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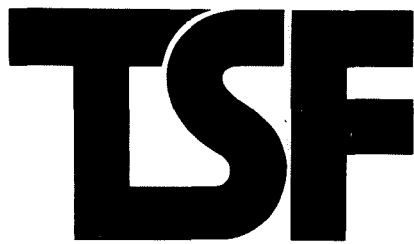
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of these teachings can be clearly established as normative—highest norms or standards. (See Berkeley and Alvera Mickelsen, *Understanding Scripture*, Regal Books, pp. 24-32.) Other teachings in the Old and New Testaments consist of regulations for people where they were.

Christ gave the power of binding and loosing to the apostles (Matt. 16:19; 18:18). This power involved teaching authority, and discipline (see von Meding and Muller [DNTTh], I, 171-172), but not personal authority divorced from the gospel (ibid). Nor can it be divorced from the living, resurrected Jesus.

The first act of the resurrected Lord after his ascension and exaltation to the right hand of God was to send the Holy Spirit. "He poured out this which you are seeing and hearing" (Acts 2:33). This coming of the Spirit was what Joel spoke about, what John the Baptist prophesied, what Jesus announced during his earthly ministry, and what Peter explained in his pentecostal sermon. It was the first act of the resurrected-exalted Jesus. The presence of the Holy Spirit in the world and the teachings mentioned by Peter in connection with Pentecost (Acts 2:17-18) became real.

The inauguration of the New Covenant is seen in Jesus' solemn words of the Lord's

Supper: "This cup is the New Covenant in my blood . . ." (Luke 22:20; I Cor. 11:25). The new wine of the gospel cannot be contained in the old wineskins of Judaism (Matt. 9:17; Mark 2:22, Luke 5:37-39).

The resurrected Jesus is the *whole* Christ: his teachings and the teachings about him, his emphasis on the authority of his gospel, his work at Pentecost, the presence of the Holy Spirit, and his provision for the inauguration of the New Covenant.

Maleness, Jewishness, and circumcision are clarified by the total criterion. The use of maleness, circumcision, or any other *Jewish* structure as limiting service for women is negated by the reality of sons and daughters prophesying—preaching, evangelizing, teaching, comforting, encouraging, doing the full work of the ministry.

The effects in the history of the church of neglecting the gifts of the Spirit are seen more clearly in the light of Anderson's criterion. All gifts were given to men and women (i.e., particular gifts) for the common good (I Cor. 12:7), for the building up of the church (I Cor. 14:12), and for the building up of the body of Christ (Eph. 4:12). When the church lost sight of the total, living, resurrected Christ, it lost sight of its gifts and their use.

Galatians 3:26-29 is a normative passage. One should not begin in verse 28, but rather

in verse 23. Before faith in Jesus, the old covenant was in operation. But now under the new covenant all believers are sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. Verse 28 is Paul's concise statement of what Pentecost involves.

Ambiguous terminology is clarified by the total criterion. Anderson speaks of a "pastoral hermeneutic" and "textual exegesis." This is puzzling at first. I think he means "pastoral regulations" for people where they were so that they could carry out the highest norms of Pentecost. To use such regulations to cancel the highest norm of Pentecost is tragic. To see them as a means to achieve Pentecost is more likely how Paul intended them to be understood. Recognition of dependence and true learning are essentials for all ministry. The Spirit of Jesus will not re-interpret Pentecost, but rather in every age the Spirit will guide teachings to make the power of Pentecost more fully operative.

The Joel passage as quoted in Acts 2:17-18 is central. Anderson closes with this passage. The total criterion of the resurrected Jesus—all that he is, all that he taught, all that is taught about him in Scripture—comes into sharp, clear focus when we see Pentecost as an historical event and also as a powerful present reality to end all sexism, racism, and classism.

A Response to Anderson (II)

by Gerald T. Sheppard

The biblical materials themselves assign a very limited role narratively to the teaching of the risen Lord. In the synoptic Gospels, the post-resurrection encounters are brief; Jesus' instructions appear elusive and punctiliar.

By contrast, the account in Acts 1:3 allows Jesus forty days to add to the disciples' understanding of "the kingdom of God"; but we, the readers, are offered no specific details about what he taught. Historical critics properly raise questions about the sources of such tradition. However, even working within the narrative lines of the Gospels themselves, we find no biblical tradition about what might constitute the new content of revelation by the post-resurrection Christ. Within the canonical presentation of Jesus Christ in Scripture, the post-resurrection Lord remains a silent figure for us. Within the tradition, the unrecorded words of Christ become the grounds for fusing once and for all the meaning and message of Jesus with that of the Christ. The Gospel story is inevitably told through the eyes of those who have seen the glory of God beyond the crucifixion of God; the resurrection of human life beyond the

suffering and death of the oppressed.

In Galatians, Paul claims he learns about the Gospel through a special audition in the wilderness, but he immediately assures us that he confirmed the accuracy of his knowledge by comparison with the Gospel tradition as already understood by the disciples in Jerusalem. The later Pauline reference to a "command from the Lord" coincides, in my opinion, with the early Christian understanding of prophecy which belongs to a quite different resource than what Anderson proposes. It is not based on an appeal to experience within the churches as proof that the risen Lord has recently clarified some previously equivocal matter; for example, in a manner parallel to Anderson's case for women's ordination.

I agree with Anderson that one should value what we discover by God's grace to be the actual situation in churches. Of course, we can observe that God seems to allow women to minister as effectively, if not more so, than men. At a minimum, this evidence ought to inspire us to hope that we can hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ with a new precision. In and of itself, it need not lead to the assumption that the risen Lord has finally made a timely decision. In my estimate, Anderson's approach risks assigning the issue of women's ordination to biblical *adiaphora*, uncertainties at the margin rather than at the

center of our understanding of the Gospel. I would prefer to argue theologically that women *should* be ordained, and should have been in the past, for the sake of the same Gospel to which Scripture bears witness then and now. The risen Lord has not unexpectedly decided to join us in exegesis of biblical texts on this timely subject. Conversely, through ignorance and a poverty of imagination, *we* have only now caught up to yet another aspect of this same Gospel. We cannot blame the risen Lord for the uncertain sounds in *our* Gospel of the past. We can only respond thankfully that we now know we *should* have ordained women from the beginning of the church. The church is an imperfect institution. To whom much is given much is required!

On a much more controversial matter, the presence of gay and lesbian Christians and ministers in our churches is for me a similar issue. I have argued elsewhere that our privileged knowledge of "homosexualities" demands a new precision in our hearing the Gospel. I believe that the Gospel—as Evangelicals Concerned recognizes—should lead us at least to an affirmation of gay and lesbian partnerships ruled by a biblical ethic analogous to that offered for heterosexual relationships. If one makes such claims, then the resurrected Lord cannot be used as an excuse for the preceding centuries of sexism and

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homophobia. We should confess our past sins, whenever we gain a deeper knowledge of things that were already implicitly at the core of our profession of faith in Jesus Christ. After all, these *are* matters of life and death, not mere ambiguities.

Finally, I am disappointed in Anderson's proposal for what I consider to be a failure within Reformed Protestantism of the West. In the national Faith and Order Movement, I have been impressed with the (Eastern) Orthodox critique of the *filioque* clause in the Nicene Creed. The Orthodox contend that the *filioque* clause, on the one hand, says nothing about the economic trinity in wor-

ship and Christian praxis and, on the other hand, the *filioque* relegates the Holy Spirit to an inferior status within the Trinity. As Kilian McDonnell suggests, Protestants seem to assume that the Holy Spirit was not present with believers until the day of Pentecost. In the biblical tradition, the post-resurrection Jesus must go away so that the Holy Spirit will be with us in a special way, as the convictor/comforter until Christ comes again in glory. Even at this point, many Protestants relegate the Pentecostal activity of the Spirit to the Apostolic Age and, as Anderson's proposal seems to suggest, opt for a "Christomonism" for understanding God in the Church Age.

Anderson deserves commendation both for his genuine concern to respect the nature of the biblical text, rather than merely project his own ideas into it, and for his recognition of the gift of God in the ministry of ordained women. Nevertheless, Anderson's theological thesis, in my opinion, resolves too many hermeneutical problems by a "Jesusology" of the post-resurrected Lord. Moreover, such a view tends to invite an atrophied understanding of the role of the Holy Spirit, for example, in the attestation of Scripture, discernment within the community of faith, and empowerment to announce freedom to captives and liberty to the oppressed.

A Response to Mickelsen and Sheppard

by Ray S. Anderson

Berkeley Mickelsen and Gerald Sheppard have made significant contributions to theological literature in their own right. For them to take the time to read and critique what I have written is a mark of their Christian collegiality and their concern to contribute further to theological dialogue within the evangelical community. The fact that they were severely limited in the amount of space to present their responses while I was privileged to write two major essays, only demonstrates their good will and grace even further. I deeply appreciate their contributions.

Both Mickelsen and Sheppard seem to have grasped clearly the basic thesis which I proposed, with Mickelsen willing to consider it as a possible way of proceeding in the hermeneutical task, while Sheppard, if I understand him correctly, rejects it. Mickelsen has suggested some valuable insights which need to be pursued further, and points to the need for continued exploration of the biblical, cultural, and historical contexts in which the original texts were written. I am not sure what he means by "the highest norms of Pentecost," and by suggesting that the "Spirit of Jesus will not reinterpret Pentecost." I do not think he means that the historical event of Pentecost constitutes a norm any more than the historical event of the resurrection is a norm. It is the person of the risen Christ which is normative even as it is the person of the Holy Spirit which makes the normative presence of the risen Christ in the Church a contemporary reality.

This, of course, is where Gerry Sheppard takes issue with my basic thesis. Sheppard is not willing to allow that the risen Christ was normative for Paul. Rather, Paul's experience of the risen Christ needed to be corroborated by the oral tradition of the Jesus who lived, taught, was crucified and appeared to the early disciples. I find this strange in light of Paul's insistence that he "did not confer with flesh and blood" following his conversion, and that he only went up to Jerusalem three years af-

ter, and only then for fifteen days, and that it was fourteen years later when he went up to confer with them about "his gospel" (Gal. 1:18; 2:1). Can we read the Galatian epistle in any other way than an attempt by Paul to argue for his experience of the risen Christ as a criterion for his own apostolic authority as well as for "his gospel"?

But Sheppard does not want to allow for a Pauline reinterpretation of the gospel tradition as represented by the pre-resurrected Jesus. He will only allow that the resurrected Jesus, or the Holy Spirit, leads us to discover the same gospel with a "new precision." His basic thesis seems to be that what the church discovers today as a "permission" to ordain women can be found in the original biblical texts. This is a position taken by Daniel Fuller and has been ably presented in the November/December 1985 issue of *TSF Bulletin*.

What I hear Sheppard saying is that even Paul's teaching must be verified by its correspondence with the oral tradition as contained in the remembrance and witness of the disciples. Should Timothy have found, with a "new precision," a source in that early tradition to set aside Paul's clear instructions not to place women in authority over men? I do not think this is what Sheppard means to suggest. But then I am not clear as to what he means by the "gospel tradition," to which Paul himself must conform in order to be accurate, nor am I clear as to what he means by the "canonical presentation of Jesus Christ in Scripture."

Along with the ordination of women, Sheppard cites the case of the recognition of homosexual partnerships as one which can also be determined by a "new precision" in interpreting the biblical texts. I had expected that he would have pointed to this as a logical outcome of my own thesis, a point which I anticipated in my essay. Instead, he argues that refusal to recognize homosexual partnerships along with the refusal to ordain women by the church in its past is to sub-

stitute "our gospel" for the true and original "gospel of Christ." I have read the attempts to argue the case for ordination of women as well as for recognition of homosexual partnerships on the basis of "new exegetical precision," and I remain unpersuaded. For the reasons cited in my essay, I continue to feel that the discernment of the ministry of the resurrected Jesus in and by the church today is a recognition of an eschatological reality by which the historical Jesus, coming again, and present in the power of the Holy Spirit, is leading the church toward its future.

In the end, Sheppard charges me with following the Western tradition with regard to the *filioque*. I plead guilty here, with a qualification. I agree with Karl Barth, who has suggested that there are clearly no ecclesial or historical grounds for the insertion of the *filioque* clause into the Creed. Yet, Barth argues, the theological instincts which sought to locate the saving and sanctifying work of the Spirit of God in the work of Christ, the Son of God, are essentially correct. As Thomas Smal has recently shown in his two significant works, *Reflected Glory* and *The Forgotten Father*, a pentecostal or charismatic experience of the Spirit without a trinitarian and christological context tends toward a neglect of both the Father and the Son.

My own position demands that the Spirit who is present in the church be taken with radical seriousness as making present the life of God as Father and Son. But it is the proper work of the risen Christ as the Son to prepare the church for its eschatological presentation to the Father, even as it is the proper work of the Spirit to make present in the church the eschatological reality of the Father and the Son.

In Sheppard's response, no doubt dictated by its brevity, there is no clear indication that he considers the work of the Spirit to be an eschatological manifestation of God, and that this constitutes a hermeneutical context for determining what Scripture *intends* as a con-