INAUGURAL ISSUE

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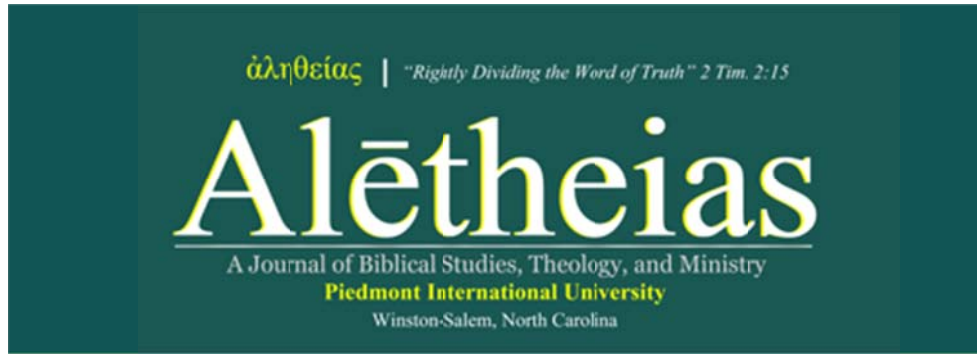
A RESEARCH JOURNAL

OF THE SCHOOL OF BIBLE AND THEOLOGY

PIEDMONT INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

WINSTON-SALEM, NORTH CAROLINA

Introduction:

Aletheias is the academic journal of Piedmont International University, Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Each issue consists of scholarly, researched articles in Biblical Studies, Theology, and Christian Ministry. It also includes reviews of notable and recently published books in these academic subjects. The editors consider the journal as part of the ministry of the University, serving believers in academic circles, churches and other ministries, and the public arena. The journal's purposes are to inform, to encourage, to edify, and to instruct.

Copying:

Doctrinal Basis:

Aletheias adheres to the Piedmont Statement of Faith published in the University catalogs.

Manuscripts:

The *Aletheias* editorial board welcomes manuscripts submitted by Piedmont faculty, graduate students, and alumni. Original research articles are also welcome from friends of Piedmont who meet the publication standards. Policies and guidelines are specified in the "*Aletheias* Instructions for Contributors." The editorial board reserves the right to reject manuscripts that do not meet the *Aletheias* standards.

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EDITORIAL

By Barkev S. Trachian*

For over sixty-five years Piedmont has been preparing preachers, teachers, and Christian leaders to proclaim the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ around the world. That focus is stronger today than it has ever been. With Piedmont's firm stand for classical dispensationalism, balanced theology, and dynamic exposition, the University emphasizes proficiency in applying a literal, grammatical, contextual, and historical hermeneutic leading to a proper understanding of the Word of God. The theological landscape today is in a state of flux. Piedmont is committed to remaining faithful to its founding mission.

SETTING THE OBJECTIVES

Launching the journal Aletheias is designed to expand the ministry of the University beyond the classroom and the online course environment. We plan to pursue four objectives.

Presenting an Avenue of Research

First, Aletheias will present an avenue of research and outreach for our Ph. D. students, our faculty, and our alumni to apply the knowledge and the skills gained in their academic programs and in their ministries. Sharing their research with a discerning public will improve their competencies and encourage further investigation of a subject for a better understanding of

biblical truth.[1] Paul commended the Berean believers because "they received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so."[2] Research, under the illuminating power of the Holy Spirit, is the most productive mode of accessing knowledge. [3] Competence in research is a significant objective of the Ph.D. curriculum. Producing Aletheias is consistent with that objective.

Contributing to the Body of Biblical Scholarship

Second, Aletheias will endeavor to contribute to the body of scholarship in biblical studies, theology, and ministry by producing timely articles, expanding our current knowledge of the Word of God and Christian ministry; evaluating relevant literature; and presenting a conservative, premillennial, dispensational perspective. While other views will be objectively presented, our premise will remain anchored in our theological identity. In every course our faculty members share valuable information, and our students produce quality research. Many of our alumni lead dynamic ministries where their training is applied. These research papers and these ministry principles are worth sharing.

Engaging Our World for Christ

Third, Aletheias will strive to engage our multi-cultural world for Christ as we obey the Great Commission. Scholarship is sometimes viewed as intellectual exercise lacking passion and urgency for outreach. A sincere desire for a proper understanding of the Word of God should propel one to have a burden for making Christ known to all people. Proclamation of the Word was the passion of the early church. "Its proclamations were inspired not by a Pharisaic, scribal

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[1] Timothy Johnson, M.D., vividly illustrates the effectiveness of this method of discovery of truth in his salvation testimony published in his book, *Finding God in the Questions* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2004), 15.

[2] Acts 17:11. All Scripture citations are taken from the King James Version.

[3] Kevin J. Vanhoozer skillfully explains the importance of thorough research in discovering biblical truth in his article "Lost in Interpretation?" *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* (March 2005): 89-114.

legalism, but by the living Word."[4] Archeologists excavating the catacombs have discovered an interesting symbol: a pair of sandals, to represent the mission and the evangelistic outreach of the early Christians.[5] The early Church was a proclaiming Church. In the Great Commission obedience to "observe all things" is the content and outcome of teaching.[6] Paul repeatedly affirmed the importance of the proclamation of the Gospel. This truth is crystallized clearly in his message to the Corinthian believers.[7] After affirming proclamation as the transmission of the Gospel, Paul presented the heart of the Gospel in its most dynamic form as the summation of his central message.[8]

Providing a Ministry Forum

Fourth, Aletheias will provide a forum where ministry leaders will share with our readers Scriptural truths and paradigms learned through research and years of service. Ministry should have at its disposal the most advanced technology. Leaders should be equipped with enhanced communication skills for maximum impact for Christ. Seminaries usually structure courses into aggregates referred to as departments, divisions, or schools. This compartmentalization may assume that Theology, Biblical Studies, and Ministry are mutually exclusive areas of academic pursuit. Ministry may be viewed as one of the disciplines. However, Ministry is the adhesive that gives Theology and Biblical Studies power for impact.[9]

In addition to specifying courses in Ministry, Piedmont International University requires a ministry component in every theology and Biblical Studies course. Aletheias will reflect this emphasis.

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[4] Eberhard Arnold, *The Early Christians in Their Own Words* (Farmington, PA: Plough Publishing House, 1998), 291.

[5] Ibid., 292.

[6] Matthew 28:19-20.

[7] 1 Corinthians 15:1-4.

[8] Ralph P. Martin, *Worship in the Early Church* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1975), 58.

[9] Joel Green, "Practicing the Gospel in a Post-Critical World: The Promise of Theological Exegesis," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* (September 2004): 387.

SELECTING A NAME

Selecting the name Aletheias for this journal seemed very appropriate because of the mission of Piedmont and the focus of the School of Bible and Theology. The environment in which Timothy ministered was in many ways, similar to our days. False teaching, departure from the Faith, and theological error had corrupted the ministry in Ephesus.[10] Paul assigned Timothy to pastor the church in that city, giving him a charge to "hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus."[11]

"Paul's purpose was to motivate and encourage Timothy to keep a firm grasp on that truth himself and to pass it on to others who would do likewise (2:2). It is only with a thorough knowledge of God's truth that falsehood and deceit can be recognized, resisted, and opposed."[12] In contrast to these imposters, Timothy was to "study (σπουδαζω) to show thyself (παρτιστιμι) approved (δοκιμος) unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing (ορθοτομεω) the Word of Truth (αληθεια)."[13] The Word of Truth is the apostolic faith which Timothy had received from Paul and is to communicate to others. For us it is, quite simply, Scripture." [14] As an institution dedicated to preparing faithful proclaimers of God's Truth, Piedmont has the high calling of focusing on rightly dividing (cutting straight) the Word of Truth.

SCANNING THIS ISSUE

The opening article of Aletheias consists of a comprehensive study of the doctrine of Unlimited Atonement. After establishing the background for the doctrine, Hoyle Bowman presents a compelling list of proofs for this doctrine. Dr. Bowman concludes that the "correct position is the infralapsarian order which has the decree to provide salvation before the decree to elect." Dr. Bowman's clear presentation will serve as a definitive argument for Unlimited Atonement. Dr. Bowman wrote this article many years ago. The editors decided to include it in the inaugural issue of Aletheias because it affirms one of the tenets of our theological heritage

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[10] 1 Timothy 1:4-9.

[11] 2 Timothy 1:13.

[12] John MacArthur, *New Testament Commentary 2 Timothy* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1995) 70.

[13] 2 Timothy 2:15.

[14] John Stott, *The Message of 2 Timothy* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1973): 67.

and because Dr. Bowman has had a central role in preserving the theological identity of Piedmont.

Larry Tyler's "Survey of the Christology of the Apocalypse" is a focused research on the Christology of the New Testament. The author's examination is an analysis of the visual representations of Christ, His titles, and His association with the Father. The article closes with a comparison of the Christology of the book of the Apocalypse with the other books of the New Testament.

Atheism hasincreased in popularity on our nation's secular campuses during the last decade. In "Critiquing The God Delusion: an Apologetic Paradigm against the New Atheism of the 21st Century," Brian Wagner provides the Christian students on these campuses and the pastors a response to one of the most influential books that is fermenting that popularity.This articlealso offers a renewed approachfor countering such attacks with a biblical apologetic method, best expressed as "speaking the truth in love."

The question, "What is Truth?" has been the subject of philosophical and theological inquiry for many ages. Given the name of this journal, Scott Anthony Smith's article "The Nature of Truth: A Theological Answer to a Philosophical Question" is of special significance. The author holds to the ancient philosophical correspondence theory of truth, offering a God-centered answer to a perennial critical question used against the theory. What exactly is the nature of the correspondence relation itself that links a truth bearer (usually a linguistic assertion) to the truth maker (the reality expressed by the truth bearer)? From the biblical answer to this question, the author proposes that other philosophical and theological questions may find a solution or clarification.

In a carefully constructed series of arguments, Jacob Hollingsworth presents the usefulness of Middle Knowledge as a component of a theodicy or defense against the problem of evil. He concludes that middle knowledge offers a strong orthodox treatment of God's sovereignty and omniscience.

The research article by Wayne Willis examines the Strategic Place of Hermeneutics in the Evangelical Feminist Debate. The polarization of opposing views has impacted churches nationwide. Professor Willis applies sound principles of biblical hermeneutics to present an

objective evaluation of this controversial issue. Pastors and ministry leaders will receive very useful and reliable teaching on the subject from the Word of God.

In an informative, biographical article entitled "The Tethered Bird," Jonathan Bolin introduces to us the theological contribution of contemporary, evangelical scholar John Stott, whose writings and lectures have impacted both England and the United States for over half a century. John Robert Walmsley Stott went to be with the Lord on July 27, 2011, at the age of 90. Although he was mostly ignored by the press, Time Magazine listed him in April 2005 as one of the world's top 100 influencers. His teachings have been extensively discussed in university and seminary classrooms. His influence will continue. While the editors consider some of Stott's teachings inconsistent with the Scripture, we all recognize his scholarly influence as a theologian. The author maintains a scriptural balance in his review. Serious students of the Bible can learn much from Stott's works. The editors present this article for information, discussion, and research.

This Issue of Aletheias concludes with an extremely insightful book review by Howard L. Wilburn. In The Trellis and The Vine: The Ministry Mind-shift that Changes Everything, Colin Marshall and Tony Payne use the metaphor of the trellis and the vine to focus on the Church and the organizational structure that supports the work. The author of the review convincingly illustrates that pastors and leaders of Bible-believing Baptist churches will find a number of "intriguing potentials for local church ministry" in the 21st century.

It is our prayer that the articles and the book review in this inaugural issue of Aletheias will inspire, inform, and challenge our readers. We invite others who share the basic theological convictions of Piedmont to contribute research articles in biblical studies, theology, and ministry.

A CASE FOR UNLIMITED ATONEMENT

By Hoyle Bowman*

INTRODUCTION

Historical Background

It is fairly well demonstrated by early church fathers and most ecclesiastical creeds (cf. Philip Schaff's *The Creeds of Christendom*) that the extent of the atonement was not really an issue until the Supralapsarian and Arminian controversy of the seventeenth century. The previous Augustinian-Pelagian debate was more concerned with the problem of the extent of man's sin rather than the extent of Christ's death, though Augustine brought this aspect into the debate. But the real issue of the extent of Christ's death did not concern the church until the days of the Reformation at which time the Reformed Confessions appeared.

Jacob Herman (Latin name was Arminius) was asked to support the Supralapsarian position in Amsterdam, Holland, near the close of the sixteenth century. Upon studying the issues, he refrained from taking the ultra position. Simon Episcopus (Hugo Grotius) developed the Arminian system after the death of Arminius (Beza largely developed the Calvinistic system after Calvin's death).

One year after Arminius' death the Arminians drew up the five-point Remonstrance decree, which was counteracted in 1618 by the drawing up of the well known "five points of Calvinism" by the Calvinists. With respect to the extent of the atonement, the issue was diametrically drawn between Christ's dying for all men (Arminians) and Christ's death intended only to save the elect (Calvinists).[1]

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* Hoyle Bowman, Th.B., Th.M., Th.D., is a Professor of Theology at Piedmont International University. Dr. Bowman wrote this article many years ago as a paper for presentation to the Piedmont students. The editor asked him for permission to publish it in the inaugural issue of *Aletheias* because of the centrality of its theme.
[1] James Oliver Buswell, *A Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1963), II, 136-37. Hereafter cited as *Systematic Theology*.

In France, the controversy continued largely around Moise Amyraut (Moses Amyraldus) who taught at the Academy of Saumur and John Cameron who also taught for a short time at the same school. Both men did not believe in limited atonement.[2] Amyraut became the theological father of four-point Calvinism. Armstrong contends that Amyraut represented Calvin's teachings as he profusely used his writings; whereas, the orthodox Calvinists were not so familiar with Calvin's teachings.[3] Amyraldianism shall be mentioned later with regards to the decree of God.

From the days of the Reformation to this present day, the issue is still raging over the extent of Christ's death, though this is not the only nor the main issue. It is beyond the purpose of this article to discuss the contemporary debate over the extent of Christ's death from a historical perspective.

Essential Understanding

Before one considers the extent of the atonement, there must be an understanding of the differing positions. The following is a brief analysis of the contending positions in evangelicalism. Universalism obviously is not an evangelical position.

Arminian position. According to Berkhof, the original Arminian article read that "Jesus Christ died for all men so that He has obtained for them all redemption and forgiveness of sins."[4] Design may be ascertained in the word "obtained." If this were literally interpreted it would mean that all men would be saved. However, the article rectifies itself by indicating that only the believer receives this forgiveness. Essentially, Miley expresses the same design when he says, "The atonement is for individual men by virtue of a divine intention.…"[5] More contemporary Arminians, such as Sailer,[6] are more refined in their arguments, particularly in meeting the charge of universalism. God designed to make a provision for all men, not that He intended or designed to save all men. If so, then all men would be saved. The position is correct, in the

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[2] Brian G. Armstrong, *Calvinism and the Amraut Heresy* (Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 56-57, 153.

[3] *Ibid.*, 187-89.

[4] Louis Berkhof, *Vicarious Atonement Through Christ* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1936), 152.

[5] John Miley, *The Atonement in Christ* (New York: Phillips and Hunt, 1879), p. 306.

[6] William S. Sailer, "The Nature and Extent of the Atonement – A Wesleyan View," *Bulletin of the Evangelical Theological Society.* 10:4 (Fall, 1967):197.

writer's opinion, in the fact that Christ did die for all men. But in what sense or for what purpose? The answer awaits a further discussion.

  Five-point Calvinistic position. Five-point Calvinism has largely been limited to Reformed theology – covenant theology. This system of theology, with its emphasis upon amillennialism and infant baptism, finds its denominational format in such denominations as the Presbyterian Church (though not limited to this denomination) with its Westminster Confession (1648). The design of the atonement is expressed variously. Berkhof clearly limits Christ's death 100% to the elect when he says that "Christ gave His life *only* [emphasis is mine] for those who were given Him by the Father."[7] Nicole seems to be broader in his scope but the same in design. He says:

> The point at issue here is simply this, whether the Father [in] sending the Son and the Son in offering Himself did intend to provide salvation for all men and every man, or whether they intended to secure the salvation of all those and those only who will in fact be redeemed.[8]

Though Nicole does not believe so, his statement in the above quote would argue for a definite atonement as to design. So, in reality he accepts the Berkhof view. His word *secure* may, however, be taken that Christ's death secures its own result. The former would be acceptable to even modified Calvinists but the latter is unacceptable because the objective fact of Christ's death has no saving efficacy in it apart from other divine operations. At any rate, all Reformed five-point Calvinists have the one design in mind of limiting the death of Christ to the efficacious securing of the salvation of the elect. All admit that Christ's death was of sufficient value to save a thousand worlds of men if this had been God's eternal design. Beneficial results are ascribed to the non-elect such as life and forbearance of God.[9] However, this writer fails to see how such natural phenomena as physical life (God has constitutionally arranged man to live until he dies – Gen. 3:17-19) and one's environment have any necessary relation to Christ's death. These things rather fall under the providence and benevolence of God (cf. Matt. 10:29-30; Acts 14:17; 17:25-28). Even angels receive many such benefits simply because they are creatures of the Creator. So, unless Christ's death is more concretely related to all men, this writer fails to see any direct accruement from that death to all men. The Scriptures do not relate such benefit as described above to the result of Christ's death.

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[7] Berkhof, *Vicarious Atonement Through Christ*, 156.

[8] Roger Nicole, "*The Case For Definite Atonement,*" *Bulletin of the Evangelical Theological Society*, 10:4 (Fall, 1967): 200.

[9] Archibald Alexander Hodge, *The Atonement* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1953), 358-59.

There are five-point Calvinists who do not adhere to the Reformed, covenantal theology but who postulate the same, singular design of the atonement as the Reformed position. Many of these are dispensational Baptists. Some of these would allow more of a relation to Christ's death to the non-elect by way of a provision seen in the doctrines of reconciliation and propitiation. This position has not academically fermented itself so the writer is unable to validate himself. Individuals could be named but this is not the writer's desire. To this writer such a position is on both sides of the issue: the Reformed side and the dispensational side of theology.

In brief, the design of the atonement in five-point Calvinism is to secure the salvation of the elect through Christ's death. This was the purpose for which He came into the world. This is most certainly correct but this writer feels that such is too narrow to encompass the obvious Scriptural data concerning the provision that has been made for all men. Assuming this to be correct for sake of argument then the provisionary nature of Christ's death is also an aspect of the divine decree.

Four-point Calvinistic position. This division would also include those who are three-point Calvinists. Three-point Calvinists would either deny or else qualify unconditional election or irresistible grace (known also as efficacious grace). Both groups could be designated as moderate or modified Calvinists. Such men as Charles C. Ryrie and John F. Walvoord could be classified as four-point Calvinists. This position (four-point or three-point position) advocates a twofold purpose or a twofold aspect of the design – one purpose encompassing all men; one purpose especially for the elect. Lightner succinctly states the twofold purpose: "Christ most certainly died to *secure* [italics mine] the salvation of those who believe—the elect—and it is our conviction that the Bible teaches that Christ died to provide a basis of salvation for all men."[10]

There is no question as to the validity of the first purpose. Granting the premise of biblical election all three-point and all four-point Calvinists adhere to the divine purpose of securing the salvation of the elect. The question comes on the second purpose of *providing* salvation for all men—not that all men have the equal chance of salvation. The point of provision is yet to be proved but this writer believes that the decree of God as well as the Scriptures will support this contention.

Such a position obviously separates the work of Christ on the cross from the Holy Spirit's application of that work to the sinner. As has been stated the cross does not secure its own results.

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[10] Robert P. Lightner, *The Death Christ Died* (Des Plaines, Illinois: Regular Baptist Press, 1967), 46.

The effect must be prompted by another cause, which is the efficacious work of the Holy Spirit issuing in saving faith. The death angel did not kill the firstborn in which house the blood was *applied* (Ex. 12:12-13). The failure to appropriate the remedy-provision brought death. In like manner failure to appropriate the soteric-provision constitutes the basis of eternal condemnation (Jn. 3:18, 36).

Special Terminology Used in the Argument

Limited Atonement

Five-point Calvinists usually mean that the work of Christ on the cross is limited to the *extent* or to the intended *design* of securing the salvation of the elect. As has been stated, they do not mean that Christ's death is limited in its efficacy had God intended to save more. Due to the misunderstanding some five-point Calvinists would prefer the phrase *Limited Redemption*[11] or the phrase *Particular Atonement*.[12] Or, these may respectively be designated as *Particular Redemption* and *Definite Atonement*. Modified Calvinists may also rightfully use these terms as they view the actual result or effect of Christ's death. These adherents, however, are limiting the extent of Christ's death to the intended application of that work rather than limiting the provision of the work. They believe that Christ died for all men.

Unlimited Atonement

Universalists (those who believe all eventually will be saved), Arminians (neo-liberals and evangelicals), and moderate Calvinists use this phrase or one comparable to it. Evangelicals mean by this phrase that Christ died for all men thus providing, either prospectively (God anticipatively looking forward in behalf of Old Testament saints) or retrospectively, a sufficient provision.

Sovereignty of God

Many strict Calvinists have a twisted view as to the sovereignty of God. Hoeksema does not want to use the idea of permission in God's will and decree. He says, "permission presupposes…there is a power without God…which is simply permitted by God."[13] The writer realizes that Hoeksema incorporates permission determinatively within the decree but a more correct and biblical way would include the idea that God divinely permits such things as the sinful acts of men. In other words, God previously determined in His eternal decree that He

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[11] Loraine Boettner, *The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination* (Philadelphia: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1966), 150.

[12] Buswell, *Systematic Theology*, II, 141.

would allow or permit men so to act.[14] Such is commensurate with Scripture as Paul said, "Who in times past *allowed* [italics mine] all nations to walk in their own ways" (Acts 14:16, cf. 17:30).

Permitting men to believe the gospel, having previously taken the initiative with them, does not cheapen or lessen God's sovereignty because God does whatever He pleases. But He may not choose to go to the full measure of His omnipotence.

Reprobation

This teaching postulates that the decree of God determines that the non-elect were eternally fitted for destruction.[15] This teaching is sometimes called *double predestination.* This would normally belong to the order of supralapsarianism, which puts the decree to elect before the decree to create man. If such were the case then some would have been created (or, born) to be lost. The Bible indicates some are chosen unto eternal life but it does not indicate that the non-elect are eternally reprobated. Arbitrary election (election without cause or reason) would presuppose double predestination.

Preterition (*Praeteritio*)

This is not a biblical word. It is a theological word which would indicate that the nonelect are simply passed by. This is a theological surmise based on the reasoning that since the elect will be saved then the nonelect obviously must be passed over. The reasoning and the position are correct but the Bible does not state that the nonelect are passed by. Rather, to the contrary, the Scriptures indiscriminatingly and distributively invite all men to heed the gospel, though all do not have the same or equal chance to hear it. The Bible is clear as to why men are passed by.

Some Necessary Presuppositions

There are a number of presuppositions that could be offered in order to enhance one's understanding of the problem regarding the extent of Christ's death. The following are two of the more important ones. It is not the writer's intention to discuss fully these two presuppositions but merely to state his view regarding them.

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[13] Herman Hoeksema, *Reformed Dogmatics* (Grand Rapids: Reformed Free Publishing Association, 1966), 158.

[14] *New Scofield Reference Bible* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), P. 1273, n. 1.

[15] Hoeksema, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 161.

Biblical Election

Deuteronomy 29:28 (v. 29 in most translations) says: "The secret things belong unto the LORD our God; but the things that are revealed belong unto us…" (*The Holy Scriptures According to the Masoretic Text*). There are some things in the doctrine of election that God has not revealed to us. Some things are revealed to us yet we need the illumination of the Holy Spirit.

Fact of Soteric Election: The Scriptures clearly teach a divine choice of certain individuals from before the foundation of the world. This fact particularly relates to the Body of Christ (Eph. 1:4). The Church as a corporate body (cf. Israel's corporate national choice in Deuteronomy 7:6) was chosen (ἐξελέξατο) "he chose for himself" *in Christ* before the foundation of the world. This corporate unit choice is further restricted to an individual basis as Paul said the Thessalonian believers (and thus all believers) were chosen (εἵλατο) *unto* salvation by means of the work of the Holy Spirit and the belief of the truth (2 Thess. 2:13).

Strict Calvinists and modified Calvinists may differ on some things regarding this doctrine but all *must* agree that in the ultimate end the constituent number is the same.

Basis of Soteric Election: Election is viewed from three κάτα ("according to") considerations. First, it is according to grace (Rom. 11:5). Paul says that during the Church dispensation there is a remnant of Christian Jews who were chosen according to grace (κατ᾽ ἐκλογὴν χάριτος). Grace is unmerited favor. Therefore, it could not be by works (Rom.11:6). One should observe that *works* in the Scriptures does not mean that faith is to be also dismissed. Faith is not in the same category as works for Paul said, "But to him that *worketh not* [italics mine], *but believeth* [italics mine] on him…his faith is accounted for righteousness" (Rom. 4:5). Strict Calvinists relegate faith to the area of works but there is no justification for such because faith is the channel through which people are saved (cf. Eph. 2:8 – διὰ πίστεως). Second, we are God's inheritance having been marked off beforehand according to the purpose (κατὰ πρόθεσιν) of the Lord (Eph. 1:11). Paul, at this point, is not concerned with election as he has already mentioned such in verse 4 but God's marking the believer off beforehand as His inheritance is certainly related to election. God has a purpose for His own. Third, election is according to the foreknowledge of God (1 Pet. 1:2). Also it is to be noted that ἐκλεκτοῖς ("chosen") is adjectively put before the word "sojourners" of verse 1. The basis or standard of their election is the "foreknowledge" (προγινώσκω). Thiessen

says election is based on "… those whom He foreknew would accept Him."[16] The word προγινώσκω does have the connotation of knowing beforehand. God foreknew all people and all events. The decretive aspect of this aspect of God's knowledge shall be discussed later. However, the aspect of God's foreknowledge that is involved in election is quite different. Arminianism interprets foreknowledge as if it were ἐπί with the dative ("on the basis of") or διά with the accusative ("on account of" or "because of").[17] Rather it is according to knowledge. Here is one of those things that God has not revealed to us. As C. I. Scofield said in his footnote, "But Scripture nowhere declares what it is the divine foreknowledge which determines the divine election…"[18] All that we know is the result that God intimately knew us before the foundation of the world. Theologically, the word implies an active positive relationship rather than just a passive contemplation. Paul said, "Because *whom he foreknew* [italics mine]…" (Romans 8:29). Without the prefix the word γινώσκω means experiential, intimate knowledge (cf. LXX of Gen. 4:1; also, Matt. 1:25; Phil. 3:10). One must be careful not to equate foreknowledge with election. Buswell's warning is applicable for he says:

> Some so-called Calvinists have even taken the Thomistic position that for God to know and to do are identical. I wish to make it clear that in rejecting the Arminian interpretation of 1 Peter 1:1,2, I am by no means accepting the cliché which makes God's foreknowledge nothing but His decree of election. Divine election is one thing and divine foreknowledge is another thing.[19]

Hoeksema is guilty of equating them as he says that "foreknowledge" is a Scriptural term for election.[20] The Scripture is clear that election is according to foreknowledge. Thus, they are not synonymous terms. These two terms shall be further discussed in connection with the eternal decree of God.

A Definite Redemption

From the above discussion it is concluded that some, as over against others, will be saved. Limiting ourselves to the dispensation of the Church means that there is a *definite* number, known

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[16] Henry C. Thiessen, *Introductory Lectures in Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1961), 344.

[17] Daniel Whitby, *A Discourse Concerning Election and Reprobation* (London: F. C. and J. Rivington, 1817), 74.

[18] C. I. Scofield, *The Scofield Reference Bible* (New York: Oxford University Press), p. 1312, n. 1.

[19] Buswell, *Systematic Theology*, II, 141.

[20] Hoeksema, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 159.

only by God, within the Body of Christ. This definiteness is absolutely secured by God's eternal selection of this number unto salvation. This election is according to God's foreknowledge of these from all of eternity. No one can plumb the depths of this foreknowledge. Prescience is of necessity involved but this is not the emphasis in Scripture when His own are contemplated. Such prior knowledge of positive relationship and fellowship with His own implies certainty of redemption.

Thus, it is this writer's opinion that there is a definite redemption (viewed in its ultimate effect) for only those contemplated from all of eternity. He does not believe in arbitrary election (that is, without cause or reason). Rather biblical election is never considered in violation to human freedom of the will and is commensurate to it (Jn. 6:37).

Though there is a definite redemption stated in Scripture there is also unlimited atonement (provision) stated therein. Both must be accepted in order to do justice to the full data. The provisionary aspect is yet to be proved.

The following chart will illustrate both of these aspects. The chart will essentially relay the writer's philosophy regarding election as well as the extent of Christ's death.

Unlimited Provision   Limited to

Elect   Elect
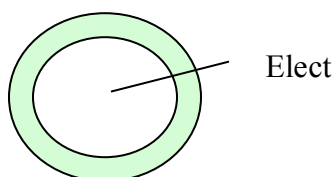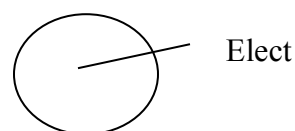
All the world   *Excludes all*

Condemned in Adam and unbelief   *Accepted in Beloved*

Commanded to believe   *Commanded to obedience*

Condemned for not believing   *Judged for not believing the Lord*

PURPOSE AND PROCEDURE

The purpose for this paper is to indicate the provisionary nature of Christ's death for all men. The writer is particularly concerned with data that relates to the dispensation of the Church, that is, this age.

As to procedure the second chapter will be concerned with arguments for provision. It will not be the design of the paper to set forth all arguments for unlimited atonement nor will it be the purpose of the paper to refute all of the arguments used by five-point Calvinism. It is the writer's opinion that much of their argument is correct. However, it is also his opinion that some data is not given its obvious meaning by five-point Calvinists.

<div align="center">PROOFS FOR UNLIMITED ATONEMENT</div>

Again it must be emphasized that only a provisionary aspect of Christ's death is intended in the phrase "unlimited atonement." It is the purpose of this chapter to set forth some of these proofs.

Proof from the Decree of God

God has a plan or decree. It is an eternal design (Eph. 3:11) and represents His divine intention, which will be ultimately and minutely carried out. This plan incorporates *everything* within it even to the most heinous sin. The plan does not exclude man's responsibility or God's divine purposes. Both God's directive and permissive wills are within the design or purpose.[21]

This decree is one plan but consisting of many facets which are enacted in time. To God, however, the future events, even to our day, are contemplated from the beginning with Him (this does not mean that God acts apart from time). Therefore, the many facets of the decree are logically related to each other in time but they have no chronological relation.[22] However, God does carry out His plan in time. For instance, the plan conceived of Christ dying before the foundation of the world, but He actually died at an appointed time in time (cf. 1 Pet. 1:20; Gal. 4:4). This could be said of every event, act, etc. within the plan of God. To this extent everything within the plan was an eternal NOW with God (Acts 15:18).

Biblical Arrangement of the Decree

As has been stated, the decree is one, but theologians speak of decrees. Five decrees are mentioned. The arrangement of these five decrees designate one's theological position. These decrees are theologically depicted as follows. The following orders are normal theological designations. There is some confusion of understanding regarding these but this paper will take

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[21] Augustus Hopkins Strong, 27th printing, *Systematic Theology* (Old Tappan, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Company), 1970, 354-55.

[22] *Ibid*, 353.

the normal nomenclature for sake of simplicity. Only the Calvinistic arrangement will be contemplated.

Supralapsarian order: The word "lapsarian" (Latin, *Lapsus*) means that man is a fallen being.[23] The problem is to determine the priority in God's mind regarding the five decrees. The logical order in supralapsarianism is: (1) the decree to elect some, (2) the decree to create man, (3) the decree to permit the fall of man, (4) the decree to provide salvation only for the elect, (5) the decree to apply salvation to the elect. As indicated the decree to elect is first. This is objected to by Shedd who indicates that man must be existent before he could be elected.[24] This arrangement would logically argue for arbitrary election and double predestination. Obviously this order is to be rejected. Hoeksema attempts to take the stigma off of this order by indicating that in eternity past the decree was supralapsarian but in actual enactment the decree became infralapsarian.[25] This is a strict Calvinistic position which is rarely followed in Reformed theology today.

Sublapsarian order: The logical order in this theological position is: (1) the decree to create man, (2) the decree to permit the fall, (3) the decree to elect some to eternal life, (4) the decree to provide salvation for the elect (though benefits of the cross may accrue to the non-elect), (5) the decree to apply salvation to the elect. This position is not nearly so strict as the Supralapsarian position as the first two decrees are in obvious logical order. The decree to elect is put before the decree to provide salvation in order to guarantee that the purpose for Christ's death was to save the elect. It is the writer's opinion that such an order need not follow to assure such a purpose, which is a correct purpose within itself. He feels such a sublapsarian order cannot adequately account, without explaining away obvious references, for the obvious provisionary intention of the death of Christ. To him this order does not adequately explain why some are passed by. If all men (τοῖς ἀνθρώποις πάντας) are declared by God to repent (Acts 17:30) then it must necessarily follow that the reason they are passed by is because they abide in Adam and in unbelief. The Scriptures do not declare that men are passed by because no adequate atonement was made for them nor that they were not elected. Rather the Scriptures are clear that men perish because they do not repent or believe (cf. Jn. 3:18, 36; 5:25, etc.). Christ said very clearly, "unless ye

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[23] Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology* (Dallas, Texas: Dallas Seminary Press, 1948), III, 178.

[24] William G. T. Shedd, *Dogmatic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, n.d.), I, 442.

[25] Herman Hoeksema, Reformed Dogmatics (Grand Rapids: Reformed Free Publishing Association, 1966), 162.

repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Lk. 13:3). Therefore, unless the sublapsarian order can account for this biblical aspect the writer feels that the order is thus deficient to this extent. This order is largely the Reformed position, which bases much of its conclusions upon the assumed covenant position (known as covenant theology). Therefore, such an order is assumed in order to keep Christ's work within a covenant circumference. To this writer, such is too narrow because more than just the redemption of the elect is related to Christ's death. Paul said that through (διὰ with the genitive) the blood of the cross all things (τὰ πάντα) are reconciled (Col. 1:20). In God's eternal economy even the non-elect will bow to the *redemptive* name of the Saviour, which is Jesus. Paul relates such action of the wicked to the death and exaltation of Jesus (Phil. 2:6-11). Therefore, there is a sustained relation between Jesus and the reprobate which goes beyond the fact that He is sovereign. Why will Christ and not the Father judge the unsaved (Jn. 5:323-24; Acts 17:30-31)? Is it not because the Son of *Man* took man's place?

Infralapsarian order: To this writer the biblical order of the decrees is: (1) the decree to create man, (2) the decree to permit the fall of all men in Adam, (3) the decree to provide (not to secure the salvation) a provision for all men in Adam, (4) the decree to elect some out of the race unto salvation, (5) the decree to apply that salvation efficaciously through the work of the Holy Spirit and belief of the truth to the elect. The point of dispute is with regards to putting the decree to provide salvation before the decree to elect. The writer affirms that this is the biblical order for a number of positive and negative reasons. First, this is the order historically followed in Genesis 3. Subsequent to Adam's fall (thus *entire race*) God provided a remedy for his dilemma- that of coats of skins (Gen. 3:21). Soteriologically, the same order prevails in the sense of a provision, though in this case, such provision must be made effective by God through the channel of faith. Second, this particular order satisfied obvious universal passages indicating that Christ's death was related in some degree to the non-elect (cf. 2 Pet. 2:1). The writer hastens to say that such obvious universal provision does not necessitate the doctrine of universalism nor does it negate the divine purpose of limiting the application of that provision to the elect (the ones who believe). Third, the decree to provide salvation is also a purposive decree. John's use of the ἵνα clauses intimates universal provision. John the Baptist's witnessing to the light was to the effect that all may believe through him (John 1:7). The ἵνα πάντες πιστεύσωσιν indicates purpose and obviously intimates a provision commensurate with the purpose. All will not believe but the purpose clause puts it on the universal level. John also said that Christ did not come into the

world (universal sense even though He only came to Palestine) to judge the world but for the *purpose* that (ἵνα) the world may or might be saved (Jn. 3:17). Verse 18 proceeds to explain why some are not judged and why some are judged. Since the death of Christ, such refusal of the provision constitutes the *basis* of their condemnation. In the final sense the non-elect would be designated as "the one who believes not" (ὁ μὴ πιστεύων, John 3:18; 8:24) or "unbelievers" (ἀπίστοις, 2 Cor. 6:14; Rev. 21:8). Though Sailer is an evangelical Arminian, his argument is irrefutable when he argues that the non-elect could not be designated as *unbelievers* if no provision was provided for them.[26] Therefore, it is the writer's opinion that God *purposed* in the decree to provide "salvation for all men to the end that the elect might be saved."[27] Fourth, as it has been stated, the sublapsarian order of putting election before the provision of salvation does not adequately account for the universal provision in Christ's death. The writer could admit such an order if the provisionary purpose were incorporated into the arrangement. Fifth, prefacing the decree to elect some with the decree to provide salvation for all does not extend Christ's substitutionary or redemptive work beyond the effectual work of the Holy Spirit. As has been stated, the refusal of the universal provision (does not guarantee the securement of salvation) constitutes *the ground* of the non-elect's condemnation. Sixth, on the other hand, by putting the decree to elect before the decree to provide salvation for the elect one must *logically* deduce that Christ's death secures the salvation of the elect. But, this does not follow because Christ's death was an objective event and within and by itself that death could not save anyone apart from other contingencies such as the effectual call of the Holy Spirit and the acceptance of the gospel by the sinner. This is Berkhof's fallacy as he believed that there is an "inseparable connection between the purchase and the actual bestowal of salvation."[28] It must be pointed out that there is an obvious distinction between Christ's death and the application of that work to the elect. Peter is clear enough when he said that Christ bought (ἀγοράσαντα) false teachers who were never regenerated (2 Pet. 2:1). This Scripture alone conclusively proves that there is a distinction between the purchasing of a commodity and the releasing of that commodity. The separation of these two, however, does not make the salvation of the elect only hypothetically possible. The salvation of the elect is an assured thing. But such certainty is not solely required by putting the

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[26] William S. Sailer, "The Nature and Extent of the Atonement – A Wesleyan View," *Bulletin of the Evangelical Theological Society*, 10:4 (Fall, 1967): 194-95.

[27] Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, III, 186.

[28] L. Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1953), 395.

decree to elect before the decree to provide salvation. It is this writer's contention that such certainty can also be assured by the reversal of the two decrees. This is simply proven by the one fact that election is election regardless of where the decree is located. If God chose a certain number, that number will be saved even if that decree succeeds the decree to provide salvation for all men. Seventh, the decree to provide salvation must be contemplated in God's mind logically before the decree to elect because the selection was for the purpose of taking some out of the *status quo* of sin. The remedy was required to fit the need. Therefore, redemptive provision became the basis of the choice. Election is a choice *in Christ* (Eph. 1:4). Election is "unto" (εἰς) salvation (2 Thess. 2:13), which must mean that God contemplated salvation in Christ and then chose some to that salvation. If election is unto salvation then the remedy had to be logically contemplated first unless the election is conceived apart from the remedy. If the latter is admitted then it is also conceivable that the cross was really unnecessary to acquire the decretal design.

It is thus concluded in this division that the infralapsarian order is more in conjunction with the total array of Scripture. Though the provisionary decree prefaces the decree to elect, this really does not lessen the effectual results assured in the decree of election. This modified, dispensational approach (opposite of the Reformed, covenantal approach) does not accept the Arminian view that election is based upon foreseen faith (though God certainly knew this). The moderate Calvinistic system views a provision for all men but the election limits the efficacy of that provision to those believing (the elect). It is the writer's opinion that God *purposed* such a provision for all as well as He purposed to elect some. Both are divine decrees. Therefore, they are divine designs or intentions. A particular order of decrees proves nothing within itself unless such an order is clearly substantiated by Scripture. In the opinion of this writer, the Scriptures are clear on the fact that a provision has been decreed and enacted for all who will believe, which does not limit the provision. The special design in the decree of God does not exclude a provisionary design.

Biblical Arrangement of Omniscience, Election, and Foreknowledge in the Degree

In the divine decree there is a logical order which is stated in the title. Omniscience, election, and foreknowledge are eternal. The new Scofield Reference Bible succinctly gives the inter-relations among these three.

> The sovereign choice of God in foreordination, election, and predestination logically originated in the divine decision based on His *eternal omniscience* [italics mine] of all possible

plans of action. The order logically, not chronologically, is omniscience, divine decision (foreordination, election, predestination), and foreknowledge, as God's decision is eternal, however, so also His foreknowledge is eternal. As foreknowledge extends to all events, it includes all that is embraced in election, foreordination, and predestination. Election is, therefore, according to foreknowledge, and foreknowledge is according to election, meaning that both are in perfect agreement.[29]

This is the obvious order as neither election nor foreknowledge could logically preface omniscience. God knows *all things* before they occur. As Shedd said, "God knew what would be created before it was actually created."[30] This means that God logically knew everything that would ever happen before His decision to divinely decree all things. His omniscience therefore is not governed or controlled by His decision. He knows all things: actual and possible (cf. 1 Sam. 23:12; Matt. 11:21). This knowledge is inclusive of all plans or any variety of any plan. Upon this basis of all knowledge He chose a plan (or, made a decision) which includes everything. Having chosen such a plan He foreknows these things will come to pass because of His decision that they will come to pass.

One illustration will suffice to show the logical order of omniscience, decision, and foreknowledge. Christ was eternally known by His Father (Jn. 1:1). In the plan it was decided that Christ would come to this earth to die (Heb. 10:5-9). Because of this decision then Christ could have been foreknown from all of eternity that He would come to die (cf. 1 Pet. 1:20, προεγνωσμένου). To this writer the above logical order is of great help in understanding many problems. It is undeniable that God's choice had to logically proceed from His omniscience. His decision did not add anything to His omniscience. God's choice was made upon the basis of His "all knowledge." This helps to understand the substitutionary (efficacious) death of Christ for the elect. One may question this logical order by appealing to the fact that these three eternal aspects may be viewed as simultaneous. The writer agrees but the fact remains that neither election nor foreknowledge can logically precede all knowledge. Logically, He knew of the plan, with its details, before the plan was chosen.

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[29] *New Scofield Reference Bible*, p. 1333, n. 1.

[30] Shedd, *Dogmatic Theology*, I, 396.

PROOF FROM THE GREEK PREPOSITIONS

There are four Greek prepositions used in relation to Christ's death: ἀντί, ὑπέρ, δία, and πέρι.[31] The preposition πρό is not used substitutionally of Christ's death.

The main concern within this division is concerning the prepositions ἀντί and ὑπέρ. The preposition πέρι will be briefly considered later in connection with the 1 John 2:2 discussion. The purpose is to show that these prepositions indicate substitution as well as, in the case of ὑπέρ and πέρι, a provisionary benefit. This presumes that in some sense Christ died for all though He became the salvational substitution for only those who believe (the elect).

The Preposition Ἀντί

This preposition is used twenty-two times in the New Testament. Theologically, only two references (Matt. 20:28; Mk. 10:45) have any great significance. These are parallel passages. Christ came to give His life a λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν ("ransom in exchange for many"). The preposition ἀντί is the strict preposition for substitution. The meaning of λύτρον is "the one commonly employed in the papyri as the price paid for a slave who is then set free by the one who bought him, the purchase money for manumitting slaves."[32] This concept of a purchasing price is the meaning of ransom in both the Old Testament (Exod. 21:30; 30:12), as well as the papyri. The preposition, therefore, is used in a commercial sense. Christ was given in exchange for many. The death of Christ, which was the ransom, realized the transaction. His death was the price paid (not to Satan) as well as it (death) was a substitute for many.

Soteriologically, the "many" (Matt. 20:28; Mk. 10:45) would be limited to only those set free by the purchase price. Plummer tries to indicate that "the indefinite *many* does not mean that there were some whom He did *not* intend to redeem, that He did not die for *all*."[33] The writer agrees with Plummer that Christ did indeed die *in behalf of* or for *the benefit of* all. But the use of ἀντί with λύτρον in these Synoptic references would rather limit the design as the commercial sense *in exchange for* is used. Therefore, this preposition ἀντί is not necessarily a proof for universal

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[31] William Magee, *Discourses and Dissertations on the Scriptural Doctrines of Atonement and Sacrifice* (Philadelphia: S. Potter and Co., 1825), I, 189-90.

[32] Archibald Thomas Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (New York: Richard R. Smith, Inc., 1930), I, 163.

[33] Alfred Plummer, *An Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to S. Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1956), 280.

provision as it views those only who are actually purchased. However, it does not exclude the fact that Christ's death was on behalf of (or, for the benefit of) others as will be discussed later.

The Preposition Ὑπέρ

According to the lexicons the preposition ὑπέρ is used 132 times in the New Testament. This preposition is predominately used of Christ's death in relation to men. Crawford, Shedd and Chafer[34] view ὑπέρ as being interchangeable with ἀντί. This would mean that the concept of substitution would also be seen in the ὑπέρ references referring to the death of Christ.

Why is ὑπέρ used rather than ἀντί? Waltke has done a phenomenal piece of work on these two prepositions. He indicates that ἀντί is a "commercial, mechanical term, whereas, ὑπέρ is "the term of personal interest" and "benefit."[35] With the genitive of persons ὑπέρ expresses "…both the notions of benefit and substitution."[36] In expressing the representative nuance ("instead of") of ὑπέρ, Walkte states that "in a very true sense Christ did die for the representative of the human race and as the representative of the believer".[37]

As a result of Waltke's conclusions on ἀντί and ὑπέρ one must realize that Christ's death rendered a sense of benefit to all and was a strict or pure substitute to those in Christ.

The following are some references that indicate both ideas of benefit and substitution in the preposition ὑπέρ. It must be remembered that within substitution there is also the connotation of benefit. Also, the writer is using the idea of substitution in its actual procuring result which in this sense is limited to the elect or the believers. The accrual to the non-elect (to this writer) is a provisionary benefit if such were accepted. Such will not transpire, though the provisional benefit is available to all men. However, this is only from God's viewpoint of decree and knowledge.

Substitution: First, Christ laid down His life ὑπέρ τῶν προβάτων (John 10:11, 15). As a shepherd may die in defense of his sheep, Christ died in place of His sheep. Spiritually, the word "sheep" is used of an established status (cf. Matt. 25:32-33). In the Johannine passage Christ indicated that the established status is through Him (v. 9). This constitutes one as a sheep. This is

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[34] Thomas J. Crawford, *Doctrine of Holy Scripture Respecting the Atonement* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1954), p. 494; Shedd, *Dogmatic Theology*, I, 380; Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, III, 56-57.

[35] Bruce Kenneth Waltke, "The Theological Significations of ANTI and ΥΠΕΡ in the New Testament," Unpublished Th.D. dissertation, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1958, 422.

[36] *Ibid*, 389.

[37] *Ibid*, 424.

the reason why Christ said to the Pharisees, "Ye do not believe, because ye are not of my sheep" (v. 26). This is simply a *statement of fact* as he indicated that His sheep heard Him (v. 27). Christ had indicated previously a statement of fact when He said, "He that is of God heareth God's words; ye, therefore, hear them not, *because ye are not of God*" (8:45). Second, Paul said that Christ gave Himself ὑπέρ ἡμῶν (Tit. 2:14). This is certainly substitutionary as λυτρόω is used in the verse. Therefore, a commercial connotation ("in exchange for") may be viewed in the preposition as well as the substitutionary connotation. Third, John said that Christ laid down His life ὑπέρ ἡμῶν (1 Jn. 3:16). This verse should be related to John 15.13. The substitutionary concept is implied.

Benefit: The writer is taking the following references in their obvious sense. There is no need, as five-point Calvinists do, to limit such verses to the elect. The preposition ὑπέρ in these references indicates a benefit to all. First, Christ said His flesh (in death) was given ὑπέρ τῆς τοῦ κόσμου ζωῆς (Jn. 6:51). The universality aspect is obviously in the passage as in verse 33 this life was *to the world*. This is the provisionary benefit which was for all but such provision is efficacious only for the one who eats of this bread (v.51). Second, Paul said that Christ gave Himself a ἀντίλυτρον ὑπέρ πάντων (1 Tim. 2:6). The ἀντί is combined with λύτρον. It is obvious that Christ had a commercial exchange in mind (not the commercial theory of the atonement) in Matthew 20:28 and Mark 10:45. Paul combines the two words and uses the preposition ὑπέρ which carries the idea of substitution as well as the connotation of benefit. Five-point Calvinists limit the πάντων ("all") to a relative sense of all races (Jews and Gentiles)[38] or to all kinds of men.[39] But it is obvious that Paul is using ἀνθρώπος in a generic sense as referring to mankind (not classes or races). Compare the "all men" (vss. 2, 4) and "men" (v.5) with the τοὺς ἄνδρας of verse 8. The πάντων modifies the noun ("men"). It would be rather unnecessary and redundant to say that God desires that all classes of men be saved (v. 4) and that Christ is a mediator between God and all races or kinds of men (v.5). This is unnecessary as God's decree is not necessarily concerned with races but with individuals. And it is redundant because naturally some from all races will be saved simply because God is no national respecter of persons (Acts 10:34). Finsterbusch, having done a special study of 1 Timothy 2:6, came to the conclusion that Paul had a universal scope in

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[38] Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 396.

[39] William Hendricksen, *Exposition of the Pastoral Epistles, New Testament Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1957), 99.

mind.[40] Third, the writer of Hebrews (probably Paul) said that Christ might taste of death ὑπέρ παντὸς (Heb. 2:9). Strict Calvinists, such as Murray,[41] argue from the context of Hebrews 2 that the παντὸς of verse nine is limited to the elect. But the writer of Hebrews has an obvious distinction in mind between the παντὸς of verse 9 and the πολλοὺς of verse 10. If no distinction was intended, the word "all" instead of "many" would have normally been used in verse 10. All is not equal to many in any language. The author is consistent in his use of "all" in Hebrews 11:39 as referring to everyone mentioned or inferred in that chapter. Would we not grant him the same consistency in chapter 2? Contextually chapter 2 deals with Christ as being the representative man who has regained the original sovereignty over the earth that man lost (vss.7-8). As representative man Christ tasted death for all (v.9). The ὑπέρ has the beneficial connotation in it. The context after verse 9 is limited to the "many" which is out of the "all." Only the "many" are redeemed. But Christ tasted death for the "all." The "all" of verse nine has its contextual support in the previous verses (vss.6-8) where man in general is mentioned as Psalm 8 is alluded to which speaks of the human race as was represented in Adam. Thus, Christ was the representative man (Heb. 2:6-11) of a redeemed race, having died for the human race. In the larger context we see that Christ died ὑπέρ παντός (2:9); He now during this age appears in Heaven ὑπέρ ἡμῶν (9:24) and to intercede ὑπέρ αὐτῶν (7:25). So, the context goes from the inclusive to the exclusive: from the παντός (2:9) to the πολλῶν (9:28). Both aspects must be accepted. He died a substitutionary death for the "many," but He represented "all." From the representative man of mankind the "all" is benefited from His tasting of death.

PROOF FROM UNIVERSAL PASSAGES

It is the purpose of this division to show that "world," "all," and "whosoever" passages may be interpreted in an unrestricted manner. Only some key passages in each area will be utilized. This writer believes that these references taken in their obvious contextual meanings lend support for universality. All five-point Calvinists must limit these references. Moderate Calvinists need not foster such limitation upon these passages because this position holds to an unlimited provision but to a limited application of the death of Christ. In the writer's opinion this

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[40] Kurt Finsterbusch, "Extent of the Atonement in I Timothy 2:6," Unpublished critical monograph, Grace Theological Seminary, 1960, 21.

[41] John Murray, *Redemption—Accomplished and Applied* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1955), 71.

position meets the demand of all Scripture; whereas, the five-point position *must* foster an unnatural interpretation upon some passages.

"World" passages. All five-point Calvinists inevitably foster to some degree a limitation upon κόσμος references pertaining to the soteriological import. This limitation is usually shown by pointing out references (such as Luke 2:1; Jn. 1:10; 12:29; Acts 11:28; 19:27; 24:5; Rom. 1:8; Col. 1:6; Rev. 13:8, etc.) that cannot mean everyone within the world. Such limited redemptionists as Symington, Pink, Berkhof, and Shedd may be consulted.[42] It must be conceded that such references as above, and others, could have such a limitation placed upon them. However, in some cases more of a universal sense may be placed upon these from the viewpoint of the biblical author. For instance, Paul was not speaking hyperbolically when he said that the faith of the Roman Christians was "*being announced* [italics mine] in all the world" (Rom. 1:8). The faith had not as yet been announced in all the world but it was in the process of being announced. It continues to be announced in our day even as the Mary of Bethany's anointing of Christ is still being announced throughout the whole world, Mark 14:9. The preposition *en* gives the sphere in which the faith is being announced.

Sasse's article on κόσμος points out many varied ways in which the word "world" is used in the Greek world, in the LXX and in the New Testament Scriptures.[43] The word is used of the material structure which Christ created (John 1:10) as well as the spatial extension of the entire geographical space (Matt. 13:38; Mk. 14:9). These two ways in which "world" is used speak of restricted universality. Sasse mentions other ways. But this is not the problem. As noted above, the problem is with the death of Christ and the "world."

<div align="center">BRIEF CONSIDERATIONS OF THIS PROBLEM</div>

Observations

According to the Greek text (Nestle) and Greek lexicons, the word κόσμος is used 186 times in the New Testament. Sasse says:

> The references are very unevenly distributed. Over half are found in the Johannine writings, 78 times in Jn., 22 in 1 Jn., 1 in 2 Jn. and 3 in Rev. Paul comes next with 46

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[42] William Symington, *On the Atonement and Intercession of Jesus Christ* (New York: Robert Carter, 1836), 279-88; Arthur W. Pink, *The Atonement* (Swengel, Pennsylvania: Reiner Publications, 1969), 257-58; Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 395-96; Shedd, *Dogmatic Theology*, II, 479-80.

[43] Hermann Sasse, "Κοσμος," *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. By Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1965), III, 867-98.

instances. The others are far behind, with 15 in the Synoptics (including parallels), 5 each in Heb., Jm, and 2 Pt., 2 in 1 Pt. and 1 in Ac.[44]

Sasse is not quite correct in his numbering. For instance this writer counted 79 times that κόσμος is used in the Gospel of John. But Sasse does indicate approximate allocation of the word "world." It is observed that John uses the word 106 times (Sasse has 104). Why would this apostle use the word "world" so profusely? This writer believes that Sasse makes a very interesting comment when he says, "These statistics are in proportion to the significance of the term in the theology of the works concerned."[45] John wrote between 90-95 A.D. which was well past the Jew-Gentile barrier age. Therefore, he would emphasize the universal significance of the word "world." This helps us to understand that John's use of "world" did not carry a Gentile connotation. In the early church era (Book of Acts) the word "world" is only used once (Acts 17:24). The Book of Acts historically ended around 68 A.D. (Paul's death). Paul's epistles were written within this era of time and he only used the word κόσμος 46 times.

Symington says that the words "the world" or the "whole world" are only used six times in reference to the death of Christ.[46] He does state six references but the six that are usually followed are as follows: John 1:29, 3:16; 3:17 (two times); 12:47; and 1 John 2:2. One wonders if Symington forgot to read such passages as John 6:33, 51; 1 Timothy 1:15; 1 John 4:14. John 6:51 says, "and the bread that I will give *is my flesh* [italics mine], which I will give for ὑπέρ (substitution) the life of the world." Christ is most certainly talking about His death. And, the word "world" (6:33, 51) cannot be limited to the elect if the elect comes *out of* the world (cf. vss. 35, 37, 39, 40, 44, 45, 47, 51, 54, 57, 65). The argument of John 6:27 is quite clear that "everlasting life" was offered to you (ὑμῖν). This pronoun includes those who departed from Christ (cf. vss. 61, 63, 66). The point of the argument is that the word "World" includes more than the believing ones (the elect); therefore, the provision was broader than the appropriation (vss. 51, 64, 65) which lends support to the fact that the benefit was extended to the world. However, this provisionary benefit was not the decretal purpose to save the world.

The premise: In many instances the word κόσμος refers to the *entire world of the unsaved*. In this writer's opinion the Scriptures never uses the word "world" to refer to believers (the elect). Strict Calvinists, such as Hoeksema and Warfield, often equate some references such a John 3:16

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[44] *Ibid*, 883

[45] *Ibid*.

[46] Symington, *On the Atonement and Intercession of Jesus Christ*, 283.

and 1 John 2:2 to the "world of the elect." Hoeksema says that "John 3:16 refers to God's world [added, he means the elect]…object of His everlasting love…"[47] Warfield does not believe that the word "world" in John 3:16 refers distributively to all and every individual.[48] It is this writer's opinion that John 3:16 concerns the *entire world of the unsaved*. God loved the non-elect (cf. Matt. 5:45-48; Mk 10:21). The elect (the believing ones) *come out of the world* (ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου. Cf. Jn. 15:19; 17:6, 14, 16). Observe the following references to the world of the unsaved:

Matthew 5:14 – "Ye (believers) are the light of the world (unsaved)."

John 1:29 – There is no contextual reason in chapter one for not taking "world" in its obvious, natural meaning of referring to the entire world of the unsaved (cf. vss. 7, 9, 10).

John 4:42 (1 Jn. 4:14) – "Saviour of the world". The word "world" cannot refer to Gentiles nor the elect in these two passages. The passages simply mean that Christ is the provision for the world.

John 8:23 –"ye…are…of this world." Only the unsaved could be of this world. The saved are in the world (Jn. 17:11; 1 Jn. 4:17) as was Christ (Jn. 9:5) but the saved no longer belong to the world.

John 17:21, 23 – World of the unsaved

Romans 5:12 – World equals all in the world (cf. Rom. 3:19)

Romans 11:15 – World of the unsaved

1 Corinthians 11:32 – World of the unsaved

2 Peter 2:5 – Unsaved world in Noah's day

1 John 2:2 – Unsaved world hates believers

1 John 4:5 – Unsaved world

1 John 4:14 – Unsaved world hates believers

1 John 5:19 – Whole unsaved world

The obvious conclusion is that God loves the world of the unsaved. The gospel is to be preached to the world of the unsaved (Mk. 16:15) with the result that those believing (the elect) will no longer be *of* the world but will be translated into Christ (Col. 1:13). When the elect one is

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[47] Herman Hoeksema, *The Death of the Son of God—The Heidelberg Catechism* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1946), III, 103.

[48] Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield, *Biblical and Theological Studies* (Philadelphia: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1952), 507-08.

regenerated, he ceases to belong to this world. Life was provided for the benefit of the world of the unsaved (Jn. 6:33, 51) in order that the elect may be saved (Jn. 6:65). Therefore, it is the opinion of this writer that Christ's death was in some sense a benefit for those who will not believe. The burden of proof is upon the limited redemptionist to indicate one reference where the word κόσμος definitely is equated with the "elect." In view of Christ's words (John. 15:18, 19; 17:6, 9) such identification is absolutely impossible in the opinion of the writer.

"All" and "Whosoever" Passages

Again, all strict five-point Calvinists limit these passages. Such must be the case in order to deny the provisionary extent of the death of Christ.

"All" passages

Hodge says these "all" passages "mean all kinds, or classes, and not all and every individual."[49] Berkhof, Symington, and Shedd[50] concur. Pink indicates that "all" is "employed in Scripture with considerable latitude and variety of meaning; very rarely indeed is it used without limitation."[51] Admittedly, this is agreed by all. As Reicke says:

> …not every appearance of πᾶς in the NT is in …soteriological contexts, nor is the word always controlled by the theme presented. There are many verses in which it simply corresponds to popular narrative style with the exaggeration still common to-day…Thus we read of 'all Jerusalem' in Mat. 2:3, 'all Judaea' in Mt. 3:5, 'all (ὅλη) Syria' and 'all' (πάντες) the sick in Mt. 4:24. Here πᾶς is not to be taken strictly. It is simply a popular way of denoting a great number.[52]

It is noticed, however, that Reicke does not indicate that the popular, exaggerative style is used in soteriological contexts, which are in narrative sections.

The slogan, "all means all and that is all that all means" must be contextually considered. Sometimes the adjective "all" means all in the most inclusive sense. Moses said that God was "God of the spirits of *all* [italics mine] flesh" (Num. 16:22; 27:16). Paul said that all Gentiles and Jews are under sin (Rom. 3:9). Though Peter was addressing only a small part of Israel, nevertheless, he meant his words to include "all the house of Israel" (Acts 2:36). At other times

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[49] Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology* (New York: Scribner, Armstrong, and Co., 1872), II, 559.

[50] Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, p. 396; Symington, *On the Atonement and Intercession of Jesus Christ*, p. 284; Shedd, *Dogmatic Theology*, II, 480.

[51] Pink, *The Atonement*, 262.

[52] Bo Reicke, "Πᾶς, ἅρας," *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. By Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1967), V, 896.

the adjective "all" means all within a certain prescribed circumference. For instance, Paul said that "all Israel shall be saved" (Rom. 11:26). Spiritually speaking, this means all of a unit (the saved unit at Christ's second coming). The context is clear that every individual Jew will not be saved.

As "all" is used in soteriological passages the context must determine its extent. It is this writer's opinion that in most cases "all" or "every" is used inclusively rather than exclusively in the following passages. First, Paul said that God "declares to men that all everywhere should repent" (Acts 17:30). Surely, Paul did not mean all races because races of people are never enjoined to repent or believe. Only individuals can soteriologically repent. This injunction is *all* without exception. Second, the "all" in 1 Timothy 2:2-6 read in any version or any Greek text gives the obvious impression of universality. We should pray for *all* men, for kings and all the ones being in high position in order that Christians may lead an unmolested life to do the Lord's work. Why? Because God wishes *all* men to be saved (the decree, however, indicates that all will not be saved). Christ is the mediator between God and men who was a ransom on behalf of *all*.[53] Symington said that "all" in the first two verses is not collective but distributive.[54] If granted, then would this mean that "all" and "all men" in verses 4-6 would distributively refer only to kings and those in high places? One could hardly gather this from the passage. The obvious intent of Paul's words is that Christians are to pray for these men so that missionary work may be done because God desires all men to be saved. Such missionary work is intimated by Paul in verse 7 where the word "nations" is used which is also used in the church's commission (Matt. 28:19). Third, God "is the Saviour of all men, especially of believers" (1 Tim. 4:10). The phrase πάντων ἀνθρώπων obviously is to distinguish from the believers (the elect) and must mean all of the other group, the non-elect. This verse is clear on the fact that the atonement is both unlimited and limited.[55] Some soteriological relation is involved with the non-elect, which could only be a provisionary relationship and not an actual relationship. Fourth, Christ tasted "of death on behalf of all" (Heb. 2:9). The reader is referred above to a fuller discussion on this verse. In sum, Christ is the representative man who died in behalf of *all* (πάντος). Many (πολλούς) sons will accrue as the result (v. 10). Pink reveals weakness in the following words, "there is <u>no</u> word for

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[53] Thomas W. Jenkyn, *On the Extent of the Atonement in its Relation to God and the Universe* (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1835), 210.

[54] Symington, *On the Atonement and Intercession of Jesus Christ*, 289.

[55] John Miley, *The Atonement in Christ* (New York: Phillips and Hunt, 1879), 322.

'men' in the Greek, and the next verse shows it is 'every' son."[56] It may be stated that man is understood as the representative man in contrast to angels in the passage. Also it may be pointed out that πάντες used apart from a noun is used virtually as a pronoun meaning in this case "everyone" (cf. N.A.S.B.). Pink evidently did not see the difference between "everyone" (v. 9) and "some" (v. 10). Πάντος (v.9) therefore is to be taken distributively ("*dictum de omni*"). As Miley says, "Every man is every man. The identity of the two terms of a proposition does not exclude their equivalence."[57] Fifth, Paul said that "the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men" (Tit. 2:11, N.A.S.B.). The phrase "all men" (πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις) cannot mean "all classes of men"[58] for the following reasons: (1) the above context of older married women, older married men, young married women, and young men does not by any means exhaust the classes of people, (2) verses 11-15 constitute a doctrinal portion based on a previous practical portion. Within this section the death of Christ is mentioned which divides the *all* into two classes: unbeliever and believers ("teaching into two classes: unbeliever and believers ("teaching *us*"), and (3) the "all men" phrase is used again in 3:2 and could not refer to all classes. Therefore, in the opinion of this writer, Titus 2:11 (cf. Tit. 3:4) is clear that the saving grace of God is extended to *all* men though a restriction of that grace is also clearly seen in verses 12-14.

"Whosoever" Passages

Pink seemingly puts no restrictions on these passages for he says: "The door of Divine mercy stands *wide* open: over its portals stand written 'whosoever will may come.'"[59] However, his *wide* open door is in reality a *closed* door as he sees *no* connection between God's decree and the command of God that all repent.[60] This anomaly will later be discussed.

Chafer says that the word "*whosoever* is used at least 110 times in the New Testament, and always with the unrestricted meaning."[61] The writer questions whether that many passages are used regarding salvation. He agrees, however, that clear passages using the word "whosoever" are used in an unrestricted manner. Some other passages imply a degree of restriction but only as the overall decretal teaching is fostered upon them. It is clearly understood that only the elect (which doctrine must be biblically understood) will believe. However, on the horizontal plane

[56] Pink, *The Atonement*, 264.
[57] John Miley, *The Atonement in Christ* (New York: Phillips and Hunt, 1879), 322.
[58] Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 396.
[59] Pink, *The Atonement*, 282.
[60] *Ibid*, 283.
[61] Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, III, 204.

there is no provisional restriction placed upon the non-elect. The following are two types of passages using the word "whosoever" or some equivalence. First, there are those passages that seemingly have a degree of limitation. These passages represent the Greek phrases πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων (John 3:15, 16; Acts 13:39--) everyone believing" or "all who believes"), ὁ πιστεύων (John 3:18, 36; 6:47; 7:38; 1 Jn.5:10-- "the one believing" or "he who believes"), ἐάν τις διψᾷ (John 7:37 –"if anyone thirsts") and παντὶ τῶ πιστεύοντι (Rom. 1:16—"to everyone believing"). Within these passages only the decree of God could determine the limitation implied. With respect to "thirsting" (Isa.55:1; Jn.7:37) Crawford exercises caution when he says, "Special invitations to those who feel their need, [sic] are not to be held as limiting the general invitations."[62] Second, there are passages that do not imply any limitation. These are represented by the phrases πᾶς ὅς ἐὰν (Acts 2:21-"everyone whoever" or "everyone who") and πᾶς γὰρ ὅς ἀν (Rom. 10:13- "for everyone whoever"). Other references could be listed but these will suffice to illustrate that the unlimited offer, in the opinion of this writer, is predicated upon a universal provision.

<div align="center">PROOF FROM THREE CENTRAL PASSAGES</div>

Due to time and restrictions placed on the length of this paper the writer does not seek to formally or fully develop the three following verses that prove, in the opinion of the writer, the universal provision of Christ's death.

II Peter 2:1

"But false prophets also among the people… will also be false teachers among you… even denying the Master (δεσπότης) who bought (ἀγοράζω) them…" (N.A.S.B.).

The issue surrounds the two Greek words. The controversy with δεσπότης is whether it refers to God the Father or to Christ. The second problem is, does the word carry a mediatory connotation in the passage, or does it have the idea of sovereignty thus the Father or Christ temporally delivered them? The word δεσπότης is used ten times in the New Testament (twenty times in the Septuagint. Cf. Gen. 15:2, 8; Jer.1:6; 4:10; 4:13; Isa. 1:24; 3:1; 10:33). It is used five times of men (1 Tim. 6:1-2; 2 Tim. 2:21; Titus 2:9; 1 Pet. 2:18) and five times of the Father and Christ (Father, Luke 2:29; Acts 4:24; Rev. 6:10; Christ, Jude 4; II Pet. 2:1). The Petrine passage is

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[62] Crawford, *Doctrine of Holy Scriptures Respecting the Atonement*, 142.

debatable. Modified Calvinists usually refer the word to Christ in a redemptive or mediatory sense; whereas, strict five–point Calvinists usually refer it to God the Father with the idea of sovereignty invested in the word. It appears that the word refers to Christ as he is related to the false teachers in verse 20. Also, in Jude 4 (Jude is concerned with these false teachers), the word δεσπότης, by the way of the Granville Sharp rule, is related to Christ. It may be admitted that the word has the idea of sovereignty over the people but that fact would not negate the idea of a mediator in the contexts of 2 Peter 2 and Jude 4. For indeed such an idea is seen in the fact that these men deny His work (which would not befit the idea of sovereign) as well as the fact that the word "Saviour" (v.20) is used in relation to them (cf. Jude 4).

With regards to the word ἀγοράζω ("to buy") the issue in the passage is whether it is used non-soteriologically (twenty-four times in the New Testament) or soteriologically (1 Cor. 6:20; 7:23; Rev. 5:9; 14:3-4). Strict Calvinists feel the pressure of this verse in 2 Peter 2. Their usual interpretation is that these teachers profess or claim that they were bought.[63] But as one observes the text it becomes clear that Peter says the Master <u>bought</u> them. Strict Calvinists interpret ἀγοράζω in the following ways: (1) these false teachers are temporally delivered from pollutions of the world.[64] This view is theologically out of order as God has given men "over to degrading passions" (Rom. 1:26) rather than purchasing them from defilement, (2) they are described in the sense of Christian charity - they are taken at their own word.[65] This view has more of the soteriological import, and, (3) these teachers were *created* by sovereign Lord. John Gill may have held to this view. In the opinion of the writer all these views just beg the question. The word ἀγοράζω when related to Christ refers to a soteriological import (cf. 1 Cor. 6:20; 7:23; Rev.5:9; 14:3-4). These references refer to believers already but this fact does not militate against the fact that Christ laid down a provisionary price for the non-elect. After all, Christ bought (ἀγοράζω) the entire field which is the *world*. (Matt.13:38, 44), but this does not mean the entire world will be saved. This writer considers 2 Peter 2:11 a *locus classicus* passage clearly indicating that Christ did lay down a *provisionary price for more then just the elect.*

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[63] Shedd, *Dogmatic Theology*, II, 481; Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 397; Roger Nicole, "The Case for Definite Atonement," *Bulletin of the Evangelical Theological Society*, 10:4 (Fall, 1967), 204.

[64] John Owen, *The Works of John Owen*, edited by Thomas Russell (London: Richard Baynes, 1826), V, 479-80.

[65] Ralph Wardlaw, *Systematic Theology* (Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1857), II, 482.

I John 2:2

"And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for *those* of the whole world" (N.A.S.B.).

The four problematic issues in the verse are: (1) what is the meaning of ἱλασμός? (2) what does περί mean? (3) what is the identification of ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν and (4) what is the scope and meaning of ὅλου τοῦ κόσμου? These problems cannot be discussed in detail in this paper. Several remarks, however, should be made beginning with the last problem. First, in the above discussion under "*World*" *Passages,* it was concluded to the satisfaction of this writer that κόσμος in many passages was used in the author's frame of reference to refer to a universal scope. Also, it was concluded that the word "world" soteriologically was used of the *entire world of the unsaved*. This is necessitated by the fact that Christ said the elect were not of this world. (Jn. 15:19; 17:6, 14, 16). The word κόσμος in John 3:16 could not, therefore, refer to the elect but *must* refer to the unsaved world. It is a foregone conclusion that God loves the elect. I John uses κόσμος in the sense of the unsaved world (cf. 3:1; 3:13; 4:5, 6, 9, 14; 5:19) and not "elect Gentiles" as Pink advocates.[66] The phrase "the whole world" with its variations occurs in inclusive sense and not with any limited connotation (Matt.16:26; 28:13; Mk. 8:36; 14:9; Lk. 9:25; Rom. 1:8; 1 Jn. 2:2; 5:19). The Romans 1:8 passages may be debated. 1 John 5:19 is questioned by some limited redemptionists, but John is referring to the entire unsaved world that "lies in the evil one." Obviously verse 19 does not refer to every individual in the world because saved people are not of this world. The two verses (1 Jn. 2:2; 5:19) explain themselves. John sees the elect ("our sin") as well as the non-elect ("sins of the *whole* world").[67] Therefore, the phrase ὅλου τοῦ κόσμου in I Jn. 2:2 and 5:19 refers to the world of the unsaved. The other three problems must also be interpreted as having universal connotations. Second, the phrases "our sins" and "the whole world must therefore, refer to the fact that Christ is the propitiation *concerning* (περί with the genitive) our sins (believer's sin) and also *concerning* (sins understood) the whole world. Strict five-point Calvinists vary in their dilemma to re-interpret the obvious. It is an obvious fact that believers cannot constitute the group to which they are contrasted. "Our sins" is in contrast to *those* of "the whole world." Yet, Pink can say that "our sins" refers to the sins of the elect Jews

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[66] Arthur W. Pink, *The Sovereignty of God* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1930), 315-18.

[67] Willis Edward Bishop, "A Discussion of I John 2:2 and the Atonement," Unpublished critical monograph, Grace Theological Seminary, 1946, 34-38.

while "sins of the whole world" refers to the sin of the elect Gentiles.[68] Yet, in Romans 3:19 he makes the πᾶς ὁ κόσμος refer to the whole race of man under judgment. Where is the consistency? Nicole's interpretation is similar to Pink's view (and all go back to Owen[69]) in that he says two phrases may refer to "a small group, perhaps of Jewish Christians, to whom he was addressing this letter, but the universality of the redeemed elected out of every nation and category."[70]   Certainly John was not writing to Jewish believers in 90-95 A.D. 1 John is a family book of *all* God's people. James and Hebrews are the only two General Epistles that have such Jewish coloring but both of these books were written before the 70 A.D. destruction of Jerusalem. Kuiper sensed the weakness of the views expressed by Owen and Pink and disagreed. His view is not much better. He says the phrase "for the whole world" is not distributively viewed. He means that the phrase should be used in a "comprehensive, a collective, a global way…"[71] Kuiper would not agree if his argument in another connection were reversed. For instance, the elect body of Christ (Eph. 1:4) is to be viewed in a "comprehensive, a collective" way but is not to be viewed as distributively referring to every individual in that body. One could pursue other Calvinistic views, but these will suffice to reveal an obvious, inherent weakness in their position. 1 John 2:2 is clearly to the point that Christ's death was concerning the sins of believers and the sins of the unsaved world, though the non-elect will not be saved. Yet in some sense there is a beneficial connection between their sins and the death of Christ. Third, five-point Calvinists must take "propitiation" (ἱλασμός) to equal salvation or regeneration. Nicole expresses this necessity by saying that propitiation in 1 John 2:2 implies "the actual attainment of salvation …"[72] Murray had the same idea when he said, "the doctrine of propitiation means that Christ propitiated the wrath of God and rendered God propitious to his people."[73] Murray's position is predicated upon a presumed covenantal scheme (covenant theology) which considers a one-unit elect group in both Testaments over which Christ acts as a priest. Such a position, in the opinion of this writer, has no foundation in the Scriptures. A few things may be said in contradistinction to the above position: (1) propitiation simply means that God's wrath was satisfied or appeased regarding sinners when Christ died, (2) logically, propitiation preceded regeneration; therefore,

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[68] Pink, *The Sovereignty of God*, 315-18.

[69] John Owen, *The Death of Death in the Death of Christ* (London: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1963), 226.

[70] Nicole, "The Case for Definite Atonement," 206.

[71] R. B. Kuiper, *For Whom Did Christ Die?* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1959), 35.

[72] Nicole, "The Case for Definite Atonemtn," 206.

[73] Murray, *Redemption—Accomplished and Applied*, 36.

the two do not equal each other, (3) the fact that three references to propitiation (Rom. 3:25; Heb. 2:17; 1 Jn. 4:10) clearly relate to God's people does not negate the fact that propitiation also relates to the non-elect in 1 John 2:2 because even the elect were under the wrath of God until they believed (cf. Eph. 2:1-3; Rom. 1:18; John 3:36), (4) therefore, propitiation has to have a provisionary connotation, even to the elect but not only so, but regarding the sin of the whole world (1 Jn. 2:2). This fourth consideration is compatible with our previously stated position of limited redemption but unlimited atonement. Such universality of provision is required in 1 John 2:2. Also, it is deemed necessary as the LXX words for propitiation (ἱλαστήριος, Lev. 16:14; ἱλασμός Lev. 25:9) are translation of the Hebrew word כָּפַר which means "to cover." The Day of Atonement sacrifice was *for the entire nation*. This did not require that all be saved. It was a provision. This consideration will be discussed fully in later connection.

2 Corinthians 5:19

"That God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them…."

One of the main issues in 2 Corinthians 5:14-21 is the design of God in regard to Christ's death. Is reconciliation to be considered solely in its intended application (for only the elect are positionally reconciled, Rom. 5:10), or does it also include intrinsic, provisional value? The writer theologically admits that ultimately only the elect will or can be reconciled to God. He also admits that it is also exegetically possible to interpret 2 Corinthians 5:14 in a restricted manner, although such an interpretation is not as plausible as the universal interpretation. Also it is admitted that the context is primarily concerned with believers (5:10, 15, 17, 21), though most contexts in the Epistles are concerned with believers and rightly so. But, does such an admission curtail the universal interpretation of verse 19? This writer does not think so.

Strict limited redemptionists restrict κόσμος in verse 19 to the elect.[74] The usual argument is that the sense of the "all" in verses 14-15 is limited to the elect. Then *world* in verse 19 must also be limited to the elect or just to Gentiles. Rice rejected such a type of argument by saying, "it is questionable logic to restrict two universal terms in a passage ("all," v.14; "world,"

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[74] John H. Gerstner, *A Reconciliation Primer* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1965, 45-46; Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, p. 396; Nicole, "The Case for Definite Atonement," 205.

vs. 19), and use the one to prove the other non-universal."[75] Then, also, the phrase, "not counting their trespasses against them" is taken to equal the imputation of righteousness or regeneration.[76]

The following consideration will indicate a provisionary nature of this passage. First, κόσμος cannot be soteriologically restricted as has been discussed previously. It has been concluded that the "world" cannot be used of believers. If it be objected that the "world" means all without exception then the objector is referred to the Scriptures which clearly enunciate such (John 15:19; 17:9, 21, 23; Rom. 3:19). These Scriptures indicate the world of the unsaved. If "world" in verse 19 cannot be believers then the pronouns αὐτῶν ("their") and αὐτοῖς ("them") cannot refer to believers. Therefore, the phrase, "not counting their trespasses against them" must refer to the world. This means the world's sins were imputed to Christ. Admittedly, this has its problems in that the Scriptures do not explicitly say that man's sin was imputed to Christ but this has been the usual Protestant interpretation. The objection might be raised that some of mankind have their sins imputed to them, utilizing Romans 4:8. But Paul did not say so. The point in Romans 4:8 (cf. Psa. 32:1-2) is from the standpoint of a regenerated man. The statement is declarative. With regards to "world" Walvoord indicates:

> Of interest is the fact that "the world" (*kosmos*) is used, meaning something more than believers only. It is rather that Christ in His death made a forensic provision for the entire world and has provided reconciliation for all not just the elect.[77]

Second, reconciliation means a change of state or relationship. It is a change from enmity to amity. God's attitude has not changed, neither has man's attitude changed toward God. An objective reconciliation has been rendered in Christ's death that has changed the relationship between God and man. God can now receive man on the basis of Christ's death. This actually becomes true when the sinner accepts Christ. In reality this argues for a two-fold reconciliation: provisional and actual. The New Scofield Reference Bible succinctly states it in the following manner:

> …the work of God involves two distinct reconciliations (1) the reconciliation accomplished at Calvary … Here God was not changed, for He has always loved the world; nor was the world changed, for it continued in sinful rebellion against God. But by the death of Christ the *relationship between God and the world* was changed; the barrier

[75] W. Frederick Rice, "Reconciliation in Christ – II Corinthians 5:19," Unpublished critical monograph, Grace Theological Seminary, 1969, 20.

[76] Hoeksema, *Reformed Dogmatics*, p. 675; Nicole, "The Case for Definite Atonement," 205.

[77] John F. Walvoord, *Jesus Christ Our Lord* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1969), 182.

because of sin being taken away judicially, enabling God to show mercy where judgment was deserved … and (2) there is reconciliation wrought by God in the sinner himself, whereby he becomes changed in his rebellious attitude toward God, so that he is persuaded to receive the reconciliation already accomplished through Christ at the cross (Rom. 5:11).[78]

There is then in reality a provisional reconciliation and an effectual reconciliation. Colossians 1:20-21 gives the two-fold reconciliation (v.20 - universal, v. 21 - limited). Only the elect will be reconciled to God but there is a provisional reconciliation for the world. The provisional becomes "effective only when received by the personal faith of the individual."[79]

CORROBORATIVE PROOF

The following proofs for provisional atonement are not necessarily to be considered of great weight within each section. The weight of proof is to be seen in its cumulativeness. Each sectional argument will be briefly treated.

Argument from God's Desire

Since 1924 the Christian Reformed Church of America has emphasized "the doctrine of common grace" in its confessional treatises in contradistinction to Herman Hoeksema, founder of the Protestant Reformed Church, who emphasized supralapsarianism to undesirable ends. As the result of great debate within that church, the doctrine of common grace is generally acknowledged as having some relation to God's desire for salvation of all men. Cornelius Van Til wrote his book entitled *Common Grace* which defends the doctrine against the strictness of supralapsarianism.[80] John Murray and Ned B. Stonehouse co-authored a booklet entitled *The Free Offer of the Gospel* in which they recognized the multiformity of God's will.[81]

This writer is of the firm opinion that God *desires* the salvation of all men or else the following select Scriptures are a hoax. These Scriptures are debated by strict limited redemptionists, but their obvious intent of expressing a universal design of provision is quite clear to this writer. There *must* be some relation between God's desire, His decree, and His provision

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[78] *New Scofield Reference Bible*, p. 1286, n. 2.

[79] Walvoord, *Jesus Christ Our Lord*, 182.

[80] Cornelius Van Til, *Common Grace* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1954), 64-95.

[81] John Murray and Ned B. Stonehouse, *The Free Offer of the Gospel* (Belvidere Road, Phillipsburg, New Jersey: Lewis J. Grotenhuis, 1948), 21.

or else there is some revealed truth, namely His desire, which is to be dissected from His plan. This writer believes everything is within God's plan. His Word is a partial expression of that plan. The following verses are translated from N.A.S.B. A theological defense shall not be given for lack of space except for brief comments.

> Do I have any pleasure in the death of the wicked… rather … that he should turn… and live? (Ezek. 18:23). For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone who dies… therefore, repent and live (Ezek 18:32).

> O Jerusalem… How often I wanted (θέλω, strong desire)… and you were unwilling (θέλω) (Matt. 23:37).

> For (explanatory γάρ) God did not send his son into the world (not elect world) to judge the world; but that the world (unsaved world) should be saved through Him (John 3:17).

> Who desires (θέλω) all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Tim.2:4).

> The Lord is… not wishing (βούλομαι) for any (context includes destruction of Earth by water and destruction of ungodly men) to perish but for all to come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9).

The Petrine verse is debatable. But to this writer the verse is far more consistent with the view of unlimited atonement that with the limited atonement. Even if the verse is granted as a referring to the elect (which would be redundant in view of God's decree for the elect) it would not negate the obvious desire of God for the salvation of all men. Therefore, it is concluded that God has a provisional design, expressed by His desire for all which must be related to Christ's death for all, as well as particular design. To deny either would be tantamount to deny the whole council of God.

Argument from God's Love

Strict supralapsarian redemptionists limit God's love to the elect. Hoeksema, among others, says that God loves the elect world (Jn. 3:16).[82] Van Til, in his review of Hoeksema's *Reformed Dogmatics*, says that Hoeksema, in contrast to Calvin, has gone too far in his either-or position. As was pointed out by Van Til, if God only loved the elect then the "elect can never in any sense have been under the wrath of God, and Christ need not have died for them in

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[82] Hoeksema, *The Death of the Son of God—The Heidelberg Catechism*, 105.

history…."[83] Van Til goes on to say that Hoeksema responded by saying His love was a wrath of love.[84] Certainly one would strenuously object to such as it has no basis in the Scriptures. God's eternal love for His own is not a "wrath of love" because ὀργή and ἀγάπη are complete opposites.

Most limited redemptionists, however, indicate that God's love is a distinguishing love.[85] Warfield limits the love of God in John 3:16 and yet entitles his chapter "God's Immeasurable Love." His qualitative view of the world, that is, God's love, was not for everyone, but for only those believing.[86] The question may be asked, if God's love is a distinguishing love ultimately limited to the elect, how then can it be immeasurable? Nicole feels as if God's love would be wasted if He loved the non-elect.[87] But even a mother will still love a reprobate son who has been disowned and rejected. To say that God's love is limited because He does not love fallen angels is more than Scripture will allow, but Nicole is sure that God does not love them.[88] Angels are not beneficiary heirs of salvation, but this fact does not preclude that God does love them. After all, the scriptures do not say that God loves the elect angels, but it is obvious that He does love them.

As Lightner so succinctly says, "The crux of the matter is, 'Does God love all men or does He not?"[89] The Scriptures so indicate. Though some would say that ἀγάπη in John 3:16 is limited to the design of applying salvation to the elect, yet the verse does indeed say γάρ ἠγάπησεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν κόσμου. This is a fact within itself. The condition of reception comes on the response to "the only begotten son" and not on the love of God. God would love the world whether anyone was saved. After all, He loved the world before anyone was saved. Martin Luther said he would rather have the word "world" in John 3:16 than that "God loved Martin Luther," because of the fact that there may be another Martin Luther.[90] Mark 10:21 records the words that Christ loved (ἀγαπάω) the rich young ruler. He was unsaved and there is no Scriptural basis for saying that he was ever saved. If it be objected that God did not love Esau because He hated him the reply

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[83] Cornelius Van Til's review of *Reformed Dogmatics* in *The Westminster Theological Journal*, XXXI (November, 1968), 92.

[84] *Ibid*, 93.

[85] A. A. Hodge, *The Atonement* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1953), 282-83; Kuiper, *For Whom Did Christ Die?* pp. 68-69; Nicole, "The Case for Definite Atonement," 203; Warfield, *Biblical and Theological Studies*, 505-22.

[86] *Ibid*, 509.

[87] Nicole, "The Case for Definite Atonement," 203.

[88] *Ibid*.

[89] Robert P. Lightner, *The Death Christ Died—A Case for Unlimited Atonement* (Des Plaines, Illinois: Regular Baptist Press, 1967), 111.

[90] As quoted by David Scaer, "The Nature and Extent of the Atonement in Lutheran Theology," *Bulletin of the Evangelical Theological Society*, 10:4 (Fall, 1967): 185.

would be that God can hate and love the same person (cf. Jn. 3:16 with Psa. 5:5). If Christians hate evil in people and still love them cannot God do the same? Are we to do what He cannot do?

The writer can see the distinguishing love of God but only in the framework of relationship. God loves His own (Deut. 4:37; 7:7; Jer. 31:3; Jn. 13:1; 1 Jn. 4:9-10) in a sense that he does not love the non-elect, but that is not to say He does not love them. I love my daughter differently than I love her friend. But this is predicated upon the established relationship. Such an analogy may be related to the eternal decree of God. God loved all men simply because they were His by creation but He loves His own in a peculiar sense. The cross of Christ is the effect of God's love and not the cause of it. Within established relationship, however, "we love Him because He first loved us" (1 John 4:19). Usually some distinction is made between ἀγαπᾶν and φιλείν in that the former word refers to volitional love; whereas, the latter refers to emotional love. The distinction may not be borne out in every case because the Father *loved* (ἀγαπάω) the son (Jn. 17:23) which would certainly involve emotion. It is granted, however, that φελέω type of love is never used of the unsaved but only of the saved (cf. Rev. 3:19 with Mk. 10:21).

The conclusion is that God does love the world of the unsaved, which love eventuated in the giving of His Son on the cross, which was the greatest demonstration of love. By such action a provision was enacted so that all those believing may have everlasting life.

Argument from Analogy

The following arguments do not prove within themselves the provisionary aspect of Christ's death. They are only used in an *a fortiori* sense (argument from the least to the greatest). But they do illustrate that if God provided such in the following cases, would He do less in the giving of His Son?

Provision for Adam argues for all. God clothed Adam and his wife with garments of skin (Gen. 3:21). Accepting the Federal-Seminal view of imputation there was, therefore, a solidaric union of the entire race *in* Adam (cf. Rom. 5:12 ff.). Romans 5:18 speaks of divine judgment coming unto all men (because they were in Adam) unto (Greek, εἰς) condemnation. In the same verse the apostle speaks of justification coming unto (εἰς) all men which all will not receive as verse 19

indicates.[91] But the provision was available as it was available for Cain (Gen. 4:7), but he did not accept it. But God offered it to him. Christ is genealogically traced being the last Adam (I Cor. 15:45), back to the first Adam, (Lk. 3:38), thus assuming solidaric union. He died as the "Son of Man" (Lk. 9:22; 19:10) for mankind.

Day of Atonement ("Yom Kippur") covered the sins of every Israelite. The sacrifice was not designed for a few within Israel but for every individual. "Then Aaron shall lay … hands on… live goat, and confess over it *all* (all the italics are mine) the iniquities of the sons of Israel, and *all* their transgressions in regard to *all* their sins …" (Lev.16:21). The inclusive design is again stated in verse 34 ("for all their sins"). This sacrifice of the dead goat was "related to them *all*… designedly offered up for all, and…truly available to all."[92] Did this national design of provision mean that all were regenerated? No. There had to be human response as Leviticus 23:29 indicates. When a Jew was cut off from the nation, it was not due to the lack of provision. The same analogy follows in the case of the sinner being cast into Gehenna. It will not be due to lack of sacrifice, because an *objective* sacrifice was offered to take away the sin of the world (Jn 1:29). However, such a provision ("life giving to the world," Jn. 6:33) has to be appropriated (Jn. 6:51).

Analogy from the Brazen Serpent. "make a fiery *serpent*, and set it on a standard; and it shall come about, that *everyone who is bitten* [italics mine and hereafter], *when he looks* at it, *he shall live*" (Num. 21:8). "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the son of man be lifted up; that *whoever believes* may in Him have eternal life…. For God so loved the world… that *whoever believes*… should not perish…. For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world; but the world should be saved through Him" (Jn. 3:14-17). Christ made this analogy. In the above *underscored* words it is *clearly* seen that the design was provisional for all who were "bitten" and not limited to all who "looked." However the efficaciousness of the provision was limited to the application. In the case of Israelites they "looked" and the case of the John 3 context man "believes." If it be argued that not all Israelites were bitten the reply is that all who were bitten had a provision. In the soteriological case *all* men are bitten with sin (Rom. 3:19, 23; 5:12) and *all* have a provision as stated by the Scriptures (Jn. 3:15-17; 6:33, 51; 12:45-47; 2 Cor. 5:14; 1 Tim. 2:6; Titus 2:11; Heb. 2:9; 2 Pet. 2:1; 1 Jn. 2:2). It is the writer's avowed opinion that if the provisional aspects of Christ's death were limited He would have used ἐκλεκτός instead of

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[91] Sailer, "The Nature and Extent of the Atonement—A Wesleyan View," 197; Lightner, *The Death Christ Died*, 140.

[92] Jenkyn, *On the Extent of the Atonement*, 201-02.

κόσμος. He did not say that He died for the elect, and the elect *only*. He did die, however, for the elect but not the elect only. Both are true as Paul said that Christ was "… the savior of all men, especially of believers" (1 Tim. 4:10).

Universal Offer Implies Universal Provision

Strict covenant theologians admit that this is a problem.[93] Berkhof gets out of the problem by saying in effect that it is not the business of the preacher to question God but to just preach the gospel.[94] Pink says that an individual sinner should not be told that Christ had died for him.[95] Martin indicates that the gospel call has to rest upon designs of the covenant and cannot be effectively offered outside the covenant. He says that the gospel cannot itself rest on anything outside the covenant. He says:

> Whatever is without the covenant, outside its limits—as an indefinite unlimited atonement is—has nothing to do with the gospel call; can impart to it no validity, no strength, no enlargement; can constitute for it no real basis or foundation…. Sinners are not inside—not yet interested in—this blessed convent or constitution; that they are aliens from the blessed kingdom of which it is charter. It is, therefore, in its essential nature obviously a universal call. It is so because it is a call to *the* covenant.[96]

Shedd gives us one reason why the gospel is to be preached to all "because it is the duty of every man to trust in it."[97] Berkhof says that "the universal offer of salvation does not include the declaration that Christ made atonement for every individual…"[98] Nicole lowers God's offer to the level of commercial advertising.[99]

A number of considerations may be made in contradistinction to the above views. First, the supposition that God has a secret council knowledge (He alone does know who the elect are) and all that the preacher must do is preach. This is without foundation in the Scriptures. This would be basing the offer on what God said to do rather than also upon His revealed desire that all should believe. Even the Lord's commission is based upon his death (cf. Luke 24:46, death; 24:47, commission). Second, how can a sinner be saved unless he personally believes that Christ

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[93] A. A. Hodge, *The Atonement*, pp. 418-19; Crawford, *The Doctrine of Holy Scripture Respecting the Atonement*, pp. 510-16; Kuiper, *For Whom Did Christ Die?*, 86.

[94] Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 398.

[95] Pink, *The Atonement*, 280-81.

[96] Hugh Martin, *The Atonement* (Philadelphia: Smith, English and Company, 1871), 25.

[97] Shedd, *Dogmatic Theology*, II, 487.

[98] L. Berkhof, *Manual of Christian Doctrine* (10th ed. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1969), 218.

[99] Nicole, "The Case for Definite Atonement," 206-07.

died *for him*? To this writer Pink is way out on a limb and Paul cut off the limb. Paul said in Acts 17:3 that Christ died and rose again from the dead and in verse 4 some believed. In Corinthians 15:3 he said "for I delivered to you (cf. Acts 18)…what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures…" The Gospel is the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ according to Paul (1 Cor. 15:1-4). Philip *personally* and *individually* explained Christ's death from Isaiah 53 to the eunuch (Acts 8:27-35). Third, Martin's covenantal presupposition that the gospel call comes from the covenant design is in direct opposition to the *desire* of God for all to be saved as well as in opposition to the *command* of God to preach to all. To this writer Martin dissects his covenant idea from the universality elements just referred to which also must be *within* the plan of God and not outside of that plan or decree. Fourth, in the mind of God there can be no inconsistency or insincerity in the offering of the gospel to all even with the decretal knowledge that all will not respond. As was noted above, in the argument from universal passages, the invitations of Scripture are unrestricted, *bona fide*, offers of salvation to all. This is true as even admitted by strict Calvinists such as Cooper who says, "God…makes on the ground of the universally suitable and sufficient atonement a most sincere, *bona fide*, offer of eternal life, not only to the elect but to all men…."[100] The strict Calvinists' solution is that this sort of thing is one of "those secret things which belong to the Lord."[101] It is freely admitted that there is a paradox. As Chafer said, "To say, at one time that Christ did not die for the non-elect and, at another time [at the presentation], that His death is the ground in which salvation is offered to all men is perilously near contradiction."[102] To this writer this is contradictory unless it is admitted that a provision was made for all. Then the particular design of the decree can rightfully and consistently take its place in the universal offer of the gospel. But if the offer to the non-elect is not offered on the grounds of Christ's death, then some other ground or basis is used in the presentation to the nonelect. But this is not supported by Scripture. For instance, Matthew 22:1-14 is a parabolic illustration of the man who was cast out of the wedding chamber because he did not have on a wedding garment which *was provided for all* guests. The basis of the entrance into the chamber was to have on the garment because that was the reason for which he was cast out into the darkness. Though a parable cannot necessarily be used to teach doctrine, this parable does

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[100] Kuiper, *For Whom Did Christ Die?* 86.

[101] Louis Berkhof, citing Cunningham, *Vicarious Atonement Through Christ* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1936.

[102] Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, III, 194.

certainly illustrate that the basis or ground of acceptance was the same for all. The parable also illustrates that the invitation was sent out to all that could be found. In this case the universal offer was based on a universal provision because the lack of the wedding garment was not due to the king's lack of supply but to the carelessness of the man. The same analogy follows with respect to the death for all and the invitation to all. The supply equals the demand, or else the non-elect in eternal hell will be there (in the case of those who reject the gospel presentation) for not believing what is false. And, this could never be admitted in the economy of God. In the light of this, Nicole's objection that "a co-extensive provision is necessary for a sincere offer…"[103] is accepted by this writer. Such acknowledgement satisfies both sides of the issues this writer believes. The seeming paradox then would not be due to a lack of provision but rather due to the tension between particular redemption and unlimited atonement (universal provision), which is "the *crux theologorum*, a cross which the theologian must carry."[104] This has been the premise through out this paper. There is a particular redemption (known only by God), which is made certain by biblical election, the efficacious call of the Holy Sprit and the individual's belief of the truth. If viewed strictly from this viewpoint, the designed provision would equal the consumption as 2 Peter 2:1 illustrates that some were bought who are eternally damned (v.17).[105]

It must be concluded, therefore, that universal offers (which are general and genuine calls to salvation) are not offered to the elect (known by God) on the basis that they are intended for them and to the non-elect (also known only by God) that they are not intended for them but were just of sufficient value to receive certain temporal benefits. Rather these universal offers are *bona fide* and unrestricted (as far as extent) invitations (cf. Isa. 55:1; Matt.11:28, 29; 22:1-4; John 6:29; 7:37; 12:35, 36; Acts 17:30; 2 Cor. 5:19-20; Rev. 22:17). The only stipulated condition is the matter of receiving Christ (cf. Jn. 3:16, 18, 36; 5:24; Acts 13:39) who was crucified (1 Cor.1:23, 24). The death of Christ becomes the basis of the offer (Luke 24:46, 47) as well as the basis or ground of the call to salvation (I Cor. 1:23,24). Any other basis of appeal to the unsaved (whether elect or non-elect) is tantamount to preaching a ἕτερος gospel (Gal.1:6). Again, the lack is not in the provision but in the reception. The recipients are "the believing ones" who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world.

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[103] Nicole, "The Case for Definite Atonement," 206.

[104] Scaer, "The Nature and Extent of the Atonement in Lutheran Theology," 180.

[105] Albert Barnes, *The Atonement in its Relation to Law and Moral Government* (Philadelphia: Parry and McMillan, 1860), 349.

CONCLUSION

It was originally purposed to add a third section dealing with some major problems with both the strict and moderate views on the atonement. The space problem would have been a major factor. Lightner may be consulted for an excellent survey of some of these problems.[106] May an itemization of some of these problems suffice to indicate that there are problems with either position. This writer, however, believes that generally a moderate position, with the least amount of problems, is usually the better position to hold. *First, there are problems with the limited view*. Some of these problems are as follows: (1) as indicated above, the strict Calvinistic position cannot adequately harmonize the general invitations with the particular design unless there is some interrelation with Christ's death, for such is the basis of the offer, (2) "world" passages in soteriological contexts cannot but be interpreted to refer to the unsaved, for the elect is never considered as part of the world, (3) it is limiting God to say that he limits (distinguishes, or discriminates) His love to only the elect when the scriptures are clear that He does love the non-elect (Jn. 3:16; Mk. 10:21), (4) to dispensationally misinterpret biblical covenants in order to postulate a so-called covenant of grace (which is the logical and theological basis for the strict view) is too tenuous of an argument upon which to build a doctrine,[107] (5) the strict five-point position advocating regeneration before faith (which it must logically, not biblically, do in order to advocate that position) is obviously flying in full opposition to the Word of God which repeatedly indicates that faith is the human channel through which regeneration or salvation comes (cf. Luke 13:3, 5; Eph. 2:8),[108] (6) safely assuming that in some cases the Holy Spirit convicts the non-elect of the rejection of Christ (for He would not convict such of sins concerning the flesh as this conviction is reserved for believers), the problem is one of harmonizing such soteriological conviction with the strict, particular design of the atonement, and (7) there is the

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[106] Lightner, *The Death Christ Died*, 93-145.

[107] Berkhof, *Manual of Christian Doctrine*, 160-71; and, all Reformed theologians. Even dispensational strict Calvinists must logically come over more to covenant theology, as some of whom this writer knows. In the opinion of this writer a dispensationalist cannot hold to the strict Reformed position. Dispensationalism has not generally held to the five-point position.

[108] Murray, *Redemption—Accomplished and Applied*, 133. Regeneration before faith is a false understanding of total depravity which has as its necessary corollary that God gives the gift of faith to the elect. It must be stated that faith may be considered a gift from God in the sense that "all" things ultimately come from God but faith comes from the person when God does His preparatory work in the sinner. But, the Scriptures *never* indicate that regeneration precedes faith. This problem alone, in the opinion of the writer, is sufficient to Biblically destroy the strict Reformed position. Also, in the writer's opinion, a person cannot be a strict five-pointer without logically holding to the Reformed order of regeneration before faith.

problem of causatively relating the priestly ministry of Christ to His earthly ministry thus making His sacrifice and intercession co-extensive.[109] *Second, there are some problems with the unlimited view of the atonement.* These are listed as follows: (1) what about double punishment if Christ died for all? (2) Why should Christ die for those in the Old Testament who were already in Sheol? (3) Is not God defeated if men are eternally lost for whom Christ died? (4) How can a man be condemned for rejecting Christ (Jn. 3:18) if he has never heard of Him (is he not rather damned because he is in Adam)? And (5), would not all be regenerated if Christ died for all? These are some of the more important objections raised against the unlimited view. These objections are replied to in the following statements. <u>Objection</u> (1) assumes that there is "quantitative equivalence between the punishment which Christ endured and the sin of men for which atonement is made."[110] If this were true then the elect would never die because Christ died for them. Also, eternal death (eternal separation from God as a penalty for sin) was not equivalently borne by Christ because He did not die eternally. He was not out of the Father-fellowship status over three hours. There are other things that Christ did not suffer which the unrepentant will suffer throughout all of eternity. Christ's death was a forensic provision that was satisfactory to God instead of what will be inflicted upon the impenitent in Gehenna. Therefore, the limited view presupposes a view of substitution that cannot be proven by the Scriptures. <u>Objection</u> (2) is answered by the question, why should Christ die for those in the Old Testament who are already regenerated before He died? The objection is no more valid on this side of the cross. Assuming that he died for all then why would He die for those who will go to Gehenna? Obviously, the time that Christ died has really nothing to do as to who will or will not be saved. <u>Objection</u> (3) is simply answered by the fact that a sovereign God is never defeated in what He has divinely decreed, which in this case is that He has purposed to *provide* salvation for all with the particular design to save the elect. Therefore, there is no waste. <u>Objection</u> (4) is a problem, which is extremely difficult. An unsaved person is condemned being in Adam (Rom. 5:12). This fact has no dispensational barrier. Within

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[109] Nicole, "The Case for Definite Atonement," 202-03; Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 395. This argument is that those for whom Christ died are the ones for whom He intercedes. Also, since the death and intercession are simply two different aspects of the priestly atoning work, the work is causative. But, intercessory prayer, within itself, has no causative relationship to the redemptive act, for it is based upon an *established* relationship. Christ does not intercede for a believer priest until that person is regenerated or else He would be praying for an unsaved person. He said that He did not pray for the world (John 17:9). And also, He was *not* a priest on earth (Hebrews 8:4). Positionally, His priestly work began after His death (". . . he ever liveth to make intercession . . .") though He prayed the Lord's prayer before death (but this prayer format is carried out in heaven).

[110] Robert H. Culpepper, *Interpreting the Atonement* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1966), 125.

the Old Testament era there was no judicial indictment of judgment for not personally believing in Christ as He had not yet come. But since grace and truth came by Jesus Christ (Jn.1:17), a judicial indictment is placed over all men (Jn.3:18). Paul said, "For God hath concluded them (Jews) all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all" (Rom.11:32). The word "concluded" means to "shut up" as in a jail. In Galatians 3:22 "the scripture hath concluded (συνέκλεισεν— "to shut up") all (inclusive of Jews and Gentiles) under sin…." This sin ("of unbelief") is set in contrast to *the faith* (v.23). This means that the heathen is under this judicial indictment of sin since the faith (Christ) has come. Christ made a provision for him, evidenced by universal passages and by the commission instructions to take the gospel to him (Mk.16:15). He has rejected the light of nature (Rom. 1) which, if accepted, might suggest that a soteriological light may come. But illustratively speaking, he has rejected a 25¢ piece (light of nature) of natural revelation. In rejecting the small amount he has rejected the larger offer though he does not know of that offer. This illustrates that a heathen can reject Christ even without hearing of Him because he has rejected the lesser revelation. Objection (5) is built on *a priori* assumption that the cross brings its own results. Within itself the cross does not save. The definiteness of the redeemed comes only when the substitutionary work is efficaciously applied by the Holy Spirit at the moment of saving faith. The blood of the Passover lamb had to be applied for the death angel to pass over that house (Exod. 12:22, 23).

As stated in this article, the extent of the atonement was not really an issue until the seventeenth century. The supralapsarians over-emphasized the truth of such things as the order of decrees which subsequently has modified itself in Reformed theology. The Arminian stress is equally objectionable. This writer believes the correct position is the infralapsarian order which, in this paper, has the decree to provide salvation before the decree to elect. Even the strict limited redemptionists must admit a provisionary connotation to the cross (i.e. for the elect). To do full and unbiased justice to all biblical data, this writer has attempted to prove that there is a provisionary nature in Christ's death to all mankind. The writer's contention is that such things as the universal passages (Jn. 3:16; Heb. 2:9; 2 Cor. 5:19; 1 Jn. 2:2) relating to the death of Christ, God's desire for all to be saved (Jn. 1:7; 3:17; 12:47; 1 Timothy 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:9) and the commission to all to repent (which commission is predicated upon the truth to be relayed and not simply because God said to relay it) must be within the divine decree. The limited redemptionists *cannot* properly arrange these matters to the order of the decree. By replacing such revealed data

in the provisionary decree then God chooses out of this universal provision any that He wishes. Such an order is in biblical juxtaposition. The above universal references support such a universal provision. But may one illustration suffice to prove that there can be a universal as well as a particular design of saving only a certain predetermined number. In Matthew 13:44 Christ said a man desired a hidden treasure in a field (the field is the world, v.38). The man buys (ἀγοράζω not λυτρόω, "to set free") the field (the world-universal provision) in order to get the treasure which is hidden in the field. Since the field is the world and if the treasure be applied to the Church (which was chosen out of the world before the foundation of the world, Eph.1:4) then this is a biblical illustration as to how Christ could die for the world (which in soteriological passages refer to the unsaved world) as well as for the elect. The reader will observe in the illustration that the field was bought *before* the treasure was secured. Christ made a provision for all that He might secure the elect–the Church. The Holy Sprit came officially on the Day of Pentecost to seek this bride who was in the world which had been bought earlier by Christ on the cross. She, as the treasure, had to be found for she would not come without the efficacious call of the Holy Spirit. The writer realizes the "treasure" is interpreted as perhaps referring to Israel, but for sake of illustration the application is valid. The writer would rest his case alone on this example, but the entire doctrinal system of both Testaments argues for a universal provision and the particular design as the result (the analogous illustration supports the fact). God so loved the world that the believing ones may be secured. The atonement can be universal without the efficacy of that atonement being universal. The definiteness comes in the *application* of the atonement and not in the provision of the atonement. The application is narrower than the provision or else how could the elect be chosen *out of* the world. Christ bought the field-then He secured His chosen out of the world. The particular design was to save the bride through biblical choice, call of the Holy Spirit and human response (Eph. 1:4; 2 Thess. 2:13; 1 Pet. 1:3). The general design was to provide salvation for all (which rejection causes eternal damnation, Jn. 3:18, 36; 5:24; 2 Thess. 1:7-9) so that the particular design may be obtained. Again, as Chafer says, "He may have easily have died for all men with a view to securing the elect."[111] As the general is before the particular and synthesis is before synopsis, so in like manner the general design to provide salvation for all is by decree, before the particular design to secure the redemption of the elect.

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[111] Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, III, 202.

In conclusion the writer wishes to say that the strict redemptionists (Reformed and all five-point Calvinists) will not agree with this paper in its entirety but the writer must earnestly and lovingly remind such Calvinists that Scripture does not indicate that Christ did *not* die for all, the world or everyone, but that there are Scriptures that say He did die for *all*. The burden of proof is upon the limited redemptionists to prove conclusively (as indicated they do not agree themselves on the identity of the word "world") that Christ did not die for all. Such things as divine sovereignty versus human responsibility, total depravity versus faith, biblical election versus making it humanly certain are no more paradoxical than particular design of the atonement versus the provisional (general) design of the atonement. All of these things are great mysteries to man, but one must believe what is recorded on both sides of any issue. Over-emphasis on any one side of an issue is hazardous. In this issue both are biblically true. Christ did intentionally (particular design in the decree) die for (not just for) the elect (and only they will be saved) but He also beneficially died (even limited redemptionists admit some type, usually temporal, of benefit) for the non-elect. They will not go to hell for lack of provision (for such was provided), but they are eternally damned due to their state in Adam and dispensationally now due to their obstinate refusal of the provisional remedy. "In flaming fire taking vengeance on those who know not God and they obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess. 1:8). What is the relation of the unsaved to the gospel if it is not that Christ died for them? How could a person be damned to hell for not believing something that had not been provided for him? In Revelation 21:8 the unbelievers (ἀπίστοις) will have their part in the lake of fire. To what were they unfaithful? The verse goes on to mention habitual murders and whoremongers. It is assumed that John's use of ἀπίστοις is within the same stream as the μὴ πιστεύων in 1 John 5:10. And, in that context John ties the unbeliever in with Christ's death. If Christ did not die for such a one, then how can God charge him with unbelief for not believing in His son?

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

Armour, John M. *Atonement and Law or Redemption in Harmony with Law as Revealed in Nature.* Philadelphia: Christian Statesman Publishing Co., 1885.

The redemption of man is viewed in accordance "with law as revealed in Nature and in Providence . . ." (p. v.).

Armstrong, Brian G. *Calvinism and The Amyraut Heresy*. Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1969.

Moise Amyraut (1596-1664) was a French Reformed theologian who was connected with the school of Saumur. Though prefaced by John Cameron, Amyraut is said to be the father of Four Point – Calvinism (total depravity, unconditional election, irresistible grace, and perseverance of the saints). Limited atonement is denied. Rather, Christ died for all and all should be saved on the condition of faith in Christ. Seeing that none would believe within themselves, God elected some. These are the only ones that will be saved.

Aulen, Gustaf. *Christus Victor: An Historical Study of the Three Main Types of the Idea of Atonement.* Translated by A. G. Hebert. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1954.

The author does not particularly advocate a view of the atonement. The book endeavors to trace various types of views. Aulen closes with the expectation that the classic view of the atonement (a movement of God to man) will resume (p. 158). This theory is also called the Patristic theory.

Ayers, M. R. *The Refutation of Determinism: An Essay in Philosophical Logic*. London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1968.

In his preface the writer gives his conclusion. He says, "It is the contention of this book that possibility is a concept which can be understood, and that when it is understood, Determinism will shed its plausibility" (p. vii). It is the author's contention that healthy determinism does not dispense with "genuinely open possibilities beyond what actually happens . . ." (*Ibid*). Within his argument the writer indicates that "ought" implies "can" (p. 151). The problem becomes acute when applied to the theological realm. Ought all to accept Christ? We would answer in the affirmative. Can all accept Christ? We would answer in the negative. But the reason why all cannot accept Christ depends upon one's theological viewpoint or the emphasis that is set forth.

Bacon, Benjamin. *The Apostolic Message: A Historical Inquiry*. New York: The Century Company, 1925.

Bacon accepts the critical method of interpreting the Synoptics, reflection is cast upon Pauline data regarding justification, etc. (pp. 395 ff.).

Bancroft, Emery H. *Christian Theology*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1966.

> "In its sufficiency, the atonement of Christ is universal; that is, potential provision is made for all mankind. But in its efficiency the atonement is limited; that is, actual provision is made only for those who accept God's gracious offer of salvation through Christ" (p. 106).

Barnes, Albert. *The Atonement in its Relation to Law and Moral Government*. Philadelphia: Parry and McMillan, 1860.

> Law and moral government preclude entire citizenry of a given country. Breaking of law is on the part of individuals. Any substitution or remedial system would equally apply to all in that system. Barnes proceeds from such to indicate that the atonement is provided for all as all were in the same need (pp. 316-58).

Barth, Markus. *Was Christ's Death a Sacrifice?* Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1961.

> Barth takes a higher critical approach to the New Testament data (pp. 14-15) which leaves few statements upon which a sacrifice may be based. He accepts the liberal view that blood poured out is the life given (p. 46). This leads him to logically assert that Christ's whole life and ministry were also sacrificial (p. 49).

Bavinck, Herman. *Our Reasonable Faith*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1956.

> This Reformed theologian accepts the covenant position, which includes a strict   limited view of the atonement and faith being a fruit or result of regeneration (pp. 352-56, 437). However, he is not as strict as Herman Hoeksema in his supralapsarianism.

Beck, Frank B. *The Five Points of Calvinism*. Ashland, Kentucky: Published by the Calvary Baptist Church, n.d.

> This booklet was written when the author, now deceased, was pastor of the North East Baptist Church in Millerton, New York. He presents a *strict* Calvinistic view on the atonement. He believed that Christ died only for the elect (pp. 24-36).

Beecher, Charles. *Redeemer and Redeemed: An Investigation of the Atonement and of Eternal Judgment*. Boston: Lee and Shepard, 1864.

> The author seeks to unveil the relation of the blood of Christ with forgiveness of human sin (p. viii). Christ, the only begotten, the first-born, the priest of Melchisedec, endured the cross and bore the eternal judgment for sin. Beecher takes the convincing the world of judgment (John 16:11) as taking place upon the ushering in of the millennium (p. 319).

Berkhof, Louis. *Manual of Christian Doctrine*. 10th printing. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1969.

Accepting the Reformed doctrine of theology the author combines the active (life) obedience and the passive (death) obedience of Christ (p. 215). He limits the extent of the atonement (p. 216).

_____. *Systematic Theology*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1953.

The author adequately discusses the doctrine of divine decrees (pp. 100-108). He says the knowledge of God is the basis for the decree (p. 102). As to the extent of Christ's death the author accepts the strict Reformed position that Christ died only to save the elect (p. 394).

_____. *Vicarious Atonement Through Christ*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1936.

The author is a covenant theologian. Covenant theology adheres to a series of covenant arrangements (redemption, works and grace) in which the elect is saved. To the reviewer such a position is untenable.

Regarding the atonement, the author believes that God had a very restricted design, that of saving the elect (p. 152). To this reviewer this certainly was a design of provision. The Scriptures are quite clear on the fact that a salvation was provided for all. If such be accepted then this also constitutes an aspect of the design or purpose. Both aspects of the design were in the eternal decree.

Berkouwer, G. C. *The Work of Christ*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1965.

Berkouwer confuses reconciliation with propitiation (p. 256) but he does indicate that only man, not God, is reconciled (pp. 257-58). He would accept to some degree an unlimited aspect of Christ's death (pp. 255, 308).

Berkofsky, Bernard, ed. *Free Will and Determinism*. New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1966.

This book is a series of essays. It is divided into two sections. The first section concerns the alternative views of determinism, reconciliationism, libertarianism and the action theory. The second section has to do with the topics of foreknowledge and free will and power and effort.

The editor argues along the following lines: Theologically man is morally responsible for his actions as the doctrines of rewards and punishment would verify. The problem is to reconcile a responsible act of sin with the fact that God knew beforehand of that sin (p. 2). If the action were determined, then the person committing the act was not performing such action of his own free will (p. 8). Regarding foreknowledge the editor asks the following questions: "Can there be foreknowledge of some action, could the action have been performed freely?" Augustine's article answered the first question in the affirmative (p. 276). God foreknows something, not nothing. Also, Augustine answered the second question in the affirmative (p. 277).

Boettner, Loraine. *The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination*. Philadelphia: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1966.

> As the title indicates the author sets forth the *Reformed* doctrine of predestination. It is a good book representing this position. Of particular value is the author's treatment of the Five Points of Calvinism (pp. 59-201). Regarding the extent of the atonement the writer indicates that "it was *efficient* to save only the elect" but as to value it "was *sufficient* to save all mankind." (p. 152). "God does not decretively will the salvation of all men, no matter how much He may desire it . . ." (p. 287). Boettner presents the usual explanation of "world" passages (pp. 290-93).

> The reviewer notes that the author omitted some verses like II Peter 2:1 which indicates that Christ *bought* the unsaved teachers. Also, he noted that there is a striking discrepancy between this book and his *Millennium*. Being a post- millennialist, he almost went to the opposite extreme.

_____. *Studies in Theology*. 27th ed. Philadelphia: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1965.

> This postmillennial and Reformed author believes that Christ died only for the elect (p. 316). His postmillennialism is inconsistent with his Calvinistic views. He says, "We believe . . . that in the final analysis the great majority of the human race will be found among the saved" (*Ibid.*).

Browning, Don S. *Atonement and Psychotherapy*. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, n.d.

> Browning desires to reconstruct theological acumen by use of psychological analogies (p. 9). "Psychotherapy is a branch of psychology that attempts to specify those elements in inter-personal interactions which tend to be therapeutically efficacious for people with broken . . . distorted lives" (p. 25). This is carried over into the theological and roots redemption in God's nature. Browning's position is closely aligned with the moral influence theory of Horace Bushnell.

Brunner, Emil. *The Mediator*. London: The Lutterworth Press, 1934.

> This neo-orthodox author accepts the penal theory of the atonement (pp. 455 ff.). He confuses reconciliation with forgiveness (p. 450). Such would lead to universal redemption if provisional reconciliation be accepted.

Buchler, A. *Studies in Sin and Atonement in the Rabbinic Literature of the First Century*. New York: KTAV Publishing House, Inc., 1967.

> This work was originally written in 1927. Using the Old Testament sacrifices Buchler says that "atonement is not automatic but is result of repentance . . ." (p. xii). "The atonement of sin effected was not identical with its pardon . . ." (p. 461). This helps to understand that Christ's work on the cross must be appropriated. It does not

automatically assure pardon since such a death is an objective fact which must be accepted.

Bushnell, Horace. *Forgiveness and Law, Grounded in Principles*. New York: Scribner, Armstrong and Co., 1874.

He accepts the "moral view" (moral influence theory) of the atonement (p. 12). This is a liberal work.

Bushnell, Horace. *The Vicarious Sacrifice Grounded in Principles Interpreted by Human Analogies*. 2 vols. New York: Scribner, Armstrong and Company, 1877.

In these volumes the author asserts the moral influence theory of the atonement.

Buswell, James Oliver. *A Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion*. 2 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1963.

In volume 2 Buswell, utilizing A. A. Hodge's *The Atonement*, admits that Calvinists adhere to a threefold universal aspect of the atonement: (1) sufficient for all, (2) applicable to all, and (3) offered to all (p. 142). Two other considerations are more restricted: (1) ultimate results indicate more lost than saved, and (2) the design and intention is to die for the elect (*Ibid.*). Most modified Calvinists would not agree with the last point if it means that Christ died *only* for the elect. This is the question. Most knowledgeable modified Calvinists admit that this was *a* design in the decree to save the elect. The question of design may not be so narrow as that.

Cadoux, C. J. *The Message About the Cross: A Fresh Study of the Doctrine of the Atonement*. London: George Allen & Unwin LTD., 1924.

The author fails to connect forgiveness of sins in the Old Testament to the death of Christ (p. 42). God's forgiveness of sins at any time is ultimately predicated on Christ's death (Hebrews 9:22).

Cadoux believes that Christ's death is potentially for all men. (pp. 44-45).

Campbell, John McLeod. *The Nature of the Atonement and its Relation to Remission of Sins and Eternal Life*. London: James Clarke and Company, LTD., 1959.

Campbell rejects limitation of the atonement (p. 60). However, he holds to a confessional theory of the atonement. God will forgive the sinner if only the sinner truly confesses his sins for Christ made a "perfect confession of our sins." But it is impossible for one person to confess for another.

Cave, Sydney. *The Doctrine of the Work of Christ*. Nashville: Cokesbury Press, n.d.

> This is an excellent book for tracing the different views of the atonement down through the centuries to the modern time.

Chafer, Lewis Sperry. *Systematic Theology*. 8 vols. Dallas, Texas: Dallas Seminary Press, 1948.

> In volume 3, chapter 10 (pp. 183-205), Chafer lays out and concludes his argument that Christ died for all men but that only the elect will receive the saving benefit from that death.

Chisholm, Roderick M. *Human Freedom and the Self*. The Lindley Lecture. University of Kansas, 1964.

> The writer discusses the metaphysical problem of human freedom. He does not like the term "free will." Rather he prefers to view the question "whether the man is free to will to do those things that he does will to do—and also whether he is free *not* to will any of those things that he will to do, and again, whether he is free to will any of those that's that he does not will to do" (p. 11). The author, thus, advocates human freedom which makes the man, therefore, responsible for what he does will or does not will.

Clark, Henry W. *The Cross and the Eternal Order: A Study of Atonement in Its Cosmic Significance*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1944.

> The book considers the cross in a theological as well as a philosophical framework. The cross with the resurrection are "two arms outstretched to save" (p. 290). Thus the atonement is related to the cosmic, eternal order of things (p. 291).

Clarke, James, Publishers. *The Atonement in Modern Religious Thought*. London: James Clarke & Co., 1900.

> This book is a theological symposium on the atonement by such contributors as Frederic Godet, Adolf Harnack, Auguste Sabatier, Marcus Dods, etc. Different theological opinions are expressed.

Clow, W. M. *The Cross in Christian Experience*. New York: George H. Doran Company, n.d.

> The author relates Christian and religious experiences to the cross. These addresses were given in Glasgow on different occasions when the Lord's Supper was celebrated. The author believes that God was reconciled to man (p. 306).

Cochran, Samuel Davies. *The Moral System and the Atonement*. Oberlin, Ohio: Edward J. Goodrich, 1889.

> Cochran views "the atonement . . . *provisionally* [italics mine] for all alike" (p. 190).

Coffin, Henry Sloane. *The Meanings of the Cross*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936.

> He does not accept the substitutionary aspect of Christ's death. Rather, in a sense it was substitutionary, the cross was a "way-shower" (pp. 101 ff.).

Crawford, Thomas J. *The Doctrine of Holy Scripture Respecting the Atonement*. 4th ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1954.

> The author presents the many sides to the question of the atonement, especially as to whom it avails and ultimately will avail. He indicates the truth of believers being chosen in Christ (p. 143). Also, he indicates that the Gospel is freely offered to all men (p. 200). He concludes by indicating that there is a destination in the atonement for only the believers, the elect, which truth is only known by God. On the human level, and on the revealed will of God, the Gospel is ". . . *sufficient for all, suitable for all,* and, beyond all controversy, *pressed on the acceptance of all*" (p. 202). His view, therefore, is that Christ's death is sufficient for all but efficacious to only believers (the elect).

Culpepper, Robert H. *Interpreting the Atonement*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1966.

> The author denies strict substitution, following C. H. Dodd and Oscar Cullmann. Guilt is not transferred to the lamb in the Old Testament nor to Christ on the cross. The cross is just a symbol of God's love, not a propitiation. The writer is representative of the conservative stream of neo-orthodoxy.
>
> His position on the atonement is that it is ". . . unlimited in its provision, but limited in its application; that Christ died for all, but that not all will actually be saved" (p. 123).

Dale, R. W. *The Atonement*. 22nd ed. London: Congregational Union of England and Wales, 1902.

> God needs to be reconciled as well as man. Dale reproduces certain traditional elements of the forensic theory of the atonement.

Denney, James. *The Atonement and the Modern Mind*. New York: A. C. Armstrong & Son, 1903.

> Forgiveness is possible but only through the death of Christ (pp. 65, 90, 107, 112). The cross was *divinely* necessary to evoke penitence (p. 124). The sinner is under compulsion to react to the demonstration of divine love shown at the cross (p. 126). The author appears to adhere more or less to the love of God or moral influence theory of the cross.

_____. *The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation*. New York: George H. Doran Co., 1918.

> Denney believes that both God and man are reconciled (pp. 30, 96). Physical death is the penal consequence of sin. Denney accepts suggestions from the forensic theory of the atonement.

_____. *The Death of Christ Its Place and Interpretation in the New Testament*. New York: A. C. Armstrong and Son, 1902.

> The author believes that Christ's death provided an objective atonement for man. It is a finished work (pp. 146-47, 235).

Dewar, D. *The Atonement—Its Nature, Reality, and Efficacy*. 3rd ed., enlarged. London: James Nisbet and Company, n.d.

> The author believes the "atonement cannot be limited in its value or sufficiency ..." (p. 351). By the atonement God has removed two obstacles: (1) ". . . those which exist in the righteousness of God," and (2) "those which exist in the guilt and depravity of man" (p. 349). The first removal enabled man, upon God's work upon the sinner, to respond to the overtures of God's grace. Every person to whom the gospel is preached is asked to receive it and he alone is blamed for not receiving it (p. 354). Thus, the author accepts an unlimited view of the atonement in its provision but not in its application.

Dillistone, F. W. *Jesus Christ and His Cross: Studies on the Saving Work of Christ*. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, n.d.

> The author indicates in his preface that the book is "neither strictly theological nor strictly devotional but will attempt to emphasize one or other of these aspects . . ." (p. 9). The book appears to be rather devotional. Its eight chapters would be good reading near the Easter season.

Dyke, Henry Van. *The Gospel For a World of Sin*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1899.

> The atonement is grounded in God's love for a world in sin.

Edwards, Jonathan. *The History of Redemption*. Evansville, Indiana: The Sovereign Grace Book Club, 1959.

> The contents of this book constitute a series of sermons that were preached by Edwards at Northampton in 1739.

> Edwards had covenantal tendencies as he believed the church was formed by Moses (p. 173). The purpose of the incarnation was to put Christ into the capacity to redeem the elect (pp. 170, 178). To this reviewer this is too narrow of a purpose for the incarnation. Salvation was not the only purpose for which Christ came into the world. And, within the scope of incarnation itself, it may be argued that becoming man argues for the solidarity of the race—as *all* men will have to give an account to Christ.

Edwards, Rem Blanchard. *Freedom, Responsibility and Obligation*. The Hague, Netherlands: Martinus Nijhoff, 1969.

> Edwards accepts more of the libertarian view of human freedom (p. 124). The author used two determinists, Sir David Ross and Hastins Rashdall, and one libertarian, C. A. Campbell, quite profusely.

> This reviewer would recommend this book for an up-to-date debate between determinists and libertarians.

Enteman, Willard F., editor. *The Problem of Free Will: Selected Readings*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1967.

> The editor was a teacher of philosophy at Wheaton College, Norton, Massachusetts. He does not offer his own solution to the problem of free will. The different essays present both sides of the controversy.

Farmer, H. H. *The Word of Reconciliation*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1966.

> The author in his Ayer Lectures at Colgate Rochester Divinity School in 1961 used the word "reconciliation" to also include "*all* the main aspects of Christ's saving work in men's lives, and therefore, derivatively from that, *all* the basic distinctive qualities of the new man in Christ" (p. 3). The *all* includes being reconciled to such things as stresses and tensions (p. 4).

> He develops Christ's saving work under the *munus triplex*: prophet, priest, and king. He views all three as being in Christ's life at any given time while He was on earth. Christ's death is viewed as a representative sacrifice for sin (p. 76).

Farrer, Austin. *The Freedom of the Will*. London: Adam and Charles Black, 1958.

> The book is more philosophical than theological yet it does present the ideas of freedom and necessity throughout. The author acknowledges free will as being that which can "deliberate, resolve, execute, persevere; but the valuation is not, in fact, contested by anyone . . ." (p. 321). He says "the most unfree act has some freedom, or it would not be an act . . ." (*Ibid*).

Ferre, Nels F. S. *The Atonement and Mission*. London: London Missionary Society, 1960.

> Inspiration of the Bible is denied. A missionary theology must be adapted to the present situation. Consequently, biblical atonement is denied in the volume.

Finney, Charles G. *Finney's Lectures on Systematic Theology*. Revised ed. Edited by J. H. Fairchild. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1957.

> This Arminian accepts that Christ laid down His life for the sheep but also the death was sufficient for all men (pp. 277, 280). He fails, however, to emphasize a purposive design in the death of Christ.

Forsyth, P. T. *The Cruciality of the Cross*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, n.d.

> Christ's death had a prime regard to the holiness of God (p. 5) rather than simply revealing the forgiving love of God (p. 6).

Franks, Robert S. *The Atonement*. London: Oxford University Press, 1934.

> His position on the atonement is the religious experience considered metaphysically. In this the author follows such liberals as Schleiermacher and C. H. Weisse.

Gayford, S. C. *Sacrifice and Priesthood*. London: Methuen and Company, LTD., 1953.

> The book denies that a true sacrifice can be vicarious (p. 130).

Gerstner, John H. *A Reconciliation Primer*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1965.

> This author accepts the five-point system of theology.

Goodwin, Thomas. *Christ Our Mediator*. Grand Rapids: Sovereign Grace Publishers, 1971.

> Goodwin has the concept that the elect was reconciled to God in eternity past *in Christ* (p. 11). These in life became rebels against God. "The gaining and winning them *in again* [italics mine] is said to be the mystery of His will . . ." (p. 12). The author fails to realize that the elect person is not reconciled until a relationship is established with God through faith in Christ. A person is not reconciled until he is regenerated or else Paul's admonishment in II Corinthians 5:20 ("be ye reconciled to God") loses all meaning.

Gray, Albert F. *Christian Theology*. Vols. I and II. Anderson, Indiana: The Warner Press, 1944, 1946.

> The author does not commit himself on the benefits of the atonement. He gives all three views: (1) universalist view, (2) Calvinist view, and (3) the Arminian view.

> In stating the Calvinist view, Gray says Christ only died for the elect if the position's premises be accepted (p. 260). He sets forth a modified view, which may be the author's own position, which admits that Christ died for all but "that the offer of salvation is made to the elect only." (p. 261).

Griffin, Edward D. "An Humble Attempt to Reconcile the Differences of Christian Respecting the Extent of the Atonement." *The Atonement Discourses and Treatises*. Boston: Congregational Board of Publication, 1863.

> Griffin's argument for unlimited atonement is along the following lines: There are 1000 prisoners in prison. A ransom (a pearl of great price) is paid for 100 of these but the offer of release is sent in to all of them to respond to the offer and those responding would be set free. Griffin's argument is that the offer to the other 900 was either deceitfully made or else their freedom, if responded would be based on something else than the ransom paid for them (pp. 251-53). As applied to the gospel being given to all this writer feels the weight of Griffin's argument.

Headlam, Arthur C. *The Atonement*. London: Hodder and Stoughton Publishers, 1935.

> His view of the atonement may be summed up in his own words: "The atonement, then . . . was the whole life and work of Christ . . . He did it by the power of love; and the Cross, a revelation of love and sacrifice, summed up his work" (pp. 75-76). "It was through the whole work of Christ that man was redeemed . . ." (p. 78).

Heim, Karl. *Jesus the World's Perfecter: The Atonement and the Renewal of the World*. Translated by D. H. van Daalen. Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1961.

> The third German edition was read by many prisoners in war camps during the days after World War II. One criticism that reviewers have made of the book is that it is not clear if Scripture or reason and experience is the basis of the work. The author accepts the unlimited extent of Christ's death (p. 116).

Hendricksen, William. *Exposition of the Pastoral Epistles—New Testament Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1957.

> This amillennial author is a limited redemptionist.

Hodge, Archibald Alexander. *The Atonement*. Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1867.

> The writer believes in limited atonement. He says, "*We* believe that Christ died with the intention of saving all those whom he actually does save" (p. 357). The question that may be asked is does this fact within itself exclude the possibility that Christ may have died for those who shall not be saved?

_____. *Outlines of Theology*. Enlarged and Revised Edition. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1949.

> This Reformed theologian limits the design of Christ's death to the elect (pp. 416-17).

Hodge, Charles. *Systematic Theology*. 3 Vols. New York: Scribner, Armstrong, and Company, 1872.

This is a Reformed theologian who emphasizes the particular design of atonement.

Hodges, H. A. *The Pattern of Atonement*. London: SCM Press LTD, 1957.

This book is written from the standpoint of Roman Catholic view of redemption. The author has a rather dim view of "vicarious atonement" (p. 46).

Hodgson, Leonard. *The Doctrine of the Atonement*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951.

The author has a degree of affinity with the moral influence theory of the atonement (pp. 81-84) but sees its inadequacy in explaining the whole aspect of the atonement. He believes that the sacrifice of Christ was sufficient for the whole world (pp. 84, 152).

Hoeksema, Herman. *The Death of the Son of God: An Exposition of the Heidelberg Catechism*. Vol. 3. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1946.

Being of the Reformed faith, the author agrees with the teaching of the Catechism that Christ suffered for the elect during His life as well as on the cross. He believes Christ's death was limited to the elect (pp. 99, 109). He pursues to normal road, which all limited redemptionists follow, in explaining away obvious universal passages (pp. 102 ff.). He denies the "doctrine of common grace" to which other Reformed theologians adhere. He views such concession as the beginning of Arminianism in the Reformed circle.

_____. *Reformed Dogmatics*. Grand Rapids: Reformed Free Publishing Association, 1966.

Hoeksema tends to lean toward supralapsarianism (p. 333). At any rate, he limits Christ's death *only* to the elect (pp. 442-43). Also, holding to a strict Reformed theology, he rejects Calvin's doctrine that regeneration is through faith (p. 447). To Hoeksema regeneration must precede faith (p. 451). This book is the most comprehensive of his writings. He died before his *magna opus* was published. The book is an attempt to defend the supralapsarian position against the "doctrine of common grace" which other orthodox Reformed theologians (Berkhof, Bavinck and others) hold. Cornelius Van Til (his view of *Reformed Dogmatics in The Westminster Theological Journal*, XXXI, Nov., 1968, (pp. 83-94) did not believe that Hoeksema adequately presented the Reformed position.

Hogan, William F. *Christ's Redemptive Sacrifice*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963.

This book is written from the Roman Catholic viewpoint. Christ's life is also redemptive (p. 41). His death was for all men (pp. 23, 72). Mary also contributed to the redemption (p. 99).

Horne, Charles H. *Salvation*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1971.

Horne, Herman Harrell. *Free Will and Human Responsibility—A Philosophical Argument*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1912.

His own words will adequately explain his position. He says:

As to freedom . . . man is indeed mostly determined but partly free. In the right use of such limited freedom as he possesses man wins his peculiar glory. As to human responsibility . . . either of the two theories of determinism and freedom holds a man responsible for his deed, though in a different way (p. 181).

Horton, Robert F. *Does the Cross Save?* London: Thomas Law, Memorial Hall, E. C., 1905.

In answering in the affirmative, the author discusses the reconciliation passage in II Corinthians 5. To him God is reconciled to the world (p. 46). The need is to give the gospel of reconciliation so men can be reconciled to God.

Jenkyn, Thomas W. *Extent of the Atonement in its Relation to God and the Universe*. New York: Leavitt, Lord, and Company, 1835.

The book is a good apologia for unlimited atonement (cf. pp. 257-68). His position is that particular atonement is based upon its application rather than its nature.

However, one must watch his governmental theory of the atonement.

Jones, Rufus M. *The Double Search Studies in Atonement and Prayer*. Philadelphia: The John C. Winston Company, 1906.

The author views man as a potential child of God (p. 85). The atonement is just an appeal to the sinner to share His life.

Kaufman, Arnold S. and Frankena, William K., editors. *Jonathan Edwards Freedom of the Will*. New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1969.

Edwards postulated that human will was not free within and by itself but that it was necessitated by a higher will "either by positive influence or permission" (p. 261). In other words, God's will is behind the will of man.

With respect to atonement, Edwards said Christ ". . . in some sense may be said to *die for all* . . . yet there must be something *particular* in the design of his death . . ." (p. 263).

Knox, John. *The Death of Christ*. New York: Abingdon Press, n.d.

Knox does not believe that Jesus was aware of His Messianic person (p. 106). He does not stress that Jesus was divine. His "divinity" was "the deed of God," i.e. His work on the cross (pp. 122-23).

Kuiper, R. B. *For Whom Did Christ Die?* Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1959.

> Kuiper expresses the Reformed belief when he says that "Calvinism does indeed hold that the number of those whom God designed to save by the death of His Son is limited, but it does not limit the intrinsic value of the atonement" (p. 73). This is tantamount to saying that Christ only died for the elect.

Lampe, G. W. H. *Reconciliation in Christ.* London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1956.

> The author accepts provisional reconciliation in the II Corinthians 5 passage (pp. 29-36).

Lidgett, John Scott. *The Spiritual Principle of the Atonement: As a Satisfaction made to God for the Sins of the World.* 4th ed. Cincinnati, Ohio: Jennings & Graham, n.d.

Lightner, Robert P. *The Death Christ Died: A Cross for Unlimited Atonement.* Des Plaines, Illinois: Regular Baptist Press, 1967.

> This colleague friend of the reviewer indicates that "Christ did not die to save every lost sinner . . . .He did die, though, *to make possible* the salvation of every lost sinner, to make them all savable . . ." (p. 67). This is the same as saying that Christ's death is sufficient for all but only efficacious for the believers (the elect).

Mabie, Henry C. *How Does the Death of Christ Save Us?* Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1908.

> Mabie seeks to answer his question by showing that there is "ethical energy resident in Christ's death . . ." (p. 9) which permeates from the death-resurrection-intercession ministry of Christ (p. 64 ff.). "Christ's intercession is rather the extension of the efficacy of the atoning-death" (p. 64). The efficacy of such death is now communicated through the Holy Spirit in His working in the church (pp. 66-67).

McIntyre, John. *St. Anselm and His Critics: A Re-interpretation of the Cur Deus Homo.* London: Oliver and Boyd, 1954.

> Critics have said that Anselm also taught a subjective connotation to the atonement. McIntyre, utilizing Anselm's teachings, shows that Anselm taught the objective view of the atonement (pp. 185-86).

McNeile, A. H. *Concerning Christ.* Cambridge: W. Heffer and Sons LTD., 1923.

> Three points are necessary for equilibrium regarding the atonement: (1) humanity of Christ, (2) love of God, and (3) immanence of God—the Holy Spirit applying the atonement (p. 148).

McSorley, Harry J. *Luther: Right or Wrong? An Ecumenical-Theological Study of Luther's Major Work, The Bondage of the Will.* New York: Newman Press, 1969.

This is a large work of 369 content pages written by a Roman Catholic over the period from September 1960 to March 1966.

McSorley's conclusion is that Luther was right in contending for the "powerlessness of free will without grace in matters of salvation" (p. 369). But that he was wrong in relying upon a necessitarian argument to prove his argument which, according to McSorley, led him to the theological predicament of not being able to adequately discuss whether man or God was the cause of sin. The author says further that Luther had no place for a personal act of faith in salvation. (*Ibid.*)

Magee, William. *Discourses and Dissertations on the Scriptural Doctrines of Atonement and Sacrifice*. Last London edition. 2 Vols. Philadelphia: S. Potter and Co., 1825.

The author accepts pure substitution from the use of *huper* as the preposition relates to Christ's death for us (pp. 188-92).

Martin, Hugh. *The Atonement*. Philadelphia: Smith, English and Company, 1871.

The author is a strict Calvinist who emphasizes the covenantal tenets of soteriology.

Matthews, Shailer. *The Atonement and the Social Process*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1930.

This is a liberal approach to the atonement.

Miley, John. *The Atonement in Christ*. New York: Phillips and Hunt, 1879.

Miley is an Arminian. He accepts, therefore, an unlimited view of the atonement (pp. 302-42). It may be stated, however, that unlimited atonement is not limited to Arminianism.

Moberly, Robert Campbell. *Atonement and Personality*. New York: Longmans, Green, and Company, 1902.

Moberly, influenced by McLeods Campbell's confessional theory, advocates the "vicarious penitence" theory of the atonement. Campbell's "vicarious confession" was criticized because of its impossibility of one person's confessing for another. The same criticism applies for Moberly's "vicarious penitence" theory. This theory teaches that Christ only could give perfect penitence to the Father which Christ did His perfect obedience to God. Due to the human personality being in union with Christ His work applied to the believing sinner.

Morris, Leon. *The Cross in the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1965.

> The author traces the redemptive work of Christ throughout the New Testament data. His view on election is acceptable. His view on the extent of Christ's death seems to be unlimited as he says of the Hebrews 2:9 Passage, "He came to die 'for every man'" (p. 278).

Moule, C. F. D. *The Sacrifice of Christ*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1957.

> The book concerns itself with the finished work of Christ on the cross (Protestant) and the eucharistic sacrifice (Roman Catholic). Moule clings to the Protestant view, but he has affinities toward the Roman Catholic view.

Murray, John, and Ned B. Stonehouse. *The Free Offer of the Gospel*. Belvidere Road, Phillipsburg, New Jersey: Lewis J. Grotenhuis, 1948.

> In this booklet these authors recognize the multiformity of God's will (p. 21). They review passages of Scriptures which have obvious universal connotations of God's desire for the salvation of all.

_____. *Th Imputationof Adam's Sin*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1959.

> The book is based on Romans 5:12-21. The author views the imputation of Adamic sin as being immediate. That is, the race sinned in Adam. However, he does not see a universal provision of righteousness by the one act of Christ (pp. 86 ff.). The reviewer does not believe Murray does adequate justice to the argument of the solidarity of the race nor the two heads: Adam and Christ. All sinned in Adam. All offered life in Christ. For, Paul had already mentioned a provision of righteousness in an unrestricted fashion when he said that a righteousness of God is offered to all the ones believing through faith in Christ (Romans 3:22, 26; 4:5). Therefore, the Romans 5 passage must be interpreted in view of Paul's previous material.

_____. *Redemption Accomplished and Applied*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1955.

> As the title implies, the author postulates a definite redemption which is accomplished for the elect. He says "The doctrine of 'limited atonement' which we maintain is the doctrine which limits the atonement to those who are heirs of eternal life, to the elect" (p. 74). He says the "atonement is not itself efficacious" if some are lost for whom Christ died (*Ibid.*). It must be understood that the death of Christ saves no one apart from the reception and application of that work to the person. The author fails to mention passages such as II Peter 2:1.

> Being of the Reformed faith Murray believes faith proceeds regeneration (p. 133). But following he contradicts himself when he says, "We entrust ourselves to him not because

we believe we have been saved but as lost sinners in order that we may be saved" (pp. 136-37). The latter is obviously the biblical position. A man is saved through the channel of faith (Ephesians 2:8) though at the time of impartation of life he is passive.

Nead, Elder Peter. *The Wisdom and Power of God as Displayed in Creation and Redemption*. Cincinnati, Ohio: Printed for the author by E. Morgan and Sons, 1866.

Nead says "That the atonement was made for *all* Adam's progeny is so plainly revealed in the Scriptures . . . that it is surprising that any would attempt to limit the atonement to *only a part* . . ." (p. 208). But he admits that Christ's work on the cross must be applied (p. 210).

Nygren, Anders. *Essence of Christianity*. Trans. by Philip S. Watson. Philadelphia: Muhlenburg Press, 1961.

This work is built around the reconciliation passage in II Corinthians 5:18-19. The author conceives reconciliation to be the work of God.

Owen, John. *The Death of Death in the Death of Christ*. London: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1959 (reprint of 1859 Goold edition of Owen's works, itself a reprint. Also, there is the 1963 edition).

Most limited (strict five-pointers) redemptionists use this book, if they have or can get quotes from it, often as their Bible (the writer's opinion).

_____. *Pneumatologia—A Discourse Concerning the Holy Spirit*. Ed., William H. Goold. London: Johnstone and Hunter, III, 1674.

Owen says that men can resist the Holy Spirit in some ways (Acts 7:51) but cannot be resisted in the matter of salvation (p. 202). This is rather begging the question as most believers will testify that they resisted the Holy Spirit before salvation. It would be better to say that the elect or those who shall be saved will not be able to finally reject the Holy Spirit. If He can be grieved and quenched by believers then most certainly He could be resisted by unbelievers.

_____. *The Works of John Owen*. V. Edited by Thomas Russell. London: Richard Baynes, 1826.

This puritan writer is a strict five-point Calvinist.

Paul, Robert S. *The Atonement and the Sacraments*. New York: Abingdon Press, n.d.

The Catholic-Protestant dilemma regarding the sacraments is treated in the latter part of the book. Though the author does not espouse transubstantiation he nevertheless develops an eucharistic theology which too closely merges the atonement and the sacraments.

Pictet, Benedict. *Christian Theology*. Trans. from Latin by Frederick Reyroux. Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication, n.d.

His limited view of the atonement is built upon his view of election which includes reprobation of the non-elect (pp. 202-214). Many Calvinists, however, do not accept double predestination.

Pierson, Arthur R. *The Heart of the Gospel*. New York: The Baker and Taylor Company, 1892.

This book contains twelve sermons that were preached by the author in the Metropolitan Tabernacle in London, England in the Autumn of 1891 during the recovery of the pastor, C. H. Spurgeon, from sickness. One message was on John 3:16 in which the author-preacher saw the verse in a "collectively universal" sense as well as a "distributively universal" sense (pp. 29-52). The "world" was viewed in the former sense and "whosoever" was seen in the latter sense. Pierson compared these two senses to Mark 16:15—"'Go ye into all the world' (collectively universal) 'and preach the gospel to every creature' (distributively universal)" (p. 41).

Pink, Arthur W. *The Atonement*. Swengel, Pennsylvania: Reiner Publications, 1969.

This writer is very well known for his views on the extent of Christ's death. He accepts that Christ died only for the elect (p. 242).

_____. *The Doctrine of Reconciliation*. Grand Rapids: Associated Publishers and Authors, Inc., n.d.

Pink believes that God as well as the believing sinner are reconciled (p. 188). He takes issue with some Calvinists who postulate that the elect person is reconciled before he believes (pp. 6-8, 188-89). It may be safely stated that Scripture never intimates that God is reconciled. Rather, man is reconciled to God.

The author does not believe in a provisional reconciliation (pp. 100 ff.). He takes the word "world" in II Corinthians 5:19 as referring to the world of the elect (pp. 103-09). This reviewer doubts if the word "world" is ever so used in Scripture. The Holy Spirit through Paul knew the words "elect," "church," or "believers," etc. He would have used some such word if such were in His mind. Therefore, in some sense reconciliation was made for the whole world.

_____. *Gleanings From the Scriptures: Man's Total Depravity*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1969.

It is interesting to observe that Pink will allow the word "world" to be "the aggregate of all the individual members . . ." (p. 14) when concerning total depravity, but when concerning salvation the word means either the "elect" or the Gentile world (his *Sovereignty of God*). To him *all* men are depraved but not all men are involved in Christ's death.

_____. *The Sovereignty of God*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1930.

This author is a strict five-point Calvinist.

Plummer, Alfred. *An Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to S. Matthew*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1956.

The author accepts an unlimited view on the atonement (cf. Matthew 20:28).

Pressense, Edmond De. *The Redeemer*. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1864.

The book presents a history of redemption from Genesis 3:15 to the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. This cross work is not "simply a testimony of the Father's love . . . but the altar of the great sacrifice which restores man to God, and God to man" (p. xiii).

Quick, Oliver Chase. *The Gospel of the New World*. London: Nisbet and Company, LTD., 1945.

He takes ὁ κόσμος in an unlimited way (pp. 63-64).

Robertson, Archibald Thomas. *Word Pictures in the New Testament*. 6 vols. New York: Richard R. Smith, Inc., 1930.

Robinson, George Wade. *The Philosophy of the Atonement and Other Sermons*. London: J. M. Dent and Sons LTD., 1912.

In the introduction to his book F. B. Meyer says that Wade "had no sympathy with narrow and cramped views of God, or the operations of His Grace . . . the Divine Love was 'higher than the highest heaven and deeper than the deepest sea,' . . . for all souls lay within its content" (p. x).

Robinson, H. Wheeler. *Suffering Human and Divine*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1939.

The first part of the book is given over to the problem of suffering. God "suffers in us, with us, for us" (p. x). At the cross God suffered in Christ (pp. 139 ff.) for His creatures. The author does not postulate a biblical view of Christ's death.

Ross, D. M. *The Cross of Christ*. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., 1928.

He rejects the forensic theory of the atonement.

Sabatier, Auguste. *The Doctrine of the Atonement and its Historical Evolution and Religion and Modern Culture*, trans. from the French by Victor Leuliette. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1904.

This Author holds to unlimited extent of Christ's death as taught by Paul (p. 44). He fuses atonement and faith by indicating that atonement was made both by the blood of Christ as well as by faith of the sinner (p. 45).

Sanders, J. A. *The Old Testament in the Cross*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1961.

>The author does not consider that the cross or the resurrection of Christ are in the Old Testament but both would "hang suspended in mid-air . . ." without the Old Testament (pp. 14-15).

Schopenhauer, Arthur. *Essay on the Freedom of the Will*. Trans. by Konstantin Kolenda. New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1960.

Scott, C. A. Anderson. *Living Issues in the New Testament*. Cambridge: At The University Press, 1933.

>Scott does not advocate a propitiatory theory of the atonement (p. xi).

Shank, Robert. *Elect in the Son—A Study of the Doctrine of Election*. Springfield, Missouri: Westcott Publishers, 1970.

>Shank's premise is that election unto Salvation is in Christ. Election is never outside of Christ (p. 27). The author accepts that Christ died for all men (pp. 67-87). His premise is that "the atonement is efficacious for all men potentially, for no man unconditionally, and for the Israel of God efficiently" (p. 86). He means that election of the Church is a corporate and not an individual election (pp. 152-58).

Shedd, William G. T. *Dogmatic Theology*. 3 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, n.d.

>This Reformed theologian rejects supralapsarianism. As to the application of Christ's death the author believes in limited redemption (p. 466). He does not object to the combination: unlimited atonement but limited redemption (p. 470). He held to the erroneous doctrine that the elect heathen could be saved apart from the Gospel reaching them (II, 705-710).

Sheets, John R., ed. *The Theology of the Atonement*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1967.

>This is a Roman Catholic symposium on the atonement. Provisional reconciliation (II Corinthians 5:19) is accepted (p. 111).

Simpson, W. J. Sparrow. *The Redeemer*. Longmans, Green and Co., 1937.

>The author accounts that the Atonement is from God but that it has a manward appeal (p. vi). This redemption is by way of Christ's sacrifice which sacrifice was for the world (pp. 131-32).

Smeaton, George. *The Apostles' Doctrine of the Atonement.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1957.

> As was the case with his book on *The Atonement According to Christ* so does the author seek to postulate a limited atonement according to the Apostles (Preface, p. v.). Obvious universal passages such as I John 2:2, are explained to refer to limited redemption. For instance he says the "world" in I John 2:2 refers to "the redeemed of every period, place—that is, prospectively and retrospectively" (p. 460). Many limited redemptionists indicate that the word "world" in I John 2:2 means the Gentile world of the elect but Smeaton sees no such distinction (*Ibid.*).

_____. *The Atonement According to Christ and His Apostles*. Grand Rapids: Sovereign Grace Publishers, n.d.

> The writer says the atonement was limited only to the elect because "Its extent coincides with its effects" (p. 174). Yet, the writer says that the gospel is to be indiscriminately preached to all men. He says this is compatible truth but now past our present vision (p. 181).

Smith, C. Ryder. *The Bible Doctrine of Salvation: A Study of the Atonement*. London: The Epworth Press, 1946.

> Salvation in both Testaments is wholly of God. God's love "cannot leave a sinner to his sin. But God must take the initiative because man cannot save himself (p. 260). The word "world" in John 3:16 is considered as "save-able (p. 244).

Spurgeon, C. H. *Lectures to My Students*. Grand Rapids: Associated Publishers and Authors, 1971.

> In his chapter on *Conversion as Our Aim* Spurgeon said that "a real bona fide substitutionary sacrifice" must be preached (p. 183) and that no attention should be paid to ultra-Calvinistic theologians who say that invitations should not be extended to dead sinners since they cannot come anyway (p. 186).

Stalker, James. *The Atonement*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1908.

> He sees a mystery in the divine and human wills in salvation which resides in the doctrine of election and not in the doctrine of the Atonement. "The Bible does not speak of a limitation of the Atonement" (pp. 103-104, 105).

Steele, David N., and Thomas, Curtis C. *The Five Points of Calvinism; Defined, Defended, and Documented*. Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1965.

> As the title indicates the authors are limited redemptionists.

_____. *Romans an Interpretative Outline*. Philadelphia: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1963.

> This book gives an excellent summary of the five point of Calvinism. Such Reformed tenets as regeneration before faith would be unacceptable to moderate Calvinists.

Stevens, William Wilson. *Doctrines of the Christian Religion*. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1967.

> Stevens takes an unlimited view. He says, "The atoning act of Christ is proffered to the full sweep of humanity" (p. 191).

Strong, Augustus Hopkins. *Systematic Theology: A Compendium*. 27th printing. Old Tappan, New Jersey, 1970.

> Strong accepts that the atonement is unlimited but that the application of the atonement is limited (p. 771).

Symington, William. *On the Atonement and Intercession of Jesus Christ*. New York: Robert Carter and Brothers, 1836.

> The author believes Christ died only for those prescribed beforehand in the covenant of grace (pp. 246-47).

Taylor, Vincent. *Forgiveness and Reconciliation*. London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1952.

> Taylor does not equate forgiveness with justification nor with reconciliation, though they are considered as "an indissoluble unity . . ." (p. vii). He accepts a provisional aspect of reconciliation (pp. 72, 73).

_____. *Jesus and His Sacrifice*. London: Macmillan and Company, Limited, 1937.

> Taylor accepts Christ's death as being somewhat vicarious and representative of men. His death was a "self-identification with sinners . . ." (pp. 261-63). The book encompasses an unlimited extent of the atonement.

> The main fault in the book is that the author casts some reflection upon pure substitution.

Thiessen, Henry C. *Introductory Lectures in Systematic Theology*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1961.

> The author is a modified Calvinist who accepts that election is based upon simple prescience. More is involved in God's foreknowledge than is admitted by Thiessen. He believes that Christ died for all men thus making a provision for all. Only the elect, or believers, savingly benefit from the provision.

Thomas, G. W. C. *The Circle and the Cross*. New York: Abingdon Press, 1964.

> A circle is a symbol of wholeness. The Cross stands at the heart of it (p. 10). In his analysis, however, the author is lacking in depicting the cross work of Christ (pp. 127-28).

Thomas, W. H. Griffith. *The Principles of Theology: An Introduction to the Thirty-nine Articles*. London: Church Book Room Press LTD., 1956.

> The Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England adhere to Biblical election (Scriptural particularism) but also show their "bearing on the universal purpose of Christ's redemption and the offer of opportunity to all men" (p. 244).

Van Til, Cornelius. *Common Grace*. Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1954.

> Van Til disagrees with Herman Hoeksema on his strict supralapsarianism. Van Til, as a result of common grace doctrine, believes that God does indeed have a certain desire for the salvation of all men (pp. 64-95). This, of course, is the biblical truth (Ezekiel 18:23, 32; I Timothy 2:4-5; II Peter 3:9, etc).

Walvoord, John F. *Jesus Christ Our Lord*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1969.

> This four-point Calvinist rejects the limited atonement theory. He believes a provision was provided for all men.

Wand, J. W. C. *The Atonement*. London: S.P.C.K., 1963.

> The author accepts something of a "vicarious penitence" view of the atonement (p. 89). Due to a mystical union with the sinner Christ vicariously feels sorrow. All the sinner needs to do is to allow that sorrow to flood his heart (*Ibid.*).

Wardlaw, Ralph. *Systematic Theology*. 2 vols. Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1857.

> Wardlaw is a four-point Calvinist.

Warfield, Benjamin Breckinridge. *Biblical and Theological Studies*. Philadelphia: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1952.

> This book is an assortment of sermons preached in the Seminary Chapel of Princeton Theological Seminary. In the article entitled "Are They Few That Be Saved?" the author postulates the postmillennial doctrine that eventually the "greater part of the human race" shall be saved (p. 349). This is rather an anomalous view in light of his Reformed doctrine of election. Such anomaly is borne out in his limiting John 3:16 love to a qualitative love rather than a quantitative love (p. 516).

Watson, Thomas. *A Body of Divinity*. Grand Rapids: Sovereign Grace Publishers, n.d.

> This was the most important of Watson's works. It is made up of 176 sermons. The sermons are arranged in catechism format similar to A. A. Hodge's work on the atonement.

> As with most limited redemptionists, he builds his case of limited redemption on the basis of covenant theology (pp. 107 ff.).

Whitby, Daniel. *A Discourse Concerning Election and Reprobation*. London: F. C. and J. Rivington, 1817.

> This is a discourse concerning the Five Points of Calvinism. Whitby accepts an unlimited view of the atonement (pp. 106 ff.).

Wolf, William J. *No Cross, No Crown: A Study of the Atonement*. Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1957.

Periodicals

Aldrich, Roy L. "The Gift of God." *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 122:487 (July-September, 1965): 248-53.

> Aldrich does not believe that regeneration precedes faith. Neither does he believe that Ephesians 2:8 teaches that faith is a gift (p. 249). This is a good article in objecting to other supposed references (Acts 5:31; 11:18; Philippians 1:29; 3:9; Romans 12:3; II Peter 1:1; II Timothy 2:25 and John 6:44-45) that teach that faith is a gift.

Aldrich, Willard M. "The Objective Nature of the Reconciliation." *Bibliotheca Sacra*. 118:469 (January-March, 1961): 18-21.

> The writer accepts a provisional reconciliation in the passage in II Corinthians 5. There is an objective reconciliation. Man must appropriate it. Sin is no longer "an impassable barrier" (p. 21). He explains how the wrath of God is abiding upon the sinner when sins are no longer imputed to him. He answers by giving an illustration of criminals under the wrath of the law while at the same time a pardon is extended to them (p. 20).

Bell, Ralph R. "God's Yardstick . . . The Cross of Christ." *The Alliance Witness* (September 2, 1970): 5-6.

> Bell suggests that for a universal status (Romans 3:23) there must be a universal cure, the cross of Christ (p. 5).

Bonar, John. "The Universal Calls and Invitations of the Gospel Consistent with the Total Depravity of Man, and Particular Redemption." *The Banner of Truth*, XIV (February, 1959): I, 11-21.

He says that ". . . a universal offer neither rests upon nor implies a universal atonement" (p. 11). He admits that "*God can command what men are utterly unable to fulfill . . .*" (p. 13) and "*God can blame and punish man for not doing what he CANNOT do . . .*" (*Ibid.*).

Chafer, Lewis Sperry. "For Whom Did Christ Die?" *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 105:417 (January-March, 1948): 7-35.

Most of this article is in the writer's *Systematic Theology*, III. Chafer accepts that Christ died for all men but that only the elect will receive the benefit of that death. He accepts the other four points of Calvinism.

Chamberlain, W.D. "The Need of Man: The Atonement in the Fourth Gospel." *Interpretation*, X, no. 2 (April, 1956): 157-66.

His unlimited view is clearly expressed in the fact that "The redemptive purpose of God covers the human race, the world which God loved, but also the world which 'knew him not'" (p. 165).

Davies, R. E. "Christ In Our Place: The Contribution of the Prepositions." *Tyndale Bulletin*, 21 (1970): 71-91.

Davies does not set forth a theology on the prepositions, but he does indicate they make a contribution (p. 72). The two prepositions ἀντί and ὑπέρ are viewed as indicating substitution.

Evans, W. Glyn. "Jonathan Edwards Puritan Paradox." *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 124:493 (January-March, 1967): 51-65.

Edwards, unlike Calvin, preached that faith is not the cause but the effect of salvation. An illustration of a whistle on a train pictures the relationship of faith to salvation. The train moves when the whistle blows but the whistle did not cause the train to move. By putting faith as an effect of salvation Edwards was not able to assure people of salvation as did Calvin (pp. 60-61).

Finlayson, R. A. "The Terminology of the Atonement." *The Banner of Truth*, 94-95 (July-August, 1971): 41-48.

The writer, in discussing such terms as propitiation and reconciliation, adheres to limited atonement. But he negates his own argument when he admits that the *world* is not reconciled to God (II Corinthians 5) but that the *world* is urged "to enter that reconciliation" (p. 44).

Gerrish, Brian A. "Atonement and 'Saving Faith.'" *Theology Today*, XVII, no. 2 (July, 1960): 181-91.

His view on the atonement is that Christ died as a representative for man—something that man could not do for himself but must subjectively be appropriated by man in order

for it to *become* atonement. He calls this the "subjective-objective" view of the atonement (p. 185) which according to him is in line with Luther and   Calvin. To him Christ being punished *in our stead* would not require faith to appropriate it as the objective fact of atonement would be an accomplished thing (p. 184).

Hook, H. Phillip. "A Biblical Definition of Saving Faith." *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 121:482 (April-June, 1964): 133-40.

> Hook states three elements in saving faith: (1) knowledge and assent, (2) appropriation and trust, and (3) results and confirmation (pp. 135-39). He indicates that salvation comes when these elements become existential, though results of faith follow salvation (p. 140).

Johnston, Arthur P. "Another Look at the Atonement." *The Alliance Witness*, 106:23 (November, 1971): 3-4.

> The author, using II Corinthians 5:14-19, contends for an unlimited extent of Christ's death.

MacGregor, James. "The Free Offer in the Westminster Confession." *The Banner of Truth*, no. 82-83 (July-August, 1970): 51-58.

> The writer indicates that the Confession upholds that the Gospel is to be offered to all men (p. 53). In answering how is this possible in light of decretive limitation, he says this is a mystery (p. 54).

MacLeod, Donald. "The Doctrine of Election." *The Banner of Truth*, 67 (April, 1969): 16-24.

> The writer limits the death of Christ to the ones chosen in Christ (p. 22). By the mere fact that the church epistles (Ephesians 1:4; Romans 8:29-34, etc.) speak of only those in the church dispensation as being in Christ, it would appear that the writer has limited his election thus even the extent of Christ's death. What about Old Testament saints? Are they not related to Christ's death?

_____. "Misunderstandings of Calvinism II." *The Banner of Truth*, no. 53 (February, 1968): 15-26.

> The writer discusses the five points of Calvinism from the Reformed tradition. The article gives some alternative views on the extent of the atonement.

Murray, Iain., ed. "The Free Offer of the Gospel." *The Banner of Truth*, XI (June, 1958): I, 8-16.

> Murray admits that the gospel is to be preached without distinction to all men. He says this general invitation to all, and Christ's particular work to the elect, are "consistent with each other" (p. 13).

The writer admits that ". . . the universality of the demand for repentance implies the universal overture of grace" (p. 22). But he says such universal proclamation "cannot be divorced from the question of extent" (p. 24). Also, he admits that Christ's death extends to the non-elect (certain blessings) and that God's love encompasses the non-elect (pp. 26-29). His difference is that "The non-elect enjoy many benefits that accrue *from* the atonement but they do not partake of the *atonement*" (p. 30). Also, he admits a discriminative love to the elect which is disclosed in the Gospel offer (pp. 30-34).

_____. "The Atonement and the Free Offer of the Gospel II." *The Banner of Truth*, no. 60 (September, 1968): 23-29.

Murray uses John 10:10-29; Ephesians 5:25-27 and John 3:16 as attempting to prove limited atonement from the basis of design in each of the three passages.

_____. "The Atonement and the Free Offer of the Gospel: III." *The Banner of Truth*, no. 61 (October, 1968): 32-35.

The writer in this article indicates there should be no limitation imposed upon a preacher in preaching a universal message to all men (p. 32).

_____. "The Reconciliation." *The Westminster Theological Journal*, XXIX, no. 1 (November, 1966), 1-23.

Murray does not allow for a provisional reconciliation. Rather the elect is the extent of reconciliation.

Nicole, Roger. "The Case for Definite Atonement." *Bulletin of the Evangelical Theological Society*, 10:4 (Fall, 1967): 199-207.

Nicole does not wish to use the word "limit" or "limitation" (p. 200). Rather he prefers the word "definite." He is an advocate of limited atonement.

Reicke, Bo. "Πᾶς, ἅπας." *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Edited by Gerhard Kittel. Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1967. V, 886-96.

Sailer, William S. "The Nature and Extent of the Atonement: A Wesleyan View." *Bulletin of the Evangelical Theological Society*, 10:4 (Fall, 1967): 189-98.

The writer's conclusion is that "the atonement . . . substitutionary in nature and universal in extent" (p. 198).

Sasse, Hermann. "Κόσμος." *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Edited by Gerhard Kittel. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1965. III, 867-98.

Scaer, David. "The Nature and Extent of the Atonement in Lutheran Theology." *Bulletin of the Evangelical Theological Society*, 10:4 (Fall, 1967): 179-87.

In expressing Lutheran theology Scaer says that the "Scripture holds to both a universal atonement and a limited election" (p. 187). Both are to be admitted and are not self-contradictory. This tension, however, between universal atonement and limited election is the *crux theologorum* (the cross that the theologian must carry) for the theologian (p. 180).

Smalley, Stephen. "The Atonement in the Epistle to the Hebrews." *The Tyndale House Bulletin*, nos. 7-8 (July, 1961): 28-35.

On Hebrews 2:9, the author connects it with mankind in Psalm 8. He says: "The same is true of 2:9 where Christ's 'tasting of death for everyone' (R.S.V.) picks up the pattern of humiliation and exaltation which forms the basis of Psalm 8 . . ." (p. 29).

Spurgeon, C. H. "For Whom Christ Died." *The Banner of Truth*, V (April, 1957): I, 32-33.

Spurgeon's premise is that the effect of Christ's death determines the design of that death. This means that only those who shall ever be saved are the ones for whom Christ died (p. 32).

Warfield, B. B. "God's Immeasurable Love." *The Banner of Truth*, 35 (October, 1964): 15-28.

The author restricts the "world" in John 3:16 ultimately to the world of the elect as well as he restricts the word "love" to comply with the elect. In what sense, could this be *immeasurable* love? The author does not believe the κόσμος is to be seen distributively of individuals (p. 17). But in viewing the word "world" as referring to the elect the writer does have distribution. It would appear that the plain sense of the passage (John 3:16-17) is obviously referring to the world of mankind.

White, R. E. O. "Christ's Death As John Saw It." *Christianity Today*. XVI, no. 12 (March, 1972): 4-7.

In looking at different metaphors such as Lamb of God, the Serpent upon the stake, Bread, etc. the author sees a universality in Christ's death.

Unpublished Material

Bishop, Willis Edward. "A Discussion of I John 2:2 and 'The Atonement." Unpublished critical monograph. Grace Theological Seminary, 1946.

Bishop accepts the reference as being a strong proof for unlimited atonement.

Finsterbusch, Kurt. "Extent of the Atonement in I Timothy 2:6." Unpublished critical monograph. Grace Theological Seminary, 1960.

It is the writer's firm opinion that the Bible teaches an unlimited atonement (p. 70). He believes I Timothy 2:6 is too ambiguous within itself for final proof of the unlimited view,

though he believes the verse favors that view rather than the limited view. It is his opinion that "objections to the unlimited atonement do not disprove it" (*Ibid.*).

Nelson, Wilton. "The Greek Prepositions and the Atonement." Unpublished Th.M. thesis. The Evangelical Theological College, Dallas, Texas, 1936.

The first part of the thesis deals more with the doctrinal aspect of the atonement. The latter part deals with a refutation of Waldenstrom's non-vicarious atonement. It is in the second part that the Greek prepositions are utilized.

He discusses three prepositions: δία, ἀντί and ὑπέρ with the latter two being the important prepositions to express substitution (pp. 48, 73 ff.).

Rice, W. Frederick. "Reconciliation in Christ—II Corinthians 5:19." Unpublished critical monograph. Grace Theological Seminary, 1969.

Rice's conclusions to this verse are: (1) the word "world" refers "to all men without exception," (2) "the relationship between God and the world has been changed, . . . , making possible the salvation of all men," and (3) mankind's sin was imputed to Christ; therefore, the sin is not imputed to man (p. 44).

Waltke, Bruce Kenneth. "The Theological Significations of ANTI and ΥΠΕΡ in the New Testament." Unpublished Th.D. Dissertation. Dallas Theological Seminary, 1958.

In volume one Waltke concludes by stating the theological significance of ἀντί in Matthew 20:28 (Mark 10:45), John 1:16, and Hebrews 12:2 as having the idea of pure substitution (pp. 152 ff.).

In volume two the writer maintains ". . . that a substitutionary significance is attached to all the occurrences of ὑπέρ when used in relation to the death of Christ and followed by the genitive of the person since it is a formula" (p. 329). He concludes the preposition has a dual meaning of "on behalf of" and "in the place of" (p. 331) and is "distinctively the preposition of the atonement (p. 412). Waltke concludes by saying that ". . . in a very true sense Christ did die as the representative of the human race and as the representative of the believer" (p. 424).

A BRIEF SURVEY OF THE CHRISTOLOGY OF THE APOCALYPSE

By Larry A. Tyler*

INTRODUCTION

The opening words, "The Revelation [Apocalypse] of Jesus Christ" have been appropriately deemed the true title of this encyclical. The Greek title ἀποκάλυψ ιυης is derived by combining ἀπό "from" and καλύπτω "to veil, to hide, to cover (up), to remove from sight." Hence, from this combination we have the title "apocalypse" or "revelation." The construction causes the reader to ask, "Is this a revelation that comes from Jesus Christ or is it a revelation about Jesus Christ?" Daniel Wallace considers the possibility that both are true. On the one hand, the revelation is supremely and ultimately about Christ. However, in Rev 22:16 Jesus tells John that His angel was the one proclaiming the message of the book to John. Therefore, the book is certainly a revelation from Christ as well.[1]

Christ in the Apocalypse draws away the veil that hangs between Him and us. Therefore, it seems appropriate to study not only the prophetic events of the book but also its contribution to the Christology of the New Testament. The latter will be the focus of this researcher. By a careful examination of the Apocalypse, the researcher will disclose the characteristics the risen Christ wished to reveal of Himself to the apostle and hence to the churches. This examination will be done

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[1] Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 121.

by analyzing the visual representations of Christ, His titles, His association with the Father, and by comparing the Christology of the book with the other writings of the New Testament.

VISUAL REPRESENTATIONS OF CHRIST

When reading the Apocalypse, one might get the impression that it presents a different Christology than the gospels and the epistles of the New Testament. This is because the visions of the Apocalypse form a different kind of communication from that used in the other books. John obviously uses apocalyptic language to describe the exalted Christ.

Vision of the Glorified Christ in Chapter One

The apocalyptic language used by John has been subjected to various hermeneutical principles. Some scholars press the symbols to unreasonable extremes, and it is true, the heavy symbolic content of apocalyptic language makes interpretation difficult. Yet one should not assume that because some things are symbolic, everything is to be taken symbolically. Isbon Beckwith, instead, argues that one needs to see the relationship between John's language and that of the Old Testament. He states, "Christ appears, portrayed in traits taken chiefly from descriptions of God and angelic beings given in the Old Testament which are meant to picture him in dazzling glory and majesty. . . . A symbolic meaning is not to be sought in the details, except so far as they form traits in a picture of resplendent glory, and contain current terms used in expressing divine activities."[2]

The first chapter of the Apocalypse contains a heavy concentration of references from Daniel, mostly from the seventh and tenth chapters. Greg Beale suggests that Rev 1:7–20 may be a "midrash" on the two chapters in Daniel. Beale uses "midrash" in its most general sense to refer to an interpretative expansion of one text that draws on other texts to supplement its meaning. Thus, John records the vision by using portions of the seventh and tenth chapters of Daniel as a model and by weaving other Old Testament texts into this framework as well.[3]

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[2] Isbon T. Beckwith, *The Apocalypse of John* (New York: MacMillan, 1919), 258.

[3] G. K. Beale, "The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text," in *The New International Greek Testament* Commentary, eds. I. H. Marshall and D. A. Hagner (Grand Rapids: Erdmann, 1999), 220.

Especially significant is John's allusion in Rev 1:13–15 to ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου (one like the Son of Man) drawn from both Daniel seven and ten. Many commentators agree that this significantly portrays Christ as a king and priest since the two Daniel texts have the same features. He was "clothed with a garment down to the feet." Joseph Seiss contends that this garment characterized not only a priest but also a king. He states, "The girdle might appear to be priestly; but it is *gold*, all gold, indicative of royalty; whilst the proper priestly girdle was not gold, but simply wrought and interwoven with gold."[4] Perhaps John was deliberately ambiguous here to show that both the kingly and priestly functions are in view.

Furthermore, Christ's role of divine judge is seen in the metaphor καὶ οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτοῦ ὡς φλὸξ πυρὸς (and his eyes like a flame of fire) in Rev 1:14. Beale comments, "The transferral of attributes from the judicial figure of the Ancient of Days (Dan 7:9–12) to Christ also evokes his role as the latter-day, divine judge . . . This role of judgment is enforced by Dan 10, since there the primary purpose of the heavenly man is to reveal the divine decree that Israel's persecutors would assuredly be judged (see 10:21–12:13)."[5] Additionally his hair is λευκαὶ ὡς ἔριον (white as wool) and λευκόν ὡς χιὼν (white as snow). In Dan 7:9 the Ancient of Days is described as having hair "white like wool" and clothing "white as snow." Robert Mounce states, "The ascription of the titles and attributes of God to Christ is an indication of the exalted Christology of the Apocalypse . . . The hoary head was worthy of honor and conveyed the idea of wisdom and dignity (Lev 19:32; Prov 16:31)."[6]

In Rev 1:15 John describes Christ's feet in the vision in this way, χαλκολιβάνῳ ὡς ἐν καμίνῳ πεπυρωμένης καὶ ἡ φωνὴ αὐτοῦ ὡς φωνὴ ὑδάτων πολλῶ (fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and his voice as the sound of many waters). John Walvoord comments, "The metal described as brass or, more properly, bronze (a copper alloy), symbolized divine judgment as embodied in the Old Testament types of the brazen alter and other items of brass used in

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[4] Joseph A. Seiss, *The Apocalypse: Exposition of the Book of Revelation*. (C. C. Cook, 1900; reprint, Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1987), 38. (Page citations are from the reprint edition).

[5] Beale, "The Book of Revelation," 209.

[6] Robert H. Mounce, "The Book of Revelation," in *The New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Erdmann, 1998), 58.

connection with sacrifice for sin (Ex 38:30)."[7] Walter Scott considers the voice to be "the sign of His supreme sovereignty and majesty over all the waves of human passion, over the circumstances of a wrecked world and a ruined Church."[8]

Rev 1:16 concludes the description of the exalted Christ in the first chapter. Here one sees coming out of his mouth a ῥομφαία δίστομος ὀξεῖα ἐκπορευομένη καὶ ἡ ὄψις αὐτοῦ ὡς ὁ ἥλιος φαίνει ἐν τῇ δυνάμει αὐτοῦ (sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength). Seiss states, "This is not a *hand*-sword, but a *word*-sword."[9] In John's gospel Christ states, "He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day (John 12:48)." Thus, the sword imagery also suggests the idea of judgment. Moreover, one is reminded of Christ's transfiguration with the vision's description of His countenance being like the sun shining in full strength. What a magnificent climax to the vision of the exalted Christ.

INTRODUCTIONS TO THE SEVEN LETTERS (CHAPTERS TWO AND THREE)

The Christology of the Apocalypse can be further explained by the descriptions of the one who gives the messages to the seven churches. Most of these descriptions also can be found in chapter one with the initial vision. In Rev 3:1 one finds the exalted Christ ἔχων τὰ ἑπτὰ πνεύματα τοῦ θεοῦ (having the seven Spirits of God). This has an obvious connection with Rev 1:4 and brings to mind the doctrine of the procession of the Spirit from Christ. Robert Thomas states, "In accord with the Holy Spirit's procession from the Son (John 15:26), it is Christ's part to bestow or withhold the powers of the life-giving Spirit on which the life of the church depends (Acts 2:33; Eph 4:7–8)."[10] This is significant in light of Christ's evaluation that the church of Sardis was ready to die. Consequently, this church needs the fullness of the Spirit's life-giving power in order to fulfill its role.

In Rev 3:7 Christ describes himself as being ὁ ἅγιος (holy) and ὁ ἀληθινός (true). This

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[7] John F. Walvoord, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1966), 44–45.

[8] Walter Scott, *Exposition of the Revelation of Jesus Christ* (London: Pickering and Inglis; reprint, Grand Rapids, Kregel Publications, 1982), 44.

[9] Seiss, *The Apocalypse*, 41.

[10] Robert L. Thomas, *Revelation 1–7: An Exegetical Commentary*, ed. K. Barker (Chicago: Moody Press, 1992), 245.

description is linked to the refining fire in Rev 1:15. Beale states, "'Holy' and 'true' are divine attributes elsewhere in Revelation (6:10), so their use here suggests Jesus' deity. The idea of 'true' carries connotations of Jesus being the true Messiah, who has begun to fulfill messianic prophecy (3:14), though he is rejected by the Jews as a false messianic pretender."[11] Moreover in this verse (3:7) Christ is described as ὁ ἔχων τὴν κλεῖν Δαυίδ, ὁ ἀνοίγων καὶ οὐδεὶς κλείσει καὶ κλείων καὶ οὐδεὶς ἀνοίγει (the one having the key of David, who opens and no one will shut and who shuts and no one opens). This description is similar to Rev 1:18b where Christ is described as having τὰς κλεῖς τοῦ θανάτου καὶ τοῦ ᾅδου (the keys of death and Hades). However, John Walvoord believes 3:7 alludes to "Isa 22:22 where, speaking of Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, it is recorded that the 'key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut and none shall open.' Eliakim had the key to all the treasures of the king, and when he opened the door it was opened, and when he closed the door it was closed. Christ, the great antitype of Eliakim, has the key to truth and holiness as well as to opportunity, service, and testimony."[12]

Additional attributes can be found in Rev 3:14. Here He identifies himself as ὁ ἀμήν, ὁ μάρτυς ὁ πιστὸς καὶ ἀληθινός, ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως τοῦ θεοῦ. The first title, ὁ ἀμήν (the amen) is used only here as a personal name for Christ. The article makes it a substantive and uses it to represent a quality par excellence. "It thus becomes a descriptive title for the Lord, and pictures Him as the one in whom verity is personified."[13] The second part of Christ's self designation, ὁ μάρτυς ὁ πιστός καὶ ἀληθινός, is intended to make ὁ ἀμήν more specific. It is there to emphasize that Christ is the faithful and true witness as opposed to the Laodicean church. Thomas believes this veracity extends beyond Christ's character but also to the content of his message.[14] The words ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως τοῦ θεοῦ may be seen as appealing to the close connection between Laodicea and Colosse. Paul uses very similar terminology in Col 1:18 where he calls Christ "the first begotten of all creation." The message is similar: Christ is unique and therefore pre-eminent.[15]

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[11] Beale, "The Book of Revelation," 283.

[12] Walvoord, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 84.

[13] Robert L. Thomas, *Revelation 1–7,* 300.

[14] Ibid., 301–02.

[15] Ibid., 303–04.

The Christology here is intensely practical rather than theoretical. One sees the exalted Christ addressing the seven churches. His self-descriptions are meant to inspire and encourage. He both commends and condemns. "Yet there is nothing here to connect him to the human Jesus recorded in the gospels."[16]

Vision of Christ as the Coming Judge (Rev 14:14–16)

In this vision John beholds one like the Son of Man sitting on a white cloud wearing a golden crown and having in his hand a sharp sickle. The Son of Man is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ in his role of king and judge. The royal crown speaks of his glorified state and his royal dignity. The sharp sickle indicates a time of harvest pointing to the climatic judgments at the second coming.[17] The cloud imagery can be linked to Dan 7:13 where the one like the Son of Man is connected to the Ancient of Days. Once again, the Apocalypse emphasizes the exalted character of the glorified Christ.[18]

Vision of Christ on a White Horse (Rev 19:11–21)

The symbolism of this vision represents what John felt to be real objective events in history. Yet these events transcend all ordinary historical experience. George Eldon Ladd states, "The second coming of Christ is an absolutely essential theme in New Testament theology. In his cross and resurrection, Christ won a great victory over the powers of evil: by his second coming, he will execute that victory."[19]

The vision reveals the heavens opening so that John can see a rider on a white horse (19:11). The white horse symbolizes victorious power. He that sat on it was called πιστὸς καὶ ἀληθινός (faithful and true). Scott observes that Christ "in his person and way is the perfect embodiment of these attributes. Faithful in the performance of every promise and every threat, while every word and act bear the stamp of absolute truth."[20] He will judge and make war in "righteousness." Beale

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[16] Donald Guthrie, *The Relevance of John's Apocalypse* (Grand Rapids: Erdmann, 1987), 43.

[17] John F. Walvoord, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 220–21.

[18] Donald Guthrie, *The Relevance of John's Apocalypse*, 43–44.

[19] George Eldon Ladd, *A Commentary on the Revelation of John* (Grand Rapids: Erdmann, 1972), 252–53.

[20] Walter Scott, *Exposition of the Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 386.

notes that "righteousness" constitutes the motif of the vindication of His afflicted people. This characterization affirms the righteous standard by which judgment is executed.[21]

One can see in Rev 19:12 that the rider's eyes are a φλὸξ πυρός (flame of fire) and upon his head are διαδήματα πολλ (many crowns). Mounce notes that nothing can be hidden from the penetrating gaze of Christ. The "many crowns" are an obvious contrast to the seven crowns of the dragon (12:3) and the ten crowns of the beast out of the sea (13:1). Many crowns indicate unlimited sovereignty, and since He is "King of Kings and Lord of Lords" (19:16) all authority is his.[22]

Rev 19:13 reveals that the rider was clothed in a robe "dipped in blood." Most commentators agree the blood is not his own. Rather, it belongs to the enemy slain in conflict. The name of the rider is "The Word of God" (19:13). Here the name alludes to God's fulfilling his divine purpose and his authoritative declaration by which the nations of the world will be destroyed. He will strike the nations with the "sharp sword" (19:15) proceeding from his mouth. The "sharp sword" symbolizes the lethal power of his word of judgment.[23] Once the nations have been subdued, He will rule the nations with a "rod of iron" (19:15). The allusion to Ps 2:9 reveals a glorious description of almighty power. Scott states, "The stern and inflexible rule exercised over the rebellious nations is intimated in the firm unyielding rod of iron."[24]

The vision concludes with a concise description of Christ's victory over the beast and the kings of the earth at Armageddon. The beast and false prophet are cast alive into the "lake of fire" (19:20). The rest are killed with a sword proceeding from Christ's mouth. Thus, judgment is accomplished through a verbal sword and Christ has the last word at the consummation. Victory is certain and directly attributed to Christ himself.

TITLES OF CHRIST

Alpha and Omega

This title is actually a figure of speech called a merism. In a merism, the whole of something

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[21] G. K. Beale, "The Book of Revelation," 950.
[22] Robert H. Mounce, "The Book of Revelation," 353.
[23] Ibid., 354.
[24] Walter Scott, *Exposition of the Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 389.

is substituted by two contrasting or opposite parts.[25] Beale remarks, "These merisms express God's control of all history, especially by bringing it to an end in salvation and judgment. The use of the first and last letters of the alphabet was typical of the ancients in expressing merisms."[26]

In Rev 1:8 the speaker identifies himself as "the Alpha and the Omega." The specific identity of the speaker is not immediately clear. Is it the Father or the Son? The evidence is persuasive for both. From surveying the rest of the New Testament one can find the words that begin the verse, Ἐγώ εἰμι, to be a frequent self-designation appropriated by Jesus especially in the gospel of John. Furthermore "the Alpha and the Omega" is a self-description by Jesus in Rev 22:13. Yet evidence favoring the expression as a title for the Father can be found throughout the Old Testament. The further description in the verse, "the one who is and who was and who is coming," is also used in Rev 1:4 to refer to the Father.[27] Thus, it is probable that this symbolic title was intentionally applied to both the Father and the Son and is highly significant for the Christology of the book. There obviously exists a close affinity between the Father and Son in the Apocalypse.

The Lamb and the Lion

The title of "the Lamb" occurs twenty-eight times in the Apocalypse. Therefore, it should be reckoned the dominant conception of Christ. The introduction of "the Lamb" in chapter five is pivotal for understanding its importance for Christology.

This chapter introduces a new image—"a scroll." The central concern in this chapter is the "scroll" and who is able to lay claim to it. Rev 5:5 reveals that "the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof." The Lion is Christ. Seiss makes this comment, "It is the very essence of the gospel, which has been sounding ever since the promise of Eden, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. It is what all the ancient types prefigured, what the songs of the prophets foretold, and what the first Christians and their successors went heralding over all the earth."[28] In verse six when the seer looks

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[25] Roy B. Zuck, *Basic Bible Interpretation* (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1991), 151.
[26] G. K. Beale, "The Book of Revelation," 199.
[27] Robert L. Thomas, *Revelation 1–7*, 80.
[28] Joseph A. Seiss, *The Apocalypse*, 114.

for the Lion he sees instead "a Lamb as though it had been slain." He who appears now as a Lamb is the same one just described as a Lion. The two titles might seem incongruous. However this is not the case. Instead, they supplement each other to reveal what otherwise could not be well portrayed.

The opening of the seven-sealed scroll requires that one be worthy and yet powerful. The title of "a Lamb" reveals the character of Christ as the overcoming redeemer. The mention of the word "slain" is a reference to the sacrificial death of the Lamb of God. He has the right to take the scroll because He has put away sin by the sacrifice of himself on the cross. Only He is able to be the redeemer. He prevailed through his sacrificial death on the cross where He paid the price of redemption. Yet the opening of the seals required power. Seiss states, "The opening of the seals, is an act of strength—an exploit of war—a going forth of power to take possession of a kingdom."[29] Merrill C. Tenney notes the word used for lamb (ἀρνίον) is not used outside of the Apocalypse, although a similar word (ἀμνὸς) is used elsewhere.[30] Thus, this is no ordinary lamb. It has "seven horns" symbolizing omnipotence and "seven eyes" symbolizing omniscience. Rather than symbolizing innocent submission, the Lamb in Revelation is a "mystic, apocalyptic designation (or title) of the glorified Christ . . . destined to be victorious over all the opposing forces in the universe, both human and demonic."[31]

Three great characteristics of the glorified Christ are thus brought to view in the dual titles of Lamb and Lion. First, He provides the ultimate sacrifice in order to redeem all creation. Second, He possesses all power to conquer and overcome all foes. Third, He possesses all knowledge and wisdom. It is little wonder that no one else was found worthy to open the scroll or even look at it.

Rev 5:7 reveals that "the Lamb came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne." Seiss sees this act of the Lamb as the most sublime individual act recorded in the Apocalypse. It is the act that all creation has been groaning, crying, and waiting for all these long ages. It is also the act that carries with it all else that is written thereafter. By virtue of this act, the world will be subdued, Babylon will be judged, Antichrist will be defeated, the dragon will be vanquished, death will be overthrown, the curse reversed, the earth made new, and the reign of

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[29] Ibid., 115.

[30] Merrill C. Tenney, *Interpreting Revelation* (Grand Rapids: Erdmann, 1958), 174.

[31] F. C. Grant, "Lamb of God," in *Dictionary of the Bible*, rev. (New York: Scribner, 1963), 562.

everlasting righteousness and peace will finally be realized. It is the act of repossessing all that was lost in Adam by the glorified Christ.[32] All heaven looks on in solemn silence as the Lamb takes the seven-sealed scroll. Therefore, every creature "in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth" will one day bow before Him to praise, honor, and worship Him (Rev 5:8–14). There is no other parallel scene of universal adoration anywhere else in the entire canon, either in the Old or New Testament.[33]

Word of God

In Rev 19:13 the glorified Christ is called by the title ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ (The Word of God). Bruce Metzger states, "Christ's proper name is not meant here, but rather his office; it is through him that God has spoken fully and finally to us (see Heb 1:1, 2)."[34] One can see clearly in Rev 19:13 that the seer identifies the victorious warrior on the white horse with Jesus of Nazareth, who is also called ὁ λόγος. In John 1:1, 14 "the Word" is God the Son. Thus, as "the Word" Christ reveals God in his being.

In the first chapter of Genesis God created the universe through speaking his word. In John 1:3 Christ is the Word through whom God made the universe. Here in Rev 19:13 the glorified Christ is the Word through whom God will bring judgment. Therefore, Christ is the agent of the divine will in creation and in judgment. The title is a fitting one since Christ both initiated creation by speaking it into existence by His effectual word and will at His second coming bring judgment by the sword that proceeds from His mouth (Rev 19:15, 21).

The title has the idea of God revealing himself in the words and deeds of Christ. Scott states, "It is *God* Who is here seen aroused to action. His very nature demands the judgment of those who on earth madly attempt to thwart His purpose to set His Son as King on Mount Zion and put into His hands earth's government."[35] Thus, the title alludes to Christ's execution of final judgment on the enemies of God in fulfillment of Old and New Testament prophecy.

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[32] Joseph A. Seiss, *The Apocalypse*, 117.

[33] Ibid., 118.

[34] Bruce M. Metzger, *Breaking the Code: Understanding the Book of Revelation* (Nashville, Abington Press, 1993), 91.

[35] Walter Scott, *Exposition of the Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 388.

Jesus Christ

This familiar title occurs only three times in the Apocalypse, all in the first five verses. The full title "Jesus Christ" is appropriate for the elevated style of the prologue. However, throughout the rest of the book the simple name "Jesus" is used. Guthrie explains, "It seems best to take this as an indication that the author attached considerable importance to the forms of titles he uses and that he prefers other names which have a stronger symbolic force."[36]

In the opening sentence of the prologue John discloses the origin and content of the book. It is a revelation "of Jesus Christ." This may mean either the revelation was made by Jesus Christ or that it was made about him or that it belongs to him. Metzger states, "In a sense all three are true: the revelation comes from God through Jesus Christ, who communicates it to John by an angel. The revelation is Jesus Christ's and the chain of communication is God–Jesus Christ–angel–John–to the churches."[37] Thus, the subject of the Apocalypse is Jesus Christ and the substance of the book reveals future events concerning his second coming.

In Rev 1:2 John has been designated as the one to testify to everything he saw—that is, "the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ." Scott states, "Both [words] 'word' and 'testimony' refer especially to the display of divine authority and rule over the earth. We regard the *Word* of God as that which He directly or mediately expresses, and the *testimony* of Jesus Christ that which He Himself, or by His angel, announces."[38]

In Rev 1:5 Jesus Christ unites with the other persons of the Godhead (Rev 1:4) in a divine salutation of grace and peace to the seven churches of Asia. Here He is described as "the faithful witness," "the firstborn from the dead," and "the prince of the kings of the earth." Regarding Jesus Christ as the "faithful witness" Beale comments, "The description is a summary of Christ's role: he persevered as a faithful witness to the Father in the face of persecution even to death, which he conquered . . ."[39] The unique mention of Christ as the "faithful witness" was particularly directed at the seven churches. Chapters two and three reveal that they were tempted to compromise their witness because of threatening persecution. They needed to overcome this temptation by modeling

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[36] Donald Guthrie, *The Relevance of John's Apocalypse*, 46.

[37] Bruce M. Metzger, *Breaking the Code*, 21.

[38] Walter Scott, *Exposition of the Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 21.

their lives after Christ.[40] "Firstborn from the dead" refers to the resurrection of Christ. "As Christ is first (cf. 'firstfruits,' I Cor 15:20) so others are to follow Christ in His resurrection. Christ and all the righteous dead are included in 'the first resurrection' (Rev 20:5–6)."[41]

Christ's kingship over the "kings of the earth," refers to his rule over his defeated enemies. It does not yet refer to his rule over his redeemed people. The phrase οἱ βασιλεῖς τῆς γῆς (the kings of the earth) is used elsewhere in the Apocalypse as a reference to the antagonists of God's kingdom (6:15; 17:2; 18:3, 9; 19:19).[42] Beale states, "This includes not only the kingdoms and peoples represented by the kingdoms but also the satanic forces behind these kingdoms."[43] The fulfillment of the role of ruler over the kings of the earth is future. This is accomplished after his victory over the beast and false prophet in chapter nineteen.

CHRIST'S ASSOCIATION TO THE FATHER

Several functions usually associated with the Father alone are assigned to Christ in the Apocalypse. In the worship passages, praise and honor are offered to Christ in the same way they are offered to the Father (4:11; 5:9, 12). Thus, both are worthy of worship and adoration. In two passages (5:13; 7:10) the worship is addressed to the Father who sits on the throne and to the Lamb. This joint act of praise does not make a distinction between the Father and the Son.

Several other passages further support the idea that Christ is closely identified with the Father. In Rev 1:6 a doxology is addressed to Christ in the same way it would be addressed to the Father. In the New Jerusalem the water of life flows from God and the Lamb (22:1) and both are seen as the source of light (21:23). Christ is referred to ασ ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως τοῦ θεοῦ (the beginning of the creation of God) in Rev 3:14. The word ἀρχὴ may be understood in the sense of the one from whom creation took its beginning.[44] However in Rev 4:11 creation is attributed to God the Father. Therefore one can see a close association of Christ with the Father in the act of creation.

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[39] G. K. Beale, "The Book of Revelation," 190.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Walvoord, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 38.

[42] G. K. Beale, "The Book of Revelation," 190.

[43] Ibid.

[44] I. T. Beckwith, *The Apocalypse of John* (New York: MacMillan, 1919; reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1967), 488 (page citations are to the reprint edition).

This close association of Christ with the Father does not in any way mean that the identity of each is lost. Guthrie states, "A survey of the full data for the Christology of the Apocalypse shows clearly that the writer does not confuse the person of Christ with the person of God the Father."[45] In Rev 3:12 Christ refers to God as his God implying the Son is subordinate to the Father. Another example can be found in Rev 2:27 where Christ is seen receiving his power to rule from the Father. Moreover, the entire revelation that the Apocalypse contains has been received from the Father mediated through the Son (1:1).

COMPARISON WITH OTHER NEW TESTAMENT WRITINGS

The Christology of the Apocalypse has only a few parallels in the synoptic gospels. The most obvious similarity is the amount of attention given to the death of Christ. One of the clearest passages can be found in Mark 10:45 that describes Christ as giving "His life a ransom for many." The ransom imagery is used in chapter five of the Apocalypse where the description of Christ's blood is said to "ransom men for God" (Rev 5:9 RSV). In the context of Rev 5:5–7 the Lamb is worthy to open the scroll because He was slain, He purchases people for God, and He made them to be a kingdom and priests. Thus, the worthiness of the Lamb comes not from His being. Rather, it comes from His great act of redemption. Mounce states, "His sacrificial death was the means whereby he purchased people for God. This interpretation is one with that of the other writers of the NT."[46]

Furthermore it should be noted that the synoptic Christ predicts an end-time (Matt 24–25, Mark 13:5–17, Luke 21:8–36) with wars and rumors of wars. Similarly the Apocalypse is a prophecy about the consummation of history. Here the visions of conflicts bear a strong resemblance to the apocalyptic sections in the synoptics.

Contrasted with the synoptics, the Christology of the Fourth Gospel more closely parallels the Apocalypse. These two books describe Christ under the figure of a Lamb. The Fourth Gospel depicts Christ in terms of the Passover lamb (John 18:28; 19:36) and reports that John the Baptist proclaimed Jesus as a Lamb (1:29). Craig Keener states, "The primary background of the Johannine

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[45] Donald Guthrie, *The Relevance of John's Apocalypse,* 55.

[46] Robert H. Mounce, "The Book of Revelation," 136.

lamb must be that of the sacrificial Passover lamb, whatever other elements may also appear."[47] A similar image of a Paschal lamb is also found in the slain lamb of Rev 5:6 where the parallel imagery is striking.

Two other parallels between the Fourth Gospel and the Apocalypse should be mentioned. One is the Father-Son relationship. This close association in the Apocalypse already has been mentioned. Yet it is also obvious that the Fourth Gospel emphasizes this relationship as well. Second, Christ is referred to as Logos in both books. Guthrie states, "Bearing in mind that the Logos title is not specifically found elsewhere in the New Testament, the proximity in Christology between these two books is marked."[48]

In the book of Acts, Stephen has a vision of "Jesus standing at the right hand of God" (Acts 7:55). He further describes Him as "the Son of Man" (Acts 7:56). This is similar to John's vision of one "like unto the Son of man" (Rev 1:13). Stephen's vision of Christ surrounded by the glory of God is consistent with the exalted Christology of the Apocalypse. Moreover the redemptive work found in the Apocalypse (the slain Lamb) finds its expression in Acts 20:28 where it reveals that Christ purchased the church with "His own blood."

Guthrie writes this about the parallels of the Apocalypse with the writings of Paul, "Those who would write off this book as inferior to that of Paul should consider a number of significant parallels."[49] First, the use of πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως (firstborn over all creation) by Paul in Col 1:15 is remarkably similar to Rev 3:14 where one finds ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως τοῦ θεοῦ (the beginning of God's creation). Second, the use of the Father-Son relationship is widespread in Paul's writings. Regarding this association in Paul's writings it "may be said to be an indispensable factor for a true appreciation of his Christology."[50] There is no disagreement between the Apocalypse and Paul's writings on the significance of Christ as the Son of God. Third, Paul's conviction of a spiritual warfare currently in progress (Eph 6:12) finds a similar parallel of the conflict in the Apocalypse. Paul records that Christ "must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet" (1 Cor 15:25) and this

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[47] C. S. Keener, "Lamb," in *Dictionary of the Later New Testament and Its Developments*, eds. R. Martin and P. David's (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1997), 641.

[48] Donald Guthrie, *The Relevance of John's Apocalypse*, 57.

[49] Ibid.

[50] Ibid., 58.

is exactly what Christ is predicted to do in the Apocalypse (Rev 20:7–10). Fourth, Paul sees Christ as judge as well as savior. In Paul's second epistle to Timothy he describes Christ as the one "who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom." The parallel in the Apocalypse is obvious throughout the book.

Other parallels are found in the rest of the New Testament. The blood of Christ as seen in the development of Christ's high priesthood in Hebrews finds similar references in the Apocalypse (1:5, 5:9, 12:11). Furthermore, 1 Pet 1:18 mentions the blood in connection with the redemption theme and 1 John 1:7 notes that the blood "cleanses us from all sin." These parallels are sufficient to show that the Christology of the Apocalypse has many similarities with the rest of the New Testament. It is true that the Apocalypse has its own form of Christology, but the Christ one finds there is the same Christ found in the Synoptics, the Fourth Gospel, the Acts, and the Epistles.

CONCLUSION

Much of the imagery used in the Apocalypse depicts in some way the achievement by Jesus Christ of the final sovereignty of God over the world. He comes as king to sit on His throne of judgment. He comes as the conquering warrior leading the heavenly armies to victory over those who are opposed to God. Every creature in the universe will worship Him and acknowledge His lordship as that of the only sovereign God. It is important to note that behind such imagery lies Old Testament prophecies of God's coming to perform a definitive act of salvation and judgment.

The title of "the Lamb," appearing twenty-eight times, might be the dominant conception of Christ in the Apocalypse. In chapter five the title is used in conjunction with another, that of a "Lion." The two titles supplement one another to reveal what could not be revealed about Christ otherwise. He is characterized as the only one worthy and powerful enough to be the overcoming redeemer. All creation has been redeemed because of His sacrificial death at Calvary. Due to this, only He is worthy to accomplish God's purposes for history. Christ will do this through the power of His word. Rather than symbolizing innocent submission, "the Lamb" designation reveals the glorified Christ destined to be victorious over all the opposing forces in the universe.

Throughout the Apocalypse one can see the close association of Christ with the Father. Praise and worship are offered to Christ in the same way they are offered to the Father.

Furthermore, in the New Jerusalem the water of life flows from both God and the Lamb and both are seen as the source of light. Additionally, the act of creation is attributed to both Christ and the Father.

The Apocalypse characterizes Christ coming in glory and power to judge and take possession of all creation in order to carry out the purposes of the Father. One might initially get the impression that this characterization is radically different from that found in other writings of the New Testament. However, when the Christology of the Apocalypse is compared with these writings many similarities are found. Nevertheless, the Apocalypse offers its own form of Christology. Richard Bauckham states, "Since Jesus is the human person on whom the destiny of the whole world hangs, his story is unfinished until the story of the whole world is complete, and, conversely, the world's story is unfinished until he comes to complete it."[51] Thus, if the Apocalypse did not unveil the gloried Christ, an indispensable link to our future destiny would be missing.

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[51] Richard Bauckham and Trevor Hart, *Hope Against Hope* (Grand Rapids: Erdmann, 1999), 118.

CRITIQUING *THE GOD DELUSION:*
AN APOLOGETIC PARADIGM AGAINST
THE NEW ATHEISM OF THE 21ST CENTURY

By Brian Wagner*

INTRODUCTION

Professed atheist and apologist, Richard Dawkins, is telling the truth! Most of the gods that he presents in detail in his debate book, *The God Delusion*, do not exist. Richard Dawkins even seems skeptical that his own pantheistic god of Natural Selection is the true "designer" of all that is real. Dawkins does not mention the names of the one true God who is revealed in the truth of the Bible. He even appears familiar with the story of how God mercifully paid for the sins of all mankind through the sacrifice of His own life, manifested in Jesus Christ. However, his evaluation and rejection of the historical evidence offered by the authors of the Old Testament and the New Testament scriptures present to the reader of *The God Delusion* mostly a different god, and a different Jesus, not traditionally recognized when those biblical names are heard.

 How does one give a response to someone like Richard Dawkins or to someone who has been influenced by his "theology" as presented in *The God Delusion*? How does one review adequately such a large detailed work that proposes to provide sufficient proof against the existence of the supernatural? *The God Delusion* is a New York Times bestseller. As of this date, the paperback edition, though almost three years old, is ranked in the top one thousand best sellers on Amazon.com, and remains ranked as their number two bestseller in the "Atheism" category of religious books. The Kindle format of *The God Delusion* holds the number one position at present.[1] Richard Dawkins is the former Charles Simonyi Professor of the Public

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Understanding of Science at Oxford University, a position he held from 1995-2008. He is now an emeritus fellow of New College, Oxford, also the founder of the Richard Dawkins Foundation for Reason and Science, and still a highly acclaimed spokesman for atheism.[2] A written response to such a well-known accomplished scientist, and what appears to be his signature work, will need to be fair-minded, comprehensive, and practical. This review of *The God Delusion* has as its purpose such a response, detailing the legitimate strengths of Richard Dawkins' arguments as well as highlighting the logical fallacies that weaken his refutation of the supernatural. Though a more adequate response, point by point, would require a book of almost equal length, this review intends to cover all the main points that Dawkins has raised in each chapter. And this review will offer some practical apologetic advice on how to present a defense of the gospel personally to someone like Dawkins or one influenced strongly by him or this book, *The God Delusion*.

OVERVIEW, FORM, CONTENT

The hardback edition of *The God Delusion* came out in 2006, published by Bantham Press, and is still available. This paperback edition is relatively the same except for an additional ten-page preface added by Richard Dawkins to answer seven generalized criticisms that he received from the first edition. Most of the criticisms that he itemizes and responds to in this new preface relate to the aggressive approach he takes against religion in his book. For example, one such criticism to which he replies is – "I'm an atheist, but I wish to dissociate myself from your shrill, strident, intemperate, intolerant, ranting language" (p. 16).[3] Dawkins, himself, identifies the passage that has been called the most 'strident' –

> The God of the Old Testament is arguably the most unpleasant character in all fiction: jealous and proud of it; a petty, unjust, unforgiving control freak; a vindictive, bloodthirsty ethnic cleanser; a misogynistic, homophobic, racist, infanticidal, genocidal, filicidal, pestilential, megalomaniacal, sadomasochistic, capriciously malevolent bully. Those of us schooled from infancy in his ways can become desensitized to their horror (p. 51).

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[1] As of 03/02/2011, http://www.amazon.com/The-God-Delusion- ebook/dp/B000SEHG5U/.

[2] Dawkins was born in 1941, and trained in Balliol College, Oxford, under the Nobel Prize-winning ethologist Nikolaas Tinbergen. Dawkins' PhD is in ethology, i.e. the scientific study of animal behavior, and for a short time he taught as an assistant professor of zoology at the University of California, Berkeley (1967-1969). He returned to become a lecturer in Oxford in 1970.

[3] All quotes from *The God Delusion* will be referenced by page numbers inserted in the text after each quotation, using parentheses. See additional information in footnote 21 below.

Admittedly, such litanies attacking the character of the God of the Bible are rare in this book. But this one, which opens the second chapter, sets the tone for each future mention of the God professed by over half the world's population.

Dawkins avers that the "strongest language to be found in *The God Delusion* is tame" (p. 16) when compared to an offer of four restaurant critiques that he has provided the reader, taken from a London newspaper. The longest of the four is here written in its entirety to serve as a comparison –

> 'All things considered, quite the worst restaurant in London, maybe the world . . . serves horrendous food, grudgingly, in a room that is a museum to Italian waiters' taste circa 1976' (p. 16).

One wonders if, because of this book's aggressive tone, none were invited, or if none were able to be found, to write a foreword to this text, for no foreword is given. Dawkins does add more up-to-date information and clarifications as footnotes in this edition, retaining as well the original endnotes from the hardback version.

There are ten chapters in *The God Delusion*. Richard Dawkins introduces their subject matter himself in the book's original preface. About each he says –

> 'Chapters 1 and 10 top and tail the book by explaining, in their different ways, how a proper understanding of the magnificence of the real world, while never becoming a religion, can fill the inspirational role that religion has historically – and inadequately – usurped.' (pp. 25-26)

> '. . . I hope Chapter 2 will change your mind, by persuading you that 'the God hypothesis' is a scientific hypothesis about the universe, which should be analysed as skeptically as any other.' (pg.24)[4]

> '. . . you might enjoy Chapter 3 on 'Arguments for God's existence' – the arguments turn out to be spectacularly weak.' (p. 24)

> '. . . I hope you will gain enlightenment from Chapter 4 on "Why there almost certainly is no God" ' (p. 24).

> '. . . please refer to Chapter 5, on 'The roots of religion', which explains why belief is so ubiquitous.' (pp. 24-25)

> 'Don't we need God, in order to be good? Please read Chapters 6 and 7 to see why this is not so.' (p. 25)

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[4] British spellings of words within quotations taken from the text are retained for this review without notation [*sic*]. Also British quotation format is often retained when quotations are copied from the text.

'Chapter 8 will invite you to think about ways in which religion is not such a good thing for the world.' (p. 25)

'The whole matter of religion and childhood is the subject of Chapter 9 . . . .' (p. 25)

Also in this preface, he introduces four "consciousness-raisers," or what one may call "beliefs," which Dawkins hopes his book will lead the reader to adopt. They are –

1. 'You can be an atheist who is happy, balanced, moral, and intellectually fulfilled.' (p. 23)
2. 'The power of cranes[5] such as natural selection . . . .' (p. 24)
3. 'There is no such thing as a Christian child.' (p.25)
4. 'Being an atheist is nothing to be apologetic about. On the contrary, it is something to be proud of . . . ." (p. 26)

But a thorough read of *The God Delusion* reveals a number of other related "beliefs" that Dawkins hopes will be accepted as reasonable. One realizes that the content of each chapter primarily presents Dawkins' arguments in support of two major "beliefs" per chapter. These "beliefs" are summarized as follows –

Chapter 1 – 5. The brilliant Albert Einstein was an atheist.
            6. It should be more socially accepted to criticize religion.

Chapter 2 – 7. Local traditions of private revelation are not evidence.
            8. Religion should be judged scientifically.

Chapter 3 – 9. Thomas Aquinas' proofs for God's existence are weak.
            10. Other popular human authorities who believe in God are now in the minority and therefore not significant.

Chapter 4 – 11. The complexity of a personal creator God cannot come from nothing.
            12. Complexity in the world should be viewed as coming from Natural Selection,[5] which probably comes from the luck provided by the Anthropic Principle.

Chapter 5 – 13. Religion originated as a by-product of Natural Selection.
            14. Religious practice develops contrary to the design of Natural Selection.

Chapter 6 – 15. Religious people sometimes act immorally.
            16. Morality should be viewed as developed by Natural Selection.

Chapter 7 – 17. The Bible's examples of immorality are not good prescriptions for modern morality.

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[5] Natural Selection is being capitalized for this review because of the personification, almost deification, which this process from Darwinian evolution theory receives by Richard Dawkins in this book.

18. Atheism supports a "consensual" ethics for morality and should not be blamed for the immorality of Hitler and Stalin.

Chapter 8 –
19. "Fundamentalist religion" is dangerous to society.
20. Embryos should not be viewed as human until birth.

Chapter 9 –
21. Small children are not made by ritual into members of any religion.
22. Children should not be taught creationism in government supported schools.

Chapter 10 –
23. Atheism can provide adequate emotional comfort to face death.
24. Atheism can provide adequate inspiration to face the rest of a brief finite life.

One will notice that these additional twenty "beliefs" which appear to be the main emphases of the chapters in *The God Delusion* have been added to the four "conscience-raisers" and have been numbered consecutively after them. All 24 "beliefs" will be discussed below and divided among the Strengths and Weaknesses sections of this review.

This book can perhaps be said to be in the form of what could be called a scientific "skyscraper sermon," i.e. one "story" after another. It appears, when viewing each chapter title, that there should be a logical progression of presentation, if one sees the first and last chapter titles as only an introduction and conclusion to Dawkins' "sermon." Chapter 2 is supposed to lay out what the "God Hypothesis" is, with Chapter 3 refuting the best "Arguments" usually put forward for that hypothesis, and Chapter 4 presenting the strongest arguments to prove there is "No God." Then Chapters 5, 6, and 7 are to reasonably show from where "Religion," "Morality," and the current "Moral *Zeitgeist*"[6] originated. And Chapters 8 and 9 are to show how immoral it would be to encourage "Religion" any further. But like many sermon titles, these chapter titles are only "springboards" into a presentation of various stories, experiences, and some researched topics. They are presented to be seen as sufficient proof of Richard Dawkins' atheism for any intelligent, reasonable person, and they are given to plead for a marginalization of religion in society. The content of *The God Delusion* is primarily focused toward a presentation of Richard Dawkins' god of Natural Selection.

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[6] Moral Zeitgeist is what Dawkins describes as "a somewhat mysterious consensus" of what is moral "which changes over the decades." (p. 300)

Richard Dawkins contends he is an atheist. He defines an atheist as follows:

> An atheist in this sense of philosophical naturalist is somebody who believes there is nothing beyond the natural, physical world, no *super*natural creative intelligence lurking behind the observable universe, no soul that outlasts the body and no miracles – except in the sense of natural phenomena that we don't yet understand. If there is something that appears to lie beyond the natural world as it is now imperfectly understood, we hope eventually to understand it and embrace it within the natural.[7]   (p. 35)

But this reviewer contends that Richard Dawkins is really a pantheist. Early on in his first chapter he reveals there is "the pantheistic reverence which many of us share with its most distinguished exponent, Albert Einstein" (p. 35). Dawkins then provides sufficient evidence to prove Einstein's pantheistic beliefs from Einstein's own words, and rightly suggests that this is Einstein's meaning when he uses the words "God" or "religion." Dawkins then adds –

> In this sense I too am religious . . . . But I prefer not to call myself religious because it is misleading. It is destructively misleading because, for the vast majority of people, 'religion' implies 'supernatural.' (p. 40)

"Pantheism is sexed up atheism," (p. 40) says Dawkins. "Pantheists don't believe in a supernatural God at all, but use the word God as a non-supernatural synonym for Nature, or for the Universe, or for the lawfulness[8] that governs its workings," he says. (pp. 39-40) Actually, within Dawkin's "pantheism" he reverences two "avatars" of this ultimate and impersonal reality that is only physical.[9] They are the Anthropic Principle and Natural Selection. They are lesser "gods" in one sense, for they are only expressions of the whole. And they are non-personal, i.e., without mind, will, or emotion. But according to Richard Dawkins, borrowing the term from mathematician Brandon Carter, the Anthropic Principle is probably responsible for the "origin of life," for "the origin of the eucaryotic cell (our kind of cell, with a nucleus and various other complicated features such as mitochondria, which is not present in bacteria)," and for the "origin of consciousness" (p. 168). Five times in this context Richard Dawkins uses the word "luck" in

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[7] This "hope" and his desire to "embrace" only natural explanations reveals the underlying commitment Dawkins has to pantheism as a presupposition by which he judges anything that even now "appears to lie beyond the natural world."

[8] I am not sure why Dawkins capitalizes the words Nature and Universe, hinting at some sort of personification of these entities perhaps, but then stops short and does not capitalize "lawfulness" which he does personify with the word "governs." Perhaps his aversion to a personal lawgiving deity unconsciously led to this choice.

[9] This is the flipside of the pantheism of Hinduism, where everything physical is not the true reality, though in some way an expression of it, and the main avatars of non-personal reality, called Brahman, are the personal gods, called Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva.

relation to the Anthropic Principle. It is this "luck" that is needed to give Natural Selection something to start selecting within and to help it over insurmountable obstacles it will face.

Dawkins says, "Once that initial stroke of luck has been granted," i.e., the origin of life, "—and the anthropic principle most decisively grants it to us – natural selection takes over: and natural selection is emphatically not a matter of luck" (p. 168). But, of course, the Anthropic Principle god is still present to help the Natural Selection god with the luck needed for the first cell and for bringing into existence human consciousness. In fact Dawkins says, "Maybe a few later gaps in the evolutionary story also need major infusions of luck, with anthropic justification" (p. 169).

Natural Selection however seems to be presented by Dawkins as the god that he is more interested in promoting, one that is more readily available and intimately related to humanity and life as we know it. Here is a list of what it does according to Richard Dawkins and based on his understanding of Darwinism.

Natural Selection has –

1. 'lifted life from primeval simplicity to the dizzy heights of complexity, beauty and apparent design that dazzle us today' (p.99)[10]

2. 'power' (p. 143)

3. 'cruelty and wastefulness" (p. 161)

4. 'the only process capable of generating complexity out of simplicity' (p. 180)

5. '[t]he most ingenious and powerful crane' (p. 188)

6. 'originally favoured the impulse to religion'[11] (p. 190)

7. 'set up the perception of pain as a token of life-threatening bodily damage, and programmed us to avoid it' (p. 197)

8. 'buil[t] child brains with a tendency to believe whatever their parents and tribal elders tell them' (p. 205)

9. 'favoured dualism and teleology in the brains of our ancestors and their children' (p. 211)

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[10] Richard Dawkins consistently rejects that any true design exists in the universe. Natural Selection only provides the "illusion of design" (p. 24), "produces an excellent simulacrum of design" (p. 103), and "licenses a design stance for" all living things. (p. 212)

[11] Of course, Dawkins has to try now to prove that his god, Natural Selection, now favors atheism. But it appears that the breeding habits of the religious seem to be one piece of evidence to the contrary. Dawkins himself even admits that he wants to know, "Why did those of our ancestors who had a genetic tendency to grow a god-center [in the brain] survive to have more children than rivals who didn't?" (p. 197)

10. 'abhor[ed] waste'[12] (p. 222)

11. 'programmed into our brains altruistic urges" (p. 253)

Richard Dawkins even says Natural Selection has an "invisible hand" that fills the environment with "cartels of cooperating genes," each one "selected to be successful in the presence of others" (p. 229). Of course, Dawkins does not actually believe Natural Selection is a personal god, nor does he say in his book that he sees it as an avatar of a non-personal pantheistic god. In a few places he even makes clear that Natural Selection "is a theory" (p. 138 see also p. 142 and p. 180). And once he curiously labels Natural Selection as just "a better alternative" (p. 147) to intelligent design,[13] and once also concedes that Natural Selection "makes no intuitive sense" (p. 210). But Richard Dawkins' predominant use of anthropomorphic and dogmatic language in the vast majority of instances when describing Natural Selection leads any reader to think that he at least hopes Darwinian Natural Selection is the "power" behind all that exists.[14]

STRENGTHS

The 24 "beliefs" listed above, which summarize the content of *The God Delusion*, should now be divided between the categories of Strengths and Weaknesses. All four "consciousness-raisers" that Dawkins himself itemizes, will be listed and discussed among the weaknesses below. Of the 20 other beliefs, which this reviewer believes fairly represent what Richard Dawkins is promoting in each chapter of his book, nine are considered by this reviewer as positive observations and sound propositions.[15] Also, there is the goal in this section of the review to focus on how the beliefs, especially the weak ones, suggest or relate to logical fallacies in Richard

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[12] The reader will notice the contradiction with the prior description of Natural Selection in #3 above. Though it is arguable that a god can abhor something it still ends up doing, Richard Dawkins seems to be here contradicting what he said earlier. The words in #3 above are taken from the quote – "Our consciousness is also raised by the cruelty and wastefulness of natural selection." Here, fifty pages later he says – "Darwinian natural selection abhors waste." He also says in this same context, "Religion is so wasteful, so extravagant; and Darwinian selection habitually targets and eliminates waste." (p. 190). The only way to give Dawkins the benefit of the doubt for this contradiction is to suppose that he wants to see the religious mind as being one of Natural Selection's mistakes that still lingers, but will eventually be destroyed by Natural Selection more recent successes, i.e., atheism.

[13] The Anthropic Principle also, he admits, is just "an alternative to the design hypothesis." (p. 164) Dawkins includes what must be a favorite quote from Charles Darwin, which also uses such anthropomorphic language. "Unrelentingly and unceasingly, as Darwin explained, 'natural selection is daily and hourly scrutinizing, throughout the world, every variation, even the slightest; rejecting that which is bad, preserving and adding up all that is good; silently and insensibly working, wherever opportunity offers, at the improvement of each organic being'." (pp. 190-191)

[14] See footnote 6 above.

[15] Numbers 5, 6, 11, and 13.

Dawkins' reasoning. The terms and definitions for any logical fallacies, thus demonstrated, are borrowed from the excellent introduction to logic called, *Come, Let Us Reason*, by Norman L. Geisler and Ronald M. Brooks.[16]

Belief numbered 5 above – **The brilliant Albert Einstein was an atheist** – was successfully proven by the research offered by Richard Dawkins in the first chapter. The discussion that scientific pantheism is really atheism in disguise, especially to the western mind, was one that needed presenting. The term "god" in the west almost always is understood as a personal being, with a mind, a will, and emotions. Two of the quotes selected from Einstein's own words are decisive in proving his god is not personal. "The idea of a personal God is quite alien to me and seems to be naïve" (p. 36). And, "I believe in Spinoza's God who reveals himself in the orderly harmony of what exists, not in a God who concerns himself with fates and actions of human beings?"[17] The use of the masculine personal pronoun, "himself" in this last quotation and the capitalization of "God" are misleading, as Dawkins rightfully points out later. But, like Dawkins, with his own personalization of Natural Selection, Einstein may have been allowing a seeping out subconsciously of an innate recognition for a personal God, or at least a need for one.

Proving Einstein was an atheist as an opening for *The God Delusion* was actually a call, by Dawkins, to all his fellow atheistic scientists to refrain from Einstein's equivocal use of religious language. "I wish that physicists would refrain from using the word God in their special metaphorical sense" (p. 41). It only appears more apparent later, in further reading, that there exists a probable underlying reason for Dawkins' desire for a clear boundary between the scientific and religious communities. It has to do with the informal fallacy of logical thinking called – "*Argumentum ad Verecundiam* (appeal to authority). 'Accept this because some authority said it.'" [98] As will be discussed more below, Richard Dawkins holds in high esteem any evidence, or theory, from the atheistic scientific community, and in seeming low esteem any evidence provided from the religious community. When the two communities overlap, there is much discomfort expressed by Dawkins.

The second belief, presented in Chapter 1, and numbered 6 above – **It should be more socially accepted to criticize religion** – is another effective contribution by Richard

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[16] *Come, Let Us Reason*, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1990. Page numbers for quotations from this book will also be added within the text, but will be in brackets instead of parentheses, e.g. [81].

[17] Though Richard Dawkins was providing a popular presentation for a wider audience, it would have been helpful if he would have referenced all his quotations from other scientific authorities. This is rarely the case in *The God Delusion*.

Dawkins. Though some of his chosen stories do not help his argument for this belief, and though he needs to provide, in the future perhaps, what limits he would set for public harassment,[18] Dawkins rightly exposes the modern social kowtowing that is being done in response to the threatened violence attached to criticizing the religion of Islam publicly. However, in trying to prove the legitimacy of this belief, Richard Dawkins uses an informal logical fallacy called Special Pleading. "This is the fallacy of saying, 'Accept this because this select evidence supports it (even though other evidence is neglected).'" [102] Dawkins' examples in chapter 1 may prove to the reader – it should be *more* socially accepted to criticize religion – since *more* is probably the correct relative term in those specific instances chosen by Dawkins. But a more balanced reasoning would have also provided examples where criticism would be socially unacceptable.

Chapter 2 contains another call by Dawkins to his scientific brethren, this time to bring religion into the laboratory. It is what this review has entitled belief number 8 – **Religion should be judged scientifically**. Richard Dawkins rejects the "fence-sitting" agnosticism that many of his colleagues show on the issue of God's existence. He says –

> . . . they often make the illogical deduction that the hypothesis of God's existence, and the hypothesis of his non-existence, have exactly equal probability of being right. The view that I shall defend is very different . . . . Either he exists or he doesn't. It is a scientific question; one day we may know the answer, and meanwhile we can say something pretty strong about the probability. (p. 70)

This call for a scientific investigation of any religion's claims is another good contribution by Dawkins. However, this reviewer wonders if Dawkins' only intention with this call is to bring more into his camp of dogmatic atheism, which is unfriendly to religion. Dawkins believes that many of his fellow scientists are true atheists but profess agnosticism as a friendly act to religion. Later in *The God Delusion* (p. 372f), Richard Dawkins protests against government sponsored

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[18] One story he chose, seemingly based on an incomplete news article, was the ruling in 2004 in Ohio in favor of a twelve year old boy who "won the right in court to wear a T-Shirt to school bearing the words 'Homosexuality is a sin, Islam is a lie, abortion is murder. Some issues are just black and white!'" (p. 45) Dawkins was concerned that the case was supposedly argued on the grounds of "freedom of religion." A reading of the decision reveals that it was for freedom of speech that the court ruled in favor of the lad. See http://oldsite.alliancedefensefund .org/userdocs/nixonopinion.pdf. One wonders why Dawkins was also more concerned about using this case as a negative example of "harassing or abusing homosexuals" (p. 45) instead of using it as a positive example of standing up against a religion, i.e., Islam. Would a court decision in favor a student wearing a T-Shirt which said, "Religion is a sin, Islam is a lie, Christians are murderers!" have been applauded by Dawkins?

teaching of intelligent design,[19] which is just such a scientific investigation as he is advocating here, but with very minute religious overtones.

The other positive beliefs that seem to be professed by Richard Dawkins in *The God Delusion* will only briefly be mentioned so as not to lengthen this review beyond propriety. Belief number 9 – **Thomas Aquinas' proofs for God's existence are weak** – is a helpful discussion of evidential arguments to show that the term "proof" is not legitimate. Number 14 – **Religious practice develops contrary to the design of Natural Selection** – is, of course, supposed to be a strength to the atheistic position, but it also becomes a strength for the creationist position since it weakens one's faith in Natural Selection as being an adequate explanation for everything.

Beliefs numbered 15, 17, 19, and 21 in this review, i.e., **Religious people sometimes act immorally**, **The Bible's examples of immorality are not good prescriptions for modern morality**, **"Fundamentalist religion" is dangerous to society**, and **Small children are not made, by ritual, into members of any religion**, are also positive contributions by Richard Dawkins. Though Dawkins' presentation of evidence supporting these beliefs will probably offend the emotional sensibilities of many in the religions he is criticizing harshly, these chapters are important contributions to illustrate how powerfully destructive a hypocritical testimony of religion can be.

<div align="center">WEAKNESSES</div>

It is appropriate to address at least a few of the main weaknesses in the other beliefs that Richard Dawkins tries to teach in *The God Delusion*. Of the four consciousness-raisers that Dawkins delineates for the reader, Numbers 1 and 4 – '**You can be an atheist who is happy, balanced, moral, and intellectually fulfilled,'** and '**Being an atheist is nothing to be apologetic about. On the contrary, it is something to be proud of'** – are not too weak, even after being associated with weak "beliefs" numbered 23 and 24 by this review, i.e., – **Atheism can provide adequate emotional comfort to face death** – and – **Atheism can provide adequate inspiration to face the rest of one's brief, finite life**. These four related beliefs of Dawkins are only weak from a subjective perspective, which is more intuitive

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[19] This is numbered above as belief number 22 – **Children should not be taught creationism in government supported schools**. This belief is among the weaknesses of the book discussed below.

and not easily tested, i.e., that religion offers more emotionally satisfying answers to life's questions, life's purpose, and for life's end.

A greater weakness that needs confronting is the second consciousness-raiser of Dawkins - **'The power of cranes such as natural selection.'** And this weakness is fundamental to the argument of the whole book and can be associated with beliefs presented in this review as numbers 11 and 12 – **The complexity of a personal creator God can not come from nothing** – and – **Complexity in the world should be viewed as coming from Natural Selection, which probably comes from the luck provided by the Anthropic Principle**. It is curious why Richard Dawkins has ignored two fundamental arguments against these foundational axioms to his book. First, if complexity only comes from simplicity, how does Richard Dawkins relate this belief to the fully proven law of physics, called The Second Law of Thermodynamics? Even if one grants the typical evolutionist explanation – ". . . the fact that life is not a closed system. The sun provides more than enough energy to drive things"[20] – entropy is a powerful competitive process to natural selection's supposed power to develop complexity. Dawkins should have at least mentioned this elephant in the room. Even though Dawkins has shifted responsibility for the origin of life, of the eucaryotic cell, and of human consciousness to the luck provided by the Anthropic Principle, each of these origins had to survive long enough to reproduce in spite of the power of this proven Second Law of Thermodynamics.

Second, Dawkins needs to answer the argument why belief in a designer creator is any more delusional then belief in the luck of the Anthropic Principle. Dawkins, himself, concedes that what the Anthropic Principle has produced is highly improbable.[21] He then even concedes that it is logically possible, based on the theory of "the multiverse plus anthropic principle" with help from "a version of Darwinism in another universe," that "our universe was designed" by a designer who "reads our thoughts and hands out omniscient advice, forgiveness, and redemption" (p. 186). This reviewer appreciates Richard Dawkins' honesty, candidness, and attempt at exploring all alternatives throughout his book. Yet, it is confusing why such a scientist as Dawkins would ignore these inconsistencies to maintain his normally emotionally charged position taken against even the possible existence of a personal creator God, even a deistic one.

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[20] Mark Isaac - http://www.talkorigins.org/faqs/faq-misconceptions.html.

[21] "The origin of life only had to happen once. We therefore can allow it to have been an extremely improbable event, many orders of magnitude more improbable than most people realize." (p. 162) "…the origin of the eucaryotic cell . . . was an even more momentous, difficult and statistically improbable step than the origin of life. The origin of consciousness . . . was on the same order of improbability." (p. 168)

This reviewer assumes this may be an example of the informal logical fallacy called – "Simple Ambiguity (or equivocation). Simple ambiguity occurs when a word or phrase is used with two or more meanings." [91] It may also be an example of "Category mistake. . . This is the 'apples and oranges' error because it mixes up two ideas that don't belong together." [109] The word that is being used in an ambiguous fashion is the word "simple." And the two categories that are being improperly compared are God and Natural Selection. Richard Dawkins wants throughout his book to compare the personal God as being complex with the force of Natural Selection as being simple.

But if a more proper comparison is to be made, God should instead only be compared with the multiverse theory. Richard Dawkins briefly does make this comparison once. It can be easily overlooked by someone who may not be reading critically. He says –

> The key difference between the genuinely extravagant God hypothesis and the apparently extravagant multiverse hypothesis is one of statistical improbability. The multiverse, for all that is extravagant, is simple. God or any intelligent, decision-taking calculating agent, would have to be highly improbable in the very same statistical sense as the entities he is supposed to explain. (pp. 175-176)

But Richard Dawkins is missing the point. A multiverse, though not personal, is still complex and evidently eternal, unless Dawkins wants to postulate that it came into existence from nothing and progressed from a simple pre-multiverse into a complex multiverse gradually. Belief in such an eternal complex multiverse, which by luck and the power of unintelligent selection was able to produce a conscious mind that could even conceive such a complex thing, is certainly no more reasonable than belief in a personal God who is eternal. The later belief, i.e., in a personal creator God, seems simpler, if simple is truly better.

The other beliefs, number 13 – **Religion originated and was developed by Natural Selection** – number 16 – **Morality should be viewed as developed by Natural Selection** – and number 18 – **Atheism supports a "consensual" ethics and should not be blamed for the immorality of Hitler and Stalin**, are related directly or indirectly to the weaknesses discussed in the last paragraphs. If the belief in Natural Selection as dependent on luck in a complex multiverse is a reasonable belief, then the belief in a designer God is also reasonable. A scientific investigation of all the evidence that points to how religion, morality, and ethics may have originated from a personal God should not be easily dismissed as delusional.

This leads to the second major weakness. Richard Dawkins says – "God, in the sense defined is a delusion; and as later chapters will show, a pernicious delusion. Not surprisingly, since it is founded on local traditions of private revelation rather than evidence, the God Hypothesis comes in many versions" (p. 52). Belief number 7 – **Local traditions of private revelation are not evidence** –, belief number 9 – **Other popular human authorities who believe in God are now in the minority and therefore not significant** –, and belief number 20 – **Embryos should not be viewed as human until birth** all depend on the prejudiced statement just quoted. The logical fallacies involved in the presentation of such beliefs are primarily called the *Genetic Fallacy* and *Consensus Gentium*. The *Genetic Fallacy* "is a special type of reductive fallacy in which the single issue focused on is the source or origin of an idea." [107]   Richard Dawkins is saying that all traditions of supernatural experiences and private revelations cannot be considered evidence. He thus easily dismisses or ignores all testimony of revelatory truth from metaphysical sources. He does not even consider as evidence the predictive material in the Bible that has come true, even something as verifiable in his lifetime as the reconstitution of the state of Israel.

Since the source of such truth is unreliable in Dawkins thinking he then begins to attack the credibility of any scientist who is religious. Using "*Consensus Gentium. . . deciding truth by majority vote*" [97], Dawkins attempts to alienate the reader from any scientists who are religious, for after all, 'they are in the minority' among the best scientists. This also seems to be the argumentation behind his view that human life is of no real value until birth. He says, "The moment of birth provides a natural Rubicon for defining rules, and one could argue that it is hard to find another one earlier in the embryonic development" (p. 331). Then in defense of late-term abortions done by the murdered physician Dr. John Britton, Dawkins says, "And if late-aborted embryos with nervous systems suffer – though all suffering is deplorable – it is not because they are *human* that they suffer" (p. 336). On what authority can Dawkins make such a statement about what stage a human embryo becomes *human*?[22]

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[22] Early in The God Delusion, Richard Dawkins gives a fleeting glimpse at the high esteem in which he holds scientists from which come such determinations that he is adopting for himself. He says – "It is important not to mis-state the reach of natural selection. Selection does not favour the evolution of a cognitive awareness of what is good for your genes. That awareness had to wait for the twentieth century to reach a cognitive level, and even now full understanding is confined to a minority of scientific specialists." (p. 252) This reviewer may be missing the point entirely from this quote, but it appears that Dawkins recognizes a "magisterium" in the scientific community that he trusts for decisions such as "when a *human* life begins."

The final weakness to discuss is the third consciousness-raiser of Richard Dawkins, i.e., '**There is no such thing as a Christian child**.' And tied to this is the only other belief, number 22, not yet discussed – **Children should not be taught creationism in government supported schools.** Though Dawkins is correct in saying that a child cannot be made into a religious adherent only by a ritual, (see strength of belief numbered 21 above). Though he correctly encourages parents – "Do not indoctrinate[23] your children. Teach them how to think for themselves, how to evaluate evidence and how to disagree with you" (p. 300), he wrongly assumes that children are unable to formulate beliefs about reality and make responsible choices and commitments in line with those beliefs. And if Richard Dawkins truly believes that evaluating evidence and learning how to disagree are important for children, why would he advocate excluding from government sponsored education any scientific evidence of alternative theories to natural selection, such as creationism?

APOLOGETIC APPROACH

In addition to reviewing the content and arguments of *The God Delusion*, a little discussion concerning how to do apologetics in the face of confrontations, such as this book poses, is now offered. Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, wrote to the professing Christians of the first century – "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always *be* ready to *give* a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed."[24]

Paul, another apostle of Jesus Christ, wrote to the same first generation of Christianity –

But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife. And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, and *that* they may come to their senses *and escape* the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to *do* his will.[25]

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[23] This reviewer is assuming that Dawkins interprets "indoctrination" to mean the forcing of children to profess faith in the beliefs of their parents before they even understand those beliefs and desire to make such a profession of their own free will.

[24] 1 Peter 3:18-19. All Bible quotations are taken from the *New King James Version*, NKJV, Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 1982.

[25] 2 Timothy 2:23-26.

These two admonitions from the two reputed to be main founders of the Christian faith arguably present principle teaching concerning the apologetic method of Christianity. And though further definition may be needed for the activities – "defense," "reason," "teach[ing]," and "correcting," both passages lay great emphasis on the manner in which the truth is given as a defense and correction.

The medium is the message, or at least an important part of it. Unless atheists like Dawkins, or those strongly influenced by him, sense a sanctity, a hope, a meekness, a fear, an avoiding of strife, a gentleness, and a humility from Christian apologists, the persuasiveness of their message will probably bear little results. Some who have read *The God Delusion* before reading this review may have felt the tone of this review should have been more condemning, chastening, and confrontational in defense of Christianity. As alluded to in the beginning, the position was taken that all the supernatural gods attacked by Dawkins did not really exist. Though this reviewer is committed fully to the YHWH and Jesus revealed in the Bible, the YHWH and Jesus as defined by Dawkins are truly "fiction" as he himself has called them (p. 51).

Some Christians may feel that it still would have been appropriate to answer all the mistaken evaluation Dawkins has made about YHWH and Jesus. This review was written with the intended audience of Richard Dawkins himself, and those persuaded by his kind of argumentation. Though including a simple gospel affirmation is important in every apologetic opportunity (see again the one included in the first paragraph of this review), it is important to help non-believers to recognize their commitment to their own gods, and beliefs, and to begin to see any faulty reasoning that supports that commitment. Unless they feel uncomfortable with their own "religion," they probably will not be willing to investigate fairly the claims of Christianity.

Some may consider Richard Dawkins an apostate from Christianity and the Anglicanism of his childhood, and thus in some way more deserving of a more vitriolic response, at least equal to his own rhetoric. This reviewer could find no evidence in Dawkins background information of his representing himself as a teacher of Christianity who then later renounced the faith. Some may attempt to justify such manner from the example of Jesus and his judgmental words to the scribes and Pharisees. But the prerogative of what the Son of God can say in defense of the truth that originated with Him is not automatically the prerogative of those who are representing that same truth. This is especially true in light of the clear injunctions of how to

do apologetics in the words of Christ's apostles, Peter and Paul, given above.   There is no evidence of vitriolic attack on specific individual atheists, or even apostates, found in the writings of the apostles. And apologetics for the Christian should be always viewed as a face to face activity. Written apologetic responses should reflect such a circumstance hypothetically at least, i.e., "What would I say if they were here in the room?"

The information in this book review would be the first contribution that would be made to Richard Dawkins, in a more abbreviated form, of course. Beyond also sharing the "evidence" from a personal testimony of "religious experience," the next step would be to discover more specifically the major stumbling blocks, in order of importance, which Richard Dawkins evidently has with seeing the reasonableness of Christianity as presented in the New Testament, and not as represented by most of the popularized history of Christianity.

CONCLUSION

The God Delusion by Richard Dawkins is a must read for every evangelical pastor, not only because of its popularity and influence, but also because most pastors do not take the time to "listen" to an extended presentation of an atheistic man's system of belief. It is only in the willingness and experience of listening, that a better understanding surfaces of what one truly believes, beyond the label given to them. With understanding comes at least a new modicum of respect that perhaps there were outside contributing factors for the unbelief.   Compassion follows close on the heals of respect, and compassion is an indispensible part of Christian apologetics.

The God Delusion is a very popular book. It has been reviewed by over 1,600 individuals on Amazon.com, with over half giving it a five star rating of approval and less than 15% giving it a negative one star rating. It has been reviewed, perhaps less charitably, by a few eminent scholars in books of their own. David Berlinski, whose Ph.D. is from Princeton, critiques the rise of new militant atheism in his book *The Devil's Delusion: Atheism and Its Scientific Pretensions*.[26] He devotes chapter 7 – "A Curious Proof that God Does Not Exist" to responding specifically to *The God Delusion* by Richard Dawkins.

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[26] *The Devil's Delusion: Atheism and Its Scientific Pretensions*, New York: Basic Books, 2009.

Here is an interesting observation by Berlinski –

> What a man rejects as distasteful must always be measured against what he is prepared eagerly to swallow. What Richard Dawkins is prepared to swallow is the Landscape and the Anthropic Principle. The Landscape does not, of course, answer the question what caused the Landscape to exist. How could it? And if nothing caused the Landscape, it does not answer the question why it should be there at all.[27]

Berlinski is a secular Jew and an agnostic but is also a proponent in behalf of intelligent design against evolution.

Alister McGrath and his wife, Joanna Collicutt McGrath, also wrote a book in response. Theirs is called: *The Dawkins Delusion? Atheist Fundamentalism and the Denial of the Divine*.[28] Both are British and professors, like Dawkins, and Alister even teaches at Oxford University where Dawkins taught. Alister is a professor of historical theology. The tone of their book was also decidedly confrontational, like Berlinski's. They said – "Curiously, there is surprisingly little scientific analysis in *The God Delusion*. There's a lot of pseudoscientific speculation, linked with wiser cultural criticisms of religion, mostly borrowed from older atheist writings."[29] According to one reviewer of their book, theology professor, Glenn R. Kreider, this last quote "is representative of their writing style. Their dismissive and pejorative tone detracts from the book."[30] Glenn Kreider, who teaches at Dallas Theological Seminary, produced a much more balanced and reasoned critique of *The God Delusion*.[31] His would be more appropriate to share with a Christian or non-Christian alike. He said –

> Who should read this book? Those who are offended or easily angered at harsh language and pejorative treatments of the faith should stay away from books like this. But those who want to understand how Christianity is perceived by an intelligent scientist who is an atheist will find the book challenging. This book should reaffirm the need for Christians to be consistent in what they believe and practice. Dawkins reignited a desire in this reviewer to pursue God who is beyond anyone's ability to understand completely. He is the Creator of heaven and earth, the providential Sustainer of everything that is, and He is the proclaimer of the hope that one day all things will be made right (p. 96).

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[27] Ibid., p. 152.

[28] *The Dawkins Delusion? Atheist Fundamentalism and the Denial of the Divine,* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2007.

[29] Ibid., p. 11.

[30] Review of *The Dawkins Delusion? Atheist Fundamentalism and the Denial of the Divine, by Alister McGrath, Joanna Collicutt McGrath, Bibliotheca Sacra* 165:657 (January-March 2008) p. 97.

[31] Review of *The God Delusion, by Glenn R. Kreider, Bibliotheca Sacra* 165:657 (January-March 2008) p. 96.

Kreider has given a good example of how Christians who should critique philosophies with which they disagree with apologetic intention and Christian demeanor. "Speaking the truth in love"[32] is not only for discourse among Christian believers. And though love may have to be sometimes firmly expressed, with warning and dogmatism when things are clearly wrong, it can always be done with gentleness, always indirectly communicating the desire for the well being of others.

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[32] Ephesians 4:15.

THE NATURE OF TRUTH:
A THEOLOGICAL ANSWER TO A PHILOSOPHICAL QUESTION

By Scott Anthony Smith*

INTRODUCTION

Long has philosophy sought an answer to a short, simple question: "What is truth?"[1] However, the exclamation poses a question far from simple to answer. First, the question contains ambiguity. Does it seek an answer to what is required for a *truth-bearer* (TB)[2] *to be true*? Maybe it is seeking what *justifies* a TB as being true? Or perhaps the question seeks to know the *purpose for making an utterance* of the form '*x* is true'? This ambiguity is exactly why Richard L. Kirkham in *Theories of Truth: A Critical Introduction* argues that one must know which area of

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[1] Not to be confused with the famous question Pilate asked of Jesus (Jn 18:38), for he was not likely asking a deep philosophical question; rather, Pilate was probably seeking answers to the situation at hand with regards to Jesus and the charges against Him. However, Andreas J. Köstenberger in "'What Is Truth?' Pilate's Question in Its Johannine and Larger Biblical Context," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 48, no. 1, Logos Bible Software (March, 2005; 2009):31-62, concludes that, rather than seeking answers, Pilate was likely "cutting off Jesus' testimony" (60). Of course, as Arthur F. Holmes points out, truth was a serious matter of discussion in Pilate's day, so perhaps philosophy was on Pilate's mind after all; see Arthur F. Holmes, *All Truth is God's Truth* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1977), 31.

[2] Philosophers argue over what can or cannot be a *truth-bearer* (hereafter referenced as TB). Richard L. Kirkham, *Theories of Truth: A Critical Introduction* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1995) lists many on page 58: beliefs, statements, sentence types, sentence tokens, ideas, judgments, and assertions. Another to be added is propositions. Some claim *nothing* can be a TB (that TBs do not exist): this must be rejected as self-refuting, as all communication would have to end (and so too this paper) for communication presupposes truth. However, it seems most reasonable to side with Kirkham that "a tolerant attitude" (59) ought to be taken regarding what can or cannot be a TB, as determined by context. See Kirkham, §2.4 for a fuller discussion. He notes that "there are no restrictions *in principle* [emphasis his] on what kinds of entities can possess truth or falsity" (59).

In addition to the mental and linguistic categories postulated for a TB, Eliot Deutsch in *On Truth: An Ontological Theory* (Honolulu: The University Press of Hawaii, 1979) argues that any objects (he explicitly argues for works of art) "which we can meaningfully say that they have (or are capable of assuming) an aim or intentionality" can be a TB. The intentionality does not originate from the object itself but "is clearly imparted to it by human beings" (94). His theory has truth being equal to the authenticity of the object's intention (98), a view that is not upheld here; however, his broader understanding of TBs is welcomed.

inquiry (or "project" as he calls them) is being answered by a theory of truth to ensure one is evaluating the theory on correct grounds.[3] Secondly, an answer to the question must presuppose that some form of an answer exists, for without a notion of truth, one cannot know if the answer itself is true. Finally, the concept of truth relies on other areas of philosophical inquiry, the two main ones being the nature of reality (ontology) and the nature of knowledge (epistemology). In fact, truth sits as the interface between the two, belonging wholly to neither, and yet intimately tied to both. So the three concepts are reciprocally related to one another and themselves, such that one must make presuppositions about all three in order to say anything intelligently about any of the three topics.

However difficult the concept of truth is to formulate clearly, it is no doubt of vital importance. All people assume some idea of truth in everything that is done. The scientist does so in his empirical investigations; the lawyer in her prosecution or defense; the teacher in her teaching (and the students in their learning). Like all areas of philosophy, the theoretical finds practical, and even popular, expressions.[4] But one's concept of truth can also have eternal consequences, for how does one determine which religion is true if one does not really know what it means for something to be true?[5] Likewise, for Christians, what does it mean to say that God, or the Bible, is true? These practical issues, in part, have led to numerous theories about truth, and it is this importance that has caused this researcher's investigation. The problem with standard philosophical theories of truth is that they were derived while not necessarily

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[3] See Kirkham, chapter 1. Kirkham's categorization of the truth projects relates those three questions, respectively, to the metaphysical, justification, and speech-act projects. This categorization has been adopted here.

[4] For an interesting introduction to both original philosophical writings (including about truth) and ways in which the theories of such become expressed in motion pictures, see Jeffery R. Di Leo, *From Socrates to Cinema: An Introduction to Philosophy* (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2007).

[5] The importance of truth in forming a philosophy of religion is recognized by August Karl Reischauer, who devotes nearly half of his work to "The Truth of Religion," Part II of his book *The Nature and Truth of the Great Religions: Toward a Philosophy of Religion* (1966; repr. Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle, Co., 1983). The first chapter of "The Truth of Religion" discusses his views for seeking "A Norm of Truth" in his pursuit of a philosophy of religion. See also William A. Christian, *Meaning and Truth in Religion* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964).

However, Reischauer, like so many philosophers, takes a position about truth and religion that presupposes that the Bible is not God's word of truth (at least inerrantly). He believes no religion should have "the exclusive right to set up the norm" of truth (Reischauer, 177). Thus, he presupposes falsity in all religions, stating: "It should be equally clear that not every insight that the various religions claim to have can be one hundred per cent true and valid and that therefore no one religion and not even religion as a whole can be given the right exclusively to fix the norm of truth by which religion's validity is to be tested and measured. To grant religion this right without any further checks would not only defeat anything like a philosophy of religion at the outset but it would also make it impossible to find a fair norm for judging the respective claims to truth of the historic religions in matters where there are serious differences" (177-178). Of course, if any one of those religions is in fact the true religion to hold (as Christianity affirms), then such a presupposition as Reischauer's means that the truth could never be found—and his philosophy of religion is even worse off than having been defeated at the outset, it would lead one away from truth.

presupposing God as defined in the Bible.[6] They presuppose that truth is separate from the existence of God (who Himself must prove to be true), and thus seek answers without consideration of Him. In short, either reality includes God as He has revealed Himself in Scripture, or it does not, but the presupposition one takes on God's revelation of His existence will drastically affect any answer to any type of theory about what truth is.

Therefore, this inquiry approaches truth while presupposing God as the Bible declares Him,[7] and, through this presupposition, seeks a theological resolution to the metaphysical problem philosophy faces in identifying the essence of what truth is.[8] For reasons given above, other presuppositions must be taken as well: these will include ontological realism, a non-skeptical epistemological position, and the actual existence of truth. These positions match both Scripture[9] and the common sense of man. Doubtless many philosophers would balk at this approach, but that is precisely the problem: if God exists as the Bible declares, then there are understandings about truth and solutions about reality that are never explored by those who do not hold such a view. Thus in the interest of finding the truth about *truth*, this article takes a philosophical road less traveled. A path is set that will result in a much-needed clarification of the correspondence theory of truth. Perhaps then, truth can be set free.

THE METAPHYSICS OF TRUTH

Defining the Metaphysical Project

To summarize Kirkham,[10] the metaphysical project seeks what *makes* a TB to be true. The project has subcategories: the extensional project, the naturalistic project, and the essence

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[6] Ideas about truth drift further from it in less Christian influenced cultures. See Ming-Wood Liu, "A Chinese Madhyamaka Theory of Truth: The Case of Chi-tsang," *Philosophy East and West* 43, no. 4 (October 1993): 649-673, http://www.jstor.org/stable/1399207 (accessed February 19, 2011). Also, Bimal Matilal, "Error and Truth: Classical Indian Theories," *Philosophy East and West* 31, no. 2 (April 1981): 215-224, http://www.jstor.org/stable/1399141 (accessed February 19, 2011). For some balance in why truth is viewed differently in certain cultures, see Huston Smith, "Western and Comparative Perspectives on Truth," *Philosophy East and West* 30, no. 4 (October 1980): 425-437, http://www.jstor.org/stable/1398969 (accessed February 19, 2011).

[7] Though Bible references will be given as appropriate, the reader is referred to any conservative systematic theology for a more detailed discussion about the aspects of God that may be referenced here.

[8] There are those that view metaphysics as an area that cannot be inquired into, and call for the whole field to be eliminated. One such group is the logical positivists; see Alfred Jules Ayer, *Language, Truth, and Logic* (Reprinted, New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1952).

[9] This stance on ontology, epistemology, and truth is entirely warranted biblically. The Bible asserts that there is a reality external to man (Gn 1), that one can know things about it (Gn 3:22), and that there is such a concept as truth (Gn 24:27). Other Scriptures can be given as well in support of this argument.

[10] See Kirkham, 20.

project. Each seeks "individually necessary and jointly sufficient" conditions for a TB to be included in a set of true TBs; basically, to what does the predicate "is true" actually *refer*? The difference in the three subcategories is the scope: the extensional project seeks answers that would apply to the actual world, the naturalistic project seeks answers applicable to any naturally possible world (one that obeys the same laws of nature as the known universe), and the essence project seeks answers applicable to any possible world; this last is the focus of the inquiry here.[11]

Two other important points about the metaphysical project are: (1) that the theory of truth not be circular in its definition; i.e., '*x* is true if *y* is true (or not-true), and (2) that confusion about what it is *not* seeking be avoided:

> The metaphysical project is not interested in providing a criterion we could *actually use* to determine if a proposition is true…. for the necessary and sufficient conditions for truth may turn out to be very abstract conditions whose possession or non-possession by a given statement is not something we can determine directly.[12]

A Plethora of Truth Theories

The number of truth theories is roughly equal to the number of people who have attempted to articulate such a theory. However, commonalities exist, yet agreeing on a categorization of these theories is difficult.[13] Three categories from the multitude are notable with regard to metaphysics—the pragmatic, coherence, and correspondence theories.[14]

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[11] Two things: First, *world* in this context refers to more than just the Earth or a planet; it is a reference to the entire universe. Second, realize that the essence project necessarily contains the answer to the other two projects, and the naturalistic project necessarily contains the answer to the extensional project, as the set of worlds involved gets reduced from a larger set (see Kirkham, 18-19).

[12] Kirkham, 25. Criteria belong to the justification project, not the metaphysical project. What *makes* something true may not be usable for *verification* or *justification*.

[13] William Lane Craig and J. P. Moreland, *Philosophical Foundations for a Christian Worldview* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2003), 131-144, outline three: *correspondence*, *coherence*, and *pragmatic* (though one might consider their observation that "postmodernism … rejects the existence of truth" [131] as a fourth theory). Paul D. Feinberg and Norman L. Geisler, *Introduction to Philosophy: A Christian Perspective* (1980; repr., Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 235, lists four, the same three as Craig and Moreland, along with *performative* (Kirkham does not classify this as a metaphysical, but a speech-act project [Kirkham, 37]). Simon Blackburn, *Truth: A Guide* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 113, diagrams four: Elimitivism (= no truth), Realism (= correspondence), Quietism (= minimalist), and Constructivism (= all other theories). Kirkham, page 37, lists six: correspondence, coherence, pragmaticism, instrumentalism (=Feinberg and Geisler's pragmatic), semantic, and minimalist. Further schemes exist, but one should realize the lack of consensus. It is difficult, as Kirkham points out in his work, as many who categorize the theories fail to see the different intensions behind the theory. For example, Frederick E. Eastburg in *Psychology and Philosophy of Truth* (Boston: Bruce Humphries, Inc., 1947), categorizes similar to the above, but adds (and seems to indicate preference for) *intuitionism*, which he even states is a "type of epistemology… according to which truth is determined… [b]y its immediate knowledge of reality" (29), thus mixing a justification project category with metaphysical categories.

The pragmatic theories are relatively new in history, developed around the turn of the twentieth century. Each theory follows one of three main paths: (1) that truth is what is agreed upon (consensus),[15] (2) that truth is what works or is useful,[16] and (3) that truth is what is verified by facts.[17] What is common among them is that truth resides in the *result* of its own being searched out—truth always *becomes* true through human inquiry. That is, as humans inquire into what they should believe, a certain result from that inquiry becomes what truth is. For consensus, truth becomes what ultimately is recognized and agreed upon by the *group*. For usefulness, truth becomes what is valuable to an *individual* person, giving him an ability to manipulate, communicate, predict, and explain.[18] For verification of facts, truth becomes what is verified from among an *individual's* ideas.[19]

It is not intended here to give a detailed defense against the pragmatic notions of truth.[20] However, given the presupposition of God, truth cannot be based in the results of man's inquiry, because truth, whatever its essence turns out to be, is a characteristic of God (Dt 32:4; 2 Co 1:18) Who is eternal (Dt 33:27; 1 Tm 1:17) and, therefore, prior to the existence of man. This does not deny that truth is potentially verifiable, useful, and open to a recognized consensus, but truth does not *become* truth by these secondary things. These notions may relate to epistemology and the justification project, but not to the metaphysics of truth.

The coherence theory[21] is older than all the pragmatic theories, and arises from the seventeenth-century rationalists. It holds that truth is ultimately the totality of a system that is

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[14] Since metaphysical theories, as Kirkham has defined them, are what is being discussed here (however, with categorization matching Craig and Moreland), there will be few, if any, references to theories such as logical positivism, deflationary, redundancy, performative, etc.

[15] The main advocate here is Charles Sanders Peirce, who referred to the view as *pragamaticism*. See Feinberg, 240; Kirkham, 79-87.

[16] William James is the foremost advocate of this form. See Feinberg, 241-243; Kirkham, 87-101; and William James, "Pragmatism's Conception of Truth" (1907), in *Truth*, Oxford Readings in Philosophy, ed. Simon Blackburn and Keith Simmons (1999; repr., New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 53-68.

[17] A major advocate here is John Dewey. See Feinberg, 243-244.

[18] Kirkham gives various quotes of William James that point to these aspects (93).

[19] Kirkham would classify this type of idea not under the metaphysical project of truth, but the justification project, since its basis for truth is in justification.

[20] Many have done such a defense. One of the earliest was Bertrand Russell, "William James's Conception of Truth" (1907), in *Truth*, Oxford Readings in Philosophy, ed. Simon Blackburn and Keith Simmons (1999; repr., New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 69-82. See also Kirkham, §3.2-3.3; and for a brief perspective, Craig, 144, or Feinberg, 242.

[21] Craig and Moreland (142) warn of confusing the coherence theory of *truth* with the theory of the same name that relates to *justification*. The former is speaking about the metaphysics of truth (what truth itself is), the latter about the epistemology of truth (how one can know truth). Kirkham makes note (104) as well that most philosophers pursuing coherence theory are involved with the justification project of truth, though he places Brand Blanshard as one who decidedly views it from a metaphysical perspective.

self-consistent; each true TB *coheres* to every other in a linked network that is truth itself.[22] Thus, truth is only a relation of its various parts (TBs) to one another, each of which is but partially true of itself, for coherentism holds that only the totality of the system is wholly true.

Again, a detailed defense against this view will not be included here.[23] Unlike the pragmatic theories, this idea of truth is not obviously ruled out when considered in light of God; indeed, truth's relation to God would require truth to cohere, as no two TBs could contradict each other. The main issue is that there could be multiple systems that cohere, yet are different from one another. Even assuming God Himself coheres into every true system, it would still leave open certain questions, such as: (1) which system is proper in reference to the Bible being His Word (and how is that determined); or (2) do different parts of the Bible reference different truth systems (making it conditionally true or false depending on the system); or (3) is the system(s) that coheres with the Bible the same one(s) that coheres with the rest of reality (that is, is the Bible true within one system, but in the system that is the known reality is it false)? These questions are implied from a *merely* coherent theory for the metaphysics of truth. The questions alone bring devastating results on biblical truth, and all truth in general (as not only the Bible would face such questions). The correct system of truth must be singular, and if so, it must be constrained by something beyond simply the coherence of the system to itself.[24]

That there is something beyond is what the ancient correspondence theory of truth argues. At least since the time of Aristotle,[25] this view has been defined by the fact that there is an external reality that exists, and that truth is the relation (correspondence) of a TB to that reality. Thus truth exists apart from man's inquiry of it (as pragmatism demands), and fundamentally

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[22] There is apparently a difficulty in defining exactly what *coherence* is in relation to this theory. See Kirkham, 104; Craig, 142. There are also two main streams, the original rationalist view (which holds the system is reality), and the later, logical positivist view (which holds the system to be "statements as the scientific picture of the world as described by contemporary sciences" [Feinberg, 236]).

[23] For such defenses, see Kirkham, §3.5; Feinberg, 235-239; Craig, 142-144; and Bertrand Russell, "Truth as Correspondence" (1912), in *From Socrates to Cinema: An Introduction to Philosophy* by Jeffery R. Di Leo (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2007), 210-211.

[24] Kirkham notes the coherentist Brand Blanshard's solution to which system is the correct one as "the one 'in which everything real and possible is coherently included.'" (106). Note the reliance of his coherent theory on that which is "real," not on the system itself. In short, even Blanshard must resort to an idea of correspondence to filter down to which coherent system is true.

[25] Many quote Aristotle's statement, "To say of what is, that it is not, or of what is not, that it is, is false; while to say of what is, that it is, and of what is not, that it is not, is true." This is perhaps the oldest known definition of the correspondence relation, though obviously if the definition is true, then people have lived by it (even if not having defined it) since the time of creation.

beyond its own self-referential systemization (as coherentism sets forth). It is this theory that is analyzed in more detail here.

Requirements for a Correspondence Theory of Truth

Norman Geisler believes, "You can not deny truth without affirming it…. Those who deny the principle of the correspondence view of truth ultimately affirm the correspondence view of truth."[26] Such a statement is not accepted by all, even among other professing believers.[27] If the correspondence theory of truth is correct, as affirmed here, the first investigation needed in setting forth any clarification of such a theory is to understand what requirements must be fulfilled by such a theory.

First, the basic idea of correspondence is succinctly stated by J. P. Moreland, "truth obtains when a truth bearer stands in an appropriate correspondence relation to a truth maker."[28] He diagrams it roughly as *truth bearer (TB) → correspondence relation (CR) → truth maker*

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[26] Norman L. Geisler, "Evangelism in a Postmodern World: Acts 17:16-34," *Faith and Mission* 21, no. 2, Logos Bible Software (Spring 2004; 2009): 64. Craig and Moreland label this form of argument for correspondence as the "dialectical argument" (Craig, 140). John Dahms notes, "It appears … that the majority view of truth in evangelical circles is the simple propositional or correspondence view." See John V. Dahms, "The Nature of Truth," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 28, no. 4, Logos Bible Software (December 1985):456.

[27] Dahms notes some men who do not accept it (Dahms, 455), and he himself questions if the correspondence view exhausts the nature of truth (Dahms, 461), and explores "a trinitarian view of truth" (465), grounded in the fact that "God is" (464)—in His being. This all sounds appealing, except it then leads him to this point: "But that which does not accord with the truth that 'God is' is not true; it is false. *The actualization of evil is therefore both true and false. The law of contradiction, also called the law of noncontradiction, is important but not an absolute* [emphasis added]" (465). The proposal about noncontradiction not being absolute apparently arises in an earlier work of Dahms: "How Reliable is Logic?" *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 21, no. 4, Logos Bible Software (December 1978): 344-380. This earlier article elicited a sharp response from Normal L. Geisler, "Avoid… Contradictions" (I Timothy 6:20): A Reply to John Dahms," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 22, no. 1, Logos Bible Software (March 1979): 53-65, to which Dahms apparently gave no heed given the statement in his later article. While Dahms makes some interesting points in "The Nature of Truth," if the law of noncontradiction is necessarily set aside because of it, there must be a flaw in his theory that the nature of truth *solely* resides in the reality that 'God is.'

Kevin J. Vanhoozer in "Lost In Interpretation? Truth, Scripture, And Hermeneutics," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 48, no. 1, Logos Bible Software (March 2005; 2009): 88-114, remarks, "Emergent evangelicals are not the only ones who wonder whether this theory [the correspondence theory] of language, meaning, and truth owes more to philosophy than to the Bible," (95). Vanhoozer himself goes on to argue for "theodramatic truth" in Scripture (112), but it becomes clear his concern is not a metaphysical project, but rather a justification project, of how truth is conveyed and known in Scripture, likewise with Mikhail Bakhtin's theory discussed by Carol A. Newsom, "Bakhtin, the Bible, and Dialogic Truth," *The Journal of Religion* 76, no. 2 (April 1996): 290-306, http://www.jstor.org/stable/1204410 (accessed February 19, 2011). Based upon Scott Oliphint's observations, it appears Van Til's main interest was also in the justification rather than metaphysics of truth. See Scott Oliphint, "The Consistency of Van Til's Methodology," *Westminster Theological Journal Volume* 52, no. 1, Logos Bible Software (Spring 1990; 2009): 26-49.

[28] J. P. Moreland, "Truth, Contemporary Philosophy, and the Postmodern Turn," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 48, no. 1, Logos Bible Software (March, 2005; 2009):77.

(TM).[29] It is the TB that is judged as either true or false,[30] based on its intentional assertion toward the TM.[31] The TM is the aspect of reality that is the standard by which truth is measured for the TB.[32] The intentionality of the TB makes it contextually relative, that is, its truth value changes based upon the context in which it is asserted. For example, if a person says, "The grass is green" (TB), while pointing to a patch of green grass (TM_1), the TB is true, but toward a patch of dead, dry grass (TM_2), it is not. The TB makes the same assertion, but it changed truth value relative to the intended TM, the reality it made an assertion about. Now in the case where the TM is also the person making the TB (i.e., an "I" statement), then there may (though not necessarily) also be a subjectively determined truth to TB. An example here is a person saying, "I am leaving now" (TB). In the case where the "I" of the TB is a prisoner locked up for life in jail (TM_1) who refers to himself while speaking to a guard, there is no subjective determination (the statement is false; he is going nowhere). However, if the "I" is spoken by a husband (TM_2) to his wife, then truth is subjectively determined based on the husband's power and will to make it come true or not.

From the epistemology presupposed here, it follows that there are some TBs. Even most philosophers agree that *something* acts as a TB, even though arguing about what qualifies as one (see note 2). The presupposed ontological realism guarantees some TMs. What remains is the

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[29] His diagram had the correspondence relation above the other two. This may have been to illustrate that the TB and TM are objects, while the CR is merely a relation. Whatever the case, the important point here is the direction of the arrows: the TB is evaluated according to the CR which is determined by the TM. The abbreviations are conventions used in this article, not Moreland's.

[30] Moreland argues for propositions as being the only TBs; propositions being "minimally, the content of a sentence" (Moreland, 78). Basically, in philosophical terms, *proposition* has the idea of the *meaning* that any particular linguistic structure intends by its form. It was already concluded that for purposes here, any of a variety of TBs will be counted as valid TBs; however, it is understood that a TB must convey meaning.

[31] Craig and Moreland stress that the TM is the "intentional object" of the TB (Craig, 139), that is, the TB expresses some "intentionality" (136) in its assertion about the TM.

[32] The TM, according to Moreland, is a fact, an "obtaining state of affairs in the world," but can also be future or counterfactual (Moreland, 78). In other words, the aspect of reality that can be referred to by a TB can be either *actual* in *present* time (which includes all actual historical aspects up to that point), yet to be *actual* in *future* time (the reality has not yet obtained, but does actually obtain at some point after the time of the TB's assertion), or finally, to be *non-actual* at any time, but had potential to have been actual (reality does *not* obtain, but it could have obtained in a certain way had a previous conditional choice been decided otherwise). The last is a form of counterfactual. For example, should others read this, then the reality will be that they did read this because they chose to; but had they not chosen to, the reality would be that they did not read this. Reality obtained based on the choice to read or not read, thus a TB such as "this has been read by someone other than the writer" has its truth solely determined upon whether at least one person did in fact read that previous quotation this writer wrote, other than the writer himself. If no one else reads it, ever, that statement will remain false forever. If someone other than the writer just finished reading it, then it forever will be a true statement. In either case, there is an opposite state of affairs, a counterfactual, that did not obtain in reality, and the truth or falsehood of that can be referenced by a TB as well.

correspondence relation, the CR, which is the crucial and most difficult part to define. The failure to define it adequately causes many to question the correspondence theory's validity. Moreland's definition of the relation is typical, and typically vague:

> Correspondence is a two-placed relation between a proposition and a relevant fact that is its intentional object. A two-placed relation, such as "larger than," is one that requires two things (say, a desk and a book) before it holds. Similarly, the truth relation of correspondence holds between two things—a relevant fact and a proposition—just in case the fact matches, conforms to, corresponds with the proposition.[33]

He points out the relation is two-placed between the TB and the TM,F[34]F but how a TB can in any way match, conform, or correspond to (or mirror, picture, reflect, etc.) something other than that which it fundamentally is not remains unexplained.[35] This is the crux of a major (perhaps *the* major) issue that has faced the correspondence theory in the view of its critics. James Whelchel summarizes how Jurgen Habermas understands the issue:

> We cannot without equivocation talk about the correspondence of my statements about objects of experience with the objects of experience themselves. It makes no sense to say that my assertion about green mangos (which is a speech-act) corresponds to my experience of green mangos, unless one thinks of green mangos as speech acts or speech acts as green mangos. Logically, the validity of statements cannot be rooted in the correspondence of assertions with the external world, except in an indirect way.[36]

In other words, there is a fundamental 'type' difference between *words* and the *reality* they supposedly correspond to: the linguistic phrase 'green mango' is not the same thing as the actual object of a green mango, so how can they really relate to the point of being considered true?[37]

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[33] Moreland, 78.

[34] Bertrand Russell believes that merely seeing it as a two-way relation is an issue. He multiplies correspondence into at least a four-way relation (Russell, "Truth as Correspondence," 211-212). However, as Kirkham's illustration of Russell's theory shows, the actual correspondence relations are still a series of paired (two-way) relations (Kirkham, 121). Basically, Russell's correspondence theory just merges the fact that there is a correspondence between subject, verb, and object terms in a TB with actor, action, and receiver in the TM.

[35] According to Craig and Moreland (Craig, 139), the CR "seems to be unique among relations." They go on, "it does not seem to be reducible to something else. It is not a causal relation, it is not a physical nor is it sense-perceptible. Neither is it a picturing relation." It is agreed here that it is none of these (well, perhaps causal). They also maintain, however, that the CR, "can be directly experienced and made an object of thought." This may prove to be true, but in a different way than they describe it.

[36] James Whelchel, "Connecting In General: What Is Truth In A Post-Metaphysical World?" *Journal of Christian Apologetics* 2, no. 1, Logos Bible Software (Summer 1998; 2009): 48-49.

[37] Kirkham notes some philosophers see this relation as too "mysterious" to make correspondence the correct theory (Kirkham, 135; also Craig, 139, 141). This 'type' error is a main objection of P. F. Strawson— "Truth" (1950), in *Truth*, Oxford Readings in Philosophy, ed. by Simon Blackburn and Keith Simmons (1999; repr., New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 166-167—where he takes issue with the correspondence theory laid out by J. L. Austin, "Truth" (1950), in *Truth*, Oxford Readings in Philosophy, ed. by Simon Blackburn and Keith Simmons (1999; repr., New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 149-161. Strawson argues the 'type' issue from a view that 'facts' are not entities in reality themselves. Austin responds to that with "Unfair to Facts" (1961), in *Truth*,

The relation is never really expressed in even the simplest forms of the theory. The correspondence theory, when expressed succinctly, comes out to be: *TB(TM) is true iff TM* (i.e., a TB referencing a TM is true if and only if ['if and only if' is often abbreviated 'iff'] that TM really obtains as the TB refers to it).[38] But that only explicitly lays out two parts, the TB and the TM, not the necessary CR that actually relates the two.[39] It cannot be that the CR equals "is true if," as the "is true" goes with the TB (the property trying to be determined), and the "iff" goes with the TM as a conditional statement of its obtaining. So a solution to the actual correspondence relation itself seems wanting.

This solution needs one of two resolutions. The solution could have the CR perform a 'type-casting' that allows the reality to carry over into the vernacular of the TB flawlessly, thus yielding truth. Another option would be to show that there is some aspect that is present in both TB and TM that is not of a different type, but that is the essential aspect that carries over from the reality of the TM, to the expression of that reality in the TB, through the CR, yielding truth.[40] Whether 'type-cast' or carried over, this property of truth must end up "wholly dependent upon the relation"[41] between the TB and the TM.

Oxford Readings in Philosophy, ed. by Simon Blackburn and Keith Simmons (1999; repr., New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 183-199.

[38] In his own discussion of it, Kirkham basically dismisses the objection as irrelevant, since good definitions of correspondence do not use the word 'correspondence' itself, but rather as a summary word to describe the relation (Kirkham, 135). The problem is, the relation is still never really explained. Kirkham notes that the relation may change based on the TB type; however, though he says the relation is "for the purpose of correlating bearer and state of affairs," what he gives as examples are instead a phrase that is appropriate grammatically to the particular classification of TB ("For beliefs… 'is a belief that.' For linguistic entities… 'says that' or 'expresses,'" etc.), but it does not answer the question of how that TB type links to reality (132). In further trying to defend the summary idea of the word correspondence for the relation, Kirkham quotes Bertrand Russell, in which the relation is called "'a complex unity'" (135)—which is unhelpful. Russell realizes the importance though, as any "realist view of truth," which in his view is a correspondence-type theory, must face that "The difficulty is to *define the relation* [emphasis added] which constitutes truth if this view is adopted." See Bertrand Russell, *An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth* (1940; repr., Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1969), 232. Austin, in responding to Strawson (in the exchange mentioned above), argues that the term *correspondence* refers to the fact that the term merely points to "some sort of relation between something and something (no doubt not so simple as it sounds)" (Austin, "Unfair to Facts," 187)—again, unhelpful.

[38] This is essentially what Kirkham boils it down to when he references both A. N. Prior and D. W. Hamlyn's statements about the CR (Kirkham, 135), and is the essence of his own understanding of the correspondence theory, which he gives as "(t){t is true iff (x)[(tRx) & (x obtains)]}," which means for an "unspecified class of truth bearer" (t) where t is true if and only if (iff) there exists ( ) a state of affairs (x) such that t relates (R) according to t's classification (see note 37) to x and x obtains (132).

[39] And it does not avoid the issue, as Craig and Moreland point out, it only seems to make the relation implicit (Craig, 139). The only relation expressed in TB(TM) or tRx (see note 38) is that there is a grammatical (or medium appropriate), conventional form that the TB is using to refer to TM (i.e., TB is a belief that TM, or TB is a statement that TM, etc.).

[40] These two ideas roughly correspond to the two types of correspondence theories—correlation and congruence. *Congruence* holds that there is an *isomorphic* relation between TB and TM—where TB maps (and thus, pictures or mirrors) TM in a natural or fixed one-to-one relation. *Correlation* holds that there is no such natural or

Secondly, Bertrand Russell points out that whatever this CR is, it must allow for "truth to have an opposite."[42] Furthermore, it must account for other relations a TB may express besides mere negation: conditionals (if…then), disjunctions (either…or), universals (all…/none…), exclusions (all…except), generalities (some…/most…), future (there will be…/there will never be…), etc. Some of these introduce the issues that imply TMs may not ever obtain, or have not yet obtained at the time of the TB, yet still produce the truth of a TB in present time.[43] How can this be so if the correspondence theory holds to a relationship between the TB and a presently obtaining TM? How can truth be referenced to something that has yet to exist? How can there even be a relation to something if that something may never even exist (never obtain)? These issues must be handled by any correspondence theory of truth, and they imply there is something other than "obtaining" that may be the answer.

Thirdly, it has been assumed here that TBs can be any one of (or at least a multiplicity of) things philosophers argues for them to be (again, see note 2). Some argue for propositions (the content or meaning of a linguistic expression).[44] Since the proposition is based off meaning, this view heads off the issue of truth across different languages: that is, if in one language the sentence "grass is green" means what it does as in English, but in another language the string of letters and words "grass is green" means in that language what in English means "oaks are bright pink," then focusing on the proposition (the meaning) insures that in English the phrase is true, in the other language, it is not. This is because, from a propositional point of view, they are not saying the same thing (as is obvious), and thus are different propositions even if using the same string of letters, words, and sounds. But propositions add complexities that some philosophers do not like, and they prefer to speak of truth in context of a language, or "truth-in-L."[45] Thus, it seems that if

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fixed relation, but merely a *conventional* relation between TB and TM—where TB is determined by established (usually linguistic) standards that, as a unit, establish an orderly connection to describe the TM (see Kirkham, 119). The congruence idea seems to correspond to the idea of carrying over some essential aspect, while the correlation idea seems to correspond to the idea of 'type-casting.' Kirkham regards Plato historically (120), and Bertrand Russell more recently (120), as promoting congruence, while Aristotle (119-120) and J. L. Austin (124)—respectively—as promoting correlation.

[41] Russell, "Truth as Correspondence," 211.

[42] Ibid.

[43] Both conditionals and disjunctions introduce the issue of non-obtaining TMs (see discussion of counterfactuals, note 32).

[44] Feinberg and Geisler note that Bertrand Russell and G. E. Moore, both correspondence theorists, were among the first to advance the idea of the *proposition*. Moore later changed to *belief* as the TB (Feinberg, 248-249).

[45] Kirkham, §2.6. The relation to language was one of Alfred Tarski's key concerns. See Feinberg, 249-250; Kirkham, chapter 5.

there are multiple TB types, or even one type (but one that is a linguistic thing), then the CR must be flexible, able to carry the TM information over into any valid TB type (or language).

The final aspect the correspondence theory needs to fulfill is that of a realist theory of truth. Kirkham explains this in detail, but his final definition will do here:

> A theory of truth, *T*, is a Realist theory if and only if *T* says that any given belief (statement, or whatever) is true only if the very same state of affairs that the belief is a belief in (or that the statement expresses) obtains either independently of any mind or with only derivative dependence [upon a mind].[46]

Generally, this "Realist" definition as Kirkham defines it was already covered in the first section above, for it follows the correspondence formula of *TB(TM) is true iff TM*. However, two things are significant in Kirkham's definition. First, what it means to "obtain." It has already been mentioned that there seem to be true TBs that can occur about states of affairs (TMs) that never happen. For example, "if Person-A accepts the job, Person-A will be rich" (TB), and Person-A does not accept the job (TM). Here the opposite state of affairs obtains from what the TB asserted, yet few can doubt that the TB has a truth value (though unknown). So again, "obtaining" is questionable as a criterion (or at least the sole criterion) not only for a correspondence theory, but even more fundamentally, for a realist theory. The correct CR must be able to handle this.

Secondly, Kirkham's definition has *restrictions* on the obtaining of the state of affairs; they must do so "independently of any mind or with only derivative dependence." Now even if obtainment is discovered to not be the sole criterion for a TM, it seems certain that it is at least involved in determining some truths. What Kirkham is combating with these restrictions is ontological solipsism and absolute idealism, both of which hold that there is *no reality external to a mind*. Solipsism holds that reality is all in the mind of the individual; absolute idealism, that it is all in the mind of another, greater mind (the Absolute, World Spirit, or God).[47] From a Christian perspective this desire is commendable, as solipsism denies a real God, and if absolute idealism were true, then that would be some form of panentheism.[48]

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[46] Kirkham, 78. "Realist" will be used to refer to the definition as Kirkham has defined it.

[47] Kirkham, 74.

[48] Feinberg and Geisler, on page 271, define *panentheism* as "God is in the universe the way a soul is in a body. That is, the universe is God's 'body' and God is the 'soul' of the universe." The form of panentheism that absolute idealism would take is almost the reverse—God is the "body and mind"; the universe is the thoughts He is having in His mind.

Kirkham accommodates some mind-dependence within a valid realist theory of truth in his phrase "derivative dependence." What this means is that a state of affairs may have come about because of a mind (he gives the example of a Ford engineer about 1962 coming up with the design for the Ford Mustang now parked out on the street), or the state of affairs may actually involve the existence of a mind, or may involve the action of thinking or the state of a specific thought by a mind,[49] or may—in very narrow, odd, and rare cases—even obtain purely because of min[50] It appears Kirkham is trying to express that for a state of affairs to be actual, to obtain, does not, normally, *necessitate* it to be perceived or known by any mind (he would include God), nor in most cases can it be "a mental entity" (*merely* an idea, a belief, etc.).[51]

Is this a correct goal? Does it go too far? Can (1) such a view fit within a presupposition of the biblical God, and (2) is that level of restriction really required for a realist view of truth? As to (1), it might be considered a moot point. According to the Bible, God does know everything (Ps 147:5; Heb 4:13), so whether that is required or not for a state of affairs obtaining may be irrelevant, as there is no state of affairs that obtains without His knowledge. As to (2) Kirkham's one exception allowing for a mental entity produces a physical brain state (see note 50), which indicates a naturalistic or physicalist bias.[52] Such a view of realism causes problems for those non-obtaining truths, which really are just mental entities (an idea of the way things would be if something were otherwise). It seems Kirkham's definition of "Realist" would more aptly be labeled "Physical Actualism." At risk of being labeled a "quasi-realist" by Kirkham, *realism* (and thus the correspondence theory) ought to account for mental entities (which *are* part of reality) and for situations that *really might have* occurred, rather than hold the narrow requirement "that the state of affairs in question obtain mind-independently."[53] Not requiring a physical actualization allows possibility for mental entities to be TMs; however, any actual physical TM may be unknown by mortal man.

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[49] Kirkham, 76.

[50] He gives the example: "Suppose Smith has the belief expressible with the sentence 'My brain is now in brain state 438,' and suppose further that people's brains are in state 438 when and only when they are having belief tokens of the type 'My brain is now in brain state 438.' Now it is a fact that Smith is in brain state 438 *only because he believes he is* [emphasis his], yet that his physical brain is in state 438 is something even an ontological realist will want to count as a fact" (Kirkham, 77-78).

[51] Kirkham, 73.

[52] Kirkham does not appear to be a physicalist in his views, as he does differentiate between that view and a realist view (Kirkham, 74).

[53] Kirkham, 76.

It is proposed then that a correct realist, metaphysical, correspondence theory of truth must meet the following requirements:

1. *Conversion/Conveyance of Truth*: Account for a TB and a TM in some relation CR that makes the connection between TB and TM in such a way that the truth value of TB can be certain (even if subjectively derived).

2. *Relational Flexibility*: Account for true and false TBs of various logical forms relating to various aspects of TM representation of reality—obtaining, not obtaining, conditionally obtaining, future obtaining, etc.

3. *Symbolic Variety of TB*: Account for various conventional entities (belief, linguistic entity [sentence], artwork, etc.) to be a TB while maintaining some fixity of the CR that allows for (1) to take place.

4. *Essential Variety of TM*: Account for the possibility of both known and unknown (God excepted) physical entities, as well as purely mental entities, to be TMs.

5. *Metaphysical Purpose*: Account for what truth *is*—what it *is* for a TB to be able to be considered true with respect to a TM, but *not* necessarily for the actual use of the theory for justification or verification purposes to determine *how* or even *if* one may determine its truth.

6. *Non-Circularity*: Account for defining TB truth without a reference to truth itself.

The Relationship of God and Truth

Given the above requirements and the aforementioned presupposition of the God of the Bible, the following is a proposed statement for a correspondence theory of truth (CT) with an explanation afterwards: CT = *TB(TM) is true iff God can affirm TB(TM).* It is that simple, and that complex. To state it explicitly, the CR is God's ability to affirm any true TB for any valid TM. *Affirm* is used to represent two ideas: (1) objectively, God could express the same TB(TM) Himself ("The grass is green.") without having to negate or modify it; (2) subjectively, God could replace an "I" subject statement with a contextually appropriate name or identifier of the subject to convert it into an objective statement ("Your husband is leaving now.") without having to negate or otherwise modify it. This is the "mysterious" correspondence relation so sought for by some, and assumed by many others. It may not be obvious, but it will be shown that it meets the non-circularity requirement. It also holds true to the metaphysical purpose and indeed offers little

help in verification—God could oblige and affirm a particular TB(TM), but that is not likely to happen regularly.

First, note how this CT accounts for essential variety in the TM. It can establish truth for any TB statement about any physical entity or any mental entity (because God knows them and can make a TB, of the same or a negated form, about them). Therefore, all real entities—physical, mental, spiritual, or otherwise unknown—can potentially be an intentional TB object.

Second, because the CR is God's ability to affirm the TB, then the TB is open to symbolic variety. If it is a linguistic entity, then God can affirm either it or its negative in that language; if it is some other symbolic entity (say, a piece of art), then God can affirm it by making either it, or some correcting modification of it. This variety is possible because God is the fixed point of the relation. Anything put forth as a TB not in a conventional symbol or defined in the setting forth of it (i.e., anything that was unintelligible), would be false (as God would not affirm it Himself).[54]

Third, the CT accounts for all possible types of TB to TM relations. A true TB(TM) is any that God can also affirm; a false TB(TM) is any He would have to negate (or tweak in some way—like correct a word, change a color) in order to affirm.[55] God could talk *about* falsity or the false assertion of another, but He cannot *affirm* it. Now some relations may have two or more TMs associated with them, one or more of which will only hold a generally undiscovered truth value determined upon whether God could or could not have affirmed it, based upon if the TM would or would not have really obtained had a different choice been made. Only God knows the TM, and the truth, for the TM is here a mental entity of God (the only entity that can be a foundation to determine the truth value of a non-obtaining TM). This also allows for truth about the future and other problematic areas that finite man might make a TB about, to which a truth value must be available, even if perhaps unknowable.

Finally, it is God alone who can provide that critical link between TB and TM, the CR that makes certain the truth of TB in relation to TM. This is because the CR is God's own ability to Himself either affirm the TB(TM) or deny it. Two aspects make the relation possible:

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[54] See Kirkham, page 339 for a discussion about an unintelligible sentence predicated as true.

[55] Some allowance for a misspelling or mispronunciation on the part of the original person asserting a TB would in most cases not invalidate the truth, as God can also make allowance for the frailty of man expressed in unintentional ways.

(1) *The Essential Aspect*: The essence of all reality apart from God Himself was created and shaped—and is currently upheld—by one or more speech-acts (Gen 1:1-3ff; Psa 33:6; Heb 1:3, 11:3; 2 Pet 3:5). The Godhead, in the person of Christ, is the Word (Jn 1:1 w/1:14), so the essence of language itself abides in God, and was immediately a part of mankind's capabilities (both to hear and understand, Gen 1:28-30, 2:16-17; and to speak, 2:19-20, 23), being created in God's image (Gen 1:26-27). Because all objects of reality other than God have their substance originated (*ex nihilo*) in speech, and speech itself is a capability of God, then the essential *meaning* can *map* to reality, while that meaning can also be 'type-cast' into any *conventional* symbolic form (i.e., language) man may come up with. This common bond makes the conventionally expressed TB able to assert something meaningfully about the speech-founded reality that makes the TM obtainable, but it does not itself guarantee the correspondence relation (CR), which requires a further aspect.

(2) *The Moral Aspect*: What makes God true—what makes Him communicate only truth— is founded upon other facets of His nature. His omniscience (Ps 147:5; Heb 4:13) prevents Him from communicating improperly out of ignorance (i.e., making a mistake). His goodness and righteousness (Gen 18:25; Ps 100:5, 116:5; Rom 11:22; Eph 4:24) prevent Him from communicating wickedly by volition (i.e., making a lie). Therefore, the correspondence theory *TB(TM) is true iff God can affirm TB(TM)* makes truth dependent on the assertion (TB) about reality (TM) that God, by His character, is also capable of affirming (CR). Thus, the CR is a *morally constrained* relation defining whether a TB is true with regards to TM.

Implications of This Theory

If the proposed correspondence theory is correct with its understanding of the correspondence relation (and it is believed it is closer than previous representations of the theory), then the implications are many[56]—beyond exploration within this article. However, a few seem noteworthy for this researcher to at least mention and comment on briefly.

(1) *The Justification Project*: The justification of truth can, ultimately, be certain, as it rests in God's ability, not mankind's ability. Thus, the final answer to the justification project is the same

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[56] The interpretation here of the correspondence theory of truth, on cursory examination, appears to uphold "the implications of relating truth to God" that Arthur F. Holmes presents (Holmes, 37). Related to that, see the text in the "Conclusion" associated with note 64.

as the metaphysical project, though the means is not "relatively easy to determine"[57] in most cases (the Bible being an exception). Because of the need to find a usable verifier of truth, the justification project must continue. Probability itself will no doubt remain a part of reality that finite man must live with this side of eternity. Whether this view of correspondence affects the study of probability in any way is uncertain.

(2) *Truth Founded in Authoritative Witness*: Related to the justification project is the question of what is the best source for finding and confirming truth. Since truth is founded upon a Supreme Authority's ability to testify of (affirm) that truth, then the primary source for determining truth is likely through authoritative witness. The Bible would appear to confirm this, though in the case of people it is often by multiple witnesses, probably due to the fallen state of man (see Num 25:30; Deut 17:6; Ru 4:9-11; Isa 8:2; Jer 32:10; Mt 18:16; Jn 5:33-37, et. al.). Witness (even by fallen man) is God's primary means of continuing and spreading the truth (Act 1:8, 10:41-43; Heb 11:1-12:1; Rev 11:3, et al.). But not all witnesses are human (Gen 21:30; 31:44, 48; Job 16:8; Isa 19:19-20; Jn 5:36; 1 Jn 5:8, et al.). Even empirical investigation is a form of witness; it is creation itself witnessing (Deut 4:26; Ps 19:1, 50:6; Act 14:17; Rom 1:20). However, the witness from creation must be interpreted through a person; so a person—whether scientist, theologian, businessman, or farm boy—stands both as the one responsible for himself to correctly interpret the witness of creation concerning God (see Romans 1), and also as the one responsible to bear a true verbal witness to others concerning God as revealed by creation.

(3) *The Predicate "is true"*: For a person to predicate "is true" (or preface "it is true that…," etc.) on to any assertion does not make such a predication "vacuous" or redundant;[58] rather, it *adds a moral dimension* to the statement (note that the statement may already itself have some moral aspect). So if one says, "grass is green," and he believes it, he is stating his belief (in which he may be mistaken). But when one says, "'grass is green' is true," he is additionally making a statement about God. He is saying, "God could affirm 'grass is green,'" and whether this could be so or not will depend on the reality (actual or potential) of the TM. Of course, an individual ignorant of what truth is (ignorant of the fact that the correspondence relation that generates the truth value is based in God) may not realize it is a moral position being taken. Nevertheless, at that point, a

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[57] Kirkham, 43. It is not easy to determine because God Himself does not deny or affirm every truth assertion made by a person.

[58] Kirkham notes that F. P. Ramsey's intent is to "claim … 'is true' is vacuous, that it says nothing at all" (Kirkham, 317). Kirkham relates the difference from C. J. F. Williams' theory that "can be classified as a redundancy theory, since it implies that anything we say with the help of 'is true' can be said without it" (321).

person's assertion, though perhaps mistaken, has also made an assertion about God Himself—as God's character is being represented by man (truly or falsely, based on the truth value of the assertion). Thus, something that may not have been moral has become so by a moral choice to associate God's character with it.

Further, if "is true," rather than being predicated on an assertion, is predicated upon a singular object such as "He is true" or "the wall is true," then an even more fundamental aspect is being addressed: it is the character of that object that is under evaluation, not merely its relation to reality. Here, the predicate "is true" takes on a deeper meaning than merely "God can affirm 'him'" or "God can affirm 'the wall.'" For a person, it is stating that "God can affirm 'he' (whoever the subject) is knowledgeable, good, and righteous" in the matter at hand, or even as a generalized statement. In fact, it is basically a statement that the person, at that moment, is being who God intended him to be—the image and likeness of Him on earth. This is so of the non-personal as well; such a statement means "God can affirm 'the wall' is everything a wall is intended to be."

(4) *The Speech-Act Project*: Number (3) also reveals that the answers to both aspects of the speech-act project[59] are contained in the metaphysical project. For one aspect, the illocutionary-act project (which seeks to answer what is a person *doing* when saying 'is true'), the answer is making a representation of God's character, as discussed in (3). For the assertion project (which seeks to find the meaning of 'is true'; that is, what is a person *saying*, using different words, when stating 'is true'), that answer was given above in (3) as well. "Is true" is equal to "God could affirm." Declaring something 'is true' is an illocutionary and locutionary act—action and speech—at the same time.

(5) *The Liar Paradox*:[60] One of the great mysteries in the study of the nature of truth is what does one do with a sentence like "this sentence is not true." If it is false, as it states, then it is true. If it is true, then it is by self proclamation false—hence, a paradox. Some try "to dismiss the liar sentence as a piece of nonsense,"[61] as in it doesn't really mean anything. However, consider first that the sentence refers to itself in total, that is, the subject "this sentence" is a reference to the whole sentence, subject and predicate. Therefore "this sentence" equals "this sentence is not true." Second, the sentence is a real part of reality (it is a TM). Third, it asserts something about

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[59] See Kirkham, 21.
[60] See Kirkham, chapter 9 for a detailed study of various attempts to solve this paradox.
[61] Kirkham, 271.

itself (it is a TB of itself). Given these, one should be able to see why the sentence is more than merely an empty statement, more than just nonsense—and has instead become a major focal point in philosophical circles. All the proposed solutions have seen some difficulties, but with the correct understanding of a correspondence theory of truth being related to God the sentence is merely false, because it is not a sentence God could affirm precisely because it is a logical paradox. In other words, the endless loop of contradiction is avoided because its falsity is not purely determined by the TB it makes nor the TM it is, but also by the CR—whether or not God can affirm it, and that is based both upon the essential reality of the statement and the moral character of God.

The solution may be clearer with a brief attempt at an explanation. The liar paradox is rather unique in that it fits both categories of predication discussed in (3) above: it is both an *assertion* being evaluated (does it match reality in what it says so that God could affirm it) as well as a singular *object* being evaluated (does it match the character of what it is intended to be that God could affirm it). The problem in the paradox is resolved looking at it either way. When evaluated as an assertion, the sentence expands to "'this sentence is not true' is not true," which is a sentence God could *not* affirm because upon the stating of such a sentence the TM becomes the opposite of what the TB states (that is what creates the paradox), making the TB no longer matching the reality of the TM. When evaluated as an object, the sentence is viewed by its character: whether the sentence is all that God intends a sentence to be. A sentence is intended to communicate reality (truth), which, as just mentioned, changes for the liar paradox the moment it is affirmed. Therefore, the sentence also fails as a sentence—not structurally (it has a subject and predicate)—but upon its character of failing to communicate a reality. Thus, once again, God could *not* affirm it. With the CR based in God, then falsity of a TB can be more than merely the opposite or negation of truth, it is also the absence of it, the inability of God, based on His character, to affirm the TB. The liar paradox is false due to the absence of truth to it; its statement never matches its reality and thus does not reflect the character of what a sentence should be—a communication of reality.

(6) *Truth is Absolute*: With the CR being based in God, truth itself is absolute (the definition is fixed as to what truth is), while allowing the flexibility of TBs to change truth value based on changing TM circumstances. Thus, "the grass is alive" may be true today; but tomorrow, after a fire sweeps through, the same statement about the same patch of grass is no longer true. Context

may determine truth, yet truth is, absolutely, still based on whether God can establish the correspondence relation by affirming the TB "the grass is alive" with regard to the specific patch of grass acting as the TM, at any particular moment in time (that is, within that context). Any fixed reality (history, God Himself, etc.) would never vary, as the TM never changes, therefore a TB would never change value in relation to those fixed realities.

(7) *The Godhead, Bible, and Truth*: God is true because He is omniscient, good, and righteous, not because He is true. "True," as an adjective used in this way of God, is essentially a summary of these three character traits that make Him what He is; of course, "God is true" is also a statement that "God can affirm 'God' is as He is intended to be"—see (3) above. Similarly, what God says is *truth* because He is omniscient, good, and righteous (that is, because He is *true*); therefore, His word is truth (and cannot be anything other than that).[62]

In Christ, Who is the Word (Jn 1:1) and Who is Truth (Jn 14:6), there is the *ultimate affirmation of God*, bringing together in One both the original, eternal *Logos* (Word) and the conventional, symbolic form God created to be the ultimate image and likeness of Himself within His creation (mankind)—both together in the Son of man, "God with us" (Jn 1:14; Mt 1:23; Mt 9:6). Since the correspondence theory of truth as defined here shows that truth is grounded in God's capability of expression (affirmation), based upon His character, this ties the actualization of truth (note the noun, not the adjective) to an action that *comes forth* from Him. Could this be part of what Christ means in John 8:42? There it is written, "Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me." Is it this proceeding from the Father that makes the Person of Christ, both Son and Word, "the truth" (the noun; Jn 14:6), while the Father, though true (the adjective), is never referred to as "the truth"? That both Christ's nature of being truth (compare 8:31 with 8:36) and His human nature (references to both Father and Son, specifically the Son of man) are being emphasized in the passage preceding 8:42, and also following, especially in contrast to the Devil (who Christ is revealing is His opponent's father) being without truth (8:44), hint at such a connection between truth and procession.

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[62] It should be obvious that this theory of truth, resting as it does in an omniscient God, must reject the idea of Gregory A. Boyd's "Open-Theism," where he argues for God not being omniscient. See James K. Beilby and Paul R. Eddy, eds., *Divine Foreknowledge: Four Views* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2001). If God is not omniscient, then He could make a mistake about a TB relation to a TM due to a lack of knowledge regarding the TM, or a lack of understanding about a TB. It seems that there are not only biblical arguments against his view (see the other contributors to *Divine Foreknowledge* for such), but also a philosophical reason to reject it—there would be no certainty of truth.

Not just Christ is the truth; four times the apostle John speaks of "the Spirit of truth" (Jn 14:17, 15:26, 16:13; 1 Jn 4:6) and once equates the Spirit with truth—"the Spirit is truth" (1 Jn 5:6). This is interesting in light of the fact that the Spirit, too, proceeds from the Father according to Jn 15:26: "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, *even* the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me." It appears that what makes the second and third Persons of the trinity equal to truth itself (not just being true) is the fact that they *proceeded* from the Father—they are the Persons of the Godhead Who themselves are directly working as *affirmations* of God in this world. They are actualized, direct expressions of truth from God, to the world, actualized through the incarnation of Christ and the indwelling of the Spirit.[63]

CONCLUSION

When properly understood that the correspondence relation is grounded in both the being of God Himself (His knowledge, goodness, and righteousness) and the potential for the expression of that being, it becomes clear that truth is absolute. The true truth-bearers are those that God Himself is able to express through affirmation, and the truth-makers are those things that have an essential relation to language itself (which includes mental entities), allowing language or other symbolic or semiotic forms to conventionally frame a meaningful proposition mapping to reality. The nature of truth is discovered to be fully dependent upon God— His own nature, the potential of that nature's expression, and the means (speech-acts) by which He created all reality that is not Himself. The theory itself also shows truth is personal (related to God and man), propositional (expression via the truth-bearer), and ontological (reality as exists in the truth-maker).[64] These make the clarified view of the correspondence theory outlined here both theologically and philosophically sound, providing what is believed to be the best theory of truth for a Christian (or any person) to hold.

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[63] This author is aware that there is a long history of discussion about the meaning of the procession of the Son and the Spirit from the Father. The idea expressed here on how the notion of a procession from the Father might relate to the second and third Person's manifesting truth is merely offered up as a possibility for further exploration, without thought of what consequences or further implications that may have to that discussion.

[64] These have been clearly recognized, though perhaps not articulated entirely accurately, not only by individuals (See Dahms, 455-456, especially in his discussion of E. J. Carnell's view of truth, and following that, his own concept), but also cross-culturally (see Smith, 425). See also Holmes, page 34, for his understanding of the personal nature of truth.

MIDDLE KNOWLEDGE AND THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

By Jacob Hollingsworth*

INTRODUCTION

Pain and suffering are inescapable realities common to all mankind. Some evil, such as acts of genocide, natural disasters, violent crimes, acts of terror, or situations of starving children occur with no immediately apparent redemptive value. Many philosophers have argued against the existence of God based on moral objections to the goodness of a Creator who would allow the existence of evil. Of the apologists who have attempted to answer these questions, most have failed to offer rhetorically convincing and scripturally sound arguments that maintain God's goodness and human responsibility. In this paper, it is argued that affirming middle knowledge strengthens theistic responses to the argument from evil.

THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

The problem of evil is an argument against God based on the existence of evil in the world. It has been offered in several forms and revisions over the years including: the logical problem of evil, the evidential (sometimes called probabilistic) problem of evil, the soteriological problem of evil and the existential problem of evil.[1] William Rowe, the leading proponent of the evidential argument from evil, structures his argument as follows:

1. There exist instances of intense suffering which an omnipotent, omniscient being could have prevented without losing some greater good or permitting some evil equally bad or worse.

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[1] See Michael L. Peterson, *God and Evil: An Introduction to the Issues* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1998).

2. An omniscient, wholly good being would prevent the occurrence of any intense suffering He could, unless He could not do so without losing some greater good or permitting some evil equally bad or worse.

3. There does not exist an omnipotent, omniscient, wholly good being.[2]

While older arguments have charged God for some phenomena of evil, the evidential argument is concerned with intense and undistributed evil. Rowe concludes that God does not exist based on the presence of such intense suffering, coupled with a seeming lack of evidence that sufficient goods are obtained to redeem much of the evil in our world. This argument is now considered to be the "most formidable objection to theistic belief."[3] Apologists choosing to respond to these objections use theodicy for defense.

THEODICY AND DEFENSE

Theodicy

In his seventeenth century epic poem, *Paradise Lost*, John Milton uses allegory to establish that man and Satan are responsible for the entry of suffering into creation. Taken from Milton's purpose statement, the objective of theodicy is: "[to] justify the ways of God to man."[4] According to Michael Peterson, "A theodicy seeks to articulate plausible or credible explanations that rest on theistic truths and insights."[5] A theodicy presupposes the existence of God and evil and attempts to present factual answers for why God permits evil in the world.

The most common theodicy is the greater-good theodicy, which teaches that God allows only that evil from which He will bring about a greater good or prevent a worse evil. This theodicy rejects the first premise of the evidential argument from evil; thus, it does not answer objections to vast amounts of seemingly gratuitous evil, that evil which appears to be pure loss.[6] Bruce Little asserts that the greater good theodicy "ends up affirming … evil was God's will. While some may try to avoid this conclusion, it is impossible if one is consistent with the greater-

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[2] William Rowe, "The Problem of Evil and Some Varieties of Atheism," In *The Evidential Argument from Evil*, ed. Daniel Howard-Snyder (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 2.

[3] Peterson, *God and Evil*, 85.

[4] John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, book 1, line 26.

[5] Peterson, *God and Evil*, 85.

[6] Bruce A. Little, *A Creation-Order Theodicy: God and Gratuitous Evil* (Lanham: University Press of America, 2005), 24; and Bruce A. Little, *God, Why This Evil?* (Lanham: Hamilton Books, 2010), 2.

good response."[7] A variety of more specific theodicies develop from the general argument of the greater good theodicy.[8]

In contrast to the greater good theodicy, Bruce Little's "Creation Order Theodicy," uses a systematic study of Scripture to argue that God has established a moral order in His creation and through man's free choices, creation has become corrupted, thus allowing evil to exist that does not render God as blameworthy, including gratuitous evil.[9] Suffering continues not only because of man's continued rebellion against God's created order, but also because creation has been corrupted. The corruption results in a continuation of brokenness and decay that will continue until all is restored in the eschaton. Little's argument denies any incompatibility between pointless suffering and an Omnipotent and Omnibenevolent God.

Defense

A defense differs from theodicy in that it attempts only to demonstrate plausible rational arguments to defeat arguments from evil showing that there is no logical incompatibility between the existence of evil and the existence of God.[10] Unlike a theodicy, a defense does not seek to offer factual proof of the coexistence of God and evil; a defense is satisfied to give only a possible explanation. The most notable defense is Alvin Plantinga's "Free Will Defense."[11]

<center>MIDDLE KNOWLEDGE</center>

Middle knowledge, or *scientia media*, is a concept in philosophical theology first expressed by Luis de Molina, a Spanish Jesuit theologian of the sixteenth century. At odds with the teachings of the Lutherans and Calvinists, Molina was intensely concerned with avoiding the "protestant error of denying genuine human freedom."[12] And he worked to reaffirm freedom, without sacrificing a strong and orthodox understanding of divine sovereignty. He "became intensely preoccupied with demonstrating the compatibility of human freedom on the one hand divine foreknowledge and future contingents: (1) how can God know infallibly causally

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[7] Little, Why This Evil, 128.

[8] For a brief treatment of popular greater good theodicies, see Peterson, *God and Evil*, 85-109.

[9] See Little, *A Creation-Order Theodicy*.

[10] Alvin Plantinga, *The Nature of Necessity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), 165.

[11] See Alvin Plantinga, "The Free Will Defense," in *The Problem of Evil: Selected Readings*, ed. Michael L. Peterson (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992), 103-133.

[12] William Lane Craig, *The Problem of Divine Foreknowledge and Future Contingents from Aristotle to Suarez* (New York: E.J. Brill, 1988), 169.

indeterminate future events, and (2) once divine foreknowledge of a future event is posited, how is theological fatalism to be avoided?"[13]

Movements of Divine Knowledge

Molina understood God's omniscience to include three divisions of knowledge: natural knowledge, free knowledge, and middle knowledge.[14] According to Craig, God's knowledge preceding any "decision or decree of the divine will"[15] is natural knowledge. This includes His "knowledge of all possibilities. He knows all the possible individuals He could create, all the possible circumstances He could place them in, all their possible actions and reactions, and all the possible worlds or orders which He could create."[16] Natural knowledge has always been known to God, independent of any act of will, and He would cease to be God without it. The second category of knowledge, free knowledge, is described by Molina as that "by which, *after* the free act of His will, God knew *absolutely* and *determinately, without any condition or hypotheses,* which ones from among all the contingent states of affairs were in *fact* going to obtain and, likewise, which ones were not going to obtain."[17] According to Craig, such knowledge is contingent upon the world He chooses to actualize, and the content of this knowledge would have been different had He created a different world or none at all.[18] For Molina, the third type, middle knowledge, is knowledge of true counterfactuals of all possible future choices of free creatures in any set of circumstances. This knowledge is logically "prior to any free act of God's will"[19] and serves to "delimit the range of possible worlds to those He could create, given the free choices which creatures would make in them."[20]

William Lane Craig classifies natural knowledge, middle knowledge, and free knowledge as *logical moments* in God's knowledge in that they are not *temporally distinct* but rather they are *logically structured*.[21] The logical order of these movements goes from natural knowledge, to middle create, through middle knowledge He knows which worlds *would* accomplish His will, and once

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[13] Ibid., 170.

[14] Louis de Molina, *On Divine Foreknowledge: Part IV of the Concordia,* trans. Alfred Freddoso (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), 168.

[15] William Lane Craig, *The Only Wise God: The Compatibility of Divine Foreknowledge and Human Freedom* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 1999), 129.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Molina, *On Divine Foreknowledge,* 168.

[18] Craig, *The Problem of Divine Foreknowledge and Future Contingents,* 175.

[19] Molina, *On Divine Foreknowledge,* 168.

[20] Craig, *The Only Wise God,* 130.

[21] Ibid, 128-129.

He has actualized the world of His choosing He has free knowledge of everything that *will* happen.

Support of Middle Knowledge

Middle knowledge is primarily a discipline in Apologetics, whereby philosophical tools are used to clarify theological concepts and difficult passages in a way that attempts to bring coherence to them. In this case, it provides a coherent view of foreknowledge that does not devalue God's sovereignty or human responsibility. The need for this distinction comes from a fair and systematic study of scripture wherein the nature, character, and attributes of God must remain consistent throughout His written revelation and correspond accurately with His working in the world.

The term "middle knowledge" is not found in scripture; however many examples of conditional statements exist where God presents a possible choice that would lead to a specific action or consequence. Some of these examples require God to possess a knowledge of counterfactuals whereby he understands what *would have* happened in a condition contrary to fact. One such example is found in Matthew 11:20-21:

> Then Jesus began to denounce the towns where he had done so many of his miracles, because they hadn't repented of their sins and turned to God. "What sorrow awaits you, Korazin and Bethsaida! For if the miracles I did in you had been done in wicked Tyre and Sidon, their people would have repented of their sins long ago, clothing themselves in burlap and throwing ashes on their heads to show their remorse."

Here it appears that Jesus recalls knowledge of counterfactuals of creaturely freedom by knowing how Tyre and Sidon would have responded if they had been witnesses of his miracles instead of Korazin and Bethsaida.

First Samuel 23 is another text that seems to support middle knowledge. Here David escapes from King Saul after receiving counterfactual knowledge from God. It is revealed to him that if he follows a certain chain of events, then Saul would capture him. After receiving this information, he chooses to avoid those circumstances and is able to escape.[22] Other examples can be found in 1 Samuel 13:13-14; Jeremiah 38:17-18; Matthew 26:24; John 15:22,24; 18:36; 1 Corinthians 2:8; *passim.*[23] Such examples of counterfactual knowledge are consistent with God possessing middle knowledge.

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[22] Edward R. Wierenga, *The Nature of God: An Inquiry into Divine Attributes,* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989), 118.

Historic discussion of a three movement view of God's knowledge can be found predating Molina according to Kirk MacGregor who has identified such a concept in the writings of the Anabaptist theologian Balthasar Hubmaier (1480-1528).[24] Much of the recent revival of discussion on Middle Knowledge has been sparked by Alvin Plantinga who is said to have formulated an understanding of Middle Knowledge prior to having studied Molina.[25] Other contemporary supporters of middle knowledge come from varied theological traditions and include: Anthony Kenny, William Lane Craig, Thomas P. Flint, Bruce A. Ware, Bruce A. Little, Ken Keathley, and Terrance Tiessen.

THE BEST OF ALL POSSIBLE WORLDS

Leibniz's "Best of All Possible Worlds Theodicy" can be strengthened by the application of middle knowledge. Genesis 1:31 tells us that God looked at His creation and, "behold, it was very good." The creation act is inseparable from the character and nature of God and His attributes demand that He would create the best world He could.[26] The nature of God is instrumental in defining the parameters of creation; thus, God would not create anything that would go against His character. Using His middle knowledge, God is able to see all possible worlds and all individual sets of choices in those worlds and then actualize the one with the optimum balance of good and evil.

William Lane Craig suggests that God has actualized the world with the greatest number of saved. He writes, "God wants to maximize the number of saved: He wants heaven to be as full as possible. Moreover, as a loving God, He wants to minimize the number of the lost."[27] Whatever the criteria, God has created the best as necessitated by His wisdom and goodness. In the actualized world, God has structured creation to follow a certain set of laws and principles. As man interacts in creation, even in his corrupted state, he has the capacity to cause joy and suffering. Because of the effects of sin and death, gratuitous evil exists in the world. However, this is still the best of all possible worlds that God could have created, containing the optimum balance of good and suffering. If indeed God has used knowledge of future contingents to identify

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[23] Kenneth Keathley, *Salvation and Sovereignty: A Molinist Approach*, (Nashville: B&H Publishers, 2010), 38.

[24] Kirk R. MacGregor, *A Molinist-Anabapist Systematic Theology*, (Lanham: University Press, 2007), 63.

[25] Thomas P. Flint, *Divine Providence: The Molinist Account* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998), 2.

[26] Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz, *Theodicy*, trans. E.M. Huggard (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1952), 163.

[27] William Lane Craig, "'No Other Name': A Middle Knowledge Perspective on the Exclusivity of Salvation through Christ," in *Faith and Philosophy* 6. (1989), 183.

and actualize the best of all possible worlds, then God cannot be blamed for the presence of evil in the world.

DIVINE ATTRIBUTES ESSENTIAL TO THE DISCUSSION

Sovereignty

Middle knowledge can help in one's understanding of sovereignty. While scripture affirms both the sovereignty of God[28] and the free will of man,[29] many theologians have taken an extreme position on either side of this tension. On the one side is open theism, which limits God's knowledge and control of creation, binding Him by the unforeseen choices of His creatures. This view fosters a weak view of God and is inconsistent with scripture. On the other extreme is strong determinism, which attributes every action to God's sovereign rule. This view belittles human responsibility and makes it difficult to separate God from the origin of evil. Both extremes are unacceptable and can be reconciled by an application of middle knowledge.

In the middle knowledge view, God has foreknowledge of the free choices of moral agents, and while these choices are exercised outside of His direct control, He retains sovereignty as He decides which possible world to actualize.[30] From vast numbers of possible worlds, God is able to choose the world where the free acts of moral agents will work in history to accomplish His ultimate end. With this knowledge, God is able to place free creatures in situations where they will choose an action having been divinely foreseen, and in so doing God in no way undermines the free choice of man.

Because middle knowledge can explain God's sovereignty without abandoning the free will of man, it can also exonerate Him of any blame for the existence of evil. There is no debate over the biblical teaching that sin entered the world through one man; however, in highly deterministic systems it is difficult to understand sin's origin apart from God's decree. Yet, with true libertarian freedom preserved, it is understood that man has the power of moral choice and can choose wrong moral actions, opening up the possibility for sin and evil. Thus, man, uninfluenced by causal knowledge, is alone the cause of evil entering into God's perfect creation,

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[28] Rev. 4:11 NKJV "You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And *by Your will* they exist and were created."

[29] James 1:13-15 NKJV "Let no one say when he is tempted, 'I am tempted by God'; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death."

[30] Flint, *Divine Providence: The Molinist Account*, 44.

and man is responsible for his wrong choices. Why then does God not actualize a world wherein no moral agent would sin? God is free to actualize the world He desires, although He can only actualize logically possible worlds. Plantinga writes, "The free will defender … insists on the possibility that it is not within God's power to create a world containing moral good without creating one containing moral evil."[31] Plantinga argues that a world where *free creatures* always did right is not a feasible world. This does not count against the power of God, it only demonstrates that He is working within an order where He has judged freedom to be a more desirable set than non-freedom. Craig writes, "Since God knows prior to His decision to create what any possible creature would do in any possible circumstances, God in deciding which creatures to create and which circumstances to bring about or permit ultimately controls and directs the course of world history to His desired ends, and yet without violating in any way the freedom of His creatures."[32]

In this created order, God has granted moral creatures the freedom to commit acts that He does not desire, yet He remains sovereign to bring about His ultimate goal for creation. Craig states, "In certain circumstances, creatures will freely sin, despite the fact that it is God's will that they not sin. If then God for whatever reason wants to bring about those circumstances, He has no choice but to allow the creature to sin, though that is not His absolute intention."[33] It is God's infallible middle knowledge that sees His sovereign plan to its ultimate end.

Omniscience

A view of omniscience including middle knowledge aids in responses to the argument from evil by explaining how libertarian freedom is preserved while God knows the future free acts of contingent beings. As such, it explains how God can have absolute knowledge that is not causal. "By means of His middle knowledge, God is able to construct a possible world which is within His power to actualize and which is consistent with His will. By taking into account the free decisions of creatures in His planning, God, in willing to actualize a certain world does not violate the freedom of creatures in that world, though He knows with certainty what they will do."[34] Through choosing the world to actualize—inclusive of man's free choices—God's middle knowledge is not causal.

Middle knowledge not only explains the tension between free will and omniscience, it can

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[31] Alvin Plantinga, *Nature and Necessity* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), 184.
[32] Craig, *The Problem of Divine Foreknowledge and Future Contingents,* 200.
[33] Ibid.
[34] Ibid., 177.

also serve to protect against weak and unbiblical views of omniscience. Open theism is a man-centered subset of the greater good theodicy that makes unacceptable and unbiblical compromises by arguing that God's omniscience is not absolute. In effect, such theodicies place a greater priority on man's free will than on God's omniscience. The application of middle knowledge could allow these arguments to maintain a true form of libertarian freedom without diminishing the attributes of God.

Providence

Middle knowledge helps explain a working understanding of providence. Providence can be defined as "God's governance of creation in a personal and daily way."[35] In a system where all events are not causally determined by God's decree, He is enabled to act within the free choices, prayers, and actions of mankind to govern within time and space. With knowledge of all circumstances and their ramifications upon every free creature, God is able to providentially orchestrate and decree the exact set of people and circumstances necessary to carry out His will, while using the free choices of men.[36] God's providence enables man to become involved in the unfolding of history through prayer, although, answers to prayers are always within the council of God and never change the determined end. Without God's gracious providential interventions, it cannot be known how much more evil the world might contain. Francisco Suarez taught, "Middle knowledge is of the highest necessity for divine providence, for it would be impossible for God to plan for and govern the world according to His wisdom without such knowledge."[37]

THE SOTERIOLOGICAL PROBLEM OF EVIL

The soteriological problem of evil is concerned with the multitudes of lost people condemned to hell, especially those who have no Gospel witness. This is most difficult when double predestination is espoused. It must be understood why God is just in condemning to hell those who have never had a Gospel witness. This is typically answered by showing that the general revelation seen in creation is sufficient to condemn but not sufficient to save. Middle knowledge can be used to strengthen this explanation. Craig suggests that God through His middle knowledge, ordered the circumstances of each individual so that all who would respond

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[35] Little, *Why This Evil*, 17.

[36] William Lane Craig, "The Middle Knowledge View," in *Divine Foreknowledge: Four Views*, eds. James K. Beilby, Paul R. Eddy (Downers Grove: IVP, 2001), 134.

[37] Craig, *The Problem of Divine Foreknowledge and Future Contingents, 219.*

affirmatively to the Gospel are given a gospel witness.[38] God's middle knowledge made it possible for Him to actualize the best possible world, including the most favorable ratio of good and evil, which would include the maximum number of saved.

LIBERTARIAN FREEDOM

It has already been demonstrated that middle knowledge can preserve human libertarian freedom. Little explains libertarian freedom as follows, "man has the power to choose to the contrary, and in doing so has the power to cause events."[39] In reference to free will, Augustine wrote, "if human beings are good things, and they cannot do right unless they so will, then they

ought to have free will, without which they cannot do right."[40] Free will is an element central to most theodicies and it is the most common explanation for the origin of evil. Without a convincing argument for creaturely freedom of moral choice, God would become the only logical origin of evil, sin, and suffering. Middle knowledge explains how true libertarian freedom is compatible with an orthodox understanding of God's omniscience.

It should also be noted that libertarian freedom is subject to conditions. For instance, God may limit the quantity of possible options from which to choose in accordance with His sovereign will and providential rule. God sometimes structures man's circumstances in order to limit his possible choices to those which would bring about a certain range of possibility. Such structuring is part of God's providential work in creation. Freedom is also restricted by natural laws and subject to consequences within the created order. Even with limits, the power of choice in the molinistic scheme is true libertarian freedom to choose between one or more available options.

The power of choice has implications for almost every tenet of theistic belief, and these implications often assist in answering the argument from evil. In the beginning, God created man in His image and gave man the power to choose freely to obey or disobey. Furthermore, without creaturely freedom, man could not have a true and uncompelled ability to love God.[41] In exploring human freedom and responsibility, it is recognized that mankind's wrong moral choices caused suffering to enter the creation. Libertarian freedom is also necessary for

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[38] Craig, "No Other Name", 184.

[39] Little, *Why This Evil*, 14.

[40] Augustine, *On Free Choice of the Will*, trans. Thomas Williams (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1993), bk. 2, chap. 1, p. 30.

[41] Little, *Creation-Order Theodicy*, 169-170.

understanding God's providence; it reveals that a loving God radically intervenes in the lives of His free creatures to sustain creation and bring about His glorious conclusion to history. Finally, the importance of choice is best seen in God's plan of salvation where His loving plan of redemption and reconciliation is made available to all men. The God who carefully actualized a world filled with free moral beings is not the heartless god accused by the argument from evil. Freedom explained by middle knowledge portrays a God who loves His creation without any form of malice, even as the free choices of mankind have corrupted the ideal that God desires.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, middle knowledge proves helpful when included in components of a theodicy or defense against the problem of evil. It is especially helpful in models that affirm the existence of gratuitous evil. In contrast to compatibilistic and deterministic models, Molinism provides a particularly *convincing* and compassionate explanation of the origin of evil by allowing for an honest understanding of libertarian freedom. Furthermore, in contrast to the tenets of open theism, middle knowledge offers a strong orthodox treatment of God's sovereignty and omniscience.

If Molinism proves sustainable, it serves to reconcile the seemingly paradoxical doctrines of divine omniscience and human free will. Proper application of the doctrine of middle knowledge clearly exonerates God from any responsibility for the origin of evil and offers the building blocks for convincing responses to arguments against God.

Middle knowledge builds upon a framework of divine sovereignty, strong providence, absolute omniscience, and libertarian freedom to help demonstrate that God cannot be blamed for the current state of evil in the world. Overall, the application of middle knowledge to standard aspects of orthodox Christian belief strengthens responses to many of the questions raised by antitheistic arguments against God.

THE STRATEGIC PLACE OF HERMENEUTICS IN THE EVANGELICAL
FEMINIST DEBATE

By Wayne Willis*

INTRODUCTION

The egalitarian and complementarian debate within the religious community has spread dramatically since the early days of the secular feminist movement in the U.S.A. In fact, the debate has metastasized to such an extent it may be posited that clear lines of distinction separating liberal and conservative theologians are not as bold as they once were. The growth of egalitarianism particularly among evangelicals provides an undeniable witness to the gathering momentum of the movement. There was a time when ecclesiastical egalitarianism was a cause almost exclusively propagated by liberal theologians, but since the 1970's, such an assertion may no longer be completely accurate. In the first decade of the twenty-first century many of the writers and "movers and shakers" in the forefront of the push for gender equality in church pulpits were evangelicals.

Various trajectories proceed from the broad topic of feminism. Many of the issues, in fact, serve to *unify* egalitarians and complementarians. For example, common rights and privileges available to both men and women as citizens of the U.S.A. are not subject to debate.

There is unanimity on both sides of the spectrum in addressing such broad human rights topics. In this regard complementarians should not equivocate but, to the contrary, find themselves in agreement with such egalitarians as Craig S. Keener who wrote, "Many ideas

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which have been advocated in the name of the women's movement are not only in harmony with Christian principles, but demand the support of all Christians: for instance, opposition to rape, other forms of sexual and physical abuse, sexual harassment, and pornographic exploitation."[1] Such subjects, in a biblical and theological context, such as equal spiritual standing in Christ, individual dignity and worth, and accountability of both male and female in the Body of Christ, are topics on which evangelical egalitarians and complementarians alike can also find common ground.

However, there are areas of major disagreement having strategic theological implications. For example, at the core of the debate between evangelical egalitarians and complementarians is the biblical definition and description of manhood and womanhood, namely, how should men and women relate to each other in the home and in the church? There is also the question of gender definition and distinction. Does the Bible teach gender equality or gender distinction? If so, how is it to be applied in the home and in an ecclesiastical context? A critical focus of this article is whether or not it is biblically acceptable for a woman to function as pastor in a local church. It is the opinion of the writer that the feminist debate in the evangelical community does not stand alone but rather, projects significant and potentially damaging theological trajectories. It is posited that linkage exists between the feminist debate among evangelicals and such theological fundamentals as questions related to the God-head, the nature of biblical revelation and inspiration, the integrity and authority of the biblical text, as well as the trans-cultural relevance of the Scriptures in the twenty-first century culture. Ultimately, however, it is postulated that interpretative principles and procedures are the fountainhead of, at least, the primary contentions relevant to, the debate. In fact, in the opinion of the writer, hermeneutics is the crucial issue. Therefore, examples of the hermeneutical approaches upon which evangelical egalitarian positions are structured are presented, analyzed, and critiqued.

At the dawn of this controversy among evangelicals (ca. 1979) A. Duane Litfin commented on the options available to evangelical theologians. He concluded that there were only two. The first option available for evangelical egalitarians was to discontinue a "full-court press" on the evangelical community. According to Litfin this would seem improbable since it is,

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[1] Craig S. Keener, *Paul, Women & Wives* (Peabody Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1992), 6. The Bible condemns rape, sexual abuse and physical abuse, as well as sexual harassment and pornographic exploitation. Bible-believing Christians believe it also condemns, in addition to the above list of sexual sins, homosexuality and abortion. Liberal theologians, in general, would *not* agree with conservative theologians who condemn those particular issues but, to the contrary, some of the liberal persuasion would characterize such deviate behavior as "just causes."

after all, the cause for women's liberation which is at stake. The second option was for the traditionalists to "acquiesce" and incorporate the egalitarian viewpoint into the evangelical community. According to Litfin this would alleviate the tension between the two opposing viewpoints. His prediction in 1979 was that such a merger would not occur. He wrote, "Traditionalists see the theological ramifications as so far-reaching that to accede would be to betray some of the fundamental aspects of a biblical view of man and his world."[2] Since then, however, it appears that "signs" of foundational compromises in the evangelical community are evident, and the theological trajectory indicates more are on the way. Such compromises are not justified, in the writer's view, given the heavy theological consequences.

THE PROMINENT PLACE OF HERMENEUTICS IN THE DEBATE

Inerrancy is not the issue in the evangelical feminist debate. Since both evangelical egalitarians and evangelical complementarians profess a commitment to the inerrancy and subsequent authority of the Bible, it would appear that the only battleground left in the debate is the hermeneutical one. Without question many evangelical feminists profess a commitment to the authority of the biblical text. According to Paul W. Felix an evangelical feminist "has a high view of Scripture" and, quoting Daniel G. Lundy, "one who believes that the Bible teaches the full equality of men and women without role distinctions based on gender."[3] Since, therefore, the focal point of the feminist debate among evangelicals is not inerrancy, namely, the integrity of the biblical text, the issue becomes by default, hermeneutics, or how the Bible should be interpreted.[4] It is the writer's view that Susan Foh was, in fact, correct in her assessment that "the most crucial question biblical feminists have raised is how to interpret the Bible."[5] The analyses represented in this paper is based on the assumption that Foh's conclusion is correct, namely, that the hermeneutical issue is the fundamental aspect in the feminist debate since it affects all else.[6] The

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[2] A. Duane Litfin, "Evangelical Feminism: Why Traditionalists Reject It," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 136, no. 534 (July-September 1979): 1.

[3] Paul W. Felix, "The Hermeneutics of Evangelical Feminism," *The Master's Seminary Journal*, 5, no. 2 (1994): 1.

[4] Of course, from the liberal perspective the integrity of the Scripture *is* the issue. The "theological center" is *not*, for the liberal feminist, "divine revelation" but women experiences. Elisabeth Fiorenza wrote, The *locus* or place of divine revelation and grace is therefore not the Bible or the tradition of a patriarchal church but the *ekklesia* of women and the lives of women who live the 'option for our women selves.' It is not simply 'the experience' of women but the experience of women (and all the oppressed) struggling for liberation from patriarchal oppression" ("The Will to Choose or to Reject: Continuing Our Critical Work)," 128.

[5] Susan Foh, *Women & The Word of God* (Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1976), 2.

[6] It is the assumption of this writer that *hermeneutics* (how the Scriptures are interpreted) is the beginning place in a theological methodology since it will, more than any other component, affect the final theological product

assessment with regard to the crucial place hermeneutics has in the debate does not belong to complementarians alone. Both the evangelical egalitarian and the complementarian appear to agree, for the most part, that hermeneutics and the exegetical product represent the primary point of contention in the evangelical feminist debate. As a representative of the egalitarian camp, Kevin Giles wrote, "The main divide is between those who think the only solution allowed to evangelicals is an exegetical one and those, like the writer, who think that exegesis alone can only take us so far. In the end, we come up against hermeneutical questions: most notably, what is theologically primary and secondary in the diverse scriptural comments on women, and what in this diverse teaching applies to our age?"[7] Another voice, namely Roger Nicole, concurs and writes, "It appears to be a sad reality that most of the differences between patriarchalists and egalitarians in the present gender debate are hermeneutically based, if one includes exegesis as a dimension of hermeneutics."[8]

While it may be conceded, at least on the surface, that the feminist debate seems to have been a silent issue for many in the pews and even some pulpits, the matter does not appear to be diminishing in its intensity. With regard to this intensity factor Gary Meadors writes (ca. 2003):

> A more significant phase of this battle is now on the horizon of the evangelical camp. This militaristic language is no longer a hyperbole. Since the various proponents "within the camp" all claim the same bible as an authority, it seems that the debate cannot be won or lost simply on the exegesis of an individual text. Therefore, the battle has shifted to a much larger issue: How is the text to be read by successive generations of believers? Consequently, we have entered a philosophical and hermeneutical debate.[9]

THEOLOGICAL BACKGROUNDS IN THE DEBATE

The Liberal Theological Perspective in the Debate

Classic liberalism would not appear to consider hermeneutical and exegetical concerns necessarily strategic because of its *low* view of Scripture. Barbara Brown Zikmund affirmed such an assertion when she wrote, "Contemporary feminists approach reality with new questions and

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derived from the exegesis of the biblical text. There is almost (allowing for an objection from a source unaware to this writer) unanimous consent among evangelical authors (on both sides of the issue) that hermeneutics is central in the evangelical feminist/non-feminist debate.

[7] Kevin Giles, *The Trinity & Subordinationism* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2002), 194.

[8] Roger Nicole, "*Biblical Hermeneutics: Basic Principles and Questions of Gender*" (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 363.

[9] Gary T. Meadors, "Exegetical Essentials: Exploring the Tensions Between Textual Fidelity & Cultural Relevance," *Talking Points* (2003). While it is true that this debate is not won or lost based on the exegesis of one individual text it is also true that each biblical text is vital to the whole ("analogy of Scripture") corpus of accumulated biblical witness with regard to the issue.

formulate new interpretations. The motive is not simply to reform; it is to reconstruct. A mature feminist critical consciousness is revolutionary. It challenges method and upsets assumptions."[10] For example, in comparing the liberal and the evangelical perspective it would be hard to imagine the following statement, penned by Zikmund in 1985, could find compatibility among evangelicals. She writes,

> Jewish and Christian feminists use new interpretative principles to "liberate" God's word in scripture. They are willing to risk, out of a belief that God has promised "liberation" to all creation. They are also redefining *authority* to celebrate the resources of community in interpreting God's Word. By allowing women's *experience* to inform the task, they are rediscovering new theologies and leaving behind old oppressions.[11]

Generally speaking, and true to their tradition, it appears that for the liberal feminist "experience" is a doorway to understanding and insight into "God's word." It appears that the feminist reader becomes the *locus* for determining the ultimate meaning of the Scriptures. The intent of the original author or the understanding of the original audience apparently has little relevance for liberal feminism. From their perspective "God's word" is pro-feminist and not to be confused with the written word. Liberal feminists generally view the Bible as contaminated through patriarchal prejudices they believe to be anti-women. It appears evident, at least to the writer, that the theological starting place, at least for the extreme liberal feminist, instead of the Scriptures, is the age old struggle for women's equality, and pushing the envelope, the liberation of all women from male domination. As summed up in *Women and Men in Ministry*,

> In the interpretation of Scripture, women's experience became increasingly the norm of authority. Since they believed that Scripture and its historic interpretation was simply theology from the male's perspective, they had every right to do theology from their own perspective. Women were now "to believe in their own equivalent person hood [*sic*] as the normative starting point of theology more than they can believe in any past accumulation of tradition which has been carried on without and against women's participation."[12]

Considered an outspoken women's rights advocate, Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza leaves no doubt, at least from a theologically conservative perspective, with regard to her extremism. As a contributing author in Letty M. Russell's *Feminist Interpretation of the Bible*, Fiorenza's comment appears to justify such a label. She writes regarding the cause of women's liberation, "Its goal is not simply the 'full humanity' of women, since humanity as we know it is male defined, but

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[10] Barbara Brown Zikmund, "Feminist Consciousness in Historical Perspective," in *Feminist Interpretation of the Bible*, Letty M. Russell, ed., 28.

[11] Zikmund, 28.

[12] Robert L. Saucy and Judith K. Tenelshof, *Women and Men in Ministry* (Chicago: Moody Press, 2001).42.

women's religious self-affirmation, power, and liberation from all patriarch alienation, marginalization, and oppression."[13] Other persons among the contributors to Russell's *Feminist Interpretation of the Bible* include Katie Geneva Cannon who, at the time of its publication, in 1985, was Assistant Professor of Christian Ethics at Episcopal Divinity School, Cambridge, Massachusetts. She was the first African-American to earn a Ph.D. from the prominent liberal institution, Union Theological Seminary located in New York. She also has made her mark in history as the first African-American to be ordained in the United Presbyterian Church U.S.A. In the same volume, J. Cheryl Exum was listed as an Associate Professor of Biblical Studies at Boston College. She received her Ph.D. from Columbia University. Another contributor, Margaret A. Farley is Professor of Christian Ethics at Yale Divinity School.[14]

According to William Rodgers, Fiorenza claims that the "women-church" has the authority to receive or reject biblical truth.[15] As of 1985 Elisabeth Fiorenza was Professor of New Testament Studies and Theology at the University of Notre Dame. She is now (ca. 2008) a faculty assistant at Harvard Divinity School. Among some of the courses she has recently taught are "Feminist Bible Interpretation," "Gospel Stories of Women," and "Feminist Theory and Theology."[16] For Fiorenza the liberal feminist position is *not* a debatable issue. This is clear enough in the following statement: "I have therefore argued that feminist theology must articulate its advocacy position not as an option for the oppressed but as the self-identification of women in patriarchal society and religion, since *all* women are socialized to identify with men."[17] In his paper, Rodgers named another author who also may be labeled as somewhat extreme from a conservative viewpoint. Her name is Dennise Carmody. According to Rodgers, Carmody accepts the theory that suggests Paul is not the author of the Pastoral letters. Rodgers documents Carmody's belief that such a theory removes the anti-feminist guilt from *Paul* and places it upon the shoulders of a "pseudo-Paul" who is the *genuine* author of the epistles. Rodgers lists other authors holding to this view as well.

Liberal Theological Links to Evangelical Egalitarianism

[13] Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza, "The Will to Choose or to Reject: Continuing Our Critical Work" in *Feminist Interpretation of the Bible* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1985), Letty M. Russell, ed., 126.

[14] Fiorenza, 7.

[15] William Kenny Rodgers, "The Quandary Concerning the Pauline Doctrine of Women in Worship and Ministry" (Reformed Theological Seminary, 1999), 7. The web site address for the full text of this paper is <http://www.bonairefbc.com/papers/paulinedoctrine.htm>.

[16] The online address is <http://www. hds.harvard.edu/faculty/schusslerfionza.html>.

[17] Fiorenza, 128.

Wayne Grudem has addressed the *softening process* and possible future harmful effects of the evangelical feminist perspective on interpreting Scriptures. He wrote, "Though many of our egalitarian friends today do not adopt the other implications of their view, their followers will, and the next generation of leaders will go much further in the denial of the truths of Scripture or in their failure to be subject to Scripture in other parts of life."[18]

Liberal feminists have palpably made up their mind on the matter of the gender debate even if it conflicts with the biblical text. For the liberal theologian the goal is liberty for every woman at every level including the freedom to pastor churches *even at the expense of biblical authority*. If there is to be a "bridge" constructed between liberal feminism and evangelical feminism, regrettably, theologically strategic compromises would only come from the evangelical community. Such an inference seems inevitable, considering that liberal feminism has long since forfeited any semblance of conservatism related to the essential doctrines of the faith. It should be apparent, in the writer's opinion, that there exists an *impassable* gap between the core beliefs and value systems of these two antithetical theological perspectives.

THE "LARGE TENT" IN THE FEMINIST DEBATE

The feminist dispute continues to make unusual partnerships in and out of the evangelical community. Covenant theologians and dispensationalists, Pentecostals, and Baptists, have *joined forces*, utilizing a military metaphor, to combat either the evangelical egalitarian or the evangelical complementarian ranks. The various theological persuasions of course are not always in perfect lockstep theologically. However, certain theological and philosophical traits, as will be expanded later in the article, do describe, it is posited, a certain degree of unanimity when it comes to evangelical egalitarian essentials. Among such broad features which could be included are apparent heavy emphasis on experience, interpretative approaches counter to hermeneutical principles and practices generally accepted as the norm for eighteen-hundred years of the life of

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[18] Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism & Biblical Truth*, 53. In his book, *Evangelical Feminism: A New Path to Liberalism*, Grudem points to markers in evangelical feminism, which, in his opinion, are "steps on the path toward liberalism. As stated in the introduction of his book, Grudem attempts to link liberalism with evangelical egalitarianism by demonstrating the following: (1) that liberal protestant denominations were pioneers of evangelical feminism, and that evangelical feminist today have adapted many of the arguments earlier used by theological liberals to advocate the ordination of women and to reject male headship in marriage; (2) that recent trends now show that evangelical feminists are heading toward a denial of anything uniquely masculine, and some already endorse calling God, "our Mother in heaven;" (3) that the history of others who have adopted these positions shows that the next step is the endorsement of the moral legitimacy of homosexuality; (4) that the common thread running through all these trends is the rejection of the effective authority of Scripture in people's lives, and that this is the bedrock principle of theological liberalism.

the Church, general agreement that the Scriptures teach the biblical legitimacy of the role of pastor for women, related to the previous point, a deference in some measure to contemporary cultural pressures related to human rights and privileges.

Even though the academic and ministry credentials of evangelical feminists may vary it would appear that, at strategic points within the corpus of their feminist dogma, the unanimity is somewhat stronger than the diversity. Paul W. Felix, Sr., disclosed some of the leading personalities and theologians of *evangelical feminism* in the following statement,

> The individuals primarily responsible for laying the foundation of evangelical feminism are Nancy Hardesty, Letha Scanzoni, Paul Jewett, Virginia Mollenkott, and Dorothy Pape. Prominent names currently associated with the movement are Gilbert Bilezikian, Mary Evans, W. Ward Gasque, Kevin Giles, Patricia Gundry, E. Margaret Howe, Gretchen Gaebelein Hull, Craig Kenner, Catherine Clark Kroeger and Richard Kroeger, Walter Liefied, Alvera Mickelsen, David Scholer, Aida Spencer, and Ruth Tucker.[19]

Even if Felix were more eclectic than average, his inclusion of such personalities as Craig Keener, Alvera Mickelsen, Virginia Mollenkott, Patricia Gundry, and others appears from the writer's perspective to broaden the evangelical "tent" somewhat. For example, in a personal profile online Virginia Mollenkott is described as a featured speaker at Kirkridge's annual "Christian People of the Rainbow" conference, drawing a large number of "lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans-gendered Christians." Such an association at least could suggest Mollenkott enters the egalitarian debate with a personal bias against the complementarian position.[20] Wayne Grudem gives special mention to evangelical egalitarians which have not moved "one inch toward liberalism in the rest of their doctrinal convictions, and who strongly believe and defend the inerrancy of the Bible." Grudem's list includes such persons as Stan Gundry, Jack Hayford, Walter Kaiser, Roger Nicole, and Grant Osborne. Grudem refers to these men as his "egalitarian friends."[21]

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[19] Paul W. Felix, "The Hermeneutics of Evangelical Feminism," *The Master's Seminary Journal* 5, no. 2 (1994): 2.

[20] www.geocities.com/vmollenkott.

[21] Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism*, 20. It is safe to say that it is inappropriate to characterize every egalitarian as liberal, in the classic sense of the word, and to question his or her personal integrity. It would also be equally unwise, in my opinion, to doubt the affirmation of allegiance to the Word of God as inerrant and infallible by evangelical egalitarians based solely on their egalitarian stance (e.g. Walter Kaiser). It should be evident to all that such discussions must be approached in humility and Christian grace.

IDENTIFYING THE "PROPER HERMENEUTIC" IN THE FEMINIST DEBATE

Hermeneutics and the resultant exegetical product is the proper beginning place and foundational to a truly biblical theology. The biblical exegetical product, as the consequence of a properly and consistently applied hermeneutic ought to be the determinate for any authoritative conclusions forged in the feminist debate. However, as Robert Thomas comments in his book, *Evangelical Hermeneutics*, there has come into existence a smorgasbord of hermeneutical definitions providing "new and sometimes conflicting definitions for terms whose meanings were reasonably clear, until the barrage of new hermeneutical literature began."[22] Thomas writes,

> Evangelicals are experiencing a mixture of past and proposed new hermeneutics systems. The challenges to the traditional methods so far may seem to be only theoretical. The prevailing practical approach to interpretation remains mostly what it has been. Yet the challenges are becoming less theoretical and more practical… The new approaches tend to abandon authorial and historical interpretation, the type of interpretation that prevails under strict grammatical-historical guidelines. This is somewhat surprising, coming as it does so close on the heels of consensus statements by evangelical in the late 1970s and early 1980s that the grammatical-historical method alone is compatible with an inerrant Bible. What confuses the issue is the use of *grammatical-historical* by the new approach to mean something different from what the expression has traditionally denoted.[23]

He continues, "sometimes the new refers to itself as 'grammatical-historical-literary' and sometimes as 'grammatical-historical-literary-theological…[and]…it was not unusual to encounter missiological and feminist challenges to the grammatical-historical method during the early 1980s, sometimes coming from outside and sometimes from within the evangelical camp."[24]

The objective of the application of a good hermeneutic is, of course, to arrive at the meaning of the text intended by the original human author and the *ultimate* author, God. It is the goal of the biblical exegete to arrive at the meaning of the written text as *objectively* as possible but with an ever-present realization that all interpreters carry the baggage of *bias*. Such bias baggage should be acknowledged by the exegete and subsequently countered by a hermeneutic as bias free as possible. This hermeneutic must be *honestly*, as much as possible, and *consistently* applied to the text. Of course, the exegete is to be aware of the literary genre and devices represented in the text; however, in the opinion of the writer, this does *not* hinder a consistent application of the grammatical-historical hermeneutic employed by the interpreter. Given the strategic place of

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[22] Robert L. Thomas, *Evangelical Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2002), 20.
[23] Ibid., 20.
[24] Thomas, 20.

hermeneutics in a proper theological method, it would seem obvious that the teaching implications and resultant applications of the text of Scripture rise or fall on such a hermeneutical grid. The writer would add to this point the observation that what has been described as a *literal* hermeneutic is in view here. However, in the opinion of the writer, it would be better to substitute the words, *normal*, or *face-value*, in the place of "literal" to avoid possible mischaracterization or confusion.[25] This normal hermeneutic must be applied to the biblical text *consistently* in order to guard effectively against personal bias or prejudice in the interpretative process. Such a hermeneutical approach is necessary because the *focus* in the evangelical feminist issue, and all other theological discourse, is unquestionably the biblical text. As Walter Kaiser has noted, "Traditionally… exegesis and hermeneutics focused on the text itself in an effort to determine what the text said and meant in its own original objective." In the context of the Reformation's impact on exegesis, Kaiser continued by commenting on the sole task of the exegete. This description is pertinent to the evangelical feminist debate. He writes,

> The sole object of the expositor is to explain as clearly as possible what the writer meant when he wrote the text under examination: It is the interpreter's job to *represent the text*, not the prejudices, feelings, judgments, or concerns of the exegete. To indulge in the latter is to engage in *eisegesis*, 'a reading *into*' a text what the reader wants to say. In adopting this stance the Reformers sided with the earlier Antiochian school against Origen's school at Alexandria.[26]

CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE EVANGELICAL FEMINIST HERMENEUTIC

Examples of Evangelical Egalitarian Hermeneutical Approaches

Jack Cottrell calls attention to what he considers "common ground" ("basic") issues for both the "feminist" and the "non-feminist." He describes the "common" issues as follows: (1) the two horizons, namely, from the author's intended meaning perspective or "what it *meant*" and also from the interpreter's perspective, that is, "what it *means*"; (2) the importance of context; (3) "Scripture interprets Scripture;" (4) applying the principles (according to Cottrell this is what separates the "feminists" from the "non-feminists").[27]

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[25] In his *Basic Theology*, page 125, Charles Ryrie writes, "I believe…that the correct system of hermeneutics is that which may be labeled normal, plain, or literal."

[26] Walter Kaiser, *Toward An Exegetical Theology*, Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1981, 44-45.

[27] Jack Cottrell, 31-39. Touching on the third principle, namely, "scripture interprets scripture," Cottrell raises the question of how to handle the "hard passages." To the feminist this is a passage which is in conflict (in the context of feminist issues) with other passages on the subject? How is the interpreter to distinguish such passages? According to Cottrell a "common way of representing this distinction" is by designating them either *prescriptive* or *descriptive* in nature. "Prescriptive scripture interprets descriptive scripture." The following "supplemental rules" are

Paul W. Felix compared the egalitarian interpretative process to the complementarian hermeneutic in the following comment:

> Their principles for interpreting Scripture, however, differ markedly from those of the advocates of role distinctions for men and women. A comparison of evangelical feminist's principles with the grammatical-historical method of interpretation clarifies what and how great they deviate from traditional views of women's role in church and at home. The disputed principles include the issues of *ad hoc* documents, interpretative centers, the analogy of faith, slavery as a model for the role of women, culturally biased interpretation, cultural relativity, and patriarchal and sexist texts. An examination of these issues shows how far evangelical feminist hermeneutics fall short of grammatical-historical interpretation.[28]

In regard to the evangelical egalitarian hermeneutic in particular it is difficult to pinpoint such a single hermeneutic due to the variations represented in the eclectic evangelical feminist spectrum. In the same article, Felix footnotes Rebecca Merrill Groothuis' "eight strategies as a part of biblical feminist hermeneutics." Groothuis' eight strategies of biblical feminist hermeneutics are as follows:

> (1) Biblical interpretation is to endeavor to be faithful to the biblical author's intent in writing the specific passage in question. (2) It is important to know the accurate translation of the passages traditionally used to silence and subjugate women. (3) It is crucial to maintain interpretative consistency with the rest of a biblical author's writings as well as the whole of Scripture. (4) Texts couched in a context of culturally specific instructions are not to be taken *a priori* as normative for the present day. (5) Culturally specific instructions are to be interpreted not only in light of biblical doctrine and principle but also in light of the culture to which they were written and the author's reason for writing them. (6) Events recorded in the Bible should be understood in light of the culture of that time. (7) In light of the progressive nature of God's revelation in the Bible, New Testament texts concerning women should be considered more accurate indicators of God's intent than those provided in the Old Testament. (8) The need to guard against interpreting the Bible in conformity with one's own cultural pre-understanding or personal expectations.[29]

Some evangelical feminists appear to begin on a sound hermeneutical footing. One hermeneutical approach by the egalitarians is represented by Gordon Fee's *cultural emphasis*. Hardly any complementarian would disagree with the observation made by Gordon Fee that the "first task of hermeneutics" is, in fact, "the careful exegesis of texts, which has the original intent

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presented as means to determine whether a scripture is descriptive or prescriptive: (1) *trans-cultural* versus *cultural*; (2) *doctrinal* versus *practical*; (3) *general* versus *specific*; (4) *clear* versus *unclear*; *systematic* versus *incidental*; (5) *didactic* versus *historical*, (Cottrell, 35-38).

[28] Paul W. Felix, "The Hermeneutics of Evangelical Feminism" (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2002), 373.

[29] Rebecca Merril Groothuis, *Women Caught in the Conflict*, 112-115. From observing Groothuis' eight principles of interpretation, the reader should note what seems apparent to this writer, namely, an underlying feminist bias or predisposition as illustrated in principles, 2, 4, 5, and 7.

of the text as its primary goal."[30] However, the qualifiers Fee and other evangelical feminists attach to their definitions necessitates a separation between the two opposing positions regarding the woman's role in the church. For instance, Fee espouses what is an apparently unconditional acceptance of the inspiration of the Scriptures. His stance seems somewhat diminished, however, by an apparent *proviso* allowing maneuvering room for the possibility of a biblical text heavily conditioned by cultural biases. Fee's hermeneutical perspective, at least on the surface, appears to provide a broader opening for the interpreter's bias to be introduced into the biblical text. Fee writes,

> Inspiration maintains that God indeed "spoke all these words and said..." But it does not maintain that God *dictated* all these words. To the contrary it recognizes, indeed argues, that *the Bible is God's Word spoken in human words in history*. As God's Word it has eternal relevance; God addresses us. It is ours to hear and obey. But as human words in history the eternal Word has historical particularity. None of the words were spoken in a vacuum. Rather they were all addressed to, and conditioned by, the specific historical context in which they were spoken.[31]

Theologically conservative complementarians would not discount the importance of the cultural setting in the interpretative process. Most, myself included, however, do *not* adhere to what has traditionally been labeled "dictation inspiration." In the opinion of the writer a noble aspiration for a biblical exegete would be *not* to allow the cultural setting to alter or obscure the authorial intent inherent in the text and context of a biblical passage. For example, what separates, for Fee, the "cultural baggage" of the "Greco-Roman" world from the intended meaning of Ephesians 5:21-6:9 or Colossians 4:15 or First Corinthians 16:19?

Apparently Fee grants to the Greco-Roman culture a level of influence upon the inerrant biblical text that should not be permitted. For example, he writes:

> Given both the ambiguity of the New Testament evidence and the lack of explicit teaching on patriarchy as the norm in the new creation, to derive a theology of patriarchy from the Ephesians passage would thus seem to be a dubious form of theologizing at best. There is no question that these texts *reflect* the patriarchal worldview of the Greco-Roman world, but they do not bless that worldview theologically. Rather, Paul's instructions (like Peter's in I Pet 2:18-3:7) have to do with how to live out the life of Christ in such a cultural setting.[32]

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[30] Gordon D. Fee, "Hermeneutics and the Gender Debate" (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 372.

[31] Fee, 368.

[32] Ibid., 375.

Fee seemingly does *not* separate the biblical text from its "cultural contamination" as dramatically as other egalitarian writers but, nonetheless, it appears to be present and somewhat *more* than implied. It must be kept in mind that the biblical text is distinct from all other ancient literature in that it is uniquely inspired. In other words the ultimate author, namely, the Holy Spirit, so superintended the authors so that the result was the final literary product intended by God even within the Greco-Roman cultural context.[33]

William Webb posits what he labels as a *"redemptive-movement hermeneutic."*[34] This hermeneutic is distinguished from the classic hermeneutic labeled "static" by Webb.[35] Other labels such as "progressive," "developmental," or "trajectory" hermeneutic are listed as well.[36] Webb's interpretative model imposes an *eighteen-point grid* through which the biblical text must negotiate in order for the interpreter to be satisfied that the intended meaning is correctly exposed. Webb places himself among the evangelicals who claim an adherence to biblical authority. Placing the hermeneutic of William Webb in the "moderate" designation may be pushing the envelope in the writer's opinion.[37]

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[33] This is not to suggest something like the "dictation theory" but only to affirm that God allowed and used the different personalities, backgrounds, vocabularies, and writing styles of the human authors yet superintended the process so that the finished product could be called "the Word of God." The text is indeed within the context of the writer's culture but it is posited that the message is not contaminated or distorted by that culture. This particular work of the Spirit on the authors with regard to the writing of the Scriptures is described in 2 Peter 1:19-21.

[34] Webb wrote that "a key component of a redemptive-movement-hermeneutic is the idea of movement. The Christian seeking to apply Scripture today should examine the movement between the biblical text and its surrounding social context. Once that movement has been discovered, there needs to be an assessment of whether the movement is preliminary or absolute.*" Women, Slaves, and Homosexuals*, 36.

[35] Webb states that a "static" hermeneutical approach "understands the words of the text aside from or with minimal emphasis upon their underlying spirit and thus restricts any modern application of the Scripture to where the isolated words of the text fell in their original setting." *Women, Slaves, and Homosexuals*, 30. This definition by Webb seems to be wanting on several different levels. One salient point is with Webb's use of the word, "spirit," which is vaguely, or at best, in my view, imprecisely defined. The accusation against those who utilize a "static" hermeneutic may therefore be viewed as somewhat self-serving since anyone who does not recognize such a difficult to recognize "spirit" moving through the text of Scripture is said to "restrict" its "modern application."

[36] Webb, 31.

[37] Webb wrote, "Church creeds have long declared that Scripture provides the authoritative basis for Christian life and faith. To this sacred authority I am deeply committed. Nevertheless, I must confess that, as I have grown in my understanding of what is actually contained within the pages of Scripture, I have had to rethink my hermeneutic. I have had to rethink my hermeneutic in order to retain my commitment to the authority of Scripture!" Webb, 56. It is important not to rush to judgment in regard to statements such as these; however, if I am reading this statement correctly, it seems to the writer that my commitment to the Scriptures does not depend on whether or not I agree with the teachings contained therein having interpreted them using the grid of a normal, consistently applied hermeneutic.

The *Redemptive Movement Hermeneutic* apparently allows for a future culture, in many instances, and *not* the Scriptures, to provide the "ultimate ethic." [38] Webb believes there is a "movement" or "spirit" in the text of Scripture which gently moves the reader toward what "ought to be" in the future beyond the ANE/GR (Ancient Near East/Greco-Roman) culture of the biblical writers into a better informed "covenant community" of believers yet to come. Webb's "X-Y-Z model" represents "X" as the original or ANE/GR culture. "Y" represents, for Webb, the biblical text and an improved ethic over the "X" culture.[39] Between the "Y" and "Z" Webb places the contemporary culture of our day. Some place beyond our present day cultural setting he has identified the "ultimate ethic" designated "Z." For example, we, the twenty-first century believer, apparently have come a long way since the days of Paul in grasping a better understanding of slavery and the place of women in the home and in the church. It appears, at least at first glance, that the "ultimate ethic" extends beyond the confines of the work of the Holy Spirit in inspiration. According to Webb the Bible provides "trans-cultural" truths which are broadly accepted as authoritative and binding. While some texts are to be regarded as somewhat bound by the prejudices and ignorance of the immediate audience or are *ad hoc* in nature, others are labeled "seed passages." He writes,

> During Paul's day the seed ideas of various texts helped shape not only a theoretical equality between Jew and Gentile, but also an equality that had profound implications for Christian society and worship gatherings. *Seed texts* (italics mine) also played a significant role for abolitionists in seeing that the preliminary movement within the slavery texts could and should be taken further. This same kind of social equality implication appears to be extremely pertinent to the women's issue today.[40]

Galatians 3:28 is presented (by Webb) as the evangelical feminist's premier "seed text" passage.

Another example of an egalitarian hermeneutic is found in Alvera Mickelsen's *highest ideals*. Mickelsen lists what she considers to be important steps in the interpretative process. The first step, according to Mickelsen, establishes the intended meaning of the author. The second is to "identify the highest norms or standards taught in the Bible."[41] She describes this second step

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[38] See "The Implications of the Redemptive Movement Hermeneutic" by Dr. Mike Stallard, (A paper presented as a part of the Faculty Forum series at Baptist Bible Seminary, Clarks Summit, Pennsylvania, 8 April, 2004).

[39] The "Y" designation according to Webb "stands for where the isolated words of the Bible are in their development of a subject…" Webb provides a chart of his "X, Y, Z" formula on page 32 of his book, *Slaves, Women, and Homosexuals*. On this chart the "Y" designation is described as "the isolated words of the text; an ethic 'frozen in time."

[40] Webb, 91.

[41] Mickelsen, "An Egalitarian View: There is Neither Male nor Female in Christ," 177.

as "a means of sorting through the many commands in the Bible that obviously are not intended to be universal for all times."[42] How are the highest "ideals or standards" to be recognized as such according to Mickelsen? In my view the charge of bias for the feminist issue may, in fact, have some legitimacy with regard to Mickelsen's hermeneutic especially concerning the last ideal cited. In her article, she lists three ways a student can recognize the "standards" in the Bible. The *first* is the fact that the "highest ideals" are emphasized by Jesus and, sometimes, by the Apostle Paul. The *second* way in which a "highest standard" is indicated is "found in the purpose of Christ's ministry and the purpose of the Gospel."[43] *Lastly*, the "highest ideal" was provided on the Day of Pentecost according to Mickelsen, when the Holy Spirit was given to all people, including women, in fulfillment of Joel's prophecy. Galatians 3:26-29 is, for Mickelsen, a restatement of Joel's prophecy.[44]

SOME COMMON PRINCIPLES IN EVANGELICAL EGALITARIANISM

Some of the hermeneutical principles employed by evangelical egalitarians have already been alluded to but some of the more prominent ones are described in this section. While in every system a certain amount of divergence exists, as intimated previously, common characteristics under the evangelical feminist's umbrella do more to unite than to divide. The traits mentioned below, to a greater or lesser degree, are present in the hermeneutical grid of all evangelical egalitarians.

Even though the evangelical egalitarian claims allegiance to the biblical text, the text does not appear to be *the* cornucopia of biblical argumentation for the feminist cause. Wayne Grudem makes an interesting observation related to the egalitarian and his or her treatment of the biblical text with the following general statement:

> Egalitarians have run out of new exegetical arguments, and they simply are not winning the arguments on the basis of the biblical text. Their books increasingly deal not with detailed analyses of biblical texts, but with broad generalizations about Scripture, then with arguments from experience or arguments from philosophical concepts like fairness, or from the supposed negative results of a complementarian position (such as spousal abuse, which we strongly oppose and condemn as well). But is seems to me, and increasingly it seems to many others, that egalitarians have simply lost the key arguments on the meaning of the biblical text, and they have no more arguments to make.[45]

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[42] Ibid., 91.

[43] Ibid., 179. The "new order" proclaimed by Christ.

[44] Ibid., 180.

[45] Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism & Biblical Truth*, 53.

Ad Hoc Passages

Among the outstanding hermeneutical tenets common to most evangelical feminists would be the *ad hoc designation* for what evangelical egalitarians regard as culturally bound biblical texts. According to Paul Felix this designation (e.g. I Timothy 2:9-15) is used to "restrict the teaching of 2:9-15 to an individual situation experienced by the original audience."[46] Such a restriction, in effect, limits the application to a first-century situation making "trans-cultural," twenty-first century literal application inappropriate and inaccurate.

The "Interpretative Key"

Felix also points to another hermeneutical tenet of the evangelical feminist, namely, the *"interpretative key" or "locus classicus"* or a defining passage. The *locus classicus* makes its appearance many times as the biblical text. A favorite of many evangelical feminists is Galatians 3:28 through which all other passages are filtered. The Pauline *"hard* passages" as well as patriarchical passages are filtered through the *"interpretative key"* grid. Felix suggests that "creation-redemption" is also an interpretative center for the feminist.[47]

Cultural Context Emphasis

The evangelical feminist places an *emphasis on the cultural setting* of the biblical passage of Scripture and especially as that biblical culture detracts from an "analogy of faith" application bent toward an egalitarian theological pre-understanding. For many evangelical feminists, therefore, objective meaning in a given biblical text becomes almost impossible since biases exist both in the text and in the reader.

The "Principle of Slavery"

Among other things Felix also lists *the principle of slavery* as a model for arguing the feminist cause which is generally stressed by the majority of evangelical feminist as well as the employment of the "analogy of faith" principle (Scripture cannot contradict Scripture).[48] This model, of course, is utilized by Webb in his book, *Women, Slaves, and Homosexuals*. Evangelical feminists apparently do not acknowledge as great a distinction between slavery as it is presented

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[46] Paul W. Felix, "The Hermeneutics of Evangelical Feminism," 376.
[47] Felix, 378.
[48] Ibid., 380.

in the Scriptures and gender-based roles described in the Scriptures (especially as they are related to the home and the Church) as much as evangelical non-feminists.

PROPOSED HARMFUL CHARACTERISTICS PREVALENT IN THE EVANGELICAL EGALITARIAN HERMENEUTIC

An Undue Emphasis on the Contemporary Cultural Context

For the evangelical egalitarian a pre-understanding grounded in a culturally conditioned feminist's view of gender seems to exact undue influences on the interpretative process. Many evangelical egalitarians' literary contributions reviewed for this paper placed a great deal of emphases on experience and the cultural relevancy of the feminist issue. For example, in speaking of the change in the theological landscape in regards to the feminist debate, Linda Belleville wrote:

> What accounts for the change? It is not that a biblical consensus has emerged - for many traditionalists still claim that theirs is the "Christ-honoring, Bible-believing perspective" and that the egalitarian perspective is the "liberal, culturally acceptable view." The primary impetus is actually social in nature. The feminist movement and the force of economic pressures have catapulted women into the workplace, where they have shown themselves to be equally talented, equally wise, and equally levelheaded.[49]

Webb also acknowledges the cultural pressure stimulating the feminist's agenda in the evangelical community. He said "the winds of culture are blowing today on two significant issues: the women's issue and the homosexual issue. Social change is taking place in both of these areas. *As a result*, Christians have to *re-evaluate* their beliefs due to changing attitudes toward women and homosexuals."[50]

Giles also contributes to the egalitarian chorus of culturally sensitive exegesis seemingly granting broad allowances for its input and influence regarding the ultimate meaning of a biblical passage. He wrote, "the debate about the man-woman relationship is not so much over the historical meaning of this or that text but about what the Spirit is saying to the church on this matter *in our age and culture* in the Scriptures."[51] Unfortunately, it is possible to get the impression with many representatives of the evangelical feminist community that the contemporary culture is competing with the biblical text for attention. The "culture," in the context of the evangelical

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[49] Linda L. Belleville, "Women in Ministry," *Two Views on Women in Ministry* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 2001): 78.

[50] Webb, *Slaves, Women & Homosexuals*, 25. Webb does not see biblical legitimacy for the practice of homosexuality but concurs with the proposition that the Bible condemns such behavior.

[51] Giles, *The Trinity & Subordinationism*, 195.

feminist, could be defined as a "politically correct" perception of women's rights and roles including ministry in the local church. Extra-biblical data (e.g. cultural understanding, personal experience, social injustice) is introduced into the hermeneutical mix in a disproportionate manner in the writer's opinion. While Stanley Grenz points to "current discussions" regarding gender differences where he nonetheless appears to diminish the fact that the Scriptures *do*, in fact, teach gender-based roles.[52] He cites Peggy Reeves Sandy's "studies" which conclude,

> In addition to biological sexual distinctions, the nature of the environment in which a society develops influences male and female roles. A hostile environment, she argues, readily leads to male domination, whereas relative equality between the sexes is most frequently found when the environment is beneficent. Indeed, in the biblical narrative, human sin results in both a hostile environment (a cursed ground) and male dominance.[53]

The pre-empting of biblical authority for an advanced "technological culture," evidently more qualified to analyze scientific gender distinctions, may appropriately be labeled "cultural arrogance" in this writer's opinion. Related to the cultural aspect in the hermeneutical process Susan Foh comments:

> It is true that "one cannot absolutize the culture in which the Bible was written," if by culture, one means that which is only cultural as opposed to that which is commanded by God in his word as well as reflected in the biblical culture. For instance, Christians have no obligation to wear sandals or tend sheep just because such things were done in Christ's day. However, the biblical feminists mean more than this when they employ the hermeneutic of deculturalization (or de-absolutization of the biblical culture). Regardless of how the Bible presents a subject, even if it is directly commanded, it could be the result of cultural contamination if it also appears in the biblical culture, according to the biblical feminist. This concept of deculturalization is possible only in conjunction with an incorrect doctrine of Scripture.[54]

As alluded to earlier, a "bias sensitive" application of a grammatical-historical-hermeneutic is the best defense against such a hermeneutical flaw. [55] The consistent application of such a literal or *normal* hermeneutic will better distinguish between what is *descriptive* and what is *prescriptive* in the

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[52] Grenz believes sin was the cause for male domination according to his statement on pages 166-67 of his book, *Women in the Church*. Evidently Grenze sees subordination as implying inferiority. However, while sin did mean Eve would now have a sinner as a husband it (sin) did not cause gender-based role distinctions. Gender-based functions were in existence before the fall (e.g. man is given the responsibility to "cultivate" the garden before Eve; man is given the responsibility to "name" the animals before Eve; of course, man gave the name of "Eve" to Eve). The fact that man was created first is used by the Apostle Paul in I Cor. 11:8 and 1 Tim. 2:13. The order of creation is not sin related.

[53] Grenz, *Women in the Church*, 167.

[54] Foh, *Women & the Word of God: A Response to Biblical Feminism*, 30.

[55] While both the dispensationalists and the covenant theologian would claim the "grammatico-historical" method of interpretation, it is the classical dispensationalist who would add "literal" to the label of this hermeneutic. "Literal" can also be understood as "normal." In other words, taking the biblical text at *face value* with an understanding of the implications of the literary style and forms and interpreting the biblical passage accordingly.

biblical text. Inspiration does not remove the biblical text from its cultural context but it does provide a safeguard against a kind of cultural contamination which hinders the message intended by its ultimate author, namely, the Holy Spirit. Biblical commands should *not* be taken lightly or too quickly lost in a cultural maze artificially imposed on the text by the interpreter.[56] The reformation principle of *sola scriptura* is just as appropriate in the twenty-first century as it was in the days of the Reformation. The line of demarcation between the complete canon of Scripture and extra-biblical culture seems lightly drawn by many feminists in evangelical circles. Susan Foh's analysis related to the "cultural bias" of evangelical feminism rings true. She writes,

> The biblical feminists have chosen a principle by which they judge the rest of the Scriptures. If a particular section of Scripture does not agree with their self-imposed standard, they explain it as a reflection of the culture in which it was written and therefore it is not binding. The principle they have chosen can be labeled equality (in particular, with regard to men and women). This principle breaks the analogy of Scripture as correctly understood, because it does not account for the large portions of Scripture.[57]

An Undue Emphasis on the "Ad Hoc" Nature of Texts not affirming Feminists Ideals

It is the consistent theme of the evangelical feminist to appeal constantly to the *ad hoc* nature of certain biblical texts to avoid the clear authorial intent of the passage. *Ad hoc* passages may be defined as the literary style of particular passages indicating a localized situation that may limit the application to the ancient cultural setting. Using this principle, for instance, Gordon Fee appears to dismiss the use, by the Apostle Paul, of the Genesis record to teach a biblical mandate for a woman's subordination to church leadership in the context of First Timothy 5:14.[58] It seems to the writer that the authoritative significance of Genesis is somewhat diminished at least for 21st century application by Webb as well.[59] Of course, the local situations and implications must be carefully evaluated in exegetical process of all Scripture passages. Such a consideration does not provide a license, however, for the nullification of clear trans-cultural biblical commands. This *ad hoc* designation is an apparent exegetical device or tool misapplied by the evangelical feminists

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[56] The reader should be reminded of Jesus' statement in Matthew 5:19. However, the writer does not want to imply that the historical and cultural context of a passage is not strategically important in the exegetical process.

[57] Susan Foh, *Women & the Word of God*, 37. Susan Foh is a graduate of Wellesley College and Westminster Theological Seminary.

[58] Gordon D. Fee, "Hermeneutics and the Gender Debate," 376–77.

[59] Webb, *Slaves, Women & Homosexuals*, 141–45. Webb wrote, "The pragmatic factors that drove primogeniture customs were part of the ancient setting but they are no longer part of our world." Webb in this statement attempts to dismiss the significance of "Adam being created first" complementarian argumentation.

which has the effect of limiting the implications of biblical texts which seem, to them at least, to teach a complementarian position.

Jack Cottrell in his discussion of "General vs. Specific" and the "*occasional* nature of the epistles" and the erroneous feminist assertion that "all descriptive statements are specific" responds,

> But this simply is not true. We cannot just assume that teaching dealing with specific problems is descriptive only. Even if we grant that each epistle was occasioned by specific problems, this does not in itself mean that those problems were culturally or locally unique. The problem of division in Corinth, for example, called for some very practical instruction from Paul, specifically applied in 1 Corinthians. Very few would doubt that it is intended to be normative for the whole church…"[60]

Of the five passages in this study in particular three are given an *ad hoc* designation, namely, I Corinthians 11:3-16, I Corinthians 14:34, and I Timothy 2:9-15 are restricted by the evangelical feminists through, in the writer's view, a misapplication of the *ad hoc* principle.

An Apparent Abandonment of the Perspicuity of the Scriptures

As noted earlier William Webb pits what he calls his "redemptive movement hermeneutic" against the "static hermeneutic" most often employed throughout the history of the Church. His "hermeneutic" contains eighteen, often complicated, "criteria" a bible reader must go through in order to arrive at how the text is to be applied in a contemporary situation. In addressing this almost impossible maze of biblical tunneling Grudem comments,

> Speaking from the perspective of over twenty-five years in the academic world, I will not say that only one percent of the Christians in the world will be able to use Webb's system and tell us what moral standards we should follow today. I will not even say that one percent of the seminary-trained pastors in the world will be able to follow Webb's system and tell us moral standards we should obey today. I will not even say that one percent of the seminary professors will be able to have the requisite expertise in ancient cultures to use Webb's system and tell us what moral standards we should follow today. That is because the evaluation and assessment of any one ancient culture, to say nothing of all the ancient cultures surrounding the Bible, is a massive undertaking, even with one narrow subject such as laws concerning marriage and divorce, or property rights, or education and training of children. It is time-consuming and requires much specialized knowledge and an excellent research library. Therefore I will not even say that one percent of the seminary professors who have academic doctorates in OT or NT will be able to use Webb's system and tell us what moral standards we should follow today.[61]

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[60] Cottrell, 47.

[61] Wayne Grudem, "Should We Move Beyond The New Testament To A Better Ethic?" *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 47, no. 2 (June 2004): 319.

Such hermeneutical acrobatics makes it an understatement to speak of Webb's interpretative approach as complicating the matter of Bible study for the typical Bible student. Most believers, if left to Webb's system, would not be able to hazard a guess as to the authorial intent of a particular biblical passage. William Webb is not representative of all evangelical feminists. Not all evangelical feminists would agree or adapt all aspects of Webb's hermeneutical model as demonstrated by *other* egalitarian hermeneutical alluded to in this article.

Subjectivity in Biblical Exegesis (Emphasis on Personal Experience)

The hermeneutical aspects of evangelical feminism make it a "perfect storm" for subjective analyses and input of biblical texts related to the gender debate. This appears *not* to be unrelated to *personal bias* on the part of the evangelical feminist in particular. Such an accusation must be balanced by an admission that everyone is guilty of some subjective analyses in exegesis. Such egalitarians as Craig Keener, Linda Belleville, Stanley Grenz, Alvera Mickelsen, William Webb, and others appear to state their case for their position couched in some kind of *personal experience* and a pre-understanding of "what ought to be" in the "kingdom of God." Alvera Mickelsen, for example, stated, "while theologians debate whether God can and does call women to positions of leadership (with men as well as women), the Spirit of God is working through women whom he has gifted and called to leadership positions around the world."[62] She apparently believes both complementarians and egalitarians alike are heavily influenced by emotions and experiences in their approach to the biblical text. She wrote, "I have come to believe that the issue has as much to do with the emotions and experiences of people as it has to do with interpretation of certain passages of Scripture." She then proceeds, in her article, to argue with an overt feminist bias (e.g. "men have been socialized to see themselves as 'heads' of their houses").[63] Stanley Grenz attributed his research, which resulted in an egalitarian feminist view, to personal experience. He stated, "The basic openness to the ministry of women I gained from my upbringing was deepened after my marriage to Edna."[64] There are many such examples of personal experience interwoven into the evangelical feminist apologetic.

With such logic as this one could argue for almost any conclusion substantiated with data selectively chosen while eliminating other data *not* favorable to a pre-understanding or bias.

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[62] Alvera Mickelsen, "An Egalitarian View: There is Neither Male Nor Female in Christ," 177.

[63] Mickelsen, 173.

[64] Grenz, *Women in the Church*, 8.

Regarding whether there can be an objective approach to the Scriptures Felix comments, "the response of several in the evangelical feminist camp is 'No.' Scholer illustrates the negative answer: 'now, however, I feel that I have come to understand myself, along with many others, that in fact objective interpretation and objective hermeneutic is a myth.'"[65] The answer, in the writer's opinion, is that absolutes derived from the Scriptures are possible through the consistent application of a literal or better, normal or face-value hermeneutic which can control or, at least, keep personal bias and subjective input at a minimum. Subjectivity can be as variable as the individual student of Scripture but a great deal of objectivity is and must be achievable if the intended meaning of the text is to be ascertained.

A Faulty Hermeneutical "Starting Place"

Felix calls this "an interpretative center." He expands the definition with the comment that "stated another way, is there a clear text, an interpretative center, a theological and hermeneutical key, a 'locus classicus,' a defining passage, a starting point that serves as a filter in analyzing the New Testament view regarding these female roles?"[66] He lists two theological starting places used by evangelical feminists. One is a biblical text namely Galatians 3:28, and the other is a motif, namely the "creation-redemption" motif.[67] It is clear enough both in the Old Testament and in New Testament that all of Scripture carries equal weight. There is no selective inspiration. One verse in *not* more inspired than the other.[68] It should also be apparent that Scripture does *not* contradict Scripture but, in fact, Scripture *interprets* Scripture. The "ugly texts" Webb refers to in *Slaves, Women, & Homosexuals* implies, at least in my opinion, Scripture is in conflict with Scripture.[69] Such an impression flies in the face of an understanding that ultimately God alone is the author of the Bible. Scripture then has not and will not contradict or challenge itself. As Susan Foh commented, "if the author of Scripture is the Holy Spirit, contradictions cannot exist; any appearance of contradiction results from the reader's lack of understanding."[70]

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[65] Paul W. Felix, "The Hermeneutics of Evangelical Feminism," 383–84.

[66] Felix, 377–78.

[67] Felix, 378–79.

[68] The reader should review Joshua 1:8 and Matthew 5:18-19.

[69] Webb, 32. One of the "ugly texts" cited on this page is Deuteronomy 21:10-14. Webb comments, "Even in 'ugly texts' like these, a redemptive spirit surfaces within the Bible, especially when it is read against the backdrop of the ancient culture. One might expect such a redemptive movement, since the core of a biblical ethic is to love God and to love one's neighbor."

[70] Susan Foh, "A Male Leadership View," *Women in Ministry: Four Views* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1989), 71.

Another stress of the feminists in the evangelical camp may qualify for being designated as a "theological center." It is the issue of slavery and the comparison made to the gender debate. Just as slavery is unjust so also is the subordination of women either in the church or at home. The slavery analogy is used by Webb, Keener, and others. The rationale from Galatians 3:28 is not only *position* addressed in this verse but *function* as well. Slavery has been abolished in the phrase, "there is neither bond nor free." Webb builds a straw man by accusing the complementarian of tolerating slavery if it existed today. Regarding Deuteronomy 23:15-16, Webb writes, "a static hermeneutic would apply this slavery-refuge text by permitting the ownership of slaves today, provided that the church offers similar kinds of refuge for runaway slaves."[71]

Kevin Giles equates the two, namely the subordination of women to their husbands and slavery by asserting that "the biblical case for slavery, which is almost universally regarded now as mistaken and self-serving, is far stronger than the case for the permanent subordination of women put forth by some evangelicals today."[72] It is, however, as was mentioned previously, biblically untenable to postulate the notion that women are *permanently* subordinate to their husbands. A married woman will no longer be subordinate to her husband in the eternal state because marriage will not exist.[73] In spite of Kevin Giles' attempt to paint the complementarian into a pro-slavery corner, the fact remains, slavery was not instituted by God. Slavery was a product of sin and *not* a creation of God. As Saucer comments, "the institution of slavery was also not part of God's original creation. All biblical instructions toward both slaves and their masters are God's instructions toward both slaves and their masters and are to control a practice that came into human life as a result of sin."[74] Males do not cease from being males "in Christ," females do not cease from being females "in Christ." It seems safe to affirm that all comparisons are not analogous in Galatians 3:28.

A Deficient View of the Scriptures

No one is suggesting that every evangelical feminist is denying *full* inerrancy as already alluded to earlier. The overall general assumptions, however, of the feminist movement raise

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[71] Webb, 33.

[72] Giles, *The Trinity & Subordinationism*, 230.

[73] Matthew 22:30 records Jesus' statement that in the resurrection there will be no marriage relationship but rather, believers will be as the angels.

[74] Saucy and Tenelshof, 148.

serious questions that eventually come full circle back to the crucial issue of the authority of the Bible. Wayne Grudem, in his introduction to *Evangelical Feminism: A New Path to Liberalism*, quotes Mark Dever, senior pastor of Capitol Hills Baptist Church, Washington, D.C. This quote was published on Dever's blog, "Together for the Gospel." He comments,

> It is my best and most sober judgment that this position (egalitarianism) is effectively an undermining of – a breach in – the authority of Scriptures…it seems to me and others (many who are younger than myself) that this issue of egalitarianism and complementarianism is increasingly acting as the watershed distinguishing those who will accommodate Scripture to culture, and those who will attempt to shape culture by Scripture.[75]

As Foh states, "The biblical feminists have taken one step further away from the biblical concept of the trustworthy Scriptures. They maintain that the Bible is defective concerning at least one matter of faith and practice. The Bible is defective when it says, 'The husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church...' (Eph. 5:23) and 'I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over men; she is to keep silent' (I Tim. 2:12)."[76]

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

The evangelical complementarian and egalitarian debate is having a rippling effect upon the entire Body of Christ. No one is exempt from its impact, no denominational body and no individual church member will be able to escape some of the fallout with regard to this ecclesiastical "battle of the sexes." There can be no middle ground given if the middle ground represents a compromise on the clear teaching of the Word of God. Such a statement is not meant to be overly dramatic. This particular debate encompasses a wide range of theological fundamentals. From theology proper and our understanding of subordination within the Trinity, to such questions related to bibliology as the nature of inspiration and hermeneutical issues, to questions affecting the doctrine of ecclesiology and church governance, the evangelical feminist debate has long tentacles. Heavy consequences are inherent for the Church of Jesus Christ. This

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[75] Grudem, 18. Grudem apparently concurs with Dever's analysis with regard to the issue of biblical authority and egalitarianism. Grudem provides a quote from Francis Schaeffer, namely, *The Great Evangelical Disaster*, published in 1984. Particularly from his section entitled, "The Feminist Subversion." The following is one paragraph of the quote which, in the context of today's debate, almost sounds prophetic. Schaeffer wrote, "Some evangelical leaders, in fact, have changed their views about inerrancy as a direct consequence of trying to come to terms with feminism. There is no other word for this than accommodation. It is a direct and deliberate bending of the Bible to conform to the world spirit of our age at the point where the modern spirit conflicts with what the Bible teaches" (quote from: *The Great Evangelical Disaster*, 130).

[76] Foh, *A Response to Biblical Feminism*, 18–19.

demands vigilance on the part of the biblical exegete in the twenty-first century. Even though, it must be admitted, everyone brings some pre-understanding into his or her approach to the Scriptures; it seems apparent to this writer that the bias of the evangelical feminist is more blatant and focused than those of the evangelical complementarian (e.g. Mollenkott). The agenda of the evangelical feminist is more concentrated in that it is the dominant theme throughout their study of the biblical text. Complete unanimity is non-existent among evangelical feminists with regard to a hermeneutic or subsequent exegesis of all classic biblical passages most commonly used in the debate. There is enough unanimity present however, to betray a bent toward a supposed "exegetical outcome" sympathetic to an egalitarian position that goes beyond a more objective consideration of the biblical text.

The fervency of this "battle" reveals more than just a theological point made along the way as one studies the text of Scriptures. Evangelical feminism is a *cause* for the vast majority of egalitarians who label themselves "evangelical." It is for them "a hill to die on." However, because of the hermeneutical principles at stake and subsequent exegetical product, the feminist debate is also a "hill to die on" for the evangelical complementarian as well.

A TETHERED BIRD

By Jonathan Bolin*

Heavenly Father, we bow in your presence.

May your Word be our rule,

Your Spirit our teacher,

And your greater glory our supreme concern,

Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

(A prayer used by John R. W. Stott before preaching)[1]

On at least two occasions, John R. W. Stott described the Christian liberal as a balloon whose rope has been cut. The liberal has no compass and is blown around by the winds of subjectivity. Likewise, Stott pictured the fundamentalist as a caged bird who is imprisoned by his strict and literal view of the Bible. An evangelical, however, Stott saw as a kite because the evangelical is tied to an orthodox view of theology but is able to "fly high." After using this illustration of the three categories in Christianity, Stott concluded, "[for the evangelical] this position demands a particularly unusual combination of loyalty to the past and creativity for the future."[2]

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[1] David L. Edwards and John R.W. Stott, *Essentials: A Liberal-Evangelical Dialogue* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1988), v.

[2] Roy McCloughry, "Basic Stott: Candid Comments on Justice, Gender, and Judgment," *Christianity Today* (January 8, 1996), 28. For the same illustration, see "Learning to Fly Kites," *World Christian*, October, 1989, 10.

Perhaps more aptly than any other Christian leader in the last sixty years, Stott has been described by some scholars as "the evangelical kite." Taking into account his lifelong love for birds, John Stott may be called a tethered bird – for a kite is bound to fly in the direction the wind blows, but a bird has the ability to steer its flight and land wherever it pleases. Stott has been able to steer the course of evangelicalism to dialogue and unity among Christians.

A BRIEF BIOGRAPHICAL SURVEY OF JOHN STOTT'S LIFE AND MAJOR INFLUENCES ON HIS THEOLOGY

At times, it is difficult to grasp a man's theology and views without understanding the particular influences that shaped him. It almost goes without saying that Stott's family, conversion, education, ministry (including the controversies), and study of the Word all shaped his thought. A brief survey of these factors is, therefore, necessary.

Stott's Childhood and Early Education

John Robert Walmsley Stott was born April 27, 1921, to Arnold and Emily ("Lily") Stott.[3] Arnold was a renowned "consultant physician" specializing in the heart and chest at Westminster Hospital in London.[4] He married Emily Holland (a devoted "evangelical Christian"[5]) in July of 1911. Together they had four children, of whom John was the youngest.[6] Of his three sisters, John was closest to Joy.[7] John Stott's future social concerns stemmed greatly from his parents' example.[8] Though not a Christian, his father had a compassionate mindset bent on helping humanity and serving his country as a doctor. "He was a fervent believer in education, a child of the enlightenment, with an almost naïve trust in the power of reason and the inevitability of progress to remedy the world's ills."[9] Emily was also involved greatly in social action when she helped start the Domestic Fellowship.[10]

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[3] Timothy Dudley-Smith, *John Stott: The Making of a Leader, The Early Years* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 26.

[4] He achieved the rank of Major during his service to the Royal Army Medical Core in World War I. Ibid., 24.

[5] She went to college in order to become a medical missionary, but gave up both the dream and college, to take care of "her invalid mother and a much younger brother, Lance." Ibid., 25-26.

[6] Ibid., 26.

[7] Joy was a little over a year older than John, whereas Joan was almost nine years older. Rosemary, the second oldest, died of meningitis at three. Ibid., 26.

[8] When asked why he has been so involved with social issues, Stott placed a heavy emphasis on his parents' involvement in the community. McCloughry, 25.

[9] Dudley-Smith, *Making of a Leader*, 25.

The children grew up with a variety of house servants, the most influential of whom was a devout Christian named Nanny Golden.[11] John started school at age six at King Arthur's, Kensington, and later attended Oakley Hall (a preparatory boarding school), where he developed his lifelong love for photography and ornithology.[12] In 1935, Stott enrolled at the prestigious Rugby School with the intent of becoming a linguist. While at Rugby, the fifteen year-old involved himself with his first humane effort. Along with three other of his closest friends, he started an organization, the ABC Society, which was dedicated to helping homeless people by giving them baths. Later, Stott recalled, "I was more an activist than a thinker. I saw needs and wanted immediately to meet them." [13] John was able to sample the political climate of the pre-war European continent when his father sent him to Germany and France during summer breaks.[14]

Stott's Conversion

Not until his conversion at sixteen did John abandon his pursuit of becoming a modern linguist in favor of becoming ordained in the Anglican Church. His father had hoped he would become involved in diplomacy.[15] Despite the fact that Rugby emphasized religious devotion and though Stott was confirmed at age fifteen, he was in a desperate pursuit for meaning in life.[16] The key figure in John's conversion was E. J. H. Nash. John Bridger, a fellow student, was able to get John involved with the local Christian Union, where Nash would eventually speak.[17] "Bash," as they called him, was a staff member with the Scripture Union whose main ministry was to speak

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[10] The Domestic Fellowship was a ministry that allowed local maids to meet together during their time off for fellowship and study of God's Word. Ibid., 44.

[11] Ibid., 40.

[12] Ibid., 45, 54.

[13] Ibid., 75. Although they were never able to give baths to the homeless, they did do some good, "until the treasurer loaned all the subscriptions to his brother, who spent everything." McCloughry, 25.

[14] Dudley-Smith, *Making of a Leader*, 83.

[15] This was a difficult decision because he was extremely proficient in both German and French. Ibid., 86.

[16] Stott recalls, "[a]s a typical adolescent, I was aware of two things about myself, though doubtless I could not have articulated them in these terms then. First, if there was a God, I was estranged from him. I tried to find him, but he seemed to be enveloped in a fog I could not penetrate. Secondly, I was defeated. I knew the kind of person I was, and also the kind of person I longed to be. Between the ideal and the reality there was a great gulf fixed. I had high ideals but a weak will." Ibid., 89.

[17] Along with the invitation by Bridger, Dudley Smith includes the following influences on Stott's conversion: "Lily's Lutheran piety; the prayers and 'Scripture portions' from the nursery onwards; the choruses and simple stories of Nanny Golden; Great-Aunt Emily, a true believer, who prayed for him; All Souls and its Sunday School; Gerry Irvine and Oakley Hall" etc. Ibid., 90.

and organize camps at public schools (elite schools for boys such as Rugby).[18] Stott was deeply affected on February, 13, 1938, by Nash's sermon entitled "What then shall I do with Jesus, who is called the Christ?" It was on this day that Nash took Stott on a drive to talk to him. Paralleling the previous passage (Mt. 7:13) with Revelation 3:20, Nash explained the plan of salvation, and John came to faith in Christ. [19] After this incident, Nash wrote John every week for five years, and eventually John became his assistant at the "Bash Camps" during the summers until 1945.[20] Almost immediately after his conversion, Stott desired to become a clergyman of the Anglican Church. Because of his desire to be ordained, Stott was not required to serve in the military during World War II.[21]

Stott's Education at Trinity and Ordination

After finishing at Rugby with honors (head boy) in 1940, Stott was given a scholarship to attend Trinity College at Cambridge.[22] While there, John became heavily involved in the Cambridge Inter-Collegiate Christian Union.[23] During this time he came under the influence of John Wenham who diverted Stott away from premillennialism.[24] Wenham may also have introduced Stott to Hudson Taylor's biography, a great influence on Stott's later concern for world evangelism.

As World War II began to rage (Stott's collegiate years corresponded directly with those of World War II), he joined the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship, and his relationship with his parents deteriorated.[25]

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[18] Nash's camps became known as "Bash Camps." Bruce Hindmarsh, "Basic Christianity-with an Oxbridge Accent," *Books & Culture*, Sept./Oct., 2000, 7.

[19] Stott wrote the following in his diary the next day, "Up till now Christ had been on the circumference and I have but asked Him to guide me instead of giving Him complete control. Behold! He stands at the door and knocks-I have heard Him and now is He come into my house." Dudley-Smith, *Making of a Leader*, 93-96.

[20] Hindmarsh, 7.

[21] Dudley-Smith, *Making of a Leader*, 110-111.

[22] "Trinity was then (as it is still) the largest and wealthiest college in either Oxford or Cambridge." Ibid., 120.

[23] CICCU, a part the Christian Union under which Nash served, was "firmly evangelical and interdenominational with a strong missionary emphasis." Oliver Barclay, a fellow student, recounts, "John Stott made an immediate impact when he came up as a Fresher." Ibid., 125, 128.

[24] Stott's original lean toward Dispensationalism was partially due to his study of the Scofield Bible which Nash had given him. Ibid., 133.

[25] Ibid., 177. Stott's father was extremely disappointed that his son was seeking a career in the Church (especially during the years of World War II). This disappointment partially stemmed from Dr. Stott's pride in serving his country as a soldier (he served in both world wars) and embarrassment that his only son had chosen not to serve. He did not talk to John for at least two years and questioned whether to financially support him at Cambridge. John's mother was torn between the two during this time. Ibid., 154.

In 1942, after finishing his studies in French and German, John Stott was free to be fully occupied with his study of theology. In contrast to Stott's personal views, most of the professors at Cambridge were thoroughly liberal in their view of the Bible. [26] Among the more conservative faculty, though still liberal in some of his views, was C. H. Dodd.[27] Dr. B. F. C. Atkinson and Dr. Douglas Johnson encouraged Stott to reject the liberal teaching.[28] John graduated with a B. A. in June of 1943 "with a First in Part 1 of the Tripos and a Senior Scholarship from Trinity." [29] He would return for a final year at Trinity in the fall to earn an M.A.

At the end of his final year at Trinity, he was invited to stay at Cambridge for a doctorate. Stott turned down the offer and went directly to Ridley Hall to prepare for ordination.[30] While at Ridley, he stayed heavily involved with the CICCU.[31] He was ordained in June of 1945.[32]

Stott's Ministry at All Souls

After his ordination in 1945, John Stott joined Harold Earnshaw-Smith, the rector of All Souls and St. Peter's, as assistant curate.[33] His responsibilities would increase when Earnshaw-Smith became ill half way through Stott's first year at All Souls.[34] In 1949, John was able to publish a few articles in the Keswick magazine, *Life of Faith* and in the InterVarsity Fellowship's magazine. He also wrote a couple of booklets on evangelism and discipleship.[35] After a brief

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[26] Most evangelicals during that time got though higher criticism classes by ignoring what was being taught. "Sometimes [they claimed] to have spent lectures reading the daily paper." Oliver Barclay was instrumental to "help Stott 'break free' and face the intellectual challenges of the modern world courageously and honestly." Hindmarsh, 8.

[27] Stott recalled "…just looking round that room of 200 students drinking in every word of the great Professor C. H. Dodd and saying to myself. 'I'm the only person who doesn't agree with him." Dudley-Smith describes Stott's battle, "It was an early introduction to that 'pain in the mind' which was to accompany much of John Stott's later writing, Fighting his way to fair assessments of unwelcome arguments, maintaining with intellectual rigour his evangelical position only because he found it to be true." Dudley-Smith, *Making of a Leader*, 181-83

[28] Ibid., 184-87.

[29] The Tripos were the honors examinations at Cambridge. He had obtained Firsts in the German and French Tripos in preceding years. Ibid., 189.

[30] Stott felt called to a pastoral ministry rather than a teaching ministry. Ibid., 194.

[31] Ibid., 197.

[32] Ibid., 202.

[33] Earnshaw-Smith's preaching "was thoughtful, Christ-centered, often evangelistic, and in essence biblical and expository." Stott found that he had a great pastoral role-model during his early years in the ministry. Earnshaw-Smith would greatly influence the young Stott in his emphasis on reliance upon the Holy Spirit in evangelism. Ibid., 206, 209, 215, 219.

[34] His main responsibilities before this event were with the children of the church. Ibid., 230.

[35] Ibid., 237.

period of health, Earnshaw-Smith fell ill for the last time. He died in March of 1950. Stott was in charge of the church.[36] In September, John Stott became rector of All Souls, Langham Place.[37]

In 1951, the congregation's move back into the building of All Souls allowed for rapid growth of the church. They had been meeting at St. Peter's due to the damage sustained by All Souls during the war .[38] The increased traffic made it necessary to start All Souls' Guest Services. This ministry became a great tool to council and evangelize the thousands of people who visited the church.[39] Understandably, Stott's first true placement as rector in the Church kept him extremely busy, but his natural ability to delegate and his above average memory of names and circumstances afforded him the ability to shepherd well.[40] In addition, his preaching was excellent and worthy of imitation by the curates at the church.[41]

Along with a vibrantly growing ministry at All Souls in the 1950's, Stott was also promoted in the Evangelical movement. In 1951 Stott began his international influence on missions by attending and speaking at the World's Evangelical Alliance. The main purpose of this organization was to provide "action and thought" across denominational lines for Evangelicals. The same year, All Souls reached out to other churches in the London area to assist them in building their congregations.[42] In 1952, Stott accepted an invitation from CICCU to lead a mission to a university. This ministry would become one of Stott's main evangelistic opportunities during the rest of his life.[43]

Stott's associations also played an important role in his future influence. He started his lifelong, and somewhat controversial, relationship with Billy Graham in the early 1950's. All Souls participated in Graham's 1954 Harringay crusade that lasted March through May. This

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[36] Ibid., 242.

[37] Stott felt "more humbled than honored" at his appointment, but took up the task nonetheless. Based on the influence of Nash's camps and CICCU, Stott enumerated the following five point plan for his new ministry: "the priority of prayer, expository preaching, regular evangelism, careful follow-up of enquirers and converts, and the systematic training of helpers and leaders." Ibid., 246, 251, 252. All Souls, Langham Place was named after Sir James Langham of Northhamptonshire. It was built as a result of an Act of Parliament in 1818 "promoting the building of additional churches in populous parishes." It was completed on Christmas Eve of 1823. Ibid., 29-35.

[38] Stott's emphasis on vibrant ministry to the community evidenced itself in the addition of many ministries including the Clubhouse for the poor, a ministry to the surrounding stores, and weekly Bible studies. Ibid., 257, 261, 269, 271.

[39] Ibid., 283.

[40] Ibid., 274, 277.

[41] "John Collins [a curate at All Souls] came to feel that the most valuable training he received from his Rector was how to preach expositionally." Ibid., 273.

[42] Ibid., 292, 293.

[43] Ibid., 294. He would eventually lead more than fifty university missions during his lifetime to several different countries, including the United States, Australia, and South Africa. McCloughry, 25.

religious meeting became the largest of its kind in British history, and many people made professions of faith. All Souls was able to disciple most of the converts.[44]

Another manifestation of Stott's ability to lead and initiate was his Eclectic Society, begun in 1955. It was a great help to Anglicans in general and "the driving force behind the National Evangelical Anglican Congress."[45] Many organizations and institutions quickly recognized Stott's ability to lead. He declined the offer to become principal at the London College of Divinity in 1955 and Coadjutor Bishop of the Diocese of Sydney in 1956 and in 1958.[46] He did accept the position of chaplain to the Queen in 1959.[47]

As requests and demands from outside All Souls continually increased, Stott was still able to initiate the All Souls International Fellowship, which was established in 1961 for the purpose of reaching the growing population of international students.[48] Some of these requests included an invitation on several occasions to speak at the Keswick Convention (1962 and 1965). Due to the convention's views on sanctification, he accepted with reservation.[49] Later, in 1964, his speech at the Islington Clerical Conference caused a great controversy concerning the Charismatic movement.[50]

John Stott never married, and as a result, many questioned his singleness. He reasoned that God could use him better if he remained single. The influence for this may have come from Nash, who urged his followers to consider being single for the sake of the Gospel.[51]

No history of John Stott's life could be complete without the mention of The Hookses and his love for birds. Stott acquired The Hookses, a small cottage, in 1954. Later in his life he would spend up to three months there each year as a place of rest and writing. Many of his books were

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[44] Dudley-Smith, *Making of a Leader*, 294-97.

[45] The Eclectic Society was a group of Anglican ministers who met to mutually encourage each other twice a year. Ibid., 305-08.

[46] John Stott was also offered the positions of principal of Wycliffe Hall twice, of professor at Fuller Theological Seminary, Regent College, and Trinity College at Cambridge, and of president of the World Evangelical Fellowship; all of which he declined. Timothy Dudley-Smith, *John Stott: A Global Ministry, The Later Years* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 73, 252, 188, 252.

[47] Dudley-Smith, *Making of a Leader*, 319-26.

[48] Dudley-Smith, *A Global Ministry*, 25.

[49] Stott said that revering the Keswick Convention was part of his upbringing (through Bash's affinity for it), but he made up his mind to reject some of its teachings while at Cambridge. Dudley-Smith, *A Global Ministry*, 34.

[50] His booklet, *The Baptism and Fullness of the Holy Spirit*, was the result. Ibid., 38.

[51] "I was expecting to marry. There were two particular people who attracted me, although not simultaneously! It's difficult to explain what happened. All I can really say is that when I had to make up my mind whether to go forward to commitment, I lacked assurance that this was God's will for me. So I drew back…Looking back over my life, I think I know why God has called me to be single—because I could never have traveled or written as I have done if I had had the responsibilities of family." Dudley-Smith, *Making of a Leader*, 330.

written during his "Happy Days at Hookses."[52] His passion for bird watching and photography was evidenced in his book on birds.[53]

<center>STOTT'S CONTROVERSIES</center>

Break with Lloyd-Jones

Stott's ministry may be characterized by three main controversies. The first controversy occurred in 1966 at the National Evangelical Anglican Congress at Keele. Martyn Lloyd-Jones had just made an appeal to Evangelicals to separate from the liberal denominations.[54] When Lloyd-Jones finished his address, John Stott rose to give the concluding remarks of the meeting. Though the assembly was taken aback by Lloyd-Jones' remarks, they were further amazed when Stott stated, "I believe history is against what Dr. Lloyd-Jones has said…Scripture is against him…I hope no one will act precipitately…We are all concerned with the same ultimate issues and the glory of God."[55] David Bebbington commented that "it was simply not done to suggest in public that Christians should leave their existing denominations for the sake of gospel purity."[56] This dispute led to a break of relationship between these two great evangelicals.

Stott's desire (and that of similarly-minded men) was to bring the Anglican Church back to Orthodoxy by "encouraging bright young men not to leave the fold but to become ordinals, thereby increasing the evangelical presence in the Anglican Church…It was this argument which Lloyd-Jones was rejecting."[57] Stott would lead Evangelicalism from within the church, and Lloyd-Jones, from without.[58]

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[52] The title of a poem by one of Stott's friends. Dudley-Smith, *Making of a Leader*, 434.

[53] John R. W. Stott, *The Birds, Our Teachers: Essays in Orni-Theology* (Wheaton: H. Shaw Publishers, 1999).

[54] Jeff Straub, review of *Evangelicalism Divided*, by Iain Murray, *Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal* 6 (Fall 2001): 118.

[55] Mark Sidwell, "Separation and Unity: D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones and 'Evangelical Unity,'" *Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal* 3 (Fall 1998): 54.

[56] Hindmarsh, 8.

[57] Stephen Clark, "Rewriting the 1960's: Is Dr. McGrath Right?," *Banner of Truth*, 8, doc wysiwyg://92/http://www.banneroftruth.co.uk/articles/rewrting_the_1960s/ (accessed April 17, 2001). Iain Murray gives an excellent restatement of the issue. "The divide [in evangelicalism] was not over doctrinal issues…no fundamental truth was being denied by either side." The true Christians were saddened by the state of the English Church (liberalism abounded). Murray continues by giving two reasons which spurred Lloyd-Jones' remarks. "The new emphasis on 'openness', and on the wider co-operation of evangelicals with others, failed to address the fundamental problem in the mainline denominations. That problem was the way in which the definition of a Christian had been changed and undermined…[Lloyd-Jones] believed that for evangelicals to appear to accept the 'We are all Christians' axiom of ecumenism was fundamentally wrong…in response to him it was said that the issue was really only about churchmanship." The second reason for the separation was the differences of views concerning human depravity ("the depth and reality"). The liberal tendency of the denominations led to the existence of many unbelievers in the church.

Struggle with Charismatic Movement

The second major controversy during Stott's ministry involved the charismatic movement. Stott's personal encounter with the charismatic movement began when Michael Harper, a curate at All Souls, believed that he had been baptized by the Spirit and began to speak in tongues. Stott was very honest with him and asked him not to preach about the subject. The Rector would allow Harper to practice it in private and speak about it only in personal testimony. Stott did not remove him from the pastoral team, and Harper did not leave until two years later in 1965. It was then that Stott voiced his opinion about "Neo-Pentecostal teachings and experiences."[59]

Stott's book *The Baptism and Fullness of the Holy Spirit* was a result of his studies when the issue came up. He "ben[t] over backwards to accommodate the charismatic concerns that he believed were biblically valid."[60] At a later time, he would rewrite the book under the title of *Baptism and Fullness: the Work of the Holy Spirit Today*.[61] His views of the baptism and filling of the Holy Spirit are clearly delineated in both these works. Assuring his readers that neither baptism nor the fullness of the Holy Spirit is accompanied by spectacular signs, he went on to say that baptism of the Spirit occurs at salvation, whereas filling may occur on multiple occasions.[62] Stott believed that not all spiritual gifts are delineated in the New Testament and that the gifts of

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Lloyd-Jones broke with evangelicals who were cooperating with non-evangelicals. For more see Iain Murray, *The Unresolved Controversy: Unity with Non-evangelicals* (Edinburgh: Howie and Seath, 2001), 1-19.

[58] Stott describes three types of evangelicals: "those who get out, those who cave in, and those who stay in without giving in." He states the last one is the hardest to do because "you're always in tension with people with whom you don't agree, and that is painful." McCloughry, 26. This position shows the level to which Stott compromises doctrine in order to avoid separation from false teachers. For further discussion see M. H. Reynolds Jr., "Evangelical Solomon or Compromising Evangelical?," *Foundation*, Jan.-Feb, 1996, 26. If the Anglican Church were to officially deny the doctrine of the person and work of Christ, of justification by grace through faith, or of the sanctity of heterosexual, monogamous marriage Stott would leave the Church. McCloughry, 27. But, Stott does cooperate with other groups who do approve of homosexuality. Reynolds, 26.

[59] Dudley-Smith, *A Global Ministry*, 23.

[60] David Wells, "Guardian of God's Word," *Christianity Today* (September 16, 1996): 57.

[61] He later said that he rewrote it because, "I felt I had been less than generous in my evaluation of the movement. I wanted to put on record that I had no doubt that God had blessed the charismatic movement. I still believe that some of the distinctive doctrines of charismatic Christians are not as honoring to the Spirit as they think they are, and are in fact mistaken. It seems to me we are bound to go askew if we put any subsequent experience on a level higher than the original one [salvation]. I simply think that many charismatics focus on the wrong [gifts]." He continues by stressing teaching as the most important gift today. He also expresses deep concern over the Toronto Blessing Movement because of their anti-intellectualism, their use of animal noises, and their habit of falling back [in the Bible, people would only fall forward when encountering God]." McCloughry, 30.

[62] John R.W. Stott, *The Baptism and Fullness of the Holy Spirit* (London: InterVarsity Press, 1964), 34.

tongues and healings are possible for today, though not normative.[63] At least on one occasion, he regretted not being able to bring charismatics and non-charismatics together in dialogue.[64]

Debate over Annihilationism

The final major conflict of note involved a debate with David Edwards over the destiny of the unregenerate. David Edwards, a liberal church historian, asked Stott to co-author a book with him on the essentials of Evangelicalism. In the book, Stott stated, "the most Christian stance is to remain agnostic on this question [on what happens to the unsaved who die]…The fact is that God…has not revealed how He will deal with those who have never heard [the gospel]."[65] This, of course, led to a tremendous reaction among evangelicals and fundamentalists. The issue came into the limelight in 1989 when the Consultation on Evangelical Affirmations could not reach agreement on the issue, after a speech by J. I. Packer in which he mentioned Stott by name.[66] Dudley-Smith affirms that:

> Much of this kind of thing [the "over-reaction" to Stott's views] might have passed
> without comment, had not John Stott's old friend, Professor J. I. Packer, mentioned him
> by name both in America and in Australia, suggesting that those prepared to consider the

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[63] John R.W. Stott, *Baptism and Fullness: the Work of the Holy Spirit Today* (London: InterVarsity Press, 1975), 99-101, 198.

[64] Stott later commented, "If I were younger, I would take more initiative in seeking to bring charismatic and non-charismatic leaders together for some theological work to see if we couldn't find a common basis for united action, which I believe we could. Take the signs-and wonders movement, for example. There are two extreme positions. The first is to deny that there are ever any miracles today, which puts God in a straight jacket. The opposite extreme is to make miracles the norm for the Christian life, saying that every Christian ought to be engaged in miracle working. Now, in between those two extremes, we surely ought to be able to agree to be absolutely open to the miraculous without pressing people into the extreme position of saying that every disease can be miraculously healed." Michael Maudlin, "Stott Speaks Out," *Christianity Today* (February 8, 1993): 38.

[65] He gives us some insight into why he holds this position when he says, "I am imbued with hope. I have never been able to conjure up (as some great Evangelical missionaries have) the appalling vision of the millions who are not only perishing but will inevitably perish…Between these extremes [of universalism and the traditional view of hell] I cherish the hope that the majority of the human race will be saved. And I have a solid biblical basis for this [Lk. 13:23-24, Christ refused to answer]…we need to remember that God is the Creator of all humankind, and remains infinitely loving, patient and compassionate towards all whom he has made. Yes, and he is also everybody's 'Father'…[and] wants everybody to be saved (II Pet. 3:9; I Tim. 2:4). Jesus expressed his compassion for society's outcasts, [and] refused to reject them…his own forecast was that 'many' would come…to join the Jewish patriarchs in God's kingdom (Luke 13:29); and the final vision of the redeemed in the Book of Revelation is of 'a great multitude'…that is the vision that inspires me, even while I remain agnostic about how God will bring it to pass." Earlier in the chapter he states, "Well, emotionally, I find the concept intolerable…As a committed Evangelical, my question must be-and is-not what does my heart tell me, but what does God's word say?" He bases his argument on the language used, the imagery used, the biblical concept of justice, and the Universalist texts. "Eternal torment is seriously disproportionate to sins committed in time, it clashes with the biblical revelation of divine justice." Edwards and Stott, 327-28, 314-19.

[66] Millard J. Erickson, "The Fate of Those Who Never Hear," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 152, no. 605 (Jan 1995): 14.

possibility of conditional immortality were willfully rejecting "the obvious meaning of Scripture."[67]

John Stott emphatically denies being a Universalist.[68] Stott's language about the issue is very important. He placed great emphasis on saying that it is only a "possibility" and that he held the view "tentatively."[69] Clark Pinnock, Philip Hughes, F. F. Bruce, and John Wenham agree to some extent with Stott's view of annihilationism.[70] Some even advocate that Stott's critics have grossly misrepresented him on this issue.[71]

STOTT'S GLOBAL INFLUENCE AND LATER LIFE

The Lausanne Covenant

Many know John Stott as the chairman of the International Congress on World Evangelism in 1974 and as the draftsman of the resulting Lausanne Covenant. The covenant is said to be "one of Stott's enduring legacies," and it "serves as an evangelical apostle's creed in many Third World settings."[72] The Congress was said to be "the high-water mark in this resurgence of biblical Christianity [since World War II]."[73] Eight consultations would follow

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[67] Dudley-Smith, *A Global Ministry*, 353.

[68] "I am not and cannot be a Universalist." Edwards, 327.

[69] Ibid., 320. He would write to a friend of his hurt when he was called "that erstwhile evangelical." He continued by saying, "the hallmark of authentic evangelicalism is not that we repeat traditional beliefs, however ancient, but rather that we are always willing to submit them to fresh biblical scrutiny…there is no 'knockdown' argument on either side." It is noted that he sincerely believes that Scripture teaches his view. Dudley Smith, *A Global Ministry*, 354.

[70] For discussion and refutation of John Stott's views on this subject see the following: William Crockett and James Sigountos, eds., *Through No Fault of Their Own: The Fate of Those Who Have Never Heard* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1991). Larry Dixon, *The Other Side of the Good News* (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1992). Jeff Spencer, "The Destruction of Hell: Annihilationism Examined," *Christian Apologetics Journal* 1 (Spring 1998). Robert Peterson, "A Traditionalist Response to John Stott's Arguments for Annihilationism," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 37, no. 4 (December 1994). Millard Erickson, "Is Hell Forever?," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 152, no. 607 (Jul.-Sep 1995). Charles Quarles, "The Apo of 2 Thessalonians 1:9 and the Nature of Eternal Punishment," *Westminster Theological Journal* 59, no. 2 (Fall 1997). Richard Mayhue, "Hell: Never, Forever, or Just for Awhile?," *Master's Seminary Journal* 9 (Fall 1998). Robert L. Reymond, "Dr. Stott on Hell," *Presbyterion* (Spring 1990). For agreement see: Clark Pinnock, "Toward an Evangelical Theology of Religions," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 33, no. 3 (September 1990). John R. W. Stott, "John Stott on Hell," *World Christian*, May, 1989.

[71] Roger Steer, *Guarding the Holy Fire: The Evangelicalism of John R. W. Stott, J. I. Packer and Alister Mcgrath*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999), 220-221.

[72] McCloughry, 25.

[73] "Stott resisted the temptation to reduce evangelism to technique and the gospel to therapy. The covenant first lays a foundation: God is the one 'who governs all things according to His will' and 'Who has been calling out from the world a people for himself;' the Scriptures are truthful and authoritative 'in their entirety as the only written Word of God;' and Christ is the 'only one Savior and only one Gospel.' These convictions explain what evangelism is— spreading 'the good news that Jesus Christ died for our sins and was raised from the dead according to the scriptures, and that as the reigning Lord he now offers the forgiveness of sins and the liberating gift of the Spirit to all who repent and believe.' According to the covenant, the nature of God explains why social concern is not an

Lausanne to further clarify different statements made in the Covenant.[74] In 1989 the Second Lausanne Congress on World Evangelism met in Manila, Philippines. The resulting document expanded on the Lausanne Covenant and affirmed, among other things, man's dignity as bearer of God's image and the depravity of self-centeredness, the Gospel's role as good news for the materially and spiritually poor, and the uniqueness of Jesus Christ.[75] Common criticisms of the covenant include the following: there was no direct statement about plenary inspiration of the Bible, it virtually "partnered" evangelism with social action, and it looked to denominations for implementation instead of the independent Christian community.[76]

Langham Partnership International

In 1971, Stott established the Evangelical Literature Fund (ELT) to use his royalties and the donations of others to buy books for Third-World pastors and teachers.[77] The ELT is now under the auspices of the Langham Partnership International. In conjunction with the book ministries, the Langham Partnership International actively aids in supporting Third World scholars as they pursue advanced degrees.[78]

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alternative to the gospel; the God who calls people to a saving faith is also the creator and judge of all. Therefore, we 'should share his concern for justice and reconciliation throughout human society and for the liberation of men from every kind of oppression.'" Wells, 54, 56.

[74] Stott mentions the consultations in which he was involved as follows. The Pasadena Consultation on the Homogenous Principle (1977) was a dialogue between evangelicals in Stott's camp and the church growth movement making clear that only an integrated (inter-racial) church is biblical. The Willowbank Consultation on Gospel and Culture (1978) "left us with the conviction that a lot more thinking needs to be done by evangelical people on the place of culture in hermeneutics and in mission." The High Leigh Consultation on Simple Lifestyle (1980) recognized the importance of a balance between materialism and asceticism in order to direct funds to Third World nations and the importance of caring for the environment. The Grand Rapids Consultation on the Relationship Between Evangelism and Social Responsibility which made clear that social activity is a consequence of evangelism, a bridge to evangelism, and a partner of evangelism. (The last conference was a reaction to accusation made by Arthur Johnston's book *The Battle for Evangelism*) John R. W. Stott, "Twenty Years After Lausanne: Some Personal Reflections," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, April, 1995, 50-51.

[75] Ibid., 51, 52.

[76] Dudley-Smith, *A Global Ministry*, 219. Arthur Johnston made similar claims in his *The Battle for Evangelism*. Stott acknowledged these claims in his response article to Johnston and laments that there was not a stronger emphasis placed on the supremacy of the Scripture. John R. W. Stott, "The Battle for World Evangelism: An Open Response to Arthur Johnston," *Christianity Today*, January 5, 1979, 34.

[77] Dudley-Smith, *A Global Ministry*, 232.

[78] Wells., 55. Maudlin reports Stott's words from thirteen years ago, "we have 10,000 graduate pastors to whom we send two books every year. Second, we have 50,000 non-graduate pastors for whom we select two much simpler books to send. Third, we make a grant to 700 seminaries in the Third World and Eastern Europe and send them a book list of the most important evangelical volumes that we think they should consider having. Fourth, we offer seminarians five or six basic reference books for a nominal fee; we send out about 10,000 sets every year. Fifth, we have a list of 100 Third World scholars for whom we provide a grant so they can order a dozen or more books a year. And sixth, we make grants to publishers, particularly in the Third World. Those are the six main projects."

Writing Ministry

Stott's greatest influence has come from his writing ministry. Depending on how one counts the revisions of works, Stott has written more than forty books. His most popular book, *Basic Christianity*, has sold over two million copies and printed in over sixty languages.[79] *The Cross of Christ* is considered by many to be his magnum opus.[80] His contributions to *The Bible Speaks Today* series of commentaries are also very popular.

Stott's success in writing is apparent. He was genuine and to the point. Moises Silva gives an overall positive review on Stott's *God's New Society*. He does mention, though, that Stott sometimes "over-interprets the Greek tenses," but when, in the rare cases that it does happen, it is "relatively innocuous." Silva continues his review by stating that Stott's exposition of paragraphs rather than individual verses is an excellent way of seeing the major thrust of the passage.[81] Another commentator put it this way, "Stott rarely, if ever, leads one astray. His analyses are judicious, well-defended and clearly stated."[82]

Final Years of Ministry

Stott became Rector Emeritus of All Souls in 1975 in order to facilitate his travels and writing ministry. Michael Baughen succeeded him as Rector.[83] The "Stott Fund" (1974) and the Accountability Group of Elders (1986) were formed to aid Stott in his para-church ministries.[84] The mid-90's marked Stott's diminished involvement in leading Evangelicalism. In his book *John Stott: A Global Ministry, The Later Years*, Dudley Smith quotes Stott as follows: "I really am 'in the wings' now, and rightly so. I'm conscious of diminishing intellectual vigor, and I'm no longer

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Maudlin, 55. Stott has raised more than four million dollars for the New Millennium Fund (similar to the ELT). John Yates III., "Pottering and Prayer," *Christianity Today*, April 2, 2001, 62.

[79] Anonymous, "The Rev. Dr. John R. W. Stott," *Langham Partnership International*, n.d, http://www.johnstott.org/CC_Content_Page/0,,PTID326046%7CCHI D719188,00.html. (accessed July 25, 2006).

[80] Robert Culpepper, review of *The Cross of Christ*, by John R. W. Stott, *Faith and Missions* 5, no. 1 (Fall 1987): 95.

[81] Moises Silva, review of *God's New Society: The Message of Ephesians*, by John Stott, *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 24, no. 2 (June 1980): 175.

[82] William Klein, review of *Romans: God's Good News for the World*, by John Stott, *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 41, no. 1 (March 1998): 144.

[83] Dudley-Smith, *A Global Ministry*, 149.

[84] Ibid., 142, 264.

abreast of current issues and their literature. I think my days of controversy are over…the rising generation must pick up the baton and run with it."[85]

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF JOHN STOTT'S THEOLOGICAL POSITIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Positive Influence

Though this article has touched on the major sources of conflicts in John Stott's views above, it is important to understand his views on other topics in order to grasp his thought more completely. Therefore, a brief survey of John Stott's theological positions and contributions follows.

Christology and Soteriology

John Stott did much in the areas of the study of Christ and salvation. Christ is the center of John Stott's writing. The sheer number of books with "Christ" in the title (at least fifteen) reflects this truth.[86] Both laity and professional ministers remember him most for his studies on Christ's cross. On one occasion he wrote:

> Nothing in history or in the universe cuts us down to size like the cross. All of us have inflated views of ourselves…[unbelievers] do not object to Christianity so long as it is not the faith of Christ crucified. But Christ crucified they detest…because of the wounds which [it] inflicts on men's pride.[87]

Also to be noted is his dedication on defending a true doctrine of salvation. As one commentator put it, "Dr. Stott's *The Cross of Christ* is the most forceful and persuasive presentation of the penal substitution view of the atonement that I have ever read."[88] In the book, Stott outlined the crucial questions of what the atonement truly is ("God's satisfying Himself by substituting Himself for us.")[89] Stott was clear in his utter rejection of the prosperity gospel movement.[90]

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[85] Ibid., 417.

[86] See John R. W. Stott, *Focus on Christ* (New York: William Collins Publishers, 1979).

[87] John R. W. Stott, *Only One Way: The Message of Galatians* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1968), 179.

[88] Culpepper, 95.

[89] John R. W. Stott, *The Cross of Christ* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1986), 159-160. When asked about the accusation of some who think he has watered down the gospel, Stott said, "I think that's rubbish." McCloughry, 25-26.

[90] "We have to have the courage to reject the health-and-wealth gospel absolutely. It's a false gospel." Ibid., 29.

Hamartiology

      With his high view of Christ and salvation, came his low view of man and sin. On many occasions Stott affirmed, without apology, the depravity of man.[91] He was well known for his strong stand against the homosexual agenda.[92] Stott stated, "No ethical challenge facing the churches today is more radical than the homosexual or 'gay' debate."[93]

Eschatology

      John Stott boldly claimed to be an amillennialist when he stated that the one thousand years of the millennium are symbolic for a "long but unspecified time." He based his position on three events that are specified in Revelation 20. He asserted that because these events are occurring at the present, the millennium is a present experience.[94] Stott's amillennialism was also apparent when he spoke of the state being the one who restrains in II Thessalonians 2:7.[95] It does seem that he shied away from post-millennialism when he said, "We cannot build the kingdom of God on earth."[96]

Negative Influence

Bibliology and Defense against Liberalism

      Stott realized that liberals deny the Word of God because of its implications on man's sinful state. Therefore, Stott emphasized the finality of God's revelation in Christ.[97] Stott firmly

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    [91] "We are all sinners…total depravity asserts that every part of our human being has been tainted and twisted by sin, and that this includes our sexuality." John R. W. Stott, "Faith, Hope, and Love," *New Man*, March/April, 1998, 42.

    [92] "Homosexual partnership … is 'against nature' and can never be regarded as a legitimate alternative to marriage." John R. W. Stott, *Romans: God's Good News for the World* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1994), 78.

    [93] Stott, *Faith, Hope, and Love*, 42. He valiantly defended the Orthodox position against the Liberal Dr. Sprong in a 1993 debate. Dudley-Smith, *A Global Ministry*, 338-402.

    [94] The three events and their fulfillment in the present are listed as follows: Jesus Christ is sitting at the right of the Father and reigning (Mat. 28:18), "his people have been raised and exalted with him, are seated with him, sharing his reign, and are called 'kings and priests'" (Eph. 2:6; Col. 3:1-3; I Pet. 2:5-9; Rev. 1:6), and "Satan is bound, having been overthrown by Christ at his first coming" (Lk. 11:21-22). Edwards and Stott, 308-09.

    [95] Several of his arguments for this position are as follows: it "makes sense," it meshes with Paul's known view of the state, and the masculine and neuter words are better explained. John R. W. Stott, *The Gospel and the End Time: The Message of 1 and 2 Thessalonians* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1991), 170.

    [96] McCloughry, 32. An interesting event occurred while Stott was still at Cambridge. He was asked to give a lecture on eschatology at St. Matthew's. Using the Scofield Bible that Nash had given him, he spoke on the literal rapture, the seven-year tribulation, the one-thousand year millennium, and the Great White Throne. After the service, John Wenham "showed [him] the errors of [his] ways." "John Stott would later attribute to the dispensationalist teaching of J. N. Darby and others…the emphasis on a future 'kingdom age' which contributed to the neglect by many evangelical Christians of a sense of Christians social responsibility wider than personal philanthropy." Dudley-Smith, *Making of a Leader*, 133.

    [97] "God has no more to teach us than He has taught us in Christ. It is inconceivable that there should be a higher revelation than God has given in his incarnate Son. But although God has no more to teach us, we have a

defended the reliability of the Bible against liberal attacks.[98] Though Stott provided a strong defense against liberalism, conservative evangelicals have expressed concern with his lack of comfort with the term "inerrancy."[99] Another position that makes some wary is his approval of a gender-neutral Bible, *Today's New International Version*.[100]

Stott took a theistic evolutionary approach in his view on the origins of the earth. When commenting on Romans 5:12, Stott stated that Adam existed around ten thousand years ago, and that a type of homo-sapiens, that were not in God's image, existed.[101]

Women and Pastoral Leadership

Regardless of one's view of whether women should be permitted to pastor or preach, John Stott stated that it is essential to emphasize that men and women are equal before God "by creation" (to greater extent when in Christ).

> Anything we go on to say about roles, responsibilities, and ministries must be seen in light of this absolute equality of dignity and value and relationship with God…I can't dismiss masculine headship…as the evangelical feminists do. There is something in the Pauline teaching about headship that cannot be ignored.[102]

In a later interview he would say, "What has helped me most in struggling with this issue is a growing understanding of the need for 'cultural transportation.' Biblical truth is eternal and normative." Masculine headship "refers to responsibility rather than authority" "but we need to ask, 'What are the appropriate cultural expressions of this in the church today?'" Since we have dropped the use of veils, "is it possible, then, that the requirement of silence is similarly a first-century cultural application which is not necessarily applicable today?" Stott then expressed that

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great deal more to learn." The Holy Spirit does not reveal more, but is "giving us perception and application of old truth." McCloughry, 28.

[98] "It is not dishonest in the face of apparent discrepancies, to suspend judgment and continue looking for harmony rather than declare Scripture to be erroneous." John R. W. Stott, "Are Evangelicals Fundamentalists," *Christianity Today*, Sept. 8, 1978, 46.

[99] Stott provides five reasons: "First, God's self-revelation in Scripture is so rich—both in content and in form—that it cannot be reduced to a string of propositions which invite the label 'truth' or 'error'…Second, the word *inerrancy* is a double negative…Third, the word *inerrancy* sends out the wrong signals and develops the wrong attitudes…Fourth, it is unwise and unfair to use *inerrancy* as a shibboleth by which to identify who is evangelical and who is not…Fifth, it is impossible to prove that the Bible contains no errors." John R. W. Stott, *Evangelical Truth* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 61-62.

[100] *Today's New International Version*, "Reviews," http://www.tniv.info/reviews/result.php?list_category=scholar&name_option=last_name&sort_option=ASC&Submit=Sort+%2F+List/ (accessed July 18, 2006). See Art Toalson, "Bible Society Counters Criticism of Gender-Neutral TNIV Translation," *The Christian News*, June 24, 2002, 20.

[101] James Rosscup, review of *Romans: God's Good News for the World*, by John R. W. Stott, *Master's Seminary Journal* 6, no. 2 (Fall 1995): 259.

[102] Maudlin, 38.

women can be ordained, but there must be an "appropriate contemporary expression of masculine headship" over her.[103]

Critique of Modern Christianity

Perhaps one of the most valuable elements of Stott's writing is his criticism of contemporary Christianity and his call for change. Economic oppression, the environment, and the immorality of nuclear weapons are, what Stott considered, blind spots to the modern Christian and must be corrected.[104] Stott wrote the Lausanne Covenant's rejection of Christian materialism. "In between asceticism and materialism is simplicity, contentment, and generosity, and these three virtues should mark all of us."[105] In another interview, Stott proclaimed: "We need to get the failures of the church on our conscience…Nothing today is more urgent than that the church begin to exhibit its reality as the dwelling place of God and as the new humanity being built in Christ. Only then will there be a credible witness to Christ."[106] Stott also stated that the Lord calls Christians to be separate from the present worldly culture and embrace the "Christian counter-culture."[107]

Mission

Gary Meadors suggests that around 1966 John Stott shifted his emphasis on missions to an emphasis on social concern.[108] Stott stated that his change of view (from emphasizing the Gospel over social work to emphasizing them equally) was not necessarily a direct result of the influence of one person, but of studying the New Testament.[109] When he was accused by Arthur Johnston of changing from a sole emphasis on evangelism to a view of equal partnership between

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[103] In a church setting this would flesh out in the woman pastor being part of a team led by a male pastor (or Rector in Stott's case). McCloughry, 32. The "demand for female silence was not a prohibition of women teaching men, but rather a prohibition of any kind of teaching which infringes the principle of male headship." John R. W. Stott, *Issues Facing Christians Today* (London: Marshall, Morgan, and Scott, 1984), 252. In an article discussing the controversy over Ann Graham Lotz's ministry, Stott said, "I find myself envious of her gift." Yonat Shimron, "Graham's Daughter-Struggling to Be Heard," *The Christian News*, Sept. 18, 2000, 27.

[104] McCloughry, 29.

[105] Ibid.

[106] Wells, 55.

[107] John R. W. Stott, *Christian Counter-Culture: The Message of the Sermon on the Mount* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1978), 19.

[108] Gary T. Meadors, "John R. W. Stott on Social Action," *Grace Theological Journal* 1, no. 2 (Fall 1980): 130.

[109] He states, "At the time of the Berlin Congress in the 1960's, I was still very much a right-wing conservative evangelical who believed…that my main task was simply to expound the Scriptures and leave the application to the Holy Spirit…But gradually, and I don't think it was through anybody's particular influence but through my own reflection on the New Testament, I came to see that his view was very narrow and unbiblical. In the early 1960's, I began to travel in the Third World, and I saw poverty…it became clear to me that it was utterly impossible to take that old view. Since then I have come to a much more holistic position." "Learning to Fly Kites," 11.

evangelism and social action, Stott said, "Brother Art, you say that I have 'dethroned evangelism as the only historical aim of mission'; I would prefer to say that I have attempted to 'enthrone love as the essential historical motivation for mission.'"[110] Earlier in the article Stott said that the distinction between the two purposes of mission is "often artificial….although some individual Christians are called to specialist ministries (some as evangelists, others as social workers, and so forth), the Christian community as a whole should not have to choose, any more than Jesus did."[111] "Not only the consequences of the commission, but the actual commission itself must be understood to include social as well as evangelistic responsibility."[112] Stott placed a great emphasis on avoiding this polarization of mission. He advised young people to develop a specialization, but warned them not to let this specialization cause them to neglect either evangelism or social work.[113] He believed that there is a valid role for missionaries who focus solely on evangelism. Dudley Smith quotes Stott as saying that he "integrates social concerns into the mission of the church without ever minimizing his commitment to evangelism."[114]

In an article reflecting on the effects of Lausanne, Dr. Stott proposed several needs in mission. He stated that Christians need greater unity, greater visibility, greater clarity, greater consistency, and greater humility.[115] Stott's critique of American "triumphalism" is needed. Stott was so sensitive to this that he even pointed to American pride when reviewing a commentary written by an American.[116]

Call for Dialogue, Unity, and Reform

One of the main complaints raised by Fundamentalists against Stott was his dealings with the Roman Catholic Church. The 1974 Lausanne Congress invited five members of the World

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[110] Stott, "The Battle for World Evangelism," 35.

[111] "Certainly the 'words' and 'works' of Jesus belonged indissolubly to one another. In one sense His works made His words visible." Ibid., 34, 35.

[112] John R.W. Stott, *Christian Mission in the Modern World* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1975), 29.

[113] "Learning to Fly Kites," 10. See also John R. W. Stott, *Balanced Christianity* (Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 1975), 37ff.

[114] He states (a phrase that he uses often during interviews) "Everybody cannot do everything." Stott also gives the theological basis for social involvement. He states that Christians must be involved in this type of ministry because of the nature of God ("a lover of justice, protector of the oppressed) and the doctrine of man (made in the image of God). McCloughry, 25-26. While on a visit to South America, Stott wrote concerning his view of liberation theology: "I do not think we should quarrel with its defined goal of 'liberation' since the God who made (and makes) human beings in his own image is obviously opposed to everything which dehumanizes them. We may quarrel, however, with the dubious arguments they use to buttress their position; and also with those theologians who are outspoken advocates of violent revolution." Dudley-Smith, *A Global Ministry*, 199-200.

[115] When speaking of unity, Stott condemns "sinful individualism and needless duplication." Stott, *Twenty Years*, 53-55. See also, "The Lausanne Covenant."

[116] John R. W. Stott, review of *Dynamics of Spiritual Life: An Evangelical Theology of Renewal*, by Richard Lovelace, *Trinity Journal* 2, no. 1 (Spring 1981): 81.

Council of Churches and three Roman Catholic priests.[117] Hindmarsh states that Stott and Packer "of necessity" were in dialogue with the Roman Catholics.[118] The "Stott Statement" of 1986 clearly showed a desire for unity with the Catholics.[119] But, because Stott adamantly rejected the Catholic belief system of salvation, he stated that evangelical leaders needed "to keep pressing the Roman Catholic Church…to subject all its traditions to biblical scrutiny and, where necessary, to reform."[120]

The reason for Stott's desire for dialogue is clear, "Dialogue is a token of genuine Christian love, because it indicates our steadfast resolve to rid our minds of the prejudices and caricatures which we may entertain about other people."[121] His desire for dialogue combined with staunch grasp of orthodoxy is evident in his brave defense of the Gospel at the World Council of Churches meetings. A noteworthy example was his reprimand of the World Council in 1975, "the World Council uses Scripture as a drunk uses a lamp post, namely for support rather than for illumination!"[122]

Evangelicalism and Fundamentalism

John Stott once stated, "First, I am a Christian; second I am an evangelical; third I am Anglican."[123] Stott made some very bold statements concerning Evangelicalism. "It is the contention of evangelicals that they are plain Bible Christians, and that in order to be a biblical Christian it is necessary to be an evangelical Christian."[124] "Stott was indeed the center of

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[117] Stott said, "The visible unity of all professing Christians should be our goal…and evangelicals should join others in the Church of England in working toward full communion with the Roman Catholic Church." O. Timothy, "John Stott," *Austrailian Beacon* 5, no. 4 (Aug. 1988): 7.

[118] Hindmarsh, 7.

[119] Richard Ostling, "Piecing Together the Ecumenical Puzzle," *Christian Beacon*, November 6, 1986, 5.

[120] "…the Catholic and evangelical understandings of the way of salvation are too disparate to permit common evangelism." Stott, *Twenty Years,* 53. When Stott's sister, Joy, joined the Catholic Church, he was very disappointed (she would not stay Catholic for very long). He recalled, later, his encounter with the priest, "he gave me something to read about the Seven Sacraments. I said to him, 'Surely you don't really believe all this, do you?' Joy was terribly shocked that I presumed to say such a thing to a Roman Catholic priest, but he said 'Yes I do; I believe it with all my heart.'" Dudley-Smith, *Making of a Leader,* 334.

[121] Marvin R. Wilson, "An Evangelical View of the Current State of Evangelical-Jewish Relations," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 25, no. 2 (June 1982): 152. From Stott, *Christian Mission,* 81.

[122] He vocally confronted Desmond Tutu and Jürgen Moltmann. In an address to the whole assembly he stated that the WCC needed to regain, "(1) the doctrine of man's lostness, (2) confidence in the truth, relevance and power of the biblical gospel, (3) the uniqueness of Jesus Christ, (4) the urgency of evangelism and (5) a personal experience of Jesus Christ." Dudley-Smith, *A Global Ministry*, 204-06.

[123] Dudley-Smith, *A Global Ministry*, 101.

[124] John R. W. Stott, *Christ the Controversialist* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1970), 32. Wells (using the chapter headings of *Balanced Christianity*) elaborates on Stott's position on Evangelicalism, "Stott's *Balanced Christianity* is, in brief compass, a declaration of this kind of evangelicalism. In it he opposes a polarization between mind and emotions that is so common today; he calls the church to he both conservative on the nature of Scripture and radical

evangelical recovery" in Britain. Stott's influence in recovering Evangelicalism in the United States, by means of his writings and university missions, is undeniable.[125]

Stott did not look at Evangelicalism through rose-colored glasses. He pointed out that Evangelicals fragment over personal preferences rather than over doctrine. Another problem for the Evangelicals is their lack of "systematic and creative theologians." Stott believed that if these types of theologians were to arise, Evangelicalism would unite.[126]

Closely tied to Stott's involvement with Evangelicalism is his criticism of Fundamentalism. Stott believed that "biblical revelation is not the prison that the real fundamentalists finds it."[127] He stated: "The fundamentalist emphasizes so strongly the divine origin of Scripture that he tends to forget that it also had human authors who used sources, syntax, and words to convey their message, whereas the evangelical remembers the double authorship of Scripture."[128]

John Stott's view of Fundamentalism was not totally negative. In a defense against the attacks from James Barr, in which Barr lumped Stott with Fundamentalists, Stott states: "Fundamentalism has increased my own determination that in all religious debate I will respect the other person, listen carefully to him, and struggle to understand him. There can be no understanding without sympathy and no dialogue without respect."[129]

Preaching

One of the great legacies of Stott is his teaching on preaching. Countless Christian leaders quote him as an authority. His solid exegesis of passages and relevance to current situations made

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in working out its truths in culture; he asks for acceptance of what is both structured and unstructured in the life of the church; and he calls for a partnership between evangelism and social responsibility." Wells, 55.

[125] Hindmarsh's article insightfully compares and contrasts John Stott with Billy Graham. Hindmarsh says, "If you had to choose two individuals to sum up the recovery and growth of evangelicalism in the English-speaking world in the last half of the twentieth century, you might well pick Billy Graham [and his crusade in 1949] and John Stott [and his appointment in 1950]." Hindmarsh, 7.

[126] McCloughry, 28.

[127] This prison Stott speaks of (the bird-in-the-cage illustration mentioned in the introduction) is the Fundamentalist's own narrow views (this is not a biblical cage, according to Stott, but one of a six-day creation, of the subjection of women, of right-wing political programs, and of racism). *Learning to Fly Kites*, 10.

[128] Stott, *Are Evangelicals*, 46. In 1988, John Stott said, "for thirty-five years now I have felt it right to repudiate the label 'fundamentalist'…they are true-even if sometimes embarrassing-brothers and sisters in Christ." He then proceeds to give the following eight characteristics of fundamentalism: "a general suspicion of scholarship and science," "a mechanical view or 'dictation theory' of biblical inspiration," "a naïve, almost superstitious, reverence for the Authorized Version," "a literalistic interpretation of all Scripture ('the interpretation of every word of the Bible as literal truth')," "a separatist ecclesiology," "a cultural imprisonment," "a denial of the social implications of the gospel," and "an insistence on premillennial eschatology." Edwards and Stott, 89-91. See also Dudley-Smith, *Making of a Leader*, 347.

[129] Stott, *Are Evangelicals*, 45.

his preaching worth being imitated.[130] Stott made a bold but true statement, "preaching is indispensable to Christianity…for Christianity is, in its very essence, a religion of the Word of God."[131] Numerous Christian authors and teachers use Stott's illustration that preaching is a bridge from the ancient biblical world to the present every-day life. Dr. Stott emphasized that preaching must come from a personal experience with Jesus Christ.[132]

Because of modern Christianity's neglect of preaching, "many [modern Christians] have zeal without knowledge, enthusiasm without enlightenment. In more modern jargon, they are keen but clueless."[133]

CONCLUSION

John Stott was a gift to the Church. There was nothing hypocritical about him. He practiced what he preached. Though Stott "was bred to think of himself as superior, he has achieved a remarkable grace of Christian humility."[134] The three things that stuck out in the mind of one of his study assistants were his humility, his discipline of prayer, and his balance of work and play.[135] Those who knew him described his discipline as "Teutonic thoroughness," his daily activity as "an obsessively careful management of his time," and his ability to strategize and organize as "genius."[136]

His proclamation and defense of the cross of Christ demonstrated his strong tie to orthodox Christianity. His leadership in mission and evangelicalism demonstrated his ability to apply Scripture to the modern context. In John Stott we find a tethered bird.

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[130] "True Christian preaching (by which I mean 'biblical' or 'expository' preaching…) is extremely rare in today's Church. Thoughtful young people in many countries are asking for it, but cannot find it." "It is my contention that all true Christian preaching is expository preaching." John R. W. Stott, *Between Two Worlds: The Art of Preaching in the Twentieth Century* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1982), 92, 125.

[131] Ibid., 15.

[132] John R. W. Stott, *The Preacher's Portrait* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1961), 71.

[133] John R. W. Stott, *Your Mind Matters* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1972), 7.

[134] Hindmarsh, 9.

[135] Stott awakes at five in the morning to spend at least an hour and a half in personal private prayer and meditation. Yates, 60.

[136] Hindmarsh, 7.

APPENDIX A

BOOKS AND ARTICLES WRITTEN BY STOTT, ARRANGED BY YEAR OF
PUBLICATION

Stott, John R. W. *Becoming a Christian.* London: IVF and Downers Grove: I, 50.

————. *Ezra the Scribe.* London: Berean Band, 1952.

————. *Parochial Evangelism by the Laity.* London: Church Information Board, 1952.

————. *Men with a Message: An Introduction to the New Testament and its Writers.* London: Longmans, 1952.

————. *Fundamentalism and Evangelism.* London Crusade Booklets, 1956.

————. *Being a Christian.* London: IVF, 1957.

————. *Basic Christianity.* London: Lutterworth, 1958.

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APPENDIX B

ORGANIZATIONS AND MEETINGS IN WHICH JOHN STOTT HAS BEEN INVOLVED [137]

Anglican Evangelical Assembly (AEA) (World Alive) (Chairman) (366)

Anglican-Methodist reunion (50)

Armonia (384)

Asian Leaders' Conference on Evangelism (204)

Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students (AFES) (308)

The Baker Memorial Lecture (Melbourne) (241)

The Berean Band (425)

Canadian Evangelical Fellowship in the Anglican Communion (189)

Church of England Evangelical Council (Chairman) (51).

Chavasse Lectures at Wycliffe Hall, Oxford (241)

China Christian Council (380)

Christian Action for Reconciliation and Evangelism (CARE) (305)

The Church Union (270)

European Congress on Evangelism (204)

European Leadership Conference on World Evangelism (267)

Evangelical Conference on Social Ethics (Chariman) (95)

Evangelical Fellowship in the Anglican Communion (EFAC) (Chairman) (290)

Evangelical-Roman Catholic Dialogue on Mission (ERCDOM) (204, 267)

Fellowship of European Evangelical Theologians (FEET) (220)

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[137] This list includes the majority of organizations with which Stott was involved. It by no means is a comprehensive list. Its purpose is solely to give an idea of how active this man was. Pages in parentheses come from Dudley-Smith, *A Global Ministry*.

Frontier Youth Trust (Chairman) (49)

Greenbelt Festival '83[138]

International Congress on World Evangelization (204)

 InterVarsity Fellowship (IVF) (President) (47)

Japan Congress on Evangelism (204)

Jerusalem conference on biblical prophecy (204)

Lambeth Conference (172)

London Institute for Contemporary Christianity (LICC) (307)

The Mexican Association for Rural and Urban Transformation (384)

National Evangelical Anglican Congress (NEAC) (Chairman) (80)

Pan-African Christian Leadership Assembly (PACLA) (204)

Senior Evangelical Anglican Clergy (SEAC) (366)

The Evangelical Alliance Relief Fund (TEAR Fund) (President) (274)

Universities and Colleges Christian Fellowship (UCCF formerly InterVarsity Fellowship)

    (President) (274)

Urbana Convention on several occasions (118)

World Council of Churches (WCC) (204)

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[138] Greenbelt was a large gathering of Christians that focused on Christian professionalism. Christian rock artists in the secular industry performed, liberation theology professors delivered lectures on Marx and the Bible, workshops were held on the environment, and dance classes were given. Wendy Nelles, "What's a Nice Theologian Like You Doing in a Place Like This?," *Christianity Today*, October 21, 1983, 34.

APPENDIX C

AWARDS RECEIVED BY JOHN STOTT

Doctorate of Divinity from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield (1971) (262)-He was visiting professor at the school in the fall of 1972.

Doctorate of Divinity from Lambeth (1983) **-** It was only then that people could start calling him Dr. Stott (English clergymen did not call themselves "Doctor" "on the strength of Doctorates awarded oversees") (262)

Templeton UK Project Award (1985) (419)

Doctorate of Divinity from Wycliffe College, Toronto (1993) (418)

Golden Word award from the International Bible Society (1993) (419)

Doctorate of Divinity from Brunel (1997) (418)

BOOK REVIEW

The Trellis and the Vine: The Ministry Mind-Shift That Changes Everything. By Colin Marshall and Tony Payne. Kingsford NSW, Australia: Mathias Media, 2009, xii + 196 pp., US $16.95 softcover, ISBN 978-1-921441-58-5.

The Trellis and the Vine: The Ministry Mind-Shift That Changes Everything was authored by Colin Marshall and Tony Payne, who are members of the Australian Anglican Church. Colin Marshall has been involved in both local church ministry and ministry training programs for more than 30 years. He now heads a work called *Vinegrowers,* which is designed to assist ministry leaders in implementing the principles of *The Trellis and the Vine.* Tony Payne has spent more than 20 years in active Christian ministry primarily in writing and editing and serves as the Publishing Director of Matthias Media, the publisher of *The Trellis and the Vine.*

The metaphor of the trellis and the vine occurred to Colin Marshall as he sat on his back porch reflecting on two vines in his yard supported by trellises. He noted that one vine was healthy and strong, virtually covering the trellis. The other vine, however, was not so healthy, and the most visible part of the structure was the trellis, not the vine. As he pondered the scene, Marshall devised a couple of basic assumptions: (1) the living part of the structure (that part for which the structure existed) was the vine; and (2) the trellis' purpose was limited to being a framework for supporting the living vine.

The metaphor posed by the two vine configurations suggested a church ministry paradigm to Marshall. He postulated that the vine structures are illustrative of the church. The

trellis represents the organizational structure including buildings, budgets, committees, and programs that support the work. However, the true ministry of the church is not the structure (which should not be noticeable) but the vine (which should cover the trellis as to make it virtually invisible). The heart of the autograph is to guide ministry leaders to planning for vine growth while developing the trellis only to the point necessary to sustain vine growth. While sorting through the questionable hermeneutical principles and eschatological applications of the authors, a Bible-oriented Baptist will find a number of intriguing potentials for local church ministry. Marshall and Payne pose the example of a reasonably solid Christian who approaches the pastor to announce that he would like to get more involved in the assembly and make a contribution to the work. How should one respond? The most natural and frequent response is for the pastor to consider mentally the various jobs and roles available: usher, Sunday School teacher, treasurer, musician, money counter, etc. The authors pose a different process for plugging the interested servant into a profitable ministry. The conversation should go as follows:

> See that guy sitting over there on his own? That's Julie's husband. He's on the fringe of things here; in fact, I'm not really sure he's crossed the line yet and become a Christian. How about I introduce you to him, and you arrange to have breakfast with him once a fortnight and read the bible together? Or see that couple over there? They are both fairly recently converted, and really in need of encouragement and mentoring. Why don't you and your wife have them over, get to know them, and read and pray together once a month? And if you still have time, and want to contribute some more, start praying for the people in your street, and then invite them all to a barbeque at your place. That's the first step towards talking with them about the gospel, or inviting them along to something (pp. 26-27).

If the individual responds that he would not know how to start any of those things, then the pastor should challenge him to meet regularly so the pastor can personally train him to do so.

The authors argue in chapter three that the New Testament has little to say about church growth in terms of numbers, finances, buildings, and success counted in those categories. Rather, they propose that a biblically healthy view of church growth has to do with gospel growth or increase of the Word. Success, they declare, is to be measured in the Holy Spirit's empowered process of seeing people move from spiritual darkness to a light-filled walk with Christ. "…The emphasis is not on the growth of the congregation as a structure – in numbers, finances and success – but on the growth of the gospel, as it is spoken and re-spoken under the power of the Spirit" (p. 37).

The authors suggest that church ministry is not a clean, symmetrical system of programs and processes, all well managed and smoothly operating. It is, instead, a chaotic web of personal relationships. They suggest that church ministry features disciple-making disciples who are immersed in a web of ministry that defies organization but bears fruit. These disciple-making disciples are personally digging into the Word, reading the Bible for their children and with their spouses, sharing the Word with a non-Christian colleague over lunch, meeting regularly with a new Christian for encouragement and teaching of biblical principles, and meeting with mature Christian friends for mutual strengthening.

> It can happen at home, at work, over the back fence, at church, in small groups, in a coffee shop – anywhere. But that it happens is vital. Because this is the work of the Lord, this is the Great Commission in action (p. 56).

According to Marshall and Payne, the crux of discipleship is training, but not so much the western mindset of training in which a person is to be made proficient in some practice or profession. While discipleship will include providing know-how and skills so that Christians can do certain things, the heart of training in the New Testament is much more about thinking and living than about imparting skills and competencies. The authors suggest in chapter six that training disciples can be summarized by three C's. The first C is conviction. This category covers one's knowledge of God and understanding of the Bible. A disciple must know the holy God, understand how to have a relationship with God through Christ, and not only be acquainted with, but illuminated with, truth from God's Word. The second C is character. A disciple of Christ is to display a holy, godly character that is based on sound doctrine. The final C is competency. Biblically mature disciples can speak God's Word to others in a variety of ways – some preaching, some singing, and some sharing personally with a neighbor over the back fence.

Chapter seven features a chart depicting the Gospel Growth Process in four stages. Disciple-making disciples will utilize the growth process in reaching souls for Christ, attending to infant Christians, and preparing growing Christians for disciple-making service. Outreach is sharing the gospel message with those who have never heard or never accepted Christ. Follow-up is the much needed instruction for new believers designed to establish in their thinking the basics of the faith and qualities necessary for growth to maturity in Christ. Growth is the mentoring process in which the knowledge of God and the Word of God become a part of their thinking and, consequently, conduct themselves as believers. Training is the equipping and mobilization of mature believers in preparation for becoming a disciple-makers on their own.

The implementation of this chaotic web of discipleship requires the re-programming of pastoral thought and time-usage. Marshall and Payne propose a new model for pastoral ministry with the jarring statement that…*Sunday sermons are necessary but not sufficient (p. 93).* While they understand that pastoral ministry is a multifaceted labor, they share two frequently observed models for the pastor's work and suggest a third that allows a better process for implementation of New Testament church ministry. The first model is the pastor as a service-providing clergyman. He is a professional clergyman employed by the church to fulfill certain core functions. He is to prepare and deliver Sunday sermons, organize and lead regular services, put on various occasional and seasonal services, and personally tend to congregational needs via visitation, counseling, marrying and burying. In contrast to the service-providing clergyman, a newer model is that of the pastor as the CEO. In this model, the pastor leads the church as an organization or business. The Sunday services shift to results-oriented methods featuring attractive music, décor, and preaching that will make visitors want to come. In this model, the pastoral case shifts to the small group which is programmed to accomplish the task while the pastor leads and designs fresh programs and events for outreach. In such a model the numbers of attendees multiplies.

The authors suggest that there is a third pastoral ministry model that better fulfills the Great Commission. It is called the pastor as trainer model. They provide several descriptors of this model on pp. 99-101. The pastor is to be a prayerful preacher who shapes and drives ministry through expository preaching. He is likewise a trainer who seeks to teach and train his congregation, by word and by life, to become disciple-making disciples. The congregation thus becomes a gathering of disciples in the presence of the Lord, meeting with him, listening to his word, worshipping him in truth, and going out to disciple others. The structure in the pastor as trainer model is on the pastor training individuals and people ministering to people (vine growth) rather than on programs and events (the trellis).

Recruiting workers to become disciple-making disciples is a critical task in guiding a church to become one that in actuality fulfills the Great Commission. In chapter nine, Marshall and Payne suggest several blunders to avoid in selecting workers to train. (1) Compromising on core beliefs and values is never acceptable. One cannot trust a co-worker unless he is completely dependable in rightly dividing the Word of Truth. (2) One should be careful not to be impressed with flashiness over substance. The best disciple-making disciple is one who loves and obeys

Christ, lives a disciplined life, and has a servant's heart. Always consider the track record of the individual selected. And, (3) exercise care so that one does not recruit in desperation. It is far better to form a team that is small, tight, unified and effective than to pull people on board who are not ready.

Marshall and Paine continue their autograph with an insightful chapter (12) on how to get started. They conclude the book with a helpful section (Appendix 1) featuring frequently asked questions. For the biblically-minded Baptist pastor sorting through the ministry paradigm shift that confronts him in the 21st century, and sorting through the church growth methodologies that others are employing to gather vast congregations, *The Trellis and the Vine* presents a refreshing return to viewing the biblical mandate for the church and the acceptable methods for implementing Christ's vision for church ministry in any era of church history.

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