the being called one essence, but also Trinity from the being called three . . . persons (7.4.9).

Karl Barth, therefore, finds no support in Augustine for his denial of three distinct Persons in God, although he appeals to Augustine’s difficulty with expressing God’s threeness in human language. Augustine’s difficulty

8 Bavinck, p. 291: “*Elk subordinatisme wordt gebannen*” (“Every form of subordinationism is excluded”). Bavinck continues: “*Augustinus gaat nog verder dan Athanasius. Deze liet nog eenige ondergeschiktheid eigenlijke, oorspronkelijke God ware*” (“Augustine goes yet further than Athanasius. Athanasius still grants some subordination. . . but Augustine has overcome every notion, as if the Father were the real, original God”).

9 Adolf Harnack, *Outlines of the History of Dogma*, trans. E.K. Mitchell (Boston: Beacon Press, 1959), p. 272. Harnack attributes Augustine’s doctrine of the Trinity in part to Neo-Platonism.

10 B.B. Warfield, “Calvin’s Doctrine of the Trinity,” in *Calvin and Calvinism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1931), p. 279. Warfield contends that Calvin strengthened Augustine’s doctrine of the equality of the Son with the Father by his teaching of the *aseitas* of the Son, a controversial doctrine.

was with the name for the threeness, not with the reality itself of three, different Subsistences as is the case with Barth.¹¹

Basic to the Son's equality with the Father is His being begotten of the Father's essence, rather than by the Father's will. Only if He is begotten of the Father's essence is His essence the very essence of the Father, so that, as the Nicene Creed puts it, He is of one and the same essence, or substance, with the Father.

The only-begotten Word of God . . . is the Son of God by nature,—i.e. born of the substance of the Father (*filium dei esse naturā, hoc est de substantia patris genitum*) (15.20.38).

A right understanding of the "relations" within the Godhead is fundamental for maintaining the truth of the oneness of God. The tendency of the modern English versions of the Bible not to translate *monogenees* in the gospel according to John and in the first epistle of John as "only-begotten" is doctrinally serious, to say nothing of the disregard evidenced for the history of doctrine. Lost in the modern English versions is one of the most important proofs that Jesus shares the very being of God, by virtue of generation from the Father.

Well-known is Augustine's doctrine of the procession of the Spirit from the Son as well as from the Father—the church-splitting *filioque*.

Neither can we say that the Holy Spirit does not also proceed from the Son, for the same Spirit is not without reason said to be the Spirit both of the Father and of the Son. . . . For the Spirit of God is one, the Spirit of the Father and of the Son (4.20.29).

This rests partly on Augustine's conviction that the activities of the Persons *ad extra* reflect ontological relations. If the Son breathes the Spirit forth upon the disciples (John 20:22), the Son must spirate the Spirit within the Godhead (4.20.29). But this doctrine also expresses Augustine's profound and fascinating conception of the Holy Spirit Himself as the "consubstantial communion of Father and Son" (15.27.50); "the unity of both" (6.5.7); the "friendship" or "love" of the Begetter and the Begotten (6.5.7); the very "harmony" ("*pax*") of the Triune God:

Why then did He omit to mention the Holy Spirit (in John 17:3—DJE)? Is it because it follows, that whenever we name One who cleaves to One by a harmony so great that through this harmony both are one, this harmony itself must be understood, although it is not mentioned? (6.9.10)

The threeness of God is a real threeness of distinct, living, loving Persons. But this threeness does not threaten the oneness. The absolute equality of Persons is not competitive. Rather, this threeness constitutes the

11 K. Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, I/1, trans. G.W. Bromiley (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1975), pp. 348ff.

oneness a oneness of harmonious friendship in love. And it is the Holy Spirit Who is this "consubstantial communion." When one calls to mind that the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed, drawn up in its complete form not very long before Augustine's writing of *De Trinitate*, is relatively brief concerning the Holy Spirit, Augustine's rich development of the truth about the Holy Spirit is impressive. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit receives its due from Augustine. The treatment is profound, original, moving, and compelling. The practical application lies in the oneness of the child of God with God and with the other children. Augustine's doctrine of the Spirit seems to me to be a mine that should be worked further.

Although Augustine searches the depths of the doctrine of the Trinity deeply and although he does not shrink from speculating on the basis of Scripture, he freely confesses the mystery of the Trinity. "God is more truly thought than He is uttered, and exists more truly than He is thought" (7.4.7). He concludes Book 7, the exegetical treatment of the doctrine, with a call to believe, if understanding fails:

And if this cannot be grasped by the understanding, let it be held by faith, until He shall dawn in the heart who says by the prophet, "If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not understand" (7.6.12).

THE PERFECTIONS OF GOD'S ESSENCE

It is not only the truths of God's threeness and oneness that are Augustine's concern in *De Trinitate*. He also busies himself with setting forth the perfections, or attributes, of the Godhead, i.e., of the essence in which the perfections inhere, or, as Augustine would say, of the essence which is the perfections. It is not that Augustine has some independent interest in the doctrine of the perfections of God's Being in this work. Rather, this doctrine bears on the doctrine of the Trinity. Eunomius's teaching, e.g., that the Son is begotten by the will of the Father, denies both the eternity and the unchangeableness of God (15.20.38).

Augustine treats, among others, of God's sovereignty (3.4.9) and of God's invisibility (2.8.14). But it is especially the perfection of simplicity, and the perfection of immutability that depends upon simplicity, that Augustine emphasizes.

The being of God is not composed of parts, is not divided. In God, the essence is the perfections; and the perfections, since they are the essence, are one and the same.

But in God to be is the same as to be strong, or to be just, or to be wise, or whatever is said of that simple multiplicity, or multifold simplicity, whereby to signify His substance (6.4.6)

But God is truly called in manifold ways, great, good, wise, blessed, true, and whatsoever other thing seems to be said of

Him not unworthily: but His greatness is the same as His wisdom; for He is not great by bulk, but by power; and His goodness is the same as His wisdom and greatness, and His truth the same as all those things; and in Him it is not one thing to be blessed, and another to be great, or wise, or true, or good, or in a word to be Himself (6.7.8).

In truth in the Godhead is absolutely simple essence, and therefore to be is there the same as to be wise (7.1.2).

Upon this simplicity depends God's immutability: "For nothing simple is changeable" (6.6.8).

Simplicity is simply constitutive of the oneness of the essence of God. It also undergirds the equality of the Persons. Since each Person possesses the essence and since the essence is the perfections, each Person shares all the perfections fully. But since the perfections are the perfections of the essence, there are not three sets of perfections, but one set. There are not three greatnesses, but one greatness. Hence, the oneness of God.

C. Plantinga, Jr. is sharply critical of Augustine's simplicity theory. He especially criticizes "the claim that each of the divine persons is identical with the divine essence."¹² But does not John 10:30 ("I and my Father are one") answer his challenge to provide biblical support for the doctrine of simplicity, with regard to the oneness of essence of Father and Son? And would not Augustine charge him with serious weakening of the oneness of God when he posits over against simplicity a personal essence for each Person?

This latter claim—that there are two sorts of essences in God, personal and generic—would then become the point of contention between the social trinitarian and Thomas, rather than the formal claim of trinitarian simplicity.¹³

Does this not attempt to solve the ultimate Trinitarian mystery, how three distinct Persons are not three essences, or, to state it positively, how three Persons are but one essence, by cutting the Gordian knot? Now the three Persons are also three essences—three "personal essences."

INCARNATION AND ATONEMENT

Central to any doctrine of the Trinity is the doctrine of the incarnation of the Word, or Son. The doctrine of the Trinity begins with, and derives from, the truth of the incarnation. One significant strand of contemporary development of trinitarian doctrine clearly shows that the weakening or denial of the incarnation by failing to do justice to the Deity of Jesus—the

12 C. Plantinga, Jr., "Social Trinity and Tritheism" (Grand Rapids, MI: Calvin Theological Seminary publication, n.d.), p. 27.

13 Plantinga, p. 31.

pre-incarnational Deity of Jesus—carries with it the undermining of the creedal doctrine of the Trinity, resulting in a God of one Person or even in an impersonal God. Beginning by questioning Jesus' Deity and by asserting that He was a "human person," Hans Kung goes on to challenge the church's creedal doctrine that God is three Persons, concluding that "God then cannot be confined even within the concept of person: God is *more than a person*."¹⁴

Augustine has a strong doctrine of the incarnation. Necessarily, he gives expression to it in his work on the Trinity. The Person of the only-begotten Son of God became a man in Jesus by means of the Virgin Birth.

He who is by nature the Son of God was made the Son of man . . . for this is what is meant by "The Word was made flesh." . . . (God willed) the only-begotten Son, God co-eternal with Himself, to become man, by putting on a human soul and flesh, and being made mortal to endure death (13.9.12; 13.10.13).

Although by virtue of each Person's sharing the one essence it can be said that God was born (and was crucified, 1.13.28) and although by virtue of the indivisibility of the work of the Persons all three Persons were active in the incarnation, nevertheless by virtue of the real distinction of Persons it was the Son, and not the Father or the Spirit, Who became flesh: "Yet not that this Trinity was born of the Virgin Mary . . . but only the Son" (1.4.7).

The reality of incarnation and the demand that Jesus, the Son of God, be equal with the Father led Augustine to explain the "kenosis" of Philippians 2:7 (the word translated "made himself of no reputation" in the King James Version) not as the Son's divesting Himself of Deity, or any aspect of Deity, but as His taking to Himself humanity in addition to Godhead. Against the argument of the Arians that Jesus Himself acknowledged that His Father was greater than He, Augustine defended the Son's equality with the Father by asserting the two natures of the incarnate Son as would later be formulated in the Symbol of Chalcedon:

But because, on account of the incarnation of the Word of God . . . many things are so said in the sacred books as to signify . . . the Father to be greater than the Son; men have erred through a want of careful examination or consideration of the whole tenor of the Scriptures, and have endeavored to transfer those things which are said of Jesus Christ according to the flesh, to that substance of His which was eternal before the incarnation, and is eternal. They say, for instance, that the Son is less than the Father. . . . But the truth shows that after the same sense the Son is less also than Himself; for how was He not made less also than Himself, who "emptied Himself, and took upon Him the form

14 Hans Kung, *On Being a Christian*, trans. E. Quinn (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1976), pp. 132, 133, 302, 303.

of a servant?" For He did not so take the form of a servant as that He should lose the form of God, in which He was equal to the Father. If, then, the form of a servant was so taken that the form of God was not lost, since both in the form of a servant and in the form of God He Himself is the same only-begotten Son of God the Father, in the form of God equal to the Father, in the form of a servant the Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; is there any one who cannot perceive that He Himself in the form of God is also greater than Himself, but yet likewise in the form of a servant less than Himself? And not, therefore, without cause the Scripture says both the one and the other, both that the Son is equal to the Father, and that the Father is greater than the Son. For there is no confusion when the former is understood as on account of the form of God, and the latter as on account of the form of a servant (1.7.14).

Augustine would criticize contemporary kenosis-theory (that posits something less than the entire essence of the Godhead with all the perfections for Jesus during the time of His earthly ministry) for teaching that God can change; for denying the simplicity of the essence; and for denying, in effect, though not necessarily in intention, the Godhead of Jesus. Augustine would see this as a fatal concession to the Arians: Jesus is, at least during His ministry, somewhat less than fully God.¹⁵

Like other strong defenders of the incarnation, Augustine does not, however, think the incarnation necessary. He supposes that the power of God implies that God might have accomplished the salvation of men in some other way. The incarnation was "more appropriate for curing our misery" (13.10.13). One benefit of this mode of salvation is to humble us and to extol the free grace of God (13.17.22). Augustine is the doctor always of grace.

Invariably, treatment of the doctrine of the incarnation, itself basic to the doctrine of the Trinity, involves one in the doctrine of the atonement. For the question necessarily arises, "*Cur Deus Homo?*" Although, like the early theologians generally, he ascribes too large a role in atonement to the devil, Augustine clearly expresses that the goal of the incarnation was the

15 On kenotic Christology, cf. T.V. Morris, *The Logic of God Incarnate* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1986), pp. 89ff.: "The kenotic strategy... involves the attempt to maintain that in order to become incarnate as a human being, God the Son, Second Person of the Trinity, temporarily divested Himself of all divine properties not compossibly exemplifiable with human nature"; cf. also D.M. Baillie, *God was in Christ* (London: Faber and Faber, 1948), pp. 94ff.: "According to the central idea of the Kenotic Theory, what happened in the Incarnation was that the Son of God... laid aside His distinctively divine attributes (omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence) and lived for a period on earth within the limitations of humanity."

redemption of sinners through the payment of the precious price of the blood of Him who is both God and man.

That blood was of such price, that he who even slew Christ for a time by a death which was not due (here the devil gets more than his due—DJE), can as his due detain no one, who has put on Christ, in the eternal death which was due. . . . Justified, he says, in His blood,—justified plainly, in that we are free from all sin; and freed from all sin, because the Son of God, who knew no sin, was slain for us (13.16.21).

The role of the devil notwithstanding, Christ offered the sacrifice to God: “a true sacrifice was due to the one true God” (4.14.19).

Even the view of the atonement as God's “being made partaker of our mortality, (so that we might become) partakers of His divinity,” a notion popular especially with the Greek theologians, is immediately qualified by Augustine as occurring through the cross: “For the death of the sinner springing from the necessity of condemnation is deservedly abolished by the death of the Righteous One” (4.2.4).

There is the clear teaching by Augustine, in this connection, of an effectual atonement made only for the predestinated:

In this redemption, the blood of Christ was given, as it were, as a price for us . . . that we might be loosened from his (the devil's—DJE) bonds, and that he might not with himself involve in the meshes of sins, and so deliver to the destruction of the second and eternal death, any one of those whom Christ, free from all debt, had redeemed by pouring out His own blood unindebtedly; but that they who belong to the grace of Christ, foreknown, and predestinated, and elected before the foundation of the world, should only so far die as Christ Himself died for them, i.e. only by the death of the flesh, not of the spirit (13.15.19).

Ingeniously, Augustine relates his fine insight that the atonement was not the Son's appeasing a wrathful Father to his trinitarian principle that all the works of the Trinity *ad extra* are indivisible:

But I see that the Father loved us also before, not only before the Son died for us, but before He created the world. . . . Therefore together both the Father and the Son, and the Spirit of both, work all things equally and harmoniously; yet we are justified in the blood of Christ (13.11.15).

In contrast to Augustine's view of the goal of the incarnation, it is characteristic of much contemporary theological thought, including liberation theology, to construe the purpose of the “coming” of Jesus as effecting a purely earthly deliverance for all mankind without exception.¹⁶ This is

16 An authoritative Christology by a liberation theologian is L. Boff, *Jesus Christ Liberator: A Critical Christology for Our Time* (Maryknoll, New York:

directly due to the denial of the full-blooded, biblical doctrine of incarnation—a “Christology from above.” If Jesus is God-in-the-flesh, His mission must be the redemption of humans and their world from sin by payment of the ransom to a just God by suffering in their stead the punishment of eternal wrath. If the mission of Jesus Christ is less, or other, than this, incarnation is foolishness—much ado about nothing. On the basis of redemption, in which He who is both God and man suffers what man must suffer and what God alone can suffer, there may and will be renewal of elect humanity and their world.

THE BIBLICAL BASIS

It is Augustine's avowed purpose to demonstrate the church's doctrine of the Trinity from Holy Scripture:

First, however, we must demonstrate, according to the authority of the Holy Scriptures, whether the faith be so (1.2.4).

What must bind the readers in *De Trinitate* is not the authority of Augustine, but the authority of Scripture:

Do not be willing to yield to my writings as to the canonical Scriptures; but in these, when thou hast discovered even what thou didst not previously believe, believe it unhesitatingly (3.preface.2).

Augustine's method, especially in the first seven books, is that of exegeting Scripture. Although he gives the reader a thorough course in the trinitarianism of the Old Testament, he concentrates on the great trinitarian passages in the New Testament, chiefly in the Gospel of John. John 1:1-18 establishes the Godhead of Jesus; the distinction of Persons in the Godhead; and the oneness of essence of God, besides setting forth the incarnation. John 10:30 teaches the plurality of Persons (the verb is plural: “I and my Father *are* one”), but also the oneness of essence of the Son and the Father (“I and my Father *are one*”). Therefore, it produces the doctrine of the equality of Son and the Father, refuting the Arian doctrine of the Son's subordination. John 14-16 is replete with witness to the personality, personal relations, and Godhead of the Spirit.

Much of contemporary theology would regard Augustine as a prime example of that which it repudiates as Christological error. Augustine works chiefly with John, and then with the claims of Deity by Jesus and with the attributions of Deity to Jesus. He virtually ignores the synoptics. There is little in *De Trinitate* of the ministry of Jesus as recorded in the synoptics.

Orbis Books, 1978). Boff describes the salvation of the Jesus of liberation theology thus: “A Christology that proclaims Jesus Christ as the Liberator seeks to be committed to the economic, social, and political liberation of those groups that are oppressed and dominated” (p. 266).

The Christology of Augustine is docetic, it would be charged.

But this charge points up a fundamental difference between Augustine and much of contemporary theology. Augustine received Scripture in its entirety as the inspired, authoritative Word of God, from which his doctrines of the incarnation and of the Trinity must be drawn. Contemporary theology, in contrast, regards Scripture as the fallible words of men which may with perfect right be adapted to suit the conceptions of Jesus and of the being of God with which theologians come to the Bible.

Michael Goulder, one of the contributors to *The Myth of God Incarnate*, is frank in his admission that the rejection of the doctrines of the Deity of Jesus and of the Trinity by himself and his associates is due to their repudiation of the inspired Scripture:

It looked at first as if Jesus' claims, his miracles, his saving power, etc., required him to be divine: and the doctrine that he was the Word made flesh seemed to be God's revelation and therefore unquestionable. . . . But today . . . the belief that the Bible is infallible truth is discredited. . . . If St Paul and St John believed something that we cannot make sense of, that is sad: but so far from settling the matter in favour of their "belief" because they believed it, it leaves us with the challenge of finding a doctrine which will satisfy our criteria for sense, adequacy and plausibility.¹⁷

It is safe to say that wherever the Scripture is received as the Word of God, theologians will take as their point of departure for Christology and for the doctrine of the Trinity this answer to the essential question, "Who is Jesus?": "Jesus is the eternal Word become flesh." Nor is this "Christology from above" necessarily docetism. Bad theologizing may drive it into docetism. But as long as the answer is as loud in saying, "become flesh," as it is in saying, "the eternal Word," justice will be done to the humanity of the incarnate Logos.

THE RATIONAL DEMONSTRATION

The problem is not the exegetical Augustine in *De Trinitate*, but the Augustine of Books 8-15. This is the Augustine who is determined to demonstrate the Trinity rationally from various analogies (thirteen of them according to Stephen McKenna¹⁸) found in creation and especially in the human soul.

The question is, are these analogies intended by Augustine as proof of the Trinity, in which case it is to be inferred that the Trinity can be known

17 M. Goulder, "Paradox and Mystification," in *The Myth of God Incarnate*, ed. John Hick (Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1977), pp. 55, 59.

18 S. McKenna, *The Fathers of the Church*, Volume 45, p. xv.

by reason from nature as well as by faith from Scripture? Or is it merely Augustine's intention to illustrate the doctrine of the Trinity in order to help the believing mind in understanding the revealed doctrine?

The Roman Catholic apologist typically regards Augustine's demonstration by analogies as illustration of the doctrine of the Trinity:

Reason cannot indeed demonstrate the mysteries by necessary and evident arguments; but it can illustrate, and in a measure manifest them by congruous arguments and, as it were, by similitudes, after the manner in which the Fathers, and especially St. Augustine, treated of the mystery of the Blessed Trinity. Following the lead of St. Augustine, Scholastic theology enlisted philosophy in the service of the dogma, not indeed with a view to demonstrating what is in itself incomprehensible, but in order to enable the human mind to perceive the precise nature of the mystery which it is asked to believe. St. Augustine's comparison of the two divine Processions with human self-knowledge and self-love stands as a perpetual monument to the speculative genius of the great Bishop of Hippo.¹⁹

Bourke agrees:

(Books 8-15 are) a mighty effort, not to explain the Divine Trinity, but to lead the intelligent Christian part way along the road to an understanding of what the Church teaches about the Trinity.²⁰

There is some ground for this view in Augustine's own explanation of what he is doing in the latter half of the book:

And this question we are endeavoring in some way to investigate in the human mind, in order that from a lower image, in which our own nature itself as it were answers, upon being questioned, in a way more familiar to ourselves, we may be able to direct a more practised mental vision from the enlightened creature to the unchangeable light; assuming, however, that the truth itself has persuaded us, that as no Christian doubts the Word of God to be the Son, so that the Holy Spirit is love (9.12.17).

Nevertheless, Augustine does far more than illustrate the doctrine by his analogies. He is intent on making the doctrine of the Trinity clearer than it is in Scripture alone; and he proves the doctrine from the analogies. This is evident from the labored treatment itself (Books 8-15!) and from Augustine's own admission:

And whether this is the Trinity (namely, reason, or the rational soul—DJE), it is now our business to demonstrate not only to

19 J. Pohle, *The Divine Trinity*, ed. A. Preuss (London: B. Herder Book Co., 1930), p. 197.

20 Bourke, p. 209.

believers, by authority of divine Scripture, but also to such as understand, by some kind of reason, if we can (15.1.1).

Whether as illustration or as proof, Augustine's rational demonstration of the Trinity must be rejected. The doctrine of the Trinity is revealed only in Scripture to the believing mind. It can as little be illustrated as Jehovah can be represented by a graven image. There is nothing comparable to the Trinity. Every illustration fatally injures the doctrine. It can be known only from the Word of Scripture. As a matter of fact, Augustine's analogies have burdened his entire doctrine of the Trinity with the charge of modalism, a charge not unreasonably brought against his analogies:

This confession and the analogies which Augustine makes use of regarding the trinity (they are altogether modalistic) show that he himself never could have hit upon the trinity, if he had not been bound to tradition.²¹

It is not only Karl Barth who has questioned Augustine's "*vestigium trinitatis*" ("vestige of the Trinity"), or "*trinitatis effigiem*" ("likeness of the Trinity").²² Warfield also criticized rational demonstration of the doctrine of the Trinity:

In point of fact, the doctrine of the Trinity is purely a revealed doctrine. That is to say, it embodies a truth which has never been discovered, and is undiscoverable, by natural reason. . . . As the doctrine of the Trinity is undiscoverable by reason, so it is incapable of proof from reason. There are no analogies to it in Nature, not even in the spiritual nature of man, who is made in the image of God. In His trinitarian mode of being, God is unique; and, as there is nothing in the universe like Him in this respect, so there is nothing which can help us to comprehend Him.²³

Calvin had pointed the way here for the theology of the Reformation. He was loath, he wrote in the *Institutes*, to express trinitarian distinctions by "comparison from human affairs." The reason is that this gives occasion for "calumny to the malicious, or of delusion to the ignorant" (1.13.18). In his commentary on Genesis 1:26, Calvin mentions Augustine by name as the one who "beyond all others, speculates with excessive refinement, for the purpose of fabricating a Trinity in man. For in laying hold of the three faculties of the soul enumerated by Aristotle, the intellect, the memory, and the will, he afterwards out of one Trinity derives many." Calvin concludes that a "definition of the image of God ought to rest on a firmer basis than such subtleties."

21 Harnack, p. 272.

22 For Barth's (critical) treatment of the "*vestigium trinitatis*," cf. *Church Dogmatics*, I/1, pp. 333ff.

23 Warfield, *Biblical Doctrines*, pp. 133-135.

Triads and ternaries are not earthly Trinities. They are not even reflections of the Trinity. Creation as the handiwork of the Triune God does not make known His threeness, but His eternal power and Godhead (Rom. 1:20). The image of God in the soul of the regenerated human does not consist of memory, intelligence, and will, but of righteousness, knowledge, and holiness (Eph. 4:23,24; Col. 3:10).

Of all Augustine's analogies, the one that is most attractive is not the widely acclaimed analogy of memory, intelligence, and will, but that of lover, beloved, and love. It fails, of course, because lover and beloved are two essences and because love is not a person. But perhaps we may so honor Augustine as to allow this one of his analogies to point us in the right direction as regards Augustine's fundamentally correct idea that this creation, especially human life, is what it is because God the Creator, Redeemer, and Renewer is the triune God.

The Trinity is reflected in human life, particularly redeemed human life. The life of redeemed humanity is fellowship, first with God in Christ and then with each other. There is personal distinction and intimate oneness. Marriage and the family are creational reflections of the reality of God as Trinity. A unitarian or tritheistic god could never have thought of such fellowships. But the brightest reflection of the Trinity is the church. The church is many members, but one body. If there is one "*vestigium trinitatis*" that the world can see, it is the church. "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me" (John 17:21).

Book Reviews

The Memoirs of Charles G. Finney, edited by Garth M. Rosell & Richard A. G. Dupuis; Zondervan Publishing House, 1989; 736 pp., (\$24.95). [Reviewed by Prof. Herman Hanko.]

Charles G. Finney's memoirs were originally edited and published by James Fairchild. Under his hand, the memoirs underwent extensive alteration and change. Garth Rosell and Richard Dupuis have given us in this volume a critical edition of these memoirs with complete annotation.

The result is extensive footnoting making clear the various changes, explaining obscure passages in the memoirs, giving a great deal of additional historical material, including many illustrations and maps which indicate Finney's chief areas of labor. The authors have spent ten years of research to prepare this annotated critical edition.

Charles G. Finney was a nineteenth century evangelist who was responsible for extensive revivals in the eastern part of this country and in

England and Scotland. He is generally considered to be the father of modern revivalistic movements, of the so-called altar call, and of modern evangelism. His book is, therefore, important to an understanding of this phenomenon in American religious culture.

The book makes for interesting and fascinating reading. Finney gives his own account of his labors and of the revivals which his ministry sparked. One who is interested in the question of revivals is compelled to read this volume.

The book, however, succeeded in confirming my long-held suspicion that revivals, whether in this land or abroad, are not the work of the Holy Spirit and must not be construed as such. To do so is to ascribe work to the Spirit of Christ which in fact He does not do, and thus to do despite to that glorious work by which the Son of God is pleased to gather His church throughout the ages.

From Finney's own pen we have the testimony that the revivals which took place under his ministry bore all the marks of what today is called Pentecostalism. Revivalism results in, according to the book, special mental states which include visions and special and direct revelations. It includes (and this is reiterated throughout the book) special outpourings of the Holy Spirit which are called "baptisms of the Spirit" and "second baptisms." Instances are recorded of people falling dead who opposed the revivals, with the

obvious implication that their opposition was directly punished by God. While Finney tried desperately (and, according to his testimony, successfully) to prevent the "excesses" of revivals, nevertheless, he speaks of conviction of sin which brought people to the brink of insanity and in some instances to genuine insanity.

Finney's revivals were, in these respects, no different from any other revivals which took place earlier in this country's history in New England, which were brought about through the ministry of the Wesleys in England, and which later recurred in Wales. There are almost no differences between the chief characteristics of the charismatic movement and the revivals which Finney describes. Anyone who, on the basis of Scripture, condemns the charismatic movement is compelled to repudiate revivals as well. The book makes that abundantly clear.

Just as the theological basis for the charismatic movement is contrary to Scripture, so also this book shows how far Finney departed from the truth of Scripture. This is all the more striking in the light of the fact that he was brought up by and received his early theological training from "old school" Presbyterianism. In fact, during the course of his work he was vigorously opposed by several "old school" Presbyterian theologians. But he is at great pains to disassociate himself from such theology. He introduced and consciously adopted views of rankest Arminianism which formed

the basis of his revival work.

What were these erroneous views which Finney taught?

Some form of post-millennialism has often been associated with the whole idea of revivals. This book is no exception. In the introduction appears a quotation which is from an article written during Finney's life and which was written in an effort to persuade Finney to write his *Memoirs*. One paragraph reads:

Future generations will be eager to know the whole history of a man who was the means of the conversion of so many thousands of souls, both in this country and in the father land, and who has awakened so general an interest in the whole subject of revivals. That eagerness, as the world moves toward the Millennium, will be vastly greater than that manifested in the history of a conqueror, though he may have been the hero of a hundred battles (p. xxii).

Finney rejected all the doctrines of the sovereign grace of God in the work of salvation as held by the church. In a paragraph in which he describes the teachings of his mentor, Mr. Gale (who was his pastor, his teacher in theological instruction, and an "old school" Presbyterian), he rejects everything which Mr. Gale taught him. He writes:

But my studies, so far as he was concerned as my teacher, were little else than controversy. He held to the Presbyterian doctrine of original sin, or that the human *constitution* was morally depraved. He held also, that men were ut-

terly unable to comply with the terms of the Gospel, to repent, to believe, or to do anything that God required them to do. That while they were free to all evil, in the sense of being able to commit any amount of sin; yet they were not free in regard to all that was good. That God had condemned men for their sinful *nature*; and for this, as well as for their transgressions, they deserved eternal death, and were under condemnation. He held also that the influences of the Spirit of God on the minds of men were *physical*, acting directly upon the substance of the soul. That men were passive in regeneration; and in short he held all those doctrines that logically flow from the fact of a nature *sinful in itself*. These doctrines I could not receive. I could not receive his views on the subject of atonement, regeneration, faith, repentance, the slavery of the Will, or any of their kindred doctrines (p. 48).

Finney was convinced that to hold these doctrines prevented revival in the church and brought about spiritual lethargy and death. In every respect he held to contrary views.

Old School Presbyterianism (and it must be remembered that at Finney's time, the early part of the nineteenth century, Presbyterianism was doctrinally strong in this country) is repeatedly characterized as "hyper-Calvinism" (see p. 9 for an example of this). The conversion experience, in Finney's judgment, involved accepting Christ, special mental states which were similar to

visions, and new baptisms of the Holy Spirit (p. 9). He rejected the doctrine that Christ “literally paid the debt of the elect and fully satisfied *retributive* justice”; and taught instead that Christ “only satisfied public justice” and that was all that the government of God could require (p. 51).

Especially the doctrine of the imputation of guilt is the object of Finney’s disapproval — a doctrine which lies at the very heart of Scripture and the truths of sovereign grace. He even goes so far as to say that the truth of imputation is a “theological fiction” (pp. 59, 60).

In fact, the whole of the Reformed faith is subjected to what almost amounts to mockery (pp. 59, 60, 123, 152, 190, 265, 273, etc.). Finney will have none of it. The doctrines which he preached were the only doctrines which, in his judgment, would bring about genuine revival and the blessed outpouring of the Spirit which he so desperately sought. When Dr. Charles Hodge attacked him publicly for his views, he wrote an answer, and confidently boasts that he succeeded in defeating Dr. Hodge, for this learned professor and sound Calvinist from Princeton never took up the pen against him again.

One who knows the Canons of Dordt is reminded, at almost every point in the description of Finney’s theological views, of the errors of the Arminians which are condemned by the fathers of Dordt and which are described as being the old Pelagian

errors resurrected out of hell. A striking instance of this is Finney’s assertion that the work of the Spirit is nothing but moral suasion — almost the exact term used by the fathers of Dordt to describe the pestilential error of Arminianism.

In keeping with his totally Arminian theology, Finney also taught perfectionism, i.e., that the child of God who possesses the baptism of the Spirit is able to free himself from all known sin. Interestingly, Finney tells us in these *Memoirs* that he developed this doctrine of perfectionism because he was concerned about the fact that so many converts were returning to their old ways. It was his judgment that perfectionism would prevent this “backsliding” (pp. 350ff.).

Finney is also the one who introduced into evangelistic work the “altar call.” He gave a slightly different name to it. When under his preaching many were brought under conviction of sin, he summoned them forward to occupy what he called, “the anxious seat”: open seats near the front of the auditorium in which people who came forward at his invitation could sit. Here he would speak to them and press home on them the claims of Christ. It was important to Finney to elicit from these people an immediate decision to accept Christ and come to peace. This need for an *immediate* decision was important to Finney, and he refers to it again and again.

Strangely, while Finney criticizes the doctrines of sovereign grace

as without biblical proof, he himself never attempts any biblical proof for his views. In fact, quite the contrary, he repeatedly justifies his theological position on the grounds that only the preaching of these views resulted in positive fruit and conversions for Christ. The correctness of a theological position is judged by the results in mass conversions, not by the standard of Scripture!

While oftentimes Finney tips his hat towards the Holy Spirit in an effort to give the Spirit proper credit, the *Memoirs* place a lot of emphasis on what he personally accomplished. Sometimes this is done by direct references to himself and his compelling work; sometimes it is done by holding up for criticism the fruitlessness of the preaching of those who disagreed with him; and sometimes it is done by praising the efforts of men who followed his example and used his methods and theology. I suppose it is in keeping with his wrong views of the guidance of the Spirit, but it comes across as boasting when Finney repeatedly reminds us that he never prepared his sermons. Most of the time he never even chose a text and only spoke on a passage revealed to him by the Spirit as he mounted the platform. Apparently the Word of God was not of sufficient importance to him to spend time in careful sermon preparation.

Finney was a traveling evangelist. He was not a minister in a fixed charge — although a minister occupying a fixed charge is some-

thing which the Church Order of the Reformed churches considers to be vital to the official preaching of the gospel. He preached not only in Presbyterian Churches, but in any churches into which he could secure entrance. He preached everywhere, in the hopes that revival would erase denominational differences and unite true believers into one church. What is disturbing is that the Presbyterian Church, of which he was a member, never took official ecclesiastical action against him. As strong as it was in the nineteenth century, it seemed to lack the spiritual strength necessary to expel heretics. It may very well be that in this were sown the seeds of apostasy which has brought the mainline Presbyterian Church to ecclesiastical ruin in our day.

Finney was quite insistent on the point that only his theology could bring about revival. He is probably correct in this assertion. But if he is, it is a mystery how professing Calvinists can promote, pray for, and seek revival in our day. If the theological basis is wrong, the revivalistic structure built on it is a tottering house of cards which soon tumbles into ruin. □

Calvin, Geneva and the Reformation, by Ronald S. Wallace; Baker Book House, 1988; pp. viii-310 (cloth), \$12.95. [Reviewed by Prof. H. Hanko.]

Ronald Wallace is Professor Emeritus of Columbia Theological Seminary in Georgia. He now lives

in Edinburgh, Scotland where he also earned a Ph.D. in Divinity. He is a Calvin scholar of the first rank and has put his massive learning into an important, interesting, and excellent book. His book gleans its material from all of Calvin's writings, including Calvin's Commentaries, his Tracts and Treatises, his correspondence, as well as Calvin's *magnum opus*, "The Institutes of the Christian Religion." Anyone who is interested in the work and theology of Calvin will enjoy and profit from this work.

Perhaps one of the most appealing features of the book is the author's ability to weave the life of Calvin into discussions of Calvin's views and writings. Although especially the first part of the book is biographical, the author intersperses gems out of Calvin's life throughout his discussions. And he deals with Calvin's multi-faceted labors and astounding genius in a fair and compelling way. The three main sections of the book are: 1) The Reformer and his City, 2) Churchman and Pastor, 3) The Theologian. Under the first main heading, the author deals with, "The Aim and the Plan," "Decisive Issues in a Mundane Setting," "The Struggle for 'Spiritual Government'," "Rumors, Slanders, and Cases," "Economics in Geneva," "Education and the Humanities in Geneva," "Towards a Christian Society."

There are many parts of the book which particularly struck my attention, of which we mention a

few. The author includes important information on the relation between the Council in the city of Geneva and the Consistory, in which he demonstrates that Calvin was far from being the dictator he is often described as being (pp. 54-64). While the Council in Geneva abolished feast days, the author claims that Calvin himself was in favor of them (p. 58). Although Calvin held firmly to the idea of private ownership of property, he differed from modern capitalistic theory. On page 109 Calvin's condemnation of instrumental accompaniment of singing is documented; but the author demonstrates how balanced Calvin really was in his application of the regulative principle. There is an excellent chapter on Calvin's thoughts on education (pp. 102ff.) in which Calvin's emphasis on its importance is set forth. On Calvin's views concerning the relation between church and state the author is correct in his analysis of Calvin's position. One of the most moving and enlightening chapters, in my opinion, was the chapter which dealt with Calvin's pastoral work both in Geneva proper and through his correspondence. Generally speaking, the author also does justice to Calvin's theology, although it sometimes seemed to me that the author occasionally fell into the mistake of putting Calvin's theology into a modern context and evaluating it in the light of present-day theological discussion and dispute.

An example of this latter is the author's treatment of Calvin's views

of grace, which are discussed especially in the chapter on education. The author maintains that Calvin called the good in the wicked, grace, and holds that Calvin even went so far as to say that common grace is redeeming grace which has its origin in the cross (p. 104). A certain argument can surely be made in support of the first proposition, but the simple fact is that: 1) Calvin did not write in the context of the modern controversy over the subject of common grace, and, 2) Calvin's theology as a whole certainly militates against any kind of common grace. As far as that element of common grace is concerned which is called "the free offer," even William Cunningham is forced to the conclusion that Calvin did not teach it.

Calvin's doctrine of the extent of the atonement, a subject being much debated these days, is relegated to a footnote on page 251; and the conclusion of the author is that Calvin is not clear on it. Again, W. Cunningham cites important evidence from Calvin's writings that Calvin held to the doctrine of limited redemption, even though the specific references are relatively scanty.

While Calvin's views on predestination are, for the most part, accurately presented, the author does find certain ambiguities on this subject in Calvin; but it appears as if the author does not reckon sufficiently with Calvin's refusal to enter into questions, especially concerning reprobation, on which Scripture it-

self is silent.

All those who are spiritual children of Calvin will find this book delightful and instructive reading, and not many books can be as valuable an addition to one's "Calvin Library" as this one. □

Colossians & Philemon (Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament), by Murray J. Harris; Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1991. Pp. xxix-310. \$21.95 (paper). [Reviewed by Prof H. Hanko.]

We are informed in the Preface that this book is the first volume of a new series of twenty commentaries on the New Testament which will be published over the next decade or so.

One may wonder why a new series is being prepared when already a welter of new commentaries have been written the last thirty or forty years. But there is good reason for this. The answer to this question is provided in the Preface.

This ambitious new series seeks to bring together classroom, study, and pulpit by providing the student or pastor with the information needed to understand and expound the Greek text of the New Testament. *The Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament* closes the gap between grammatical analysis and exegesis, leading the reader into an in-depth understanding of the New Testament Greek text by guiding him or her through the processes of thorough exegesis flowing into

sermon construction.

It has been my experience in Seminary that the student always faces problems in translating Greek (and Hebrew) grammar into exegesis, and in translating exegesis into a sermon in good homiletical form. This commentary is intended to be of assistance in these problems. This is why, in the quote above, the author speaks of bringing "together classroom, study, and pulpit."

To accomplish this goal, the author of this work on Colossians and Philemon has written a book which cannot really be considered a commentary by any traditional meaning of that term. It is entirely different. It concentrates on an analysis of Greek grammar and syntax. To accomplish this, the book contains:

(1) the Greek text; (2) a **structural analysis**; (3) a comprehensive discussion of each phrase in turn, treating significant **textual variants and vocabulary**, giving detailed **grammatical analysis** (including parsing), exploring the options in **disputed points of exegesis**, and providing, in effect, an **index to the standard reference works** — grammars, word-study books, and the BAGD lexicon; (4) a **translation and an expanded paraphrase**, both incorporating the results of the exegetical discussion; (5) a list (for most paragraphs of **exegetical and biblical-theological topics** arising in the text and suggested for further study, with detailed bibliography given for each topic; and (6) **hom-**

iletical suggestions, designed to help the pastor move from the Greek text to preaching that reflects careful exegesis of the text.

This commentary is indeed of real help in these areas mentioned above. It identifies all the forms and gives the usage of noun case endings and the tenses, moods, and voices of the verbs. It shows the relationships between words, clauses, and phrases and explains these. It briefly explains difficult words and expressions. In dealing with alternate readings, it prefers the Nestles-Aland edition of the Greek New Testament and thus relies chiefly on the Wescott-Hort text. It includes a literal translation of the Greek text and an expanded paraphrase. The latter is, of course, commentary, and the result is that the expanded paraphrase is not of that much value. At the end of the discussion of each book is a literal translation of the entire book and an expanded paraphrase of the entire book. The glossary of grammatical and rhetorical terms at the end is of considerable value.

In evaluating the work, the following comments ought to be made. It is my judgment that this book (and those which follow, if they are of the same quality) is an excellent help especially to the new preacher. It bridges well the gap between grammar and exegesis and will be of great assistance in this aspect of sermon preparation. It is unique among commentaries and will be a valuable addition to any minister's library. It is, of course, in its

very nature, of use to Seminary students and ministers only. Those who have no knowledge of the Greek text will not find this work of any help in understanding the text.

It is not of such great help in bridging the gap between exegesis and homiletics. The homiletical suggestions are uniformly of little use to the Reformed preacher. Even though he uses this book, he is going to have to make his own sermons without the homiletical assistance of this work.

It is not, because of the nature of the book, of a great deal of help in penetrating the meaning of the text. Its heavy emphasis on the relation between grammar and exegesis does not allow room for a detailed study of the text as a whole. Other commentaries will have to be used for that purpose.

Its theological basis is not strong and it shows a strong Arminian bias. For example, on page 51, in its treatment of the "all things" in Colossians 1:20, the author writes:

Verses 21-23, especially the conditional clause in v. 23a, make it clear that while the whole universe has now been restored to its God-ordained destiny, viz., its proper relation to Christ, in an objectively real reconciliation, still the benefits of this reconciliation are not experienced by individual human beings automatically, apart from their faith.

Nevertheless, I strongly urge our students and pastors to get these works and study them. They are alone in the world of commentaries in emphasizing the grammatical significance of the New Testament text of Scripture. □

Book Notices

The Doctrine of Scripture, by Homer C. Hoeksema. Grand Rapids: Reformed Free Publishing Association, 1990. 93 pp. \$6.95(paper) [Reviewed by Prof. Decker.]

The contents of this little volume were prepared by Prof. Hoeksema for an elective class in the Protestant Reformed Seminary. The class was intended to introduce the students to "Contemporary Views of Scripture." The material found in this book was really an introduction, a positive statement of the doctrine of Holy Scripture. Prof. Hoeksema

was taken to glory before he had opportunity to complete the work.

Hoeksema answers this question: "What has been historically, and what is now, the Reformed and confessional view of Scripture?" It is Hoeksema's contention that this question must first be answered before any critical analysis of contemporary views of Scripture can be properly done.

The reader will find in this book a treatment of the doctrine of Scripture as taught in the Reformed Creeds. He will also find detailed treatment of "Scripture's Self-Testi-

mony." In two very important chapters (5 & 6) Hoeksema argues convincingly that there is no "human factor" or "element" in the production of Holy Scripture. The book concludes with a comprehensive statement on the concept of "Organic Inspiration."

We are convinced that the key doctrine under attack in our day is the doctrine of Holy Scripture itself. For this reason the book is must reading for seminarians, officebearers, Christian school teachers, and all believers. It will provide the Reformed believer with the necessary, foundational understanding of this crucial truth. Thus the believer will be enabled to evaluate the false views of Scripture so prevalent in our day. □

Justification, the Heart of the Gospel, by Jimmy K. Barber; Veritas Publications, 829 Angelina Place, Memphis, TN 38122; 256 pp., (paper), \$9.95. [Reviewed by Prof. H. Hanko.]

Jimmy Barber is the pastor of a Baptist church in Memphis, Tennessee; and this book is, therefore, written from a Baptist perspective. Nevertheless, the author is a strong defender of the doctrines of sovereign grace, and this book is a defense of the truth of eternal justification.

In the "Preface" the author gives us the reason for writing this book.

This book was written for the

purpose of leading the student of the Bible to a richer and better understanding of the doctrine of justification. The modern cry that doctrine is unimportant is not true. The epistles in the New Testament instruct the reader with doctrine before giving the guidelines for practical holiness. Many professors of Christianity do not understand the doctrine of justification nor the meaning of the word. I have tried to correct this erroneous thinking in this book. Further, I have introduced the modern reader to some writers of the past....

The author goes on to tell us that in his research he has made use of sources from many different denominational backgrounds and from many different centuries. The emphasis, however, falls upon Baptist and Puritan works.

The book is important and ought to be read by Reformed pastors. It gives an idea of the thinking of Baptists who are committed to the sovereign work of God in salvation on this important truth.

It is my judgment that the author, in his treatment of the eternal character of justification, does not always make the careful distinctions which ought to be made in order to explain this doctrine which has been the cause of much division within the Reformed churches of Dutch descent.

I was a bit surprised that the author made no references to Herman Hoeksema in his book, although he knows the position of Hoeksema

on this subject and has read Hoeksema's works. □

D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones: The Fight of Faith 1939-1981, by Iain H. Murray. Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1990. pp. xxiv-831, \$36.95 (cloth). [Reviewed by R. Decker.]

This massive work is volume two of a biography of the late great preacher of Westminster Chapel in London. *D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones: The First Forty Years 1899-1939*, the first volume of the biography, was published in 1982, about a year after Lloyd-Jones' death. The Doctor himself authorized his long-time friend and former assistant pastor at the Chapel (1956-1959), Iain H. Murray, to write the biography.

The two volumes present a detailed account of the life of this great preacher. Both are enhanced by a number of photographs. The reader will find fascinating accounts of details in the life of the Doctor. For example, one finds the story of how the Doctor first met his predecessor, Dr. G. Campbell Morgan, at

the Chapel. Fascinating too is the story of how Morgan picked Lloyd-Jones as his successor. The two preachers were quite different doctrinally. Morgan was Arminian in his theology, while Lloyd-Jones was a Calvinist. If one wonders how the one could succeed the other in the same pulpit, he learns that after the War an entirely different congregation emerged at Westminster.

These books, especially volume two, are more than a biography of the Doctor. One gains insights into the ecumenical movement and its impact on the church in Great Britain. One also learns of the influences of Crusade Evangelism which Lloyd-Jones steadfastly opposed and of the influences of the charismatic movement.

While the cost of the two volumes is rather high, the books are worth having to anyone interested in the evangelical church in England during the first half of the twentieth century. Lloyd-Jones was a great preacher whose influence carried far beyond the large Westminster Chapel, through his travels, itinerant preaching, and publications. □

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