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TSF News and Reviews

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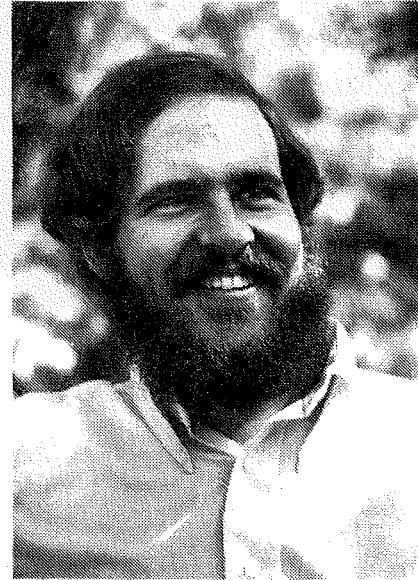
N E W S
January, 1978

FROM MARK BRANSON, TSF SECRETARY

ETS/AAR/SBL/IBR/XYZ!

Having just returned from San Francisco, the various affairs of the "academic elite" being once again accomplished, I will share some scattered news/commentary/dreams.

The Evangelical Theological Society (ETS) met at Simpson College on December 26-28. The usual array of seminars (OT, NT, philosophy, theology) carried the members through the days. This gathering continues to be a source of encouragement and scholastic sharing, especially for professors and pastors of evangelical institutions. The fellowship is usually warm and the lectures sometimes stimulating. I was able to speak at the banquet, sharing an update on TSF activities and asking for their continued encouragement and prayers. 1977 President Simon Kistemacher (Reformed Theological Seminary) has been a friend and contributor to the TSF ministry, speaking to gatherings and helping with our bibliography project. Former Secretary Vernon Grounds was noticeably missing; but who can blame him after a continuous 13 years!



*Mark Branson
TSF Secretary*

The American Academy of Religion (AAR), the Society of Biblical Literature (SBL), and the American School of Oriental Research (ASOR) met on December 28-31. Many topics dealt with rather minute issues, like "Materials Relating to Seth In An Anonymous Chronographer ('Pseudo-Malalas') and in George Syncellus"; "From Habermas' Critical Theory to Peukert's Theology of Communicative Practice"; and "Was Gilboa a Strategic Blunder?". Other excellent seminars included: "Christian Prophecy and the Sayings of Jesus", chaired by TSF friend, David Aune; a paper concerning Barth and Reinhold Niebuhr presented at the session for the Karl Barth Society, chaired by North Park's Donald Dayton; and William Lane of Western Kentucky University presented an excellent paper concerning wisdom roots in the Hebrews 1:1-4 passage, which also created discussion around Lane's resulting "high Christology" (a refreshing concept!). One of the highlights of the week was an unscheduled update on Ebla from David Noel Friedman (there will be a report in next News & Reviews.)

Associate Editors: Stephen T. Davis (Claremont Men's College) *Philosophy*; Robert E. Frykenberg (University of Wisconsin) *World Religions*; David W. Gill (New College, Berkeley) *Ethics*; Robert L. Hubbard (Conservative Baptist Theological Seminary) *Old Testament*; Paul A. Mickey (Duke Divinity School) *Practical Theology*; Grant Osborne (Trinity Evangelical Divinity School) *New Testament*.



*News & Reviews Associate,
David Gill (L); E. Earle Ellis (R)*

The Institute for Biblical Research (IBR) which is an evangelical fellowship of SBL scholars, met on Saturday morning under the leadership of E. Earle Ellis (New Brunswick Theological Seminary). Bruce Metzger (Princeton) led us in a devotional and prayer. The address was by William LaSor (Fuller) on "Prophecy, Inspiration, and Sensus Plenior." The lecture was an excellent work of scholarship and commitment, guiding hearers in the pursuit of understanding Scripture, not only within its historical-critical boundaries, but also going beyond to the more full meaning intended by God. This material will soon be made available to TSF members. The IBR meeting was a source of hope and fellowship for all of us.

A NEW CONSULTATION?

While I enjoyed the various societies and gained academic encouragement and guidance through the week, I see a definite need for some new direction. Issues prevalent among evangelicals and receiving growing attention from modernists could be classified under three areas: First the dialogue between Anabaptists and Reformers is becoming more dominant and, I believe, more fruitful. Not only did this issue surface in San Francisco, it is also being aired in print (such as the Mavrodes response in Christianity Today to Sider's Rich Christians In An Age Of Hunger, and the occasional dialogue between Sojourners and Reformed Journal), and in open discussion (especially notable in a panel at Fuller Seminary during a visit by John Howard Yoder). Richard Mouw, Clark Pinnock, and Robert Webber, are other names appearing concerning this topic.

Secondly, the theology of biblical inspiration continues to cause justified concern. Closely related are issues of revelation, authority, epistemology, and hermeneutics. The ETS seminars often focused on the doctrine of inerrancy and a new International Council on Biblical Inerrancy has been formed. Other recent contributions to the discussion include "The Inerrancy Debate Among Evangelicals" by Pinnock (available from my office--see order form) and a number of books including: G. C. Berkouwer's Holy Scripture (Eerdmans); Harry Boer's About The Battle? The Bible and Its Critics (Eerdmans); Colin Brown's



*William LaSor following
lecture to IBR.*

(editor) History, Criticism, and Faith (Inter-Varsity Press); Stephen Davis' (N & R Assoc. Editor) The Bible Today: Inerrancy Versus Infallibility (Westminster--see comments in book reviews); H. N. Ridderbos' Scripture and Its Authority (Eerdmans); Jack Rogers' (editor) Biblical Authority (Word).

Not only do the issues of authority and hermeneutics surface at scholastic debates, the practical results bear directly on issues like the United Presbyterian Task Force on Homosexuality which has recently (by a 13-5 vote) issued an opinion favoring the ordination of homosexual persons as well as the homosexual lifestyle. Thus the topic carries both academic and practical implications.

Finally, I believe evangelical theologians are on the cutting edge of creative scholarship which promises to offer the church greater guidance in understanding and obeying God's Word. Seminarians and lay persons alike are looking for just that kind of leadership and the opportunity has never been better.

If TSF members and the church at large are to gain the greatest benefit from these scholars, I believe a forum needs to be available so the rigorous academics can be done in an atmosphere of fellowship and support. The IBR has provided fellowship for those specializing in biblical studies--and the list of fellows indicates the amazing wealth of this group--Carl Armerding, George Beasley-Murray, Bruce Demarest, E. Earle Ellis, Daniel Fuller, David Hubbard, Simon Kistemaker, William Lane, Richard Longenecker, Ralph P. Martin, Bruce Metzger, W. R. Stegner, Edwin Yamauchi to name only a handful of about 100 members. We desperately need a similar society for theologians, ethicists, and church historians. Just as the IBR within the SBL, so a new fellowship could work within the AAR. We need scholars of the evangelical faith who will work together while working within the context of a wider audience. The first step would be to call a consultation on evangelical theology to be convened during the AAR convention next November in New Orleans. This would provide a base from which further steps could be taken. President David Hubbard of Fuller has voiced a similar concern, and many conversations in San Francisco indicated that the time is ripe for us to move ahead. TSF would welcome such an event because it is consistent with our aims to encourage evangelical scholarship in universities and seminaries, especially state schools and non-evangelical seminaries.

MORE NEWS

As you probably noticed, N & R has added a number of associate editors. Stephen Davis is Assistant Professor of Philosophy and Religion at Claremont Men's College (California). He is known to TSFers through an article published last year on philosophy and the Christian faith. Robert Frykenberg is Professor of History and South Asian Studies at the University of Wisconsin. David Gill is the Director of New College for Advanced Christian Studies (Berkeley) and is completing his Ph.D. at USC on Jacques Ellul. Robert Hubbard, Assistant Professor of Old Testament at the Conservative Baptist Theological Seminary (Denver) is another "almost Ph.D."--from Claremont under Professor Knierim. Paul Mickey, who earned a Ph.D. at Princeton in Theology And Personality is the Associate Professor of Pastoral Theology at Duke Divinity School. Mickey will be a key in providing us with materials more concerned with the pastoral ministry. Grant Osborne, Assistant Professor of New Testament at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, received a Ph.D. from the University of Aberdeen under I. Howard Marshall. Each associate editor will be providing book reviews, occasional articles, bibliographic helps, and comments on journal articles. I am looking forward to sharing the N & R responsibilities with such an exciting and caring group of scholars.

Enclosed in this mailing are a couple of bibliographies. We are commissioning about 40 of these over the next year, and several are ready for your purchase. The order forms at the back of N & R also provide you with discount books and several new tapes (including comments from Pinnock on theological pluralism). Those of you awaiting monographs which you ordered in October need not wait much longer--a shipment from England has just arrived! We will also be offering a few new titles. Let me know of any suggestions you have for tapes, monographs, and bibliographies. Also, any comments on N & R can help us with future issues.

FROM NORTH AMERICAN SCHOOLS

TORONTO

Under the coordination of George Robertson (Knox College), the Toronto School of Theology is experiencing creative leadership and enthusiasm. A monthly "information and newsletter" entitled Footnotes contains book comments, announcements about meetings, and a list of contact people for each of the Toronto schools. On September 30 and October 1, Pinnock spoke on "The Evangelical Student and Theological Pluralism", and Professors R.K. Harrison and Richard Longenecker responded in seminars. Dr. Kenneth Kitchen (University of Liverpool) was hosted on November 28. The topic was "Ancient East and the Old Testament: Late 20th Century A.D.". We hope to have a tape available for our next N & R mailing. A January dinner meeting dealt with "Theoschizophrenia", centering around Henri Nouwen's recent article in Sojourners, "What Do You Know By Heart?". Dr. Hans Burki (Associate General Secretary-at-Large for the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students) and Dr. Peter Richardson (Principal of University College, and former IBR secretary) will be at the February and March meetings respectively. Another recent happening was a visit by Martin E. Marty (Chicago) to the Institute for Christian Studies. Anyone desiring further information on Toronto happenings can contact Robertson at 694-0419. They are providing a model for TSF ministries in similar seminary clusters. Over 50 students are on the mailing list now, keeping mailings and activities going through small donations and sharing of the organizational tasks. Keep up the good work, neighbors!

CLAREMONT

Professor John Hick (author of The Myth of God Incarnate) and Professor Stephen David (N & R Associate Editor) debated the issue of Hick's book at a December gathering of students and laypeople in Claremont (California). The issues of theological models, biblical studies, and philosophical presuppositions were discussed by the participants; and questions from the audience helped to further illuminate crucial issues. A tape or the manuscript will be made available in the March issue of N & R.

BERKELEY

As you read this issue, many of us are in Berkeley for a lecture series by Professor Helmut Thielicke. The presentations center around the proclamation of the gospel and the specific problems encountered in that task. Tapes will be available in the next issue of N & R. Our thanks again go to the First Presbyterian Church of Berkeley for sponsoring this excellent events.

Plans continue under the direction of David Gill for the beginning of the New College for Advanced Christian Studies. Summer school courses include "Letters of Faith, Hope, and Love: Galatians, I Peter, and I John" by Bruce Metzger; "Issues in New Testament Ethics" by John Howard Yoder; "Proclamation and Presence: Urban Evangelism" by William Pannell. Other instructors include Carl Armerding, Donald Dayton, Lucille Dayton, and Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen. You can obtain further information from New College, 2407 Dana Street, Berkeley, California 94704.

PERKINS

"At Perkins we have a sizeable number of evangelicals--almost all of whom are charismatic. We are meeting together under the title of 'Wesley Fellowship' which meets once a week for prayer and Scripture reading...and small groups meet weekly for prayer. All in all I would say that I know of 30 evangelicals and am told there may be as many as 50 on this campus of 440 students. The Wesley Fellowship is a pluralistic group--no doctrinal statement is handed out for members, but having a 'devotional orientation' tends to limit the group to those believing in a supernatural God and in the authority of the Scriptures. The group is trying not to be exclusive or separatist, which I feel is the attitude we should take. However, I see a need for a doctrinal emphasis--and feel that the doctrinal statement of TSF and that of the Good News Movement gives us the theological backbone we need while allowing freedom for difference and pursuit of truth in secondary issues." -- Vaughn Baker

PRINCETON

"...a large minority of conservative/evangelical students (are part of this year's junior class). Their presence is felt on campus and they are producing some strong leadership (both academically and spiritually). Desiring a group that would give them fellowship and a witness, they recently revived 'Theological Forum'. On Tuesday, November 29, TF had Dr. J. Rodman Williams, President of Melodyland School of Theology, speak on the topic 'The Integration of Charismatic Theology and Pastoral Ministry'. It was well-attended with about 35 persons."

These comments came from Princeton senior, Doug Gilmore. E. Earle Ellis and I had an informal debate last winter on the issue of radical politics and the role of the prophet, attracting about 25 students. I understand that Jerry Walls is the contact person for TF activities.

NEW YORK

In the fall of 1975, conversations at Union Theological Seminary centered around the needs of a few students who had come out of evangelical backgrounds. Ken Sehested, Nancy Sehested, and Dee Wade were the catalysts for a number of student gatherings to discuss their theological and personal pilgrimages and concerns. I spent some time with the Sehesteds (see Spring 77 TSF Newsletter) and have corresponded with Ken occasionally since then. Ken had written, "White evangelical faith has for too long been the captive of privatistic, reactionary religion which has sustained the privilege of the powerful and the poverty of the poor. Because of this, many of us have been sorely tempted at times to forsake the faith altogether. We are hoping now (as a result of the pursuits in the fellowship) that such a direction might not be necessary."

The winter 1977 issue of the Union Seminary Quarterly Review centers around the topic, "The Evangelicals"--and Ken wrote the preface for the issue. Why should Union be interested in evangelicals? Sehested proposes three options and places his own bias with the latter: Possibly Union wishes to be courting "the

privatized religion of revivalists", that is, joining the American quest for individual meaning and private experience. Another possibility is that Union is simply falling for whatever is novel and fadish. It is not difficult to see that fadishness in America's recent religious turns; and an even more "practical" reason for interest is the financial need of such seminaries. If solvency is to be maintained, the evangelical bandwagon is certainly tempting. Do those issues draw Union's allegiance? Sehested offers a third option--one which he advocates as more fruitful, authentic, and theologically sound: "...if our words of support for biblical study and theology as an historically liberating activity are to take on any substance in this country, then we cannot afford to neglect serious study and recognition of some of the traditions lumped together and so casually dismissed as 'evangelical'. Some of the dominant religious traditions of the poor in this country fall in this broad category. If liberation is to be our biblical hermeneutic, and if it aspires to being more than the latest exotic attraction, then these people--along with their use of language, their styles of worship, their cultures--demand our attention; and, again, not simply for personal fulfillment, nor because we have need of some new theological escapade. Just as the liberation theologians have told us in their books and in person, we must decide if we are willing to take the cultures of the poor seriously in their own right."

Sehested's comments are followed by some of the most insightful articles I have read recently--especially Gerald Sheppard's "Biblical Hermeneutics: The Academic Language of Evangelical Identity." Virginia Mollenkott offers comments on feminism, James Washington writes about Black evangelicalism, and Donald Dayton searches for the reasons behind evangelical conservatism.

Copies of USQR are available (\$3) from 3041 Broadway, New York, NY 10027.

DENOMINATIONAL RESOURCES

Once again I wanted to mention some resources originating within particular denominational organizations. Catalyst is a periodical for United Methodist seminarians. It includes articles, book reviews, and a tape service (Catalyst, 8301 Bruton Road, Dallas, TX 75217).

Episcopalians would benefit from materials by the Office of Evangelism and Renewal (Episcopal Church Center, 815 Second Avenue, New York, NY 10017), as well as from the Fellowship of Witness (St. Stephen's Church, Sewickley, PA 15143).

A UPCUSA ministry, Presbyterians United for Biblical Concern published "Communique" (PUBC, P.O. Box P, Eagleville, PA 19408). PCUS students may wish to check out the "Open Letter" (Covenant Fellowship of Witness, 770 Davis Drive, St. Louis, MO 63105).

A new fund designed to benefit "theological education in the Wesleyan tradition" has been established to assist United Methodist doctoral students. Current fellows include Steve Harper (Duke); Ben Witherington (Durham, England); John Tyson (Drew); Ron Ball (Emory); and Steve Seamands (Drew). The Fund for Theological Education plans to add five "John Wesley Fellows" each year. Applications (due March 15) are available from P.O. Box 1945, Marshall, TX 75670.

A United Methodist seminary, Garrett-Evangelical in Evanston, Illinois, published an issue on "The Evangelicals" in the fall of 1976. Although the articles are of varying quality and bias, it is worthwhile to see how the various writers perceive those fitting into the popular category of evangelicalism. A common occurrence among United Methodist institutional leaders (and noticeably absent from other denominations) is the claim to a broader use of the word "evangelical". Many UM professors and church leaders wish to call themselves evangelicals, and they voice strong resentment of the more limited understanding of the word (i.e. the "narrow connotations" of some confessional positions). Several UM churchmen, including N & R Associate Editor, Paul Mickey, and TSF friend, Mike Walker (editor of Catalyst), are attempting to help UM seminaries become better informed about evangelical theology and resources. W. Richard Stegner (Garrett-Evangelical) helps clarify this issue in his article on the New Testament meaning of evangelical: "From a New Testament perspective, whoever preaches the 'good news' of the saving death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is truly an 'evangelist'" Stegner has been a friend of TSF and is a member of the IBR. We hope that efforts toward clarity in communication and scholarship in evangelical studies will prevail as a result of these ministries.

The Davidson (North Carolina) Christian Fellowship sponsored a conference for Presbyterian collegians and seminarians. TSF staffer, Dave Jones, was among the seminar leaders alongside TSF friends, Andy Dearman, D.A. Sharpe, and Cortez Cooper. "The Lord's Church: Our Part in Her Renewal" was the theme for the three-day holiday gathering. Robert Henderson (PCUS Missions Board) and Millicent Hunneycutt (former Korean missionary and instructor at Pfeiffer College) were the keynote speakers. Jones' seminar dealt with the concern of using church and seminary systems as channels for input be evangelicals.

OLD TESTAMENT

The End of the Historical-Critical Method by Gerhard Maier, translated by E.W. Leverenz and R.F. Norden. Concordia Publishing House, 1977. Reviewed by Robert Hubbard



Robert Hubbard is Assistant Professor of Old Testament at the Conservative Baptist Theological Seminary in Denver. He is working on his Ph.D. at Claremont under Professor Knierim.

This is a provocative little book. In a brief 92 pages, Gerhard Maier exposes the methodological mistakes of 200 years of biblical criticism and suggests a new direction for the future. Although not specifying exactly why, in his opinion, a new day is dawning in Biblical studies (his allusion to "utopian-Marxist" inroads into Christian theology is rather vague), this translation of a German book announces the demise of the historical-critical method and crowns a new method king.

What was wrong with the old method? In Part I, "The Inner Impossibility of the Concept," Maier answers that the method wrongly adopted Semler's distinction between "Scripture" and "the Word of God" as its starting point. It further subjected Scripture to the critical rule of human reason in an attempt to separate "genuine faith" from the "spurious" elements within the Bible itself. The problem was, says Maier, that since only revelation itself and not human reason can determine what is revealed and what is not, the historical-critical method was inappropriate to the subject matter involved (i.e., revelation).

That inappropriateness is suggested by Maier's objections to the method: 1) the impossibility of discovering a canon within the canon (the genuine versus the spurious); 2) the impossibility of separating "divine scripture" from "human scripture"; 3) the failure to handle Scripture as personal encounter or as the declaration of the divine will rather than as pure subject matter (i.e., contents, facts); 4) the predetermination of the conclusion prior to interpretation by selection of a "key" which allegedly unlocks the door to truth and error; 5) the method's deficient practicability (i.e., its meager results cannot provide "the foundation of practical life in the existing church," p. 22); 6) the failure to respond appropriately to revelation in obedience, not critique.

When did the end of the method occur? Using a collection of essays by biblical scholars and theologians edited by Ernst Kasemann (1971) as a "balance sheet that deserves an accounting" (p. 26), Maier's audit concludes: two hundred years of higher-critical research has failed to isolate a canon within the canon, spawned wide disagreements, and led to a retreat into religious experience as the key to truth. Thus, Maier charges that the method has enslaved the church in "a new Babylonian captivity" of subjective exegesis which has denied the clarity and sufficiency of the Scriptures and, in the process, undermined the certainty of faith.

In Part III, Maier proposes an exodus from this captivity in his "Historical-Biblical Method." Since the old method erred by choosing an inappropriate starting point, Maier carefully chooses his initial "prejudice" (his term); he replaces the principle of analogy with a "wide-angle" attitude which, by contrast, allows (versus excludes) the possibility of divine revelation which is not repeated and which, hence, cannot be compared; further, he assumes that a sovereign God can reveal himself at will and guarantee that revelation is unified and not contradictory, and that only revelation itself is its own best interpreter. This, by implication, eliminates what

Maier calls "the dissonance method" of exegesis from use (i.e., that which stresses the disagreements and contradictions over against essential harmony).

Maier next summarizes his view of Scripture's authority. He affirms that Scripture is revelation rather than containing it. Indeed, says Maier, God's sovereignty and salvific purpose guarantees that all the Scripture we now have is canonical and sufficient for our needs, and that even supposed discrepancies are assumed to be "tools of His Spirit" (p. 71). The infallibility of Scripture is understood "in the sense of authorization and fulfillment by God, and not in the sense of anthropological inerrancy" (p. 72). Although Maier does not amplify this statement, he obviously attempts to maintain a "high" view of Scripture and yet not deny God's sovereignty by an appeal to inerrant original writings—a view which merits attention in the current American debate on inerrancy.

After discussing the relationship of Scripture to revelation elsewhere (i.e., in church tradition, history, and other religions), Maier outlines the procedural steps of his method, adding little that is new to the exegetical methodology taught by most evangelical seminaries. His stress, however, is that the result of exegesis is not what a biblical writer as a human being wants to say (i.e., what Paul believed) but "what God wants. . .to say to all men" (p. 87). Of course, each individual text must be seen in light of the total meaning of Scripture, especially the focal point in Jesus Christ.

This is a stimulating book, useful for the theological student in its expose of higher-criticism's assumptions and inconclusive results. It rightly adds its voice to those of J. Sanders and B. Childs in calling for the practice of exegesis in a canonical context. In arguing that the material (i.e., revelation) requires a theological (versus merely historical) method, the book provides a reasonable foundation for an alternative approach to exegesis. The appended glossary of terms will help the student in reading the book.

One must withhold his evangelical "hurrahs"--or at least utter them intelligently--for the "new" method Maier crowns king upon the throne of exegesis is, in this reviewer's opinion, neither new nor adequately introduced. In the procedural section the reading becomes heavy, the various steps are vaguely defined and poorly illustrated, and the relationships of the steps to each other sequentially left unclear. In the theoretical sections (Parts I and II), many questions are left unanswered (i.e., what is the role of reason in exegesis even if one accepts Maier's framework? What role does extra-biblical evidence play in light of his "Scripture-Interprets-Scripture" principle? Is Maier right in totally rejecting a "critical" approach to the Bible?)

But for all that, this small package makes a large contribution to the beginning of a new direction in scholarship, a direction appropriate to the subject matter under study.

NEW TESTAMENT

The Early Versions of the New Testament, Bruce M. Metzger (Oxford, 1977) Reviewed by Grant R. Osborne.

Grant Osborne is Assistant Professor of New Testament at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. He is a Ph.D. from the University of Aberdeen under I. Howard Marshall.

It is a tragic aspect of modern scholarship that text criticism seems to be a dying art. The last program in North America (at Case Western in Cleveland) has now been discontinued, and serious methodological questions regarding the current state of the discipline are now being raised with few around capable of handling them. With this in mind, this long-awaited volume from the dean of North American text critics comes at a particularly opportune time. It is hoped that it will spur a new generation of students interested in this exceedingly complex aspect of biblical criticism.

The value of the versions for text critical decisions could hardly be overstated. The difficulty has always been how to evaluate all the various

witnesses. Professor Metzger has done all scholars a service by putting it all together in his magnum opus. Naturally, he organizes his data along geographical lines, proceeding from early eastern versions (Syriac, Coptic, Armenian, Georgian, Ethiopic to the minor eastern versions) to early western versions (Latin, Gothic, Old Church Slavonic to the minor western versions).

Metzger's discussions are voluminous and so complete that only the expert can begin to interact with them. In fact, as one scholar has said, it is almost presumptuous to feel one has the background even to review the work. Metzger himself has employed experts in the various languages to add detail to his discussion and so in this respect has even gone beyond himself. On the Diatessaron, for example, he patiently examines and critiques each extant allusion or version, then discusses the problems and research on the matter. The material itself is concise, clear and extremely helpful but demands a knowledge of background which few but the trained text critic possess. In short, this is an indispensable tool for anyone wishing to do text critical work but demands a good background in the field before it can be used with any depth.

The Birth of the Messiah, R.E. Brown (Doubleday, 1977). Reviewed by Grant R. Osborne

Raymond E. Brown, long recognized as one of North America's most astute New Testament scholars, has here produced an extremely important commentary on the infancy narratives of Matthew and Luke. In an extensive introduction, he discusses his basic conclusions. The birth narratives are not history (there were no "corroborating witnesses" and too many "conflicting details" in the accounts). However, they are proper vehicles for the evangelist's theology. Here his conclusions differ from most redaction critics: for the most part they were created by the evangelists themselves, who creatively used the pre-literary stories.

First he studies the Matthean infancy narrative, outlining it around who (the genealogy, stressing the Son of

David theme), how (the birth, stressing divine origins), where (scenes at Bethlehem, stressing his Jewish identity and the paradox of his Gentile orientation, re the magi) and whence (journey to Egypt and Nazareth, stressing his destiny of and ministry from Jew to Gentile). Brown's detailed commentary here is an invaluable aid to an understanding of Matthew's purposes. At the end of each section, he has included a "sectional bibliography" which greatly enriches the use of his work as a study tool.

The Lukan infancy narrative is treated with the same depth and perception as the section on Matthew. Again, he concludes that the internal organization follows Luke's own redactional purposes, especially the parallel between the Baptist and Jesus (seen in the alternation of the material) and the stress on the Holy Spirit as witness. As Brown showed in his John commentary, his interaction with other opinions is exhaustive and his discussion of the theological issues is precise and penetrating.

One of his greatest contributions comes in his appendices, where he discusses background material such as "levirate marriage" (the genealogies), "virginal conception" (he believes a historical basis is a better explanation of the evidence) or "midrash as a literary genre" (while the narratives are not midrash per se, they employ midrashic techniques to explicate the christological significance of Jesus' birth).

In conclusion, Brown's work is a valuable tool for the experience Bible student who can interact with his insights in light of his conclusions. It would be too difficult for the beginning student but extremely helpful for the other.

THEOLOGY

Helmut Thielicke, The Evangelical Faith. Vol. 2: The Doctrine of God and of Christ (translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley: Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1977).
Reviewed by Bernard Ramm

Bernard Ramm has served as Professor of Theology at American Baptist Seminary. He is also the author of numerous books, including The Evangelical Heritage; Varieties of Christian Apologetics; Protestant Biblical Interpretation; and Special Revelation and the Word of God.

Nearing the end of a distinguished academic career Thielicke is giving us his theological legacy. In these three volumes (as projected) Thielicke is not writing on all the topics of a systematic theology but selects out those which are most important. This is a very rich volume and a review cannot begin to do it justice. However, in the space we have we may suggest the over all nature of Thielicke's theology.

1. It is evangelical. He has stated in the first volume that by evangelical he means a theology based upon the Mighty Acts of God. Therefore he writes against the nineteenth century liberal tradition in theology of Schleiermacher and Ritschl. He also writes against twentieth existential theology of a Bultmann or a Tillich. The center of theology is that which God has done for us; and not the state of religious consciousness as in both liberal and existential theology. The Mighty Acts of God which Thielicke pin points are: the incarnation, the cross, the risen and ascended Lord; and the great offer of God in the gospel.

Thielicke expresses indebtedness to his German publisher for the risk he takes in publishing an evangelical theology when it is such a lost cause in contemporary German theology.

2. Thielicke is solidly Lutheran.

At all key points of difference between Lutheran and Reformed theology he takes up the Lutheran cause. He does, however, show much respect for the Reformed theology and for Barth, its greatest modern defender. He is very appreciative of Barth and states that Barth's continuous pre-occupation with the biblical message saves him from going the whole distance of Reformed errors in theology.

He has the highest regard for Luther. It is obvious that Thielicke thinks that Luther's insights in theology are so great that he even yet surpasses contemporary theologians for all their learning and historical advantage over Luther.

To those uninitiated into the Lutheran-Reformed controversy many items in this book will appear obscure. For example, the long space given to the law-gospel issue will not make sense unless the reader knows how crucial the whole Lutheran theology regards the distinction of law and gospel.

3. Thielicke is a critical theologian.

The entire theology of Thielicke implies that God has revealed himself and this revelation is in Holy Scripture which is the Word of God to the church. But he is not a "biblical positivist." He does not believe that everything in Scripture is to be accepted on the basis of "eat bird or die." Rather God honors our intelligence and therefore we are expected to use our critical sense in theology. It is this aspect of Thielicke's theology which will give evangelicals the most concern.

For example, he is agnostic about the virgin birth on the grounds that no substantial theological reason can be given for its justification. If that is not forthcoming we may not believe in it as a piece of history but only as a kind of symbol by which the early church wished to protect the doctrine of incarnation.

4. Thielicke is an incarnational theologian.

He follows Luther closely in the doctrine of the incarnation and believes that in the incarnation, God has sunk himself totally and deeply "in the flesh." This is not only aimed at refuting

the Reformed doctrine of the incarnation (which in Lutheran dogmatics amounts to only a partial incarnation) but Thielicke wants to affirm that we find God totally in meeting Jesus Christ as the incarnate God. This theme that we have all of God in the incarnation runs through the entire volume and has its implications for preaching and the Lord's Supper.

5. He is a precise theologian.

By this we mean that Thielicke is always at work showing exactly the locus of a doctrine. He is always attempting to get a doctrine into proper perspective. He shows the defects of too short or too long a focal point. Or using another imagery, writing theology is a balancing act. In the atonement (i.e., what God has done for me at the cross) and the subjective aspect (i.e., my response to the demands of the cross upon my life).

Another good facet of the volume is Thielicke's constant concern with preaching. At times the preacher takes over the task of the theologian.

As far as organization is concerned the book lacks vigorous organization and a few rabbits are chased. His resources are principally German theologians, philosophers and men of letters with whom he has reacted with all his writing career. His basic philosophical stance is a generalized Kierkegaardian existentialism which both helps and hinders the exposition.

This is decidedly a book for the professional theologian. It presumes much learning in theology, philosophy and cultural history. If somebody wishes to pay the price of time and energy to thoughtfully read this book it will be a very rewarding experience. One does not read a book like this to capitulate to its thought or to seek to criticize it on every page, but in patience to learn a great deal of first rate theological wisdom.

The Debate about the Bible

Reviewed by Clark H. Pinnock, from THE DEBATE ABOUT THE BIBLE: Inerrancy Versus Infallibility, by Stephen T. Davis. Copyright © 1977 The Westminster Press. Used by permission.



CLARK H. PINNOCK, TSF Coordinator & Prof. of Systematic Theology, McMaster Divinity College, Toronto.

Why should I, an evangelical theologian committed to the position of Biblical inerrancy which Dr. Davis is endeavoring to overturn, find it fitting to write the Foreword on its behalf, encouraging others to consider his thesis and arguments?

First, it is because I believe that there are many more ways than one to defend a high view of Biblical inspiration and authority, and that all of them should be tried. This is especially true in a climate in which some vocal evangelicals are suggesting that Warfield's doctrine of perfect errorlessness is the only sound position, and the alternative to it is liberalism and apostasy. This I consider divisive sectarianism. Therefore I am pleased rather than disconcerted when a work such as this appears. We need to listen to Dr. Davis, who strives to present a sturdy concept of Biblical authority without employing the category of inerrancy in it. The evangelical public needs to consider his thesis and to judge whether it is successful.

Second, the force of this unassuming book is to push the defenders of inerrancy to greater honesty and explicitness in their exposition of the concept. Dr. Davis shows inerrancy

to be a much more subtle and complex deduction about Scripture than it is commonly believed to be. In many of its versions, he shows that errors of various types are, in fact, admitted, and held to be compatible with "inerrancy," which proves to be a less obvious and straightforward notion than is generally acknowledged. The unspoken qualifications which Dr. Davis uncovers in the theory will have to be made more explicit in the future if its proponents are to retain their full integrity. On the basis of full disclosure a fruitful dialogue can begin to take place.

Third, the thesis will provide a pastoral service to those who are troubled with marginal difficulties in the Bible but are deeply committed to the evangelical faith. The theory of perfect errorlessness when pressed can leave such persons stranded with nothing to hold on to if a single point however minute stands in any doubt. This is a version of the "domino theory" we should hear more about because it affects a large number of some of our finest people. Finding nowhere to stand outside strict inerrancy, they cease to stand at all, even on behalf of the great truths of the gospel which stand with or without inerrancy.

I appreciate in Dr. Davis' work a level of profound common sense operating. He reminds us that throughout the whole of church history believers have been able to maintain their orthodox convictions despite the fact, which no one contests, that the only Bible they have possessed has been a fallible translation of fallible manuscripts of Scripture. If that is true, surely some of the heat hanging over this discussion should dissipate, and a calmer, more serene spirit of inquiry replace it.

The fact that I believe that people ought to give Dr. Davis a hearing does not mean I feel no uneasiness and see no dangers in his proposal. He allows errors that are not "crucially relevant" to faith and practice. He acknowledges the Bible's authority until he meets a passage that "for good reasons" he cannot accept. I

think I understand what Dr. Davis means by such expressions, and do not mistrust him personally in his application of them. However, I cannot look out over the theological landscape today and feel content for evangelicals to leave themselves so vulnerable and unguarded in their convictions about the Bible. I feel much happier myself with the strong but flexible wording of the Lausanne Covenant, "inerrant in all that it affirms," which can accommodate much of Davis' wisdom without leaving itself open to easy manipulation by those whose spirit is not docile before the teaching authority of the Word of God. I do not relish the prospect of evangelicals' handling the Bible the way liberals do--assigning certain texts to limbo while canonizing texts held to be more suitable and acceptable. It would be quite mistaken to suppose that, once rid of perfect errorlessness, we sail on a sea quite free of peril and controversy. Therefore I urge the reader to canvass this book carefully and critically, as well as patiently and sympathetically, so that he or she will receive the largest benefit from the effort of reading it.

PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

Theology and Pastoral Care by John B. Cobb, Jr. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977, ix, 79 pages, \$2.95. Reviewed by Paul Mickey

Paul Mickey has his Ph.D. in Theology And Personality from Princeton. He is Associate Professor of Pastoral Theology at Duke Divinity School.

This slender volume represents a positive breakthrough in contemporary theological discussion. It is impressive, first of all, because it is an initial successful inter-disciplinary dialogue of pastoral theology with systematic theology. Many trained in pastoral care and counselling have not disciplined their energy or writing to offer their contributions from their labors to theological inquiry and integration. Similarly, many schooled in systematic theology make statements under the rubric of theological anthropology but do not place those generalized insights into practical arenas of ministry. Theology and Pastoral

Care is a satisfying exception to this general experience and, in addition to its substantive contributions, clearly establishes a methodological basis for inter-disciplinary work in the area.

A second benefit of this work by Professor Cobb is the demonstrated response to a long standing critique that process theologians contain their theological insights and offerings in the highly abstract linguistical conceptualizations of Alfred North Whitehead. The affinities of pastoral theology and process thought have long been recognized but never developed in any systematic or explicit way. John Cogg, perhaps the vanguard of process theologians, has broken the abstraction barrier and in this work utilizes case study material from parish ministry settings as the empirical data for employing and explicating general truths, especially those associated with Christology and ecclesiology.

The interchange sheds illumination on several doctrines and on human experience. The shift and movements in orders of abstraction--from the low orders that pertain to how Chester and Mrs. Carter, Marge and Brent, express their marital conflict to the higher orders that pertain to the Logos of the incarnation--are easy to follow. The transitions are carefully prepared and the actual content makes sense, and the reader finds pastoral and theological connections being made and invited before, during and after those offered by the author.

A third positive aspect is John Cobb's own pilgrimage and growth in pastoral if not Christian maturity. Such an observation may sound presumptuous, indeed. But, in large measure it is informed by the pilgrimage and shifts in theological sensibilities that those who are professional intimates with Cobb have observed and Cobb himself acknowledges and offers in his reflections in John Cobb's Theology in Process. In addition to these and other manifest testimonies are the changes that are in evidence to the thoughtful reader, especially in Theology and Pastoral Care.

So much for the contextual, intellectual, and methodological factors that influence this study. There are two specific, substantial efforts that Cobb mounts that, in my judgment, deserve careful consideration. In The Structures of Christian Existence Cobb advanced the notion that Christian existence is ultimately a spiritual one. Now, in Theology and Pastoral Care he is more concrete (Chapter 3, "Christian Wholeness") in claiming that for the Christian the integrated, wholeness of life can be understood properly as Spiritual existence. Language about spiritual life, notions of Spirit have come to suggest a devious dualism and in "respectable" theological circles were "no no's." I have always been offended that the goals of pastoral care were stated in such limited and humanistic terms as human wholeness, self-actualization, and so forth. Whether Cobb is successful in reintroducing the full dimensionality of "spiritual" into theological discussion only history will come to reveal. The notion of psyche and that of spiritual traditionally point to fuller realities than we have been willing to entertain in theology, at least in the contemporary era. I think serious students of theology and human existence need to applaud this affirmative effort. Another theme in this volume is the christological affirmation of the directivity of Jesus Christ, Chapter 4, "God and Pastoral Care."

Here we find the claim that in Jesus' incarnation there came from outside human experience a purpose, an intention, a directivity from God the Creator, God the Father--the God who transcends human existence but who is dynamically and dramatically engaged in every aspect of creation including our human creatureliness. For, the Carters, Brent and Marge, the couples in the case studies, it is not enough to claim in the abstract that God is in charge and Jesus died for your sins: the pastoral theological task is to demonstrate and to enliven in the mutuality generated in pastoral relationships the experiential reality of God's directivity through Christ and in

our lives--the pastor, you, and me. In Christ God calls us to penitence, acceptance of God's and one another's redeeming love, and to be assured that we are accountable theologically and psychologically for our future actions.

The reader may wonder about my next transition because there is no bad news about this book. The goals for the book were simple yet quite provocative. I believe they have been achieved.

Psychology as Religion: The Cult of Self-Worship by Paul C. Vitz. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1977, 149 pages, \$3.95. Reviewed by Paul Mickey

The author is distressed and angry about the sinful and insidious way humanistic psychologies make a mockery of religion in general--and Christianity in particular. The psychological and theological basis for this travesty is the claim that something called the "self" is the center of the universe. Through "existential narcissism," the self struggles to become the universe. Two redeeming themes that are woven throughout this essay prevent it from being dismissed as an alarmist backlash against modern psychology. Briefly stated, the one theme is expressed in remarks quoted from Donald O. Hebb's 1973 presidential address to the APA. He challenged psychologists that insofar as psychology is a science it belongs to the biological sciences (page 106). For the Christian and theologian this means that psychology cannot be all things to all people. It has to belong somewhere. Both Hebb and Vitz claim, and I believe demonstrate, that the current pretense of humanistic psychology to both religious and scientific truths is infounded, and therefore deceptive and morally dangerous. A second theme exerts itself, especially in Chapters 8-11. Here Vitz offers a thoughtful and convincing Christian critique of humanistic psychology that has become "psychology as religion."

Of particular help is Chapter 10, "Beyond the Secular Self," in which he sketches three stages of self-development that culminate in the "transcendent self" as God's object (p. 127). Clearly, albeit briefly, he shows a way beyond the narcissism and self-worship as end points to human existence.

Now, let's turn to the work as a whole. In establishing the basis for his concern in one brief chapter, he speaks to the contributions that Erick Fromm, Carl Rogers, and Abraham Maslow, and Rollo May make toward an anti-theological mind set among those influenced by these theorists. And indeed, these theorists plus Eric Berne, and Thomas Harris (cf. Chapter 2) and others of their ilk are standard personality theory table fare in most seminaries.

A further source of Vitz's theological concern is presented in Chapters 4, 5, and 7. The harm done by Fromm, *et al.* is not limited to the selfish vision of reality in which ultimate truths can never transcend one's ego but extend to a positive disengagement from society at large (systematic institutions like church and public governance) and society small (families, colleagues, and neighbors). This disengagement or hyper-objectifying of both "the other" and "the doer" (i.e., the self) reduces all positive dimensions of life to games, to the art of intimidating other objects and moves relentlessly toward either a total emotional withdrawal into a "Child" cocoon or resentment against all "Parent" authorities or an impulsive, if not frantic, abandonment to mind-blowing experiments of the "Now" generation (see the abundant references to Herbert Hendin, *The Age of Sensation*, p. 120ff.).

For many parishioners the gospel of psychological self-help is very appealing and may have proven to provide temporary relief from developmental upset. These sheep need feeding from the sincere milk of the Word of God if narcissism and damnation are to be overcome. Ministers, also, need to be wary. The appeal of "careerism" (see Chapter 11) and "professionalism" in ministry that engages in a kind of green beret competency measured by emotional and spiritual detachment, distance, and the capacity to "do a good job" is an ever present temptation.

For me, personally, one of the most perceptive observations had to do with bureaucratic institutionalization of the "ethic of selfism." It is seen in the pleasant and politically seductive response patterns to all who work with professionals and bureaucrats whether civil government, church judicatories, or the broad range of the "helping professions": "This ethic must be non-controversial yet inspiring if it is to be justified to the legislature and the electorate (p. 108)." Church bureaucracy, including the local parish, are filled with people influenced by Fromm, Berne, *et al.* who sincerely desire to be non-controversial and inspiring. But our fulfillment is not in ourselves but in Christ who is the power of our salvation, a "Name which is above Name."

Dr. Vitz has provided a resource in reminding us of that Name and that Person, that same Jesus Christ who is Lord and Savior.

LANGDON GILKEY:
A GUIDE TO HIS THEOLOGY

Clark H. Pinnock
McMaster Divinity College

Langdon Gilkey is professor of theology at the University of Chicago Divinity School, having taught earlier at Vassar College and Vanderbilt University Divinity School. He is one of the half-dozen most respected American theologians today, noted for his breadth of scholarship, lucidity of expression, and creativity in constructive theological work. He is also an extremely discerning commentator upon trends in theology and the wider culture. The passion of his life is the effort typical of liberal theology to reinterpret the classical Christian symbols in relation to modern beliefs. He also illustrates the fact that with regard to liberal theologians evangelicals need to ask, not only what aspects of biblical revelation are lacking, but also what aspects are not. Gilkey has shown himself to be capable of expounding and expressing what Christians have always believed with the greatest fairness and clarity.

We can get a handle on his thought simply by briefly reviewing his seven books in the order of their appearance. Maker of Heaven and Earth: The Christian Doctrine of Creation in the Light of Modern Knowledge (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1959). This book is still the finest contribution to the doctrine of creation in recent times, and it developed out of the author's doctoral research into the place of creation in process philosophy. (The writer had been a philosophy major before the Second World War, and has been an important critic of process theology since that time.) In the preface he acknowledges his great debt to two of his teachers, Reinhold Niebuhr and Paul Tillich, a tribute he repeats in his latest book by dedicating Reaping the Whirlwind to them both. Maker of Heaven and Earth is strong in the way it brings out the theological significance of the doctrine of creation contrasting it with alternative positions such as pantheism

and dualism. He is probably right to treat it as a theological idea rather than a scientifically informative concept, but I think the reason he gives is wrong. Rather than treating creation exegetically out of the biblical text, from which one can reasonably argue the error of misusing the Bible as the source of prescientific science, Gilkey simply accepts that modern thought has no room for a factual creation, and so discards it. (Note the book's subtitle). Right here we see what we notice throughout all his work, Gilkey operating out of an excessive respect for what the modern consensus is, such that Scripture is not allowed to make its point independently. Although the evangelical can agree with Gilkey that creation is a notion very existentially-orientated to the question of the meaning and security of our lives according to the Bible itself, I do not think we can jettison its factual significance altogether. Creation is after all according to the Bible the first of the mighty acts of God, and although we should not try to date or describe it I think we should give it factual content. Nevertheless, in this early book I still sense a fairly strong belief in the "Word of God", understood in a neo-orthodox fashion, quite confident and sure-footed, so that he can refer with a note of assurance to "God's revealing and saving activity within history" and so forth. That is a confidence which sadly we will not encounter again in the later books. I suspect Gilkey himself has become the victim of his own analysis concerning the instability and breakdown of neo-orthodox thinking expressed in Naming the Whirlwind, part 1, chapter 3.

How Can the Church Minister to the World without Losing Itself (New York: Harper & Row, 1964). This is not a 'how to' book despite the title, rather a remarkably perceptive commentary on the condition of Protestant churches in America, discussed in relation to central biblical images of the church. The book came out of Gilkey's Vanderbilt experience: - there is nothing like a stint in Nashville to quicken one's critical sense in regard to the state of the churches. - and looks at the question: how can the church minister to the world, which is

its task, without losing itself, which is its danger. It includes an updating of Troeltsch's views on church and sect to account for the American denomination, and I find the book profound and prophetic in many respects, not least in its capable critique of the conservative churches. And yet the impression is beginning to build that the mission of the churches which he advocates has itself undergone a dangerous enculturation due to the accommodation of liberal theology to the Zeitgeist, and does not involve confronting the world with the full biblical gospel. That this is so becomes dramatically clear in the later books. Gilkey's church and gospel are in real danger of losing themselves.

Shantung Compound. The Story of Men and Women under Pressure (New York: Harper & Row, 1966). As an American teaching in China at the outbreak of the Second World War, Gilkey along with two thousand other foreigners was herded into a Japanese internment camp and kept there for two and a half years. The book was written twenty years later from a journal the author kept during his imprisonment, and, I suspect, also benefitted from the thinking of Reinhold Niebuhr with whom he studied after the war. In any case it marks his conversion from academic bourgeois liberalism in its view of human nature to an appreciation of the sin and fallenness of man. He found that belief in man's goodness was refuted on solidly empirical grounds, and that the doctrine of original sin proved its wisdom on the same grounds. Note however that this doctrine of sin derived not from the Bible but from human experience, the same basis of authority on which the earlier liberal position was thought to have been based. Thus his new appreciation for the doctrine of sin is still grounded in liberal 'relevance' theology, not on the Word of God, and could change again. Still we appreciate the conversion as far as it went, and notice in his later Religion and the Scientific Future that this conviction has not left him.

Naming the Whirlwind. The Renewal of God Language (New York: Bobb-Merrill, 1969). This is the first of Gilkey's two massive works. It is close to 500 pages long, and is oriented to the "death of God" debate by that time in its own dying phases. Gilkey shows himself to be very close to those throthanatologists in outlook, but believes he can get beyond their negations to affirm transcendence on the basis of a new natural theology grounded in Continental phenomenology. I myself am deeply indebted to part one which is a lucid analysis of how theology became radical and why it must locate something sounder to rest upon. The sad thing is that Gilkey has nothing solid to offer himself, and leaves the whirlwind pretty much unnamed. But his remarks on the theological background of the present crisis should be required reading for all evangelicals. Another valuable feature of the book is his sensitivity for and description of the secular spirit which dominates our age. Although I feel Gilkey tends to capitulate to this Geist, he is surely correct to insist that we relate to it. Unfortunately, the gospel which Gilkey employs as the other pole in the correlation is a demythologised and desupernaturalized version and God about whom he endeavours to speak is a shift of transcendence on the edges of man's secular experience. Naming the Whirlwind is best understood as Gilkey's natural theology based on the phenomenology of secular human experience. The methodology is Schleiermacher's. One begins with what man is already experiencing, and tries to build upwards and backwards to divine revelation. He conducts a hermeneutic of secular experience in order to see what religious dimensions might be there, and so what meaningfulness religious language might have. It is accurate to see what he is attempting, not only within the stream of classical liberal theology, but also in relation to the methodology of natural theology since Aquinas. The apologist strives to make room for revelation, so as to make it possible for God's Word to be heard. For an extended

objection to this kind of theology one should read Kenneth Hamilton's Revolt Against Heaven (1965). It would be bad enough if it were only a case of phenomenology speaking first so that God might speak later. But in fact when Gilkey gets around to the Christian message it is only a shadow of its former self, an antisupernatural theology brought consistently into line with the demands of the Zeitgeist.

Religion and the Scientific Future. Reflections on Myth, Science, and Theology (New York: Harper & Row, 1970). This work provides more evidence on some of the trends in Gilkey's thought already noted. First, we have further applications of the secular hermeneutic now into the presuppositions of scientific endeavour. These investigations yield 'traces of ultimacy' and 'whiffs of transcendence' which as he admits leave the ultimate horizon as shrouded in mystery as before. Second, we see more clearly how deeply Gilkey himself is affected by the secular spirit. Science has compelled him as a liberal theologian to surrender all claims to factuality in Christian theology and to content himself with myths and symbols.

Catholicism Confronts Modernity. A Protestant View (New York: Seabury Press, 1975). In this book Gilkey, still enamoured of modernity, calls upon Roman Catholics to follow his lead, and dismantle their traditional supernaturalistic theology in favour of a new synthesis with secular thought. He even suggests that Catholics may do a better job of it because they have the staying power of tradition and structure. By this time the reader will begin to wonder just how beneficent this modernity really is, and even how widespread. Do most people really think this way, or are we just being exposed to the way people think at the University of Chicago Divinity School? And why in any case should we always run before this breeze rather than set our sails into it? I certainly hope that Roman Catholics will politely decline Gilkey's invitation to follow in the train of liberal theology, although it is clear from the publication of David Tracy's book Blessed Rage for Order that some have gladly accepted it.

Reaping the Whirlwind. A Christian Interpretation of History (New York: Seabury Press, 1976). This book is like Maker of Heaven and Earth in the sense that it moves beyond the doctrine of creation to the doctrine of providence, a logical sequence, but it is also like Naming the Whirlwind in that it reflects the adjustments and reformulations Gilkey has made since writing Maker of Heaven and Earth. It is a long book, 500 pages, rich in scholarship, suggestive in its analysis of trends in the culture and in theology, and forthright in proposing a reinterpretation of the doctrine of providence. Part one adds more detail to what we already know about modernity from Gilkey, concentrating upon the ways in which historical passage is understood today. In an interlude on theological methodology at the center of the book he shows us how the theology works with a demythologised Bible, connecting it up with secular intimations of transcendence in history. Half of the book is then devoted to the traditional understanding of providence, and to his own reinterpretation in the light of modern consciousness. Again it is the Zeitgeist which requires the revision. Nevertheless, his account of how theological thinking on the subject developed from Augustine to the present day is richly illuminating, and his own reinterpretation has much that is valid in it. The weakness as always from the evangelical point of view lies in the fact that Gilkey is deliberately trying to avoid biblical supernaturalism while still hoping to locate significant meaning in the symbol of providence for the secular way of thinking.

The theology of Langdon Gilkey is impressive in its scholarship, and an almost ideal paradigm of contemporary liberal theology. The evangelical could hardly do better than to study it closely in order to deepen his own thought and devise ways to express biblical truth so that it relates to the modern Geist without capitulating to it.

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The author describes the relationship between the church and the kingdom of God. He sees in the New Testament an understanding of the church as a part of God's dramatic action in Jesus Christ in reconciling all things to himself. The New Testament calls this reconciling work the kingdom of God. Howard Snyder, formerly dean of the Free Methodist Theological Seminary in São Paulo, Brazil, is currently executive director of Light and Life Men International. 216 pages, paper.

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Comments by Clark Pinnock

OLD TESTAMENT COMMENTARY SURVEY by John Goldingay (reviewed, edited by Mark Branson)

The aim of this booklet is to survey and comment on the best resources available in English for understanding the theological significance of the Old Testament. It has in mind the average student in seminary or religion department rather than the research scholar. After explaining the functions of a commentary, it goes on to describe and evaluate one-volume commentaries and series. After that it examines commentaries on each and every Old Testament book, providing brief but highly illuminating remarks on each. It closes with a presentation of the "best buys". Anyone concerned to preach and teach the Old Testament will find this useful, perhaps indispensable.

NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARY SURVEY by Anthony C. Thiselton (reviewed by Don Carson)

Like Goldingay, this booklet evaluates all of the major commentaries in English on the New Testament books. It discusses the need for several types of commentary, and weighs the relative value of the series over individually-selected works. The selection of titles is quite complete, and the remarks very helpful. It would be wise to secure both Goldingay and Thiselton.

A BIBLIOGRAPHICAL GUIDE TO NEW TESTAMENT RESEARCH by R. T. France.

This guide by the editor of Themelios is specifically prepared for the research student and does not duplicate Thiselton. It could be a printed course in library research methods for the advanced student of the New Testament. It goes into lexical aids, text criticism, papyrology, the targums, grammars, periodicals, and the like.

ESCHATOLOGY AND THE PARABLES by I. H. Marshall

Marshall is fast becoming one of the top-flight New Testament scholars. Since this title appeared, he has given us several works on Christology, a major study on perseverance, and watch for his forthcoming commentary on Luke. In study Marshall comes to the defense of the integrity of the Gospel parables and argues their authenticity in their original setting.

SCRIPTURE AND MYTH by P.E. Hughes

This valuable monograph is an examination of Bultmann's plea for demythologization. It exposes the naturalistic mindset his work displays, and how he conforms the gospel to an anthropocentric worldview. Hughes himself calls for a theology in which the Word of God is determinative, and man is summoned to noetic and holistic conversion.

THE SPEECHES OF PETER IN THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES by H. N. Ridderbos

The monograph examines the speeches in the first ten chapters of Acts attributed to the Apostle Peter, containing the first theological reflections on the resurrection of Jesus. He finds them to be historically authentic, truly representing the theology of the Jerusalem church, and to contain important and fundamental New Testament theology.

THE PASTORAL EPISTLES AND THE MIND OF PAUL by Donald Guthrie.

In this work Guthrie, author of the standard and definitive New Testament Introduction, addresses the various issues that bear on the question of Pauline authorship of the Pastorals: vocabulary, style, theology, and unity. He seeks to show that Pauline authorship, although not without difficulties, is reasonable, and that we should treat them as true products of the mind of Paul.

THE MEANING OF THE WORD "BLOOD" IN SCRIPTURE by A. M. Stibbs.

Like Leon Morris, Stibbs disagrees with those who interpret the blood of Christ as signifying new life released through death and now available for us, and advocates the view that blood refers to the death of Jesus in its redemptive significance. Through his death and the shedding of his blood, Jesus has reconciled us to God, cleansing us and putting away all our sins.

THE ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN TREATIES AND THE OLD TESTAMENT by J.A. Thompson

Thompson is concerned to trace the importance of Near Eastern treaties for Old Testament studies. He finds that they illuminate numerous aspects of the literary types, vocabulary and imagery throughout the Scriptures. The data also tends to confirm the authenticity and antiquity of the biblical documents.

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