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Editor's Introduction

In 2000, the Commission for Theological Integrity of the National Association of Free Will Baptists published the first of what it envisioned as an occasional journal of theology. This issue continues to fulfill that original vision to provide a journal that would offer a forum for Christian scholarship among Free Will Baptists. The four articles in this issue represent the disciplines of biblical studies, biblical theology, missiology, ecclesiology, ethics, and history. Like past articles in *Integrity*, some of these articles are syntheses that introduce a given topic, and others are more in-depth studies of a particular subject.

In his article, "The Parable of the Good Samaritan in Modern Study," Thomas Marberry, Academic Dean at Hillsdale Free Will Baptist College, offers a close study of the parable of the Good Samaritan. Marberry contrasts earlier allegorical interpretation of the parable with new directions taken in the twentieth century by interpreters such as C. H. Dodd and Joachim Jeremias. Then he shows how more recent scholars have challenged their approach, thus emphasizing the socio-cultural context of Jesus's audience more than the way the early church would have received or even edited the parable. Dr. Marberry's study is not only interesting and informative, but it will also be helpful to preachers in preparing sermons on this and other parables of Jesus.

Ronald Callaway, Program Coordinator for Missions and Intercultural Studies at Welch College, presents an article entitled "'And Then the End Will Come': A Brief Essay on Mission Theology." In it he offers a helpful and learned synthesis of the theology of mission. He explicates the concept of the *missio Dei* (mission of God) and probes the way it interacts with and sets the agenda for theology. Rather than seeing missions as merely something the church does, Callaway makes a compelling case for seeing the *missio Dei* as at the essence of what the church is. Thus he ties the *missio Dei* to its outworking of the divine redemptive action of the Holy Trinity in the life and mission of the church of Jesus Christ. Dr. Callaway's article is not only a helpful distillation of the best evangelical theology of world mission, but it is also a practical and pastoral meditation on the church's redemptive mission in the world.

In the article "'In One Accord': Bridging the Divide between Doctrine and Practice," Jackson Watts, pastor of Grace Free Will Baptist Church in Arnold, Missouri, considers the dichotomy we often see between doctrine and practice, between theology and ethics. In his important argument, he shows why Holy Scripture does not drive a wedge between doctrine and practice. After laying this biblical foundation, he discusses some practical ways in which we see the relationship of doctrine and practice,

probing how wisdom and desire shed light on their relationship. Watts's presentation of some practical situations in church ministry, and how a unification of doctrine and practice will help the church be more faithful, makes the article relevant to everyday ministry, thus exemplifying the argument of his essay.

Matthew Bracey, Registrar and faculty member at Welch College, discusses the influences on the founding of the United States in his incisive article "America's Founding: Philosophical and Religious Influences." From his background of legal, historical, and theological study, he considers the Reformation background of and influences on much of the political thought that led to the ideals of the founding fathers and the thinkers that influenced them most: Locke, Blackstone, and Montesquieu. The upshot of his essay is that, were it not for the political theory that emerged from the Reformation, as mediated by Enlightenment-era thinkers, there never would have been a Declaration of Independence or a United States Constitution.

Following the articles are eight book reviews on subjects ranging from doctrine and biblical theology to church history to ministry. All the contributions in this issue continue to fulfill the purpose of *Integrity: A Journal of Christian Thought* to provide a platform for Free Will Baptist theological scholarship, including one for younger scholars. We commend to you this issue with the hope that it will further stimulate theological development among Free Will Baptists and extend the kingdom of Christ to the glory of God.

J. Matthew Pinson
Editor

Thomas L. Marberry

The Parable of the Good Samaritan in Modern Study

The Gospel of Luke presents the longest and most complete account of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ; it is, in fact, the longest book in the New Testament.[1] As Guthrie correctly notes, it announces the birth of both John the Baptist and Jesus. It contains the most well developed infancy narratives. It ends with a reference to the ascension which is absent from the other Synoptic Gospels.[2]

Luke, like the other synoptic authors, wrote in order to accomplish various objectives. Stein thinks it likely that Luke wrote to accomplish several specific objectives: "Whereas Luke clearly had some specific aims in mind, there also exist lesser themes he sought to share with his readers as he related to them the Gospel traditions and the traditions he had either learned or shared in concerning the early church."[3]

Marshall notes that Luke's indications of time and place are vaguer than those found in the other Synoptic Gospels. It is clear that Luke's purpose is not to give a "detailed list of what Jesus did in chronological order." More likely, his purpose is to record "the kind of things that Jesus said and did."[4] Luke consistently sets the ministry of Christ in the larger context of Roman and Jewish history.[5]

The parables form an important part of the teachings of Jesus. As Bowie notes, "The parables have an arresting quality which has etched them deep in memory. They are based on things seen, and they awake immediate and vivid images which are seen again in the mind."[6] The teachings of Jesus, especially the parables, had great appeal among the common people of the land of Palestine. These people could take hold of Jesus' teaching; it had meaning and purpose for them.[7] "The parables did

1. D. A. Carson, Douglas J. Moo, and Leon Morris, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 111. Donald Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, 4th ed. (Downer's Grove: InterVarsity, 1990), 102.

2. Guthrie, 102.

3. Robert H. Stein, "Luke," *The New American Commentary*, vol. 24, David S. Dockery, ed. (Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 35.

4. I. Howard Marshall, *Luke: Historian and Theologian* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1971), 65.

5. Ibid.

6. Walter Russell Bowie, "The Teaching of Jesus. The Parables." in The Interpreter's Bible, 12 vols, ed. George Arthur Buttrick (New York: Abingdon, 1951), VII:165.

7. Ibid.

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not bring alien information; rather they focused and called into action what people already half knew was so, and now suddenly could fully see."[8]

The amount of Jesus's teaching given in parables is one indicator of the importance of the parable as a teaching device. There are fifty-one passages in the Synoptic Gospels that may be considered parables.[9] Six are found in all three of the Synoptics; three are found in both Matthew and Luke; fourteen are found in Luke alone.[10] Jesus gives about one-third of His teaching through parables.[11]

The English word *parable* is a translation of the Greek word παραβολή, which carries a much broader meaning than does the English term.[12] It is used in the Septuagint to translate the Hebrew term *māšal*, which is used in the Old Testament to describe "any dark saying intended to stimulate thought."[13] Most authorities divide these New Testament sayings into four groups or forms: similies, example stories, parables, and allegories.[14] Some authorities find this four-fold division unworkable, but the majority of scholars find it a useful way of distinguishing between the various literary forms.[15]

Colin Brown gives a most useful summary of the use of the term παραβολή. He defines a parable as "a form of speech used to illustrate and persuade by the help of a picture." He outlines its Old Testament background as well as its use in the Septuagint, the New Testament, and the Gospel of Thomas.[16] Bailey defines a parable in this way, "The parables of Jesus are a concrete/dramatic form of theological language that presses the listener to respond. They reveal the nature of the kingdom of God and/or indicate how a child of the kingdom should act."[17]

As a general rule, parables tend to be brief and symmetrical; they omit unnecessary details and often leave questions unanswered. They are based on the events of everyday life, but they often do not present normal occurrences. They often contain hyperbole or include elements of shock

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid., 166.

10. Ibid.

11. K. R. Snodgrass, "Parable" in *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, ed. Joel B. Green, Scot McKnight, and I. Howard Marshall (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1992), 594.

12. Ibid, 593.

13. Ibid.

14. Ibid.

15. Ibid.

16. Colin Brown, "Parable, Allegory, Proverb" in *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976), 2:743-56.

17. Kenneth E. Bailey, *Through Peasant Eyes* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), xi.

and surprise.[18] It is doubtful, for example, that any normal person in first-century Palestine would owe a debt of 10,000 talents (several million dollars today).[19]

The point of emphasis in the parable often does not become evident until near the end of the story. The parables often present some type of challenge or call upon the hearer to make a decision or response. They are often invitations to change one's behavior or discipleship.[20] The parables are much more than mere illustrations; in many cases they are the vehicle that Jesus employs to communicate the message. Their purpose is to engage and instruct, to stimulate thought, and to demand a response.[21] The major focus of their attention is the nature of the kingdom of God. As Snodgrass notes, "They are avenues to understanding, handles by which one can grasp the kingdom."[22]

This essay will examine one of the most famous Lucan parables, the Parable of the Good Samaritan. It will begin with a brief exegesis of the parable. It will continue with a history of the interpretation of the parable and an analysis of how it contributes to the current debate over the interpretation of the parables. This essay will seek to place this familiar parable in its context and explain something of how it should be correctly interpreted.

TEXT: LUKE 10:25-37

> 25 And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?
> 26 He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?
> 27 And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.
> 28 And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.
> 29 But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?
> 30 And Jesus answering said, A certain *man* went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded *him*, and departed, leaving *him* half dead.

18. Snodgrass, 594.
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid.
21. Ibid., 596.
22. Ibid.

> 31 And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.
> 32 And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on *him*, and passed by on the other side.
> 33 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on *him*,
> 34 And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.
> 35 And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave *them* to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.
> 36 Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?
> 37 And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

EXEGESIS

Hultgren entitles this and other similar parables "Parables of exemplary behavior."[23] These parables are designed to present "examples of human conduct for the disciple of Jesus to follow or to avoid."[24] Jeremias classifies the parable in a similar fashion. He includes it along with other parables in the category "Realized Discipleship."[25] This parable illustrates the kind of true love that the disciple of Jesus demonstrates in his or her daily life. Jeremias explains, "Such a love finds its expression in silent giving with no sounding of the trumpet; it does not lay up treasure on earth, but it entrusts its possessions to God's faithful hands. It is a boundless love, such as is depicted by the *parable of the Good Samaritan*."[26]

Because of the question, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Hunter views this parable primarily as a salvation parable. He includes it along with three others in a category he entitles *The Parables of Eternal Issues*.[27] In another work, Hunter includes this parable in a group he entitles *The Men of the Kingdom*. This group of parables illustrates the type of conduct that those who have become true members of God's kingdom

23. Aland J. Hultgren, *The Parables of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 92.

24. Ibid.

25. Joachim Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus*, rev. ed., trans. S. H. Hooke (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1963), 202.

26. Ibid. Italics his.

27. Archibald M. Hunter, *The Parables Then and Now* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1971), 108.

will demonstrate. One type of conduct is love. Hunter writes, "Forgiveness leads on naturally to love."[28] In both of these works, Hunter finds the themes of salvation and love closely intertwined.

Bailey makes no attempt to place this parable in a specific category, but his approach is similar to that of Hunter. He writes, "The passage makes a statement about salvation. Salvation comes to the wounded man in the form of a costly demonstration of unexpected love."[29] He concludes his discussion of the parable with these words: "May the theology and the ethical demands of this time-honored passage inform and empower us afresh today."[30]

This passage may be divided into three parts. The first part, 10:25-29, is the first interview between Jesus and the expert in the law. The second part, 10:30-35, is the parable itself. The third part, 10:36-37, is Jesus's second interview with the lawyer. As Stein and others have discussed, one problem in the study of this parable is the relationship between this passage, Mark 12:28-34, and Matthew 22:34-40, in which a scribe asks Jesus which of the commandments is to be considered the greatest. Stein notes that these passages reflect two important similarities. First, in all three of these passages, Jesus has a discussion with one who is an expert in the Jewish law. Second, all of the messages mention Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18, in that order.[31] Stein outlines several possible relationships between these three similar passages. While the comparison between this parable and other similar passages is interesting and important, it is not directly relevant to the interpretation of the parable of the Good Samaritan.

The lawyer in the passage is an expert in the oral and written traditions of the Jews. Hunter explains, "The lawyer in our parable was a scribe or expert in the Law of Moses with all its many rules and regulations."[32] Hultgren defines him as "a person who is trained to interpret and teach the law of Jewish tradition."[33] Today he would be called a theologian.

In verse 25 the lawyer asks Jesus a question: "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" As Geldenhuys notes, this was a common question among Jews of the first century.[34] Since the person asking the question

28. Archibald M. Hunter, *Interpreting the Parables* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1960), 71.

29. Bailey, 56.

30. Ibid.

31. Stein, 314-15.

32. Hunter, *Parables Then and Now*, 108-09.

33. Hultgren, 95.

34. Norval Geldenhuys, *Commentary on the Gospel of Luke* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1951), 310.

was an expert in the Jewish law, Jesus responded by referring him to the law. Jesus says in effect, "You are the expert in the law. What does the law say?" The lawyer responds by citing two very famous passages from the Old Testament that teach the requirements for inheriting eternal life, which are "perfect love towards God and perfect love towards one's neighbor."[35] Jesus replies to the lawyer's answer in a positive manner. The implication of Jesus's statement is that if he "observes these requirements faithfully, he will live—in the fullest sense of the word, for time and eternity alike."[36]

In the first century, it would have been extremely unusual for a learned theologian to ask a layman about how to obtain eternal life. The traditional interpretation, based on verse 25, is that the lawyer was not asking the question seriously. Rather it was an attempt to trick Jesus into saying something contrary to the laws and traditions of Judaism. Hunter explains that the lawyer asked the question "not because he wished to know the answer but because he wanted to cross-examine Jesus as an interpreter of the sacred Law."[37] Bailey suggests that some of the lawyers were "uneasy about Jesus' attitude toward the law."[38] Some leading rabbis were teaching that one could gain eternal life by keeping the law. This lawyer wanted to determine if Jesus was in agreement with that position. Summers also presents this traditional interpretation in these words, "This was a testing of wits in which the specialist in the law doubtless intended to discredit Jesus among his followers by defeating him in theological discussion on how to attain eternal life."[39]

Jeremias suggests a different approach. In his view, the lawyer asks the question because he has been "disturbed in conscience by Jesus' preaching."[40] Rather than being an effort to discredit Jesus, his is a sincere effort to deal with legitimate issues that the preaching and teaching of Jesus has raised in his life. Jesus recognizes that the legal expert has the theoretical knowledge; what he lacks is an understanding of how to apply that theoretical knowledge to the practical issues of life. Jeremias notes that "the enquirer's theological knowledge is of no avail if his life is not governed by the love of God."[41] Geldenhuys suggests that the lawyer's motives for

35. Ibid., 311.
36. Ibid.
37. Hunter, *Parables Then and Now*, 109.
38. Bailey, 36.
39. Ray Summers, *Commentary on Luke* (Waco: Word, 1972), 134.
40. Jeremias, 202.
41. Ibid.

asking the question were probably mixed.[42] He knows that he does not have eternal life and that he does not love all men perfectly. He knows that "Jesus' answer has cornered him . . . [and] he is looking for some excuse for not having treated all people alike with love."[43] Wilcock writes that it is theoretically true that one who practices the law may live by it, but the fact is that no one can keep the law.[44] He explains, "If the lawyer thinks eternal life can be obtained by doing what the law demands, he will have to learn how extreme those demands are.[45]

The lawyer then responds to Jesus with a second question: "And who is my neighbor?" The identity of the neighbor is the logical next step in the discussion; this was also a much-debated issue in the first century. Geldenhuys argues that, in the Jewish world of the first century, "one's neighbours related only to persons belonging to one's own blood (pure Jews and therefore not Gentiles or Samaritans)."[46] Hultgren suggests that the term was normally applied to a fellow Jew or to a proselyte.[47] Kistemaker presents a similar position.[48] He argues that the term neighbor had something of a reciprocal meaning: "he is brother to me and I to him."[49]

Hultgren points out that the lawyer asked this question not to obtain information but to justify or vindicate himself.[50] His question really is: "Where do I draw the line? How large must the circle be?"[51] Jesus responds to this second question by telling the famous parable of the Good Samaritan. According to Hultgren, this parable is not based on an actual incident but is "an artful creation by a master storyteller."[52] Kistemaker suggests that it may, in fact, be based on an actual story of a man who survived such a terrible attack.[53]

The social and cultural situation in Palestine in the first century provides the background for understanding this parable. According to Kistemaker, there was a significant influx of non-Jews into the country at

42. Geldenhuys, 311.

43. Ibid.

44. Michael Wilcock, *The Message of Luke*, The Bible Speaks Today, ed. John R. W. Stott (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1979), 123.

45. Ibid

46. Geldenhuys, 311.

47. Hultgren, 94.

48. Simon Kistemaker, *The Parables of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980), 167.

49. Ibid.

50. Hultgren, 94.

51. Ibid.

52. Ibid.

53. Kistemaker, 167.

this time. Jews in Judaea were separated from those in Galilee by the Samaritans. Roman soldiers were everywhere. "Hellenist travelers visited Israel regularly."[54]

The long history of conflict between Jews and Samaritans is well known. Hultgren writes, "Normally the Samaritans were considered apostate; the sources show that they were universally regarded as objects of contempt."[55] He also describes briefly the origins of the Samaritans and how their long-running conflict with the Jews developed.[56]

There are three principal characters in the parable: a priest, a Levite, and a Samaritan. The wounded man never speaks or makes any theological contribution to the story; he is simply part of the scene. He is described in verse 30 by the Greek term 'ημιθανη̄ ("half-dead"), which is found only here in the Greek New Testament. This word can be interpreted in two ways. First, it may mean that the man could be taken for dead. The other possible meaning is that he was unconscious and looked like a corpse.[57] The priest was "a descendant of Aaron involved in the sacrifices and maintenance of the temple."[58] Jericho was a city with a high concentration of priests, and it would not have been unusual to read about a priest returning to his home in Jericho after completing his term of service at the Temple in Jerusalem.[59] The Levite was "a descendant of Levi who assisted the priests in various sacrificial duties and policing the temple but could not perform the sacrificial acts."[60]

Commentators disagree on the level of responsibility these two fictional characters had to help a fellow Jew. Hultgren examines the issues and concludes that the priest was under obligation to help. If the priest saw that the man was still alive, he should have helped. "Saving a life overrides any other prescript of the law."[61] Rabbinic authorities disagree on the issue of whether or not a priest should bury a dead body. According to Hultgren, "it is more fitting to conclude that the victim of the beating is a person in need, not one that appears dead. And in that case there can be no debate; the priest had a duty to save life."[62] See the most useful comments of Jeremias.[63] For whatever reason (and it is

54. Ibid.
55. Hultgren, 98.
56. Ibid.
57. Ibid., 96.
58. Stein, 317.
59. Kistemaker, 168.
60. Stein, 317.
61. Hultgren, 97.
62. Ibid.
63. Jeremias, 203-04.

useless to speculate on the thoughts and motives of a fictional character), the priest does nothing to help.[64] He passes by on the other side; the Levite does likewise.

Given the fact that such stories often involved three characters, it is likely that the hearers anticipated the arrival of a third character who would remedy the terrible situation. Since the Jewish society was divided into priests, Levites, and other Israelites, it is likely that they expected an ordinary Israelite to fill that role.[65] They were in for a big surprise. The hero of the story arrives, but he is not a Jew at all. He is a hated Samaritan. He administers first aid, places the wounded man on his donkey, and takes him to an inn where he continues to care for this stranger. Before he leaves the next day, he leaves two Roman *denarii* (the equivalent of two days' wages for a farmer or a soldier) with the innkeeper. Depending on the price of the accommodations, that would have been sufficient payment to take care of a stay of a week or more.[66] Before leaving, the unnamed Samaritan promises to pay any additional charges on his next visit.

The third part of the story, Jesus's second interview with the legal expert, begins in verse 36; it is short and to the point. Jesus asks, "Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?" The lawyer has no other option but to say that the neighbor was the one who rendered aid in the hour of need. Jesus concludes the interview by saying, "Go, and do thou likewise." Stein suggests that the lawyer specifically avoided using the term *Samaritan* in his answer.[67] According to Geldenhuys, the man asked the question, "Whom should I love?" Jesus answered with this parable. Jesus's point is this: "If you really love God, you will also love your fellow-man and you will show neighbourly love to everyone in need of your help, no matter who or what that person might be."[68]

BRIEF HISTORY OF INTERPRETATION

Most early Christian commentators interpreted this parable, like others, allegorically. Dodd summarizes the famous interpretation of this parable found in the writings of Augustine.[69] The man making the

64. Stein, 317.
65. Hultgren, 98.
66. Ibid, 99.
67. Stein, 318.
68. Geldenhuys, 311-12.
69. C. H. Dodd, *The Parables of the Kingdom* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1961), 1-2.

journey from Jerusalem to Jericho is Adam. Jerusalem is the heavenly city of peace. Jericho stands for the moon, which signifies our mortality "because it is born, waxes, wanes, and dies." The thieves are the Devil and his minions who strip Adam of his immortality. The priest and the Levite symbolize the ministry of the Old Testament "which could profit nothing for salvation." The Samaritan is the Lord himself. The binding of the wounds is the restraint of sin. Oil is the comfort of good hope; wine is the exhortation to "work with fervent spirit." Being set upon the beast symbolizes belief in the incarnation of Christ. The inn is the church, and the innkeeper is the Apostle Paul.[70]

When interpreters follow this method of interpretation, they pay little or no attention to the original context or to Jesus's purpose in telling the parable. They treat the parable as an allegory, regarding each detail as a cryptogram to be decoded by the interpreter.[71] As Hunter notes, "allegory means the interpretation of the text in terms of something else, regardless of what that something else may be."[72] Early Christians did not invent this method of interpretation. It had long been used in interpreting Greek classical documents such as the writings of Homer and Plato. There are two main problems with this method of interpretation. First, it divorces the parable entirely from its historical and cultural context. Second, it depends entirely on the whim of the interpreter, who can make any detail in the parable symbolize any truth that he wishes it to symbolize. The parable simply becomes putty in the hands of the interpreter; no objective standard of interpretation is possible.

The allegorical method of interpretation prevailed (with few exceptions) until modern times. R. C. Trench's Notes on the *Parables of Our Lord*, first published in the nineteenth century, can be found in the libraries of many pastors today. Trench's interpretation of the Parable of the Good Samaritan differs little from that given by Augustine many centuries ago. He notes that the parable, when "taken according to the letter only," provides a beautiful story with important lessons. He then adds, "yet we find much more beauty, and much greater motives to love, when we see the work of Christ portrayed to us here."[73] The traveler "is personified human nature, or Adam as the representative of the race." Jerusalem is the heavenly city; Jericho is the cursed city. He falls under

70. Ibid.

71. Ibid., 1.

72. Hunter, *Interpreting the Parables*, 23.

73. Richard Chenevix Trench, *Notes on the Parables of Our Lord* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1977), 112.

the power of him who is "both a robber and a murderer." He is stripped of his original righteousness. The priest and the Levite (the law and the sacrifices) are powerless to help him. The wine is the blood of the passion; the oil is the anointing of the Holy Spirit. The Samaritan "walking by the side of his own beast" reminds us of "Him who for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich." The inn stands for the church "in which the healing of souls is ever going forward."[74]

Such an interpretation is attractive, but it divorces the parable completely from its historical context. The message it conveys is not determined by the manner in which Jesus used the parable or by its contribution to the theological development of Luke's Gospel. Its meaning is determined by the way in which the interpreter chooses to interpret it. The meaning does not derive from the text; it is rather imposed upon the text.

Beginning in the late nineteenth century and continuing into the twentieth, a radical shift in the interpretation of the parables took place, largely resulting from the work of Adolf Jülicher, Joachim Jeremias, and C. H. Dodd. These authors and their disciples argued that interpreters should not view the parables as allegories but as figurative sayings, similitudes, or parables proper.[75] The greatest difference between this new method of interpretation and the traditional allegorical method is that these authors emphasize that each parable is designed to teach one main point, not a multitude of different points. Dodd explains, "The typical parable, whether it be a simple metaphor, or a more elaborate similitude, or a full-length story, presents one single point of comparison. The details are not intended to have independent significance."[76] The primary task of the interpreter is to discover this one point of comparison that the parable teaches.

The historical context in which the parable is spoken becomes much more important in this new method of interpretation than it was in the allegorical method. Dodd argues that, "if the parables are taken as a whole, their realism is remarkable." He suggests that the parables from the New Testament give to the modern reader "a singularly complete and convincing picture of" life in a small provincial town. They give us a more complete picture of peasant life in Palestine than we possess for any other province in the Roman Empire except for Egypt, where we have the benefit of the papyri discoveries.[77]

74. Ibid., 112-13.
75. Dodd, 7.
76. Ibid.
77. Ibid., 10.

Dodd deals with the issue of the allegorical interpretations that attach to certain parables. He argues that in some cases they are part of the original text; in other cases they are likely later additions to the text. He explains that "there are grounds for suspecting that in many cases the application was not a part of the earlier tradition, but was supplied by the evangelist, or by his immediate authority, representing no doubt the current exegesis in that part of the Church to which he belonged."[78]

Another interesting feature of this school of thought is that Dodd, Jeremias, and others often distinguish between two distinct contexts within which the parables are presented. The first of these is the original context in which Jesus first spoke the parable. The second is the later context in which the Gospel writer placed the parable. Jeremias explains: "As they have come down to us, the parables of Jesus have a double historical setting. (1) The original historical setting of the parables . . . is some specific situation in the pattern of the activity of Jesus."[79] The second stage is the written stage they assumed in the life of the early church. Jeremias writes concerning the early church: "It collected and arranged the sayings of Jesus according to their subject matter, created a setting for them, sometimes modifying their form, expanding here, allegorizing there, always in relation to its own situation between the Cross and the *Parousia*."[80]

For example, in his discussion of the parable of the Great Supper, Luke includes this parable in a number of table sayings designed to teach that one should invite the poor, the lame, the halt, and the blind.[81] The original context of the parable, however, concerned the vindication of the gospel message of preaching the gospel to the poor.[82] According to Jeremias, "the story has been transformed from a vindication into a warning. Once again the emphasis has been shifted from the eschatological to the hortatory."[83] According to this school of thought, the early church often reinterpreted the parables or applied them in a manner that differed from their original use in the teachings of Jesus.

It is interesting to note the small role that the Parable of the Good Samaritan played in this radical shift in the interpretation of the parables. Dodd recounts the story of Augustine's allegorical interpretation of the parable as a part of the first chapter entitled "The Nature and Purpose of

78. Ibid., 16.
79. Jeremias, 23
80. Ibid.
81. Ibid., 97.
82. Ibid., 45.
83. Ibid.

the Gospel Parables."[84] He uses the parable only to illustrate the inadequacy of the allegorical method of interpretation. He never considers this important parable in the remainder of his book. He never examines the interpretation of this parable or how it contributes either to the teaching of Jesus or to the message of Luke's Gospel. In reality, this famous parable contributes nothing to Dodd's argument.

Jeremias pays more attention to this parable than does Dodd, but it still occupies only a relatively minor position in his thought. He devotes approximately four pages to its interpretation.[85] He suggests that the parable may grow out of an actual incident. He points out that priests normally traveled to Jerusalem in groups to perform their priestly duties. It is, therefore, more likely that the priest and the Levite in the parable are returning to Jericho after performing their duties in Jerusalem. For this reason, the levitical restrictions on touching a dead body would have been less restrictive (particularly for the Levite).[86] Jeremias suggests that the Samaritan was probably a merchant who rode one donkey and carried his wares on another.[87]

For Jeremias, the basic lesson of the parable is that the law of love knows no bounds. He writes, "The example of the despised half-breed was intended to teach him that no human being was beyond the range of his charity. The law of love called him to be ready at any time to give his life for another's need."[88]

There is no doubt that Jeremias' interpretation of this important parable is infinitely better than the earlier allegorical interpretations. He seeks to set the parable in its original context; he seeks for the meaning that Jesus sought to convey when He told the parable. While Jeremias does a commendable job in interpreting the parable in light of its original context, it contributes little to the new direction he is advocating in the interpretation of the parables.

While the insights of Dodd and Jeremias have significantly influenced the interpretation of the parables in recent years, not all scholars have agreed with them. Blomberg, Hultgren, and others have challenged several of their basic assumptions. The studies of these later scholars have made more use of the Parable of the Good Samaritan than have the works of Dodd and Jeremias.

84. Dodd, 1.
85. Jeremias, 202-06.
86. Ibid., 204.
87. Ibid.
88. Ibid., 205.

Blomberg summarizes the current scholarly consensus, based largely on the work of Dodd and Jeremias, under five headings:

1. Most Christians have historically interpreted the parables as allegories.
2. Modern interpreters have rejected this allegorical interpretation in favor of interpretations that seek for the one basic point made by each parable.
3. The parables, as they appear in the Gospels, do have certain allegorical features, but these should be regarded as the exception rather than the rule.
4. The explicit interpretations of the parables that are found in the Gospels should not be taken as normative.
5. Apart from the relatively small amount of allegory found in the parables, they are among the "most indisputably authentic sayings of Jesus."[89]

Blomberg also suggests that many contemporary scholars believe that writers of the Synoptic Gospels "almost entirely obscured their significance through redactional activity."[90]

While agreeing with some of the insights developed by Dodd, Jeremias, and others, Blomberg differs from them in significant ways. He argues, for example, that the parables are more allegorical than is generally recognized. They are also more authentic than the scholarly consensus is willing to admit. They often make more than one main point.[91]

Blomberg devotes approximately four pages to his analysis of the Good Samaritan. He includes it within a group of parables he labels as "Complex Three-Point Parables."[92] These follow the typical pattern of having three principal characters. However, at times, the same role may be filled by two characters (as the priest and the Levite). Blomberg suggests that stories about Samaritans who performed good deeds in the Old Testament may have inspired this parable.[93] The traditional interpretation, which seeks to allegorize each detail by comparing it with some aspect of the process of salvation misses the mark entirely. He explains that "the parable is told not in order to answer the question of how to inherit eternal life but to answer the question of who one's neighbor is."[94]

89. Craig L. Blomberg, *Interpreting the Parables* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1990) 15-18.

90. Ibid., 22.

91. Ibid., 20-21.

92. Ibid., 213.

93. Ibid., 230.

94. Ibid.

In Blomberg's view, the parable teaches three primary lessons. They are:

1. From the example of the priest and Levite comes the principle that religious status or legalistic casuistry does not excuse lovelessness.
2. From the Samaritan, one learns that one must show compassion to those in need regardless of the religious or ethnic barriers that divide people.
3. From the man in the ditch emerges the lesson that even one's enemy is one's neighbor.[95]

Blomberg then adds these words: "The third point is perhaps the most crucial. Grace comes in surprising ways and from sources people seldom suspect."[96]

Hultgren also sets forth an interpretation of this parable that differs from the interpretive principles outlined by Dodd and Jeremias. In his view, this parable is one of a group of four that he entitles "Parables of Exemplary Behavior."[97] In his view these parables do not give the hearer comparisons between what is told in the parable and some other reality such as the kingdom of God. Rather, these parables give "examples for the followers of Jesus to emulate in their own lives."[98]

This author presents his interpretation of this parable in these words, "By means of this parable Jesus calls his hearers away from a culturally-conditioned mindset to a life of authentic love."[99] He points out that those who would ask the question "Who is my neighbor?" think of others in the world as "classifiable commodities. One can build fences to determine who is in the circle of those to be cared for and who is not."[100] According to Hultgren, this parable teaches that one "should not seek to define who the neighbor is, but simply be a neighbor to the one in need."[101] He concludes his discussion by noting, "What is so fascinating about the parable discussed here is that, while a person may seek to use the law concerning love for the neighbor as a means to draw lines of distinction, its actual purpose in Jesus' view is to break down any

95. Ibid., 233.
96. Ibid.
97. Hultgren, 92.
98. Ibid.
99. Ibid., 100.
100. Ibid.
101. Ibid.

distinctions that a person might seek to make."[102] This author sees this parable as an authentic part of the teaching of Jesus that has not been changed or adapted to fit the later situation that the author faced when writing the Gospel.

THE PARABLE IN ITS CONTEMPORARY CONTEXT

One interesting development in the study of the parables in recent years is the increasing tendency to interpret them in light of the context of the Palestine of Jesus's day rather than against the background of the later time in which the Gospels were written. Two prominent authors, Kenneth E. Bailey and Eduardo Guerra, have analyzed the Parable of the Good Samaritan against the backdrop of life as it existed among the peasants of the land of Palestine during the time of Jesus. They reject the allegorical interpretations commonly found until relatively recent years. However, they argue that, in order to understand the parable correctly, modern readers must understand how Middle Eastern peasants viewed the religious establishment in Jerusalem (the priest and the Levite) as well as other elements of the story.

Bailey lived in the Middle East for many years (where his parents served as missionaries) and served as Chairman of the Biblical Studies Department at the Near Eastern School of Theology in Beirut, Lebanon. He draws a sharp contrast between his approach and that of Dodd and Jeremias. He writes, "Most current scholarship on the parables concentrates on the redactional question of how a particular evangelist uses, shapes, or creates material in the service of his own theological interests to meet particular needs in the church of his day."[103]

He presents his own contrasting view in these words, "Yet after years of life in a Middle Eastern, oral-tradition peasant community, we find no reason to question the basic authenticity of the parables as parables of Jesus of Nazareth."[104] He continues, "No doubt the material has been reused by the evangelists for their own theological purposes. But it is our view that this reuse does not significantly obscure the original intent of the material that can be determined when the underlying culture and the literary form are carefully examined."[105] In other words, Bailey argues that the Gospel writers do not freely alter the existing material and

102. Ibid., 101.
103. Bailey, x.
104. Ibid.
105. Ibid.

develop new material to meet their own needs. They are faithful to maintain the parables as they have been given by Jesus.

Bailey establishes a likely scenario for the origin of this parable. He argues that many of the leading rabbis in first-century Palestine taught that one could achieve eternal life through keeping the law. They were, however, hearing some disturbing noises from this young rabbi from Nazareth. "Did he or did he not believe that the inheritance of Israel was available through keeping the law?"[106] The lawyer, then, is likely sent by the Jewish leaders to question Jesus. Jesus adeptly replies to the challenge not by presenting his own views but by turning to the law. "He skillfully solicits the questioner's opinion."[107] The lawyer correctly answers the question; the problem is that the law sets a standard that no one can fully keep.

The lawyer then questions Jesus concerning the identity of the neighbor, which was a commonly debated subject in first-century Palestine. The fact that the wounded traveler is left unconscious and stripped is an important part of the story. There were many ethnic groups in Palestine at this time, and each group could be identified by its language and manner of dress. The fact that he had been stripped of his clothing and could not speak meant that his racial or ethnic origin could not be determined. As Bailey notes, "He was thereby reduced to a mere human being in need. He belonged to no man's ethnic or religious community."[108]

The priest, in the context of the time, would have been "a well-mounted aristocrat." "Thus the parable in its original setting gives us a picture of a priest riding by, seeing the wounded man (presumably at some distance), and then steering his mount to the far side of the road and continuing on his way."[109] The obvious implication is that the priest had the means to help but chose not to do so. Bailey suggests that pride was a significant factor in his decision. Contact with a dead body would have rendered him ritually unclean. In order to become ritually clean again, he would have had to return to the Temple in Jerusalem and stand at the Eastern gate with the unclean.[110] That would have been a very humiliating experience for a person in his position.

The Levite clearly knows that the priest is ahead of him. Bailey explains, "As I have determined by investigation, Middle Eastern peasants assume that the Levite does know there is a priest ahead of him on

106. Ibid., 36.
107. Ibid., 37.
108. Ibid., 43.
109. Ibid.
110. Ibid., 45.

the road."[111] The consequences of touching a dead body would be less serious for a Levite than for a priest. Bailey suggests that other factors might have motivated his failure to render aid. He might have feared that the robbers would return. "More likely it is the example of the higher ranking priest that deters him."[112]

At this point in the story, a most unexpected turn of events takes place. Bailey writes, "Much to the shock and amazement of the audience, the third man along the road is one of the hated Samaritans."[113] There was a long history of hatred between the Jews and Samaritans, which had intensified a few years earlier when some Samaritans had defiled the Temple by scattering human bones during a Passover.[114] This long history of hostility makes the Samaritan's intervention all the more significant.

The Samaritan no doubt knows what has happened; he has probably just passed the priest and the Levite on the road. He is not restrained by the oral law or by the prior actions of the priest. He determines to do something different. Bailey points out that oil and wine were not only the standard first-aid remedies. They were also used as "sacrificial elements in the temple worship."[115] He notes that several of the other terms used in the passage have specific connotations in the worship of ancient Israel. The language used here is that of worship. Bailey summarizes in these words: "The Samaritan's total response to the man's need . . . is a profound expression of the steadfast love for which the prophets were calling. It is the Samaritan who pours out the true offering acceptable to God."[116]

Eduardo Guerra entitles his book *La Parábola Del Buen Samaritano*. The subtitle is "An Essay in the Concepts of Holiness and Compassion."[117] His work is more philosophical than that of Bailey, but it also seeks to interpret this parable from within the context of first-century Palestine. He notes that "the Bible was written in a cultural context strange and foreign to us. Jesus and his hearers, and the evangelists and their readers, had a large number of common understandings that it was not necessary to

111. Ibid., 46.
112. Ibid., 47.
113. Ibid., 48.
114. Ibid.
115. Ibid., 50.
116. Ibid.
117. Eduardo Guerra, *La Parábola del Buen Samaritano* (Barcelona: Editorial CLIE), 1999. This work is written in Spanish. The original subtitle is *Un ensayo en los conceptos de santidad y compasión*.

describe, because everyone knew that they were part of the situation being described."[118]

Guerra would agree with Dodd and Jeremias that the early church often placed the parables in a different context and used them in a way different from the way Jesus had originally used them in His teachings.[119] Guerra argues, however, that modern scholarly methods make it possible to reconstruct, to a large degree, the parable as Jesus would have originally expressed it.[120]

In his introduction, Guerra offers his philosophy of interpreting the parables. He writes, "The biblical text is an ancient text that communicates its message using presuppositions that the writers and their readers have in common. If we do not have the same presuppositions, we will interpret the text using modern presuppositions, which is the same as misinterpreting the text."[121] In order to interpret the text correctly, the modern interpreter must understand these common presuppositions, especially as the peasantry of ancient Palestine held them.

Palestine in the first century was an agricultural society divided into two groups. Approximately ten percent of the population belonged to the landed elite who controlled the government and the economy. The other ninety percent were peasants who produced the goods and maintained the society. The relationships between these two groups were not static, but they included a considerable amount of resentment and hostility. This resentment may well contribute to Jesus's inclusion of the priest and Levite in the story.[122]

Guerra notes, for example, that many of the common people of Palestine in the first century viewed the city of Jerusalem with its Temple and its priesthood as a symbol of oppression.[123] The Jewish leaders had allied themselves with the Roman occupiers. Jericho is the oldest city of which we have knowledge. It is one of the most desolate, driest, and

118. Ibid., 17. La Biblia se escribió en un contexto cultural extraño y foráneo para nosotros. Jesús y sus oyentes, y los evangelistas y sus lectores, tenían un sinnúmero de entenderes que no era necesario describir, pues todo el mundo presuponía que eran parte de la situación descrita.

119. Ibid., 21-25.

120. Ibid., 25-26.

121. Ibid., 32. El texto bíblico es un texto antiguo que comunica significado según presuposiciones que los escritores y los lectores tienen en común. Si no tenemos presuposiciones comunes entonces interpretamos el texto con presuposiciones modernas que es lo mismo que malinterpretar el texto.

122. Ibid., 108-109.

123. Ibid., 47. Jerusalén, con el Templo y su sacerdocio, era para muchos contemporáneos de Jesús, símbolo de opresión.

hottest places on earth.[124] In the time of Jesus, it was a hotbed of revolutionary activity on the part of those who anticipated the restoration of the Davidic throne.[125] Guerra suggests that the mention of Jerusalem and Jericho would have suggested a large number of images of the Temple and the High Priesthood with its economic, religious, and political power, and with its alliance with the oppressive Roman power.[126]

It is significant that the wounded man is stripped of his clothing. In ancient Palestine, one's clothing served as a means of identifying his position in society.[127] To be stripped of one's clothing was humiliating punishment reserved for prisoners or those captured in war.[128]

Guerra calls attention to the fact that Jews are obligated to help their fellow Jews. Yet, the man in the road is naked and cannot speak. How can the priest and Levite determine whether he is a Jew?[129] It is important that the priest avoid contaminating himself because ritual contamination has serious consequences for him and for his family.[130] He will no longer be able to collect the tithes on which his family depends.[131]

The introduction of the Samaritan who performs an act of love radically alters the situation and introduces a new dimension that first-century Jewish society could hardly understand. The hostility between the Jews and the Samaritans had a long history that included racial, political, religious, and economic elements.[132]

124. Ibid., 51.

125. Ibid., 56. La mención de Jericó en esta historia también recordaría a los oyentes de Jesús que esta región era un semillero de revolucionarios, de aquellos que con expectaciones mesiánicas esperaban el día de la restauración del trono de David.

126. Ibid., p. 57. Sin embargo cuando oímos hoy la mención de Jerusalén y Jericó con las percepciones de un judío palestino de los días de Jesús un sinnúmero de imágines salen a la superficie. Imágenes del poder político-económico-religioso del Templo y del sumo sacerdocio por su cooperación con el régimen romano opresor.

127. Ibid., 80-82.

128. Ibid, 84. La desnudez era algo tan <<fuera de lugar>> en el mapa social del mundo bíblico que la Biblia frecuentemente la menciona como un castigo humillante para los prisioneros.

129. Ibid., 105. Los judíos tenían la obligación de socorrer al prójimo. Por prójimo se entendía un judío. ¿Pero cómo puede el sacerdote saber que el hombre herido es su prójimo?

130. Ibid.

131. Ibid., 105-106.

132. Ibid., 88-89. Pero la presencia del samaritano que ejecuta un acto de amor cambia todas las cosas pues se ha introducido un elemento extraño que no refleja la sociedad como los judíos la conocían. La animosidad entre judíos y samaritanos, evidente en Palestina durante la primera mitad del siglo I d.C. tiene raíces históricas muy remotas que incluyen elementos raciales, políticos, religiosos y económicos.

The parables, by definition, invite the hearers to become participants. The Jewish peasant who hears the story will not identify himself either with the clerics or with the Samaritan. He will identify with the wounded Jew who lies half-dead on the side of the road.[133] The attitude of the priest and the Levite will confirm his existing anticlerical sentiments. The most surprising element is, for him, the mercy extended by the Samaritan. A Jew would never expect to receive help from a Samaritan, and he would never be willing to receive it. Guerra writes, "To reject the help of the Samaritan would guarantee his death. To accept the help would have consequences for the faithful Jew which would be worse than death."[134] By telling this parable, Jesus confronts his hearers with a new reality. They are challenged with a new personal and social world where compassion, not ethnic or racial exclusivity, determines the nature of human relations.[135]

There can be no doubt that Bailey and Guerra have introduced a wholly new paradigm into the study of this parable. They both interpret it not from the standpoint of how the early church used the parable but from the standpoint of how it contributed to the preaching and teaching of Jesus in first-century Palestine. Perhaps their greatest contribution is that they seek to interpret this important parable not from the standpoint of the religious elites or the politically and economically powerful but from the viewpoint of the peasant population of Palestine.

One of the greatest barriers that modern interpreters face in the study of the parables is the lack of linguistic and cultural understanding. For example, in preparation for his book *Poet and Peasant*, Kenneth Bailey studied eighteen Arabic and Syriac versions of the Bible, including translations made in ancient, medieval, and modern times. He did this because translations, especially early ones, are of great value. They reflect the translator's understanding of the culture at the time the translation was made.[136] Bailey gave preference to the earlier translations because they best reflect the cultural patterns that existed in the time of Jesus. It is difficult for many contemporary western scholars to undertake this

133. Ibid., 89. El oyente campesino judío no se identificaría ni con los clérigos, ni con el samaritano. De inmediato se identificaría con el judío atacado y que ahora estaba <<medio muerte>> a la orilla del camino.

134. Ibid., 90. El rechazar la ayuda del samaritano aseguraría su muerte. El aceptar la ayuda tendría consecuencias que para un judío devoto serían peores que la muerte.

135. Ibid, 91. Así Jesús crea en sus oyentes un estado de crisis que reta con la visión de una nueva realidad. Un nuevo mundo personal y social en el que la compasión, y no exclusivismo étnico y religioso, determinan las relaciones humanas.

136. Kenneth E. Bailey, *Poet and Peasant* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 36.

kind of research because they do not have the necessary language skills or the necessary understanding of the culture of ancient Palestine.

It is difficult to determine the precise audience or audiences with which Jesus shared this parable; He might have told it on more than one occasion. There can be no doubt, however, that this parable would have had a great impact on those who first heard it. Perhaps it can have something of that same impact on the followers of Jesus in this century.

It is difficult to determine what direction the study of this parable will take in the future. One thing, however, is certain. Students will continue to recognize its abiding value and will seek to interpret it more correctly in light of our increasing knowledge of life in first-century Palestine.

Ronald Callaway

"And Then the End Will Come": A Brief Essay on Mission Theology

INTRODUCTION

Speaking on the Mt. of Olives, the Lord Jesus spoke of all the world's[1] receiving a testimony or witness concerning the gospel of the kingdom. He said that all nations[2] would have the gospel presented to them (or against them) as a witness before the end would come (Matt. 24:14). In verses 4-13, the Lord described a series of conditions under which His disciples would have to bear witness and endure in their task. They would find themselves on the margin of these different nations or people groups.

While some Christians today believe that Matthew 24:14 found a literal fulfillment in the Roman World before A.D. 70, Revelation 5:9 and 7:9 indicate that, in worship occuring when the "end" comes, there will be believers before the Lamb from every tribe and language and people and nation. These four all-comprising terms could not be any clearer in demonstrating that the gospel of the kingdom will be witnessed to among all the peoples of earth before the end comes. The coming of the "end," as mentioned by the Lord Jesus, is intrinsically tied to the truth that the nations of the world will hear and understand a testimony about Him. This will entail a greater geographical center for Christianity than has existed since the eighteenth century. Timothy Tennent warns North American Christians that "we must understand what it means to live in a world where Christian identity no longer has any particular geographic center. We can learn much from many of our Majority World brothers and sisters who have learned over many centuries how to live out their faith as a minority faith or, oftentimes, even in a context where there is a state-sponsored religion other than Christianity."[3] The "collapse of

1. *Oikoumenē*. "The inhabited world," not the earth as a globe.

2. *Ethnos*. "Nation," not in the political sense, but rather as groups of people who identify themselves as being a "people" possessing a similar culture, language, and traditions. Missiologists currently associate the term "people groups" with *ethnos*. It is estimated at the beginning of the twenty-first century that there are over 16,500 people groups in the *oikoumenē*.

3. Timothy C. Tennent, *Invitation to World Missions: A Trinitarian Missiology for the Twenty-first Century* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2010), 23.

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Christendom," he continues, "has left Western Christians in an uncomfortable position because most have no real preparation or precedent for how to live on the margins, *counter* to the culture."[4]

Revelation 5 and 7 portray this vast multitude of believers as worshiping God. These believers have been cleansed and accepted through the death of the Lamb. By the time the scene portrayed in Revelation 5 finally arrives, Christians will have traveled to every people group on the earth. They will have witnessed or testified to that people concerning the gospel of the kingdom. In that moment the kingdom will have manifested itself in compete fullness, and the multitudes of the redeemed of the earth will be continually worshiping the King.

In a well-known paragraph, Baptist pastor John Piper manifests the supreme task of kingdom people: the world-wide or universal worship of God that has yet to happen. "Missions is not the ultimate goal of the church. Worship is. Missions exists because worship doesn't. Worship is ultimate, not missions, because God is ultimate, not man. When this age is over, and the countless millions of the redeemed fall on their faces before the throne of God, missions will be no more. It is a temporary necessity. But worship abides forever."[5]

Those who have traveled to the nations understand that the religions of the world do not and cannot offer forgiveness of sins and acceptance by God. These missionaries of the kingdom are convinced by the Word of God that it is only through the death of the Lord Jesus Christ that the nations can be saved. Those who "go" do so in weakness and humility, but they go with faith and dependence on the Holy Spirit to bring the nations to Christ. As Howard Peskett and Vinoth Ramachandra have said,

> Mission is not an optional "extra" for those few volunteers who "like that sort of thing." The church militant is God's people, Christ's body in this world, called to be God's agents and representatives, a community mandated to reproduce and grow so that Jesus Christ may be more and more glorified. We must also emphasize that Christian mission leads us again and again to the foot of the cross: all Christian mission must be shaped by the cross; the cross must never be behind us, but always in front of us. For this reason, we have drawn attention again and again to mission from the underside, to the connection between mission

4. Ibid., 22.

5. John Piper, *Let The Nations Be Glad! The Supremacy of God in Missions*, 2nd ed., (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 17.

> and suffering and even martyrdom, and to the importance of mission out of weakness, which has been the way mission has been conducted through most of the history of the church.[6]

Missions is theology. "Going to the nations" is not done in isolation from theological thought. Missional practices and church planting are carried out from a firm biblical and theological base. This is so because the Bible continually speaks of the missionary expansion of God's kingdom and the establishment of communities of believers. David Bosch, concerning missions as "The Mother of Theology," writes:

> [Heinrich] Kasting states: "Mission was, in the early stages, more than a mere function: it was a fundamental expression of the life of the church. The beginnings of a missionary theology are therefore also the beginnings of Christian theology as such." . . . Ben Meyers interprets: "Christianity had never been more itself, more consistent with Jesus and more evidently en route to its own future, than in the launching of the world mission." . . . In its mission, early Christianity took an astonishing "leap of life" from one world to another . . . since it understood itself as the vanguard of a saved humankind. . . .
>
> The New Testament writers were not scholars who had the leisure to research the evidence before they put pen to paper. Rather, they wrote in the context of an "emergency situation," of a church which, because of its missionary encounter with the world, was *forced* to theologize. . . . The gospels, in particular, are to be viewed not as writings produced by an historical impulse but as expressions of an ardent faith, written with the purpose of commending Jesus Christ to the Mediterranean world.[7]

For many Christian pastors and theologians, missions has been, and is, seen as either a practical part of what the church has been called to do or as a subset of practical theology. Others have proposed a "theology of missions." The point of this essay is that, rather than searching for a "theology of missions," all theology concerns God's mission, the *missio Dei*, the mission that belongs to Him. Christian theology is about the *missio*

6. Howard Peskett and Vinoth Ramachandra, *The Message of Mission* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2003), 13.

7. David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1995), 15-16.

Dei.[8] Bosch writes that, "just as the church ceases to be church if it is not missionary, theology ceases to be theology if it loses its missionary character. . . . The crucial question, then, is not simply or only or largely what church is or what mission is; it is also what theology is and is about. . . . We are in need of a missiological agenda for theology rather than a theological agenda of mission." This, Bosch explains, is because theology, when properly understood, "has no reason to exist other than critically to accompany the *missio Dei*." Therefore, he insists, mission should be the "theme of all theology." Theology must not be understood simply as "occupying itself with the missionary enterprise as and when it seems appropriate to do so." Rather, mission is "that subject with which theology is to deal. For theology is a matter of life and death that it should be in direct contact with mission and the missionary enterprise."[9]

A brief and non-formal survey of over twenty-five Evangelical Christian systematic and biblical theologies reveals that there is very little overtly mentioned concerning missions or the church's missionary task. Godly theologians are expertly examining and explaining important theological themes for the church. However, it seems the majority of these writers take for granted the missionary task. Thus, they never seriously consider how the theological base not only drives the overarching Christ-commanded missionary endeavor but in fact exists only because of the church's involvement in the *missio Dei*.

This short essay will seek to demonstrate that the missionary task given to the church has this basic theological aspect or character: God's mission is what theology is all about. Had there been no mission, there would be no theology. Had there been no mission, there would be no history of the church. There would be no church.

THE *MISSIO DEI*

It is always the God of the universe who goes on mission. He searches for the lost. The lost never search for Him. The mission is His. He enables and permits Christians to participate, under His command, in His mission.

> *"Assemble yourselves and come;*
> *draw near together,*
> *you survivors of the nations!*
> *They have no knowledge*

8. Latin: the "mission of God," or the "sending of God."
9. Bosch, 494.

who carry about their wooden idols
and keep on praying to a god that cannot save.
Declare and present our case;
let them take counsel together!
Who told this long ago?
Was it not I, Yahweh?
And there is no other god besides me,
a righteous God and a Savior;
there is none besides me.
Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth!
For I am God, and there is no other.
By myself I have sworn;
from my mouth has gone out in righteousness
a word that shall not return:
'To me every knee shall bow,
every tongue shall swear allegiance.'
Only in Yahweh, it shall be said of me,
are righteousness and strength;
to him shall come and be ashamed
all who were incensed against him.
In Yahweh all the offspring of Israel
shall be justified and shall glory."

Isaiah 45:20-25[10]

The words *missio Dei* have become a frequently used term to refer to all that God does to extend the salvific knowledge of Himself to an unbelieving world. His mission is salvific and at the same time concerns judgment of those human beings who do not repent and will not believe in the Lord Jesus. God's mission is to call human beings to glorify and worship Him. The mission is His. The mission does not belong to the church. The church belongs to the Lord of Harvest (Matt. 9:35-38) who sends her into His fields. The church participates "as God's people, at God's invitation and command, in God's own mission within the history of God's world for the redemption of God's creation.[11]

The following should be noted in conjunction with the above passage from Isaiah 45:

10. Unless otherwise noted, all scriptural quotes are from the ESV (with OT quotes using "Yahweh" for "THE LORD").

11. Christopher J. H. Wright, The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative (Downers Grove: IVP, 2005), 23.

- There is only one God in all the universe (all that exists anywhere), and His name is Yahweh ("I am that I am").
- All the people of the world are summoned before Him to present their "case," then to turn to Yahweh and to be saved. All the world is summoned to worship Him.
- Whether in salvation or in judgment "every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear allegiance" (v. 23).
- The Apostle Paul uses Isaiah 45.23b to refer to every knee bowing to the Lord Jesus (Philippians 2:10-11; Romans 14:11).[12]

Yahweh began the active part of His mission in Genesis 3:8 when He came to the Garden of Eden looking for Adam and Eve. He continued with His mission throughout the centuries of the Old Testament. In the Isaiah passage quoted above, He promised deliverance to Israel through Cyrus the Persian. He spoke of the future in which not only Israel but also all the nations will recognize Him as the only God. Those nations and Israel who trust in Him will be saved.

Throughout the Old Testament, God continually manifests Himself as the only God. He opposed idolatry among the Gentile nations, especially as it spread among the Israelites who claimed to know and to worship Him only. It is a misconception to understand that in the Old Testament Yahweh was interested only in the salvation and well-being of Israel. He extended centuries of grace to the idolatrous nations before they came under His judgment. For example, a cursory reading of the Psalms reveals that God, through the psalmists, makes mention of the nations or peoples or "all the earth" over one hundred seventy times. Some references are to the judgment of the idolatrous nations that will not believe, but often the peoples of the world are also gathered into God's promised salvation. Concerning the "nations" in the Psalter, George Peters writes that "it is a profound fact that 'the hymn of praise is the missionary preaching par excellence,' especially when we realize that such missionary preaching is supported by the Psalms by more than 175 references of a universalistic note relating to the nations of the world." Many of these Psalms, he notes "bring hope of salvation to the nations. . . . Indeed, the Psalter is one of the greatest missionary books in the world, though seldom seen from that point of view."[13]

Calling the Psalms the "music of mission," Creighton Marlowe writes that God has commissioned or called both Israel and the church

12. Peskett and Ramachandra, 54-55.
13. George Peters, *A Biblical Theology of Missions* (Chicago: Moody, 1972), 116-17.

> to reflect and to report the light of revelation, the good news about the true nature of God as Savior, Judge, King, and Lord of the earth and all its inhabitants. The platform upon which God's people of any age earn the opportunity to be heard . . . may and will change dramatically over the centuries or millennia or may be as different as the individuals or institutions seeking to be a witness. But the main object always remains the same: visualizing and verbalizing the revelation of the one, true God . . . before the reachable world of nations. Old Testament psalms are sacred songs . . . that in part explicitly reinforce this divine purpose for Israel and thus implicitly for the church. They celebrate the character of cross-culture outreach. They are the music of missions.[14]

In the New Testament, it is the Lord Jesus who confesses with Israel: "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one" (Mark 12:29; cf. Deut. 6:4). Yet He also proclaims the following concerning His deity: "before Abraham was, I am," (John 8:58) and "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30). It is Jesus who pronounces these powerful words, the name "I am," as His enemies fall on their faces in His presence (John 18:6). He carries God's mission to its earthly culmination as, from the cross, He pronounces, "It is finished," having become the propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of the entire world (John 19:30). Jesus Himself ("Immanuel," Matt. 1:23) will terminate His mission as He saves his Bride and brings judgment on the unbelieving nations (Rev. 19:11-16).

Five times in the New Testament, the Lord Jesus explicitly commands and sends His disciples to carry out His mission (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:45-48; John 20:30-31; Acts 1:8). While it took a few years and a bit of divine incentive to get the church to move from the Jewish to the Gentile world, once started, the mission extension of the gospel of the kingdom has been and is being carried out (to varying degrees of obedience and enthusiasm). It is to continue until "the end comes" (Matt. 24:14).

In his letter to the Galatian Christians, the Apostle Paul ties the believing Gentile nations to the faith of Abraham. Yahweh promised Abraham that he would become a great nation (Gen. 12:2-3). Paul shows the fulfillment of that promise to both Gentiles and Jews as he writes that "in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. . . . you are all one in

14. Creighton Marlowe, "Music of Missions: Themes of Cross-Cultural Outreach in the Psalms," *Missiology* 26:4 (October, 1998), 452.

Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise" (Gal. 3:26, 28b-29).

The mission is God's, and He will fulfill the goal of saving all the peoples of the nations who will hear and respond in faith to the missionary proclamation that "Jesus is Lord" (Phil. 2:11). The Lord Jesus has delegated the responsibility of a crucial aspect of His mission to the church, and she will give an account of her faithfulness to the appointed task. Her every thought and focus must be on the fulfillment of her part of the *missio Dei*.

THE *MISSIO DEI* IS A TRINITARIAN MISSION

The Bible declares that God alone is the only God, and that He is Trinity (one essence in three persons). As mentioned above, the Lord Jesus clearly confessed the "Shema"[15] of Israel: "Hear O Israel: Yahweh our God, Yahweh is one"[16] (Deut. 6:4; Mark 12:29). That God is Father is acknowledged in the Old Testament and especially in the New Testament. That Jesus claimed equality with the Father has been noted above, and the writers of the letters of the New Testament also proclaimed his deity. The deity of the Holy Spirit is established in the Gospels, in Acts, and in several other portions of the New Testament (as well as indicated in many passages of the Old Testament).

There is only one God, and He is Trinity. While Judaism and Islam are monotheistic in their concepts of God, the god of Judaism and the god of Islam is unity not Trinity. Historically the Judaic and Islamic concept of God may be the same as the God of the Bible, but theologically God is distinct from the monotheistic concepts of Judaism and Islam. Leroy Forlines writes: "When we say that there is one God, we mean that there is only one Being. There is only one *essence*. There is only one spirit-essence that is shared fully by all three persons."[17]

While the term *Trinity* is not found in the Bible, its existence and nature are clearly taught in the Scriptures. The term itself is from the Latin *trinitas*, meaning a triad or threeness. Tertullian (c. A.D. 190-220) was probably the first Christian thinker to use the actual term. Augustine penned the definitive defense of the doctrine in *On the Trinity* (A.D. 400-416). The word reached the language of the average Christian through a

15. Hebrew *sama* = "hear"; part of Israel's confession of faith.
16. Or, "Yahweh our God is one Yahweh" or "Yahweh is our God, Yahweh alone."
17. F. Leroy Forlines, *The Quest For Truth* (Nashville: Randall House, 2001), 82.

popular summary of Christian teaching used in worship called the Athanasian Creed (A.D. 670)."[18]

Because the mission is the *missio Dei*, the mission is Trinitarian. It belongs to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The "Eleven" received the command from the Lord Jesus to baptize new disciples "in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19b). There can be no doubt that the mission belongs to the Holy Trinity.

In an important article entitled "12 Theses on the Church's Mission in the 21st Century," Andreas Köstenberger writes:

> The church's mission, properly and biblically conceived, is to be Trinitarian in its orientation, but not at the expense of neglecting the distinct roles of the three persons within the Godhead. The church's mission is to be prompted by God the Father's initiative, to proceed on the basis of Christ's redemptive mission and commission, and to be empowered by the Holy Spirit. In this sense, there is no dichotomy between the church's mission being Trinitarian and Christocentric—it is to be both.[19]

According to the Gospel of John,[20] among the aspects of the *missio Dei* as carried forward by the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are the following:

God the Father

Almost fifty times in the Gospel of John, the Lord Jesus speaks of Himself as having been "sent" by the Father. His task had been "given" to Him by the Father. It is the Father who has sent Him (8:16). To the Jewish leaders who questioned Him concerning His teaching, he replied, "My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me. If anyone's will is to do God's will, he will know whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own authority" (7:16-17). When Peter seeks to defend Jesus on the night of His arrest on the Mount of Olives, the Lord rebukes him and says: "Put your sword into its sheath; shall I not drink

18. Henry W. Holloman, *Kregel Dictionary of the Bible and Theology* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2005), 551.

19. Andreas Köstenberger, "12 Theses on the Church's Mission in the 21st Century" biblicalfoundations.org. October 3, 2008. http://www.biblicalfoundations.org/the-church/12-theses-on-the-church%E2%80%99s-missionin-the-twenty-first-century (accessed March 1, 2011).

20. John's Gospel is chosen as an example from other aspects of the Father's work in the *missio Dei* that are written of in the New Testament.

the cup that the Father has given me?" (18:11). The Father sent the Son to become the propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of all humankind. He did so because He "loved the world" (3:15-17).

God the Son

Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God and the Son of Man, came as the "Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world" (1:29, 36). He claimed equality with the Father (5:17-18). He is loved by the Father (1:20), and He has the authority to do what the Father does: to raise the dead, to judge all men, and to receive the same honor the Father receives. In fact, in what may be one of the most important statements in the New Testament that denounces the postmodern idea of religious plurality, Jesus proclaims: "The Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him" (5:22-23).

Throughout John's Gospel, Jesus is moving toward His "hour," that appointed task given to him by the Father. Finally His "hour" arrives (12:23). In His "hour," the Son will be glorified and will glorify the Father (12:27-28). The Son is crucified as the "Lamb of God," and His death is sufficient to satisfy the wrath of God against sinners with their sins. From the cross (19:30), as He gives permission for His life to end (10:17-18), His last words are "It is finished."

He arises from death (20:8) and appears to the disciples. He commands them: "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you" (20:21). The message the disciples are to carry into the world is that of forgiveness of sins (20:23). As stated previously, in the four Gospels and Acts, Jesus promises to be with His disciples always and, before He returns to the His former glory at the Father's right hand, He sends them to fulfill their part of the *missio Dei*.

God the Holy Spirit

In John's Gospel, the Holy Spirit authenticates (for John the Baptist) that Jesus is the Son of God (1:32-34). After being tested forty days in the wilderness, the Lord began the process of calling certain men who would become his disciples (1:35-51).[21]

21. In Mark's Gospel (1:12), the Holy Spirit drives Jesus into the wilderness for His time of testing and preparation before the beginning of His ministry, and afterwards he "returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee" (Luke 4:14).

During the night before his crucifixion, Jesus comforted the frightened disciples, telling them that even though He was leaving, He would send them "another Helper"[22] to be with them forever (14:16, 17). The Holy Spirit would teach them all things and empower their witness.

In Acts, the Holy Spirit came upon a small group of Jesus's disciples and filled them for missionary proclamation (2:1-4). The Holy Spirit filled the deacon Stephen with power and wisdom to be able to confront the Jewish religious establishment concerning their crime of instigating the crucifixion of the Messiah (7:55). Through the Holy Spirit, Peter announced the resurrected Christ to those present in Jerusalem fifty days after Christ's death (2:14-41).

Through the Holy Spirit, Peter opened the door to the Gospel for Samaria (8:17; cf. Matt. 16:19), and with the power of the Spirit, Peter preached Christ first to the Gentiles (10:44-48). The Holy Spirit sent Saul and Barnabas on what the church now commonly calls the "first missionary" journey (13:1-3). On the "second missionary" journey, the Holy Spirit[23] directed Paul's and Silas's travel agenda (Acts 16:6-8) so that they ended up at Troas where they received new divine instructions concerning the entrance of the gospel into Europe (16:9-10).

The goal of the Holy Spirit as He moves his missionaries from their own homeland to other nations and cultures, is that of saving men and women on the "mission field." Christians are to do good and seek justice, but above all, for the glory of God, the salvation of the lost is the supreme goal of the Holy Spirit in the *missio Dei*. Schnabel writes:

> Jesus' understanding of his "mission" included his calling of disciples whom he trained to be "fishers of people" and sent to the ends of the earth with the goal of making people into disciples of Jesus, disciples who know what Jesus taught and obey what he commanded because they believe in him as God's Messiah and savior. What Theodor Oehler noted a century ago is still true today: Jesus' great missionary commission, which remains the normative standard for the church after Easter for its involvement in the world, did not command the Twelve to use a particular missionary method but instead assured them of

22. "another Advocate;" "another Counselor." "*allos*" (another) probably means one of the same kind. In 1 John 2:1 Jesus is the Advocate (*parakletos*), thus showing that the Holy Spirit and the Lord Jesus are the same essence.

23. The ESV translation of Acts 16.6-7: "And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia. And when they had come up to Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them."

> the assistance of the Holy Spirit as the continuous presence of Jesus Christ himself.[24]

In his letters to the young mission churches, the Apostle Paul constantly emphasizes the role and work of the Holy Spirit. The Corinthian church was composed, in part, of believers who were formerly sexually immoral, idolaters, adulterers, homosexuals, thieves, drunkards, revilers, and swindlers, but these new Christians had all been "sanctified . . . [and] justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God (1 Cor. 6:9-11). The Holy Spirit gifts the Church with those spiritual talents needed for her to continue forward in her part of the *missio Dei* (1 Cor. 12; 14). These new believers (in the various cultures) were to "walk by the Spirit," manifesting His fruit in their lives (Gal. 5:25, 22, 23).

In the Revelation of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit directs the vision that John receives. He is present as "the seven spirits of God" before the throne of God, and even until the end the "Spirit and the Bride say, 'Come.'" (Rev. 4:2, 5; 22:16).

The Holy Spirit is Christ's presence with His church. His is the new creation from darkness to light. His work moves beyond evangelism and missions to His abiding presence in the life of those from the nations who turn to Christ through His work.

> Joel Green has pointed out that in Luke's writings the reception of the Spirit in the life of the believer is an integral aspect of his understanding of salvation. It is not an extra add-on reserved for a dedicated few. When Peter preaches, he declares to the entire assembly that if they believe, they "will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). Peter goes on to assure them that this promise is not only for those who hear him, but also for their children and "for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call" (2:39). The same Spirit who empowers us for witness is the one who empowers us for holy living. The same Spirit who transforms the unbelieving nations of the world is the one who transforms our hearts, teaching us to say "no" to sin and to embrace the righteousness of Jesus Christ.[25]

The missionary task of the church is given to her by the Triune God of the universe who created humanity and loves humanity. It is humanity

24. Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Early Christian Mission: Paul and the Early Church* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2004), 1580-81.

25. Tennent, 414.

that turned (and turns) against its Creator. It is God alone who carried out His plan to save rebellious and sinful mankind. It is God alone who sacrificed Himself in order to satisfy His own wrath against sin and sinners. God Himself dwells in the midst of His church, impelling her to go to the nations.

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST AND THE *MISSIO DEI*

In the midst of hostile and rebellious nations, the Lord Jesus is building His victorious church (Matt. 16:18). No one will restrain her forward progress. The Lord Jesus "loves the church and gave himself up for her" (Eph. 5:25). In the midst of its first persecution, the Holy Spirit moved the church from its birthplace into surrounding Judea and Samaria (Acts 8:1). Jewish Christians began to speak to Gentiles about Christ, and a great church was started in the Syrian city of Antioch (Acts 11:19-30). From this Christian congregation, the Holy Spirit sent forth a small group of missionaries who sailed West to Cyprus and later to Asia Minor.

The church now began the process of changing from a Jewish church to an international church, which in time became primarily a Gentile church. Near the beginning of that process (A.D. 49-50), an extremely crucial meeting convened in Jerusalem (Acts 15). The Holy Spirit superintended over this meeting to allow a "coming together" of thought among the Jewish Christians and those Jewish Christian missionaries (representing the Gentile believers) as to whether or not one must become a "Jew" in order to be a Christian. The Holy Spirit guided James, the Christian leader of Jerusalem, to understand that, even from the Old Testament, God's intention was to have a church from among "the remnant (rest) of mankind" (15:17).

Local churches in Asia Minor and later in Europe began replicating the gospel ministry, and the Roman Empire became "infected" with Christianity. The "infection" was so extreme that in Ephesus the famous temple dedicated to the goddess Artemis[26] was almost completely abandoned (Acts 19:21-41). Opposition arose from local dealers in religious souvenirs, and an uproar and public movement against the missionaries (and Christians) ensued. Later, several months after the tumult, Paul, passing near the city on his way to Jerusalem called the elders of the Ephesian church to meet with him. To them, the missionary apostle declared: "I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you in public and from house to house, testifying

26. *Artemis* is the Greek name for the Roman goddess *Diana*.

both to Jews and to Greeks of repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 20:20, 21).

The church's missionaries continued bearing witness to the gospel of the kingdom among the nations of the world even, as in Ephesus, in the midst of opposition. Writing about Paul's extensive ministry in Ephesus, Ramachandra notes, concerning Paul's address to the Ephesian elders, that "such a comprehensive ministry springs from a comprehensive grasp of the gospel." Ramachandra points out that, in his letter to the Ephesians, he wrote of "one new humanity,"[27] which God "created through the cross of Christ (Eph. 2:15), and how his mission throughout the Gentile world" was to "bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things, so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places" (Eph. 3:9, 10). Ramachandra goes on to say, "We are the result of that Gentile mission, continued down the centuries by faithful men and women and entrusted to us in our own generation. Wherever the 'one new humanity' is glimpsed through the church, the 'wisdom of God' is proclaimed to the powers of this age."[28]

In writing about the progress of God's kingdom through the centuries, Ralph Winter calls attention to the fact that many Christians today are unaware of all that God, century after century, has done through his church. Winter speaks of the unfortunate "BOBO" theory—the idea that "the Christian faith somehow 'Blinked Out' after the Apostles and 'Blinked On' again in our own time. . . . The result of this kind of BOBO approach is that you have 'early' saints and 'latter-day' saints, but *no saints in the middle*."[29]

That is, of course, not true, because in every generation since Christ until the "end," God will place His church in position to carry out its part of the *missio Dei*. In the same article, Winter points out that the church has not always been able to choose the manner in which it bears witness to the gospel of the kingdom. He notes that there are four different mission mechanisms "at work to bless other peoples: 1) going voluntarily, 2) involuntarily going without missionary intent, 3) coming voluntarily, and 4) coming involuntarily. . . . We can see in every epoch the active con-

27. ESV – "one new man"

28. Peskett and Ramachandra, 239-40.

29. Ralph D. Winter, "The Kingdom Strikes Back," in *Perspectives On The World Christian Movement: A Reader*, 4th ed., Ralph D. Winter and Steven C. Hawthorne, eds. (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 2009), 213.

cern of God to forward His mission, with or without the full cooperation of His chosen nation."[30] Some examples of the above are:

- Going voluntarily – Acts 13-14. Paul and Barnabas go to Asia Minor, sent by the Holy Spirit.
- Going involuntarily – Jonah 1-4. The prophet Jonah goes to Assyria against his will.
- Coming voluntarily – 1 Kings 10:1-13. The Queen of Sheba came to question Solomon concerning the name of Yahweh.
- Coming involuntarily – 2 Kings 25. Yahweh punishes Judah, and she "comes" to Babylon as slaves (righteous people like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, Azariah, and Ezekiel "come" to the Babylonian Empire where they witness for Yahweh among the polytheistic peoples of the Empire).

The Apostle Peter, writing to believers in Asia Minor, refers to the church as "elect exiles," "living stones," "chosen and precious," "a spiritual house," "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession," and "sojourners." In their sojourning, they make "a defense to anyone who asks" for the reason of their faith. The church continues testifying to the kingdom, very often in the midst of those who revile her (1 Pet. 1:1; 2:4, 5, 9, 11; 3:15-17).

In the final book of the Bible, the church is still the church militant, engaged in the final battle, under the command of the Lamb, for the souls of the tribes, languages, peoples, and nations of the earth (Rev. 13:7, 14, 16). The beast of Revelation 13 will fight against the church (the "saints") and for a time will conquer her (Rev. 13:7-10; cf., Dan. 7:19-28). Jesus gives a stern call for faithfulness to His church that, even in the face of the wrath of the beast, she is to endure and have faith even to death (Rev. 13:10) for the furthering of the gospel of the kingdom.

One short additional note should be made about the church's lack of global vision in the *missio Dei*. Far too often, Christians of a local culture or nation fail to see the magnitude of God's mission and its successes throughout the world. Thus, they pay attention only to what is happening in their own locality. Rather than being "theocentric" or "global-centric," that is, seeing the world from God's perspective, they fall into some sort of ethnocentric collectivism[31] in their lack of concern for the world

30. Ibid., 211.

31. James E. Plueddemann, *Leading Across Cultures: Effective Ministry and Mission in the Global Church* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2009), 122-124.

and in their understanding of Christianity. In such circumstances, local or nationalistic churches are unable to rejoice in all that the Lord of the Harvest is doing throughout His world.

Well-documented Christian research shows clearly that the Christian church has moved far beyond its European and North American boundaries. She is growing rapidly in Africa, Asia, and South and Central America. At times North American Christians are hesitant to recognize the work of the Holy Spirit in churches of other cultures because they are not like "us." Therefore, they fall under suspicion whether they are really Christian. Western Christians, while not having to agree on every cultural practice of the churches of the majority world, do need to see again that the Holy Spirit is birthing "livings stones" into a global church. As Michael Pocock remarks:

> The emergence of a truly global church, at this point growing strongest in the South and East, is integral to the promises of God. Not only did Jesus send his disciples out to make disciples of all peoples, promising that he would build his church against all odds, even hell itself, but the entire Bible is a record of this movement. God promised that out of Abraham he would make a nation that would be the channel of blessing to every nation (Gen. 12:1-4). This promise was of such transcendent importance that it was repeated five times in Genesis and served as the basis for Paul's understanding of his cross-cultural missionary endeavor (Gal. 3.6-29). . . .
>
> Although 2 billion people still do not have a church among them, God's salvation in Christ has been preached among the majority of the world's peoples, offering hope that the Great Commission will be completed, perhaps in our own day. The body of Christ is forming in every part of the globe and in agreement with the promise to Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3): God is blessing the peoples of the world through his people. Global Christians are sharing the gospel, binding up wounds, and providing stability to communities in need. Those who were dead in their sins and to their Creator are being raised to new life in Christ.[32]

32 Michael Pocock, *The Changing Face of World Mission: Engaging Contemporary Issues and Trends* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005), 152.

THE *MISSIO DE*I HAD A BEGINNING AND WILL HAVE A DEFINITE END

The propitiatory death of the Lord Jesus on the cross of Calvary was not a death for an unknowable number of sins. Every sin was accounted and paid for by the Lord during his six hours of suffering, followed by his death on the cross as the sin-bearer for all humankind. There was an end to His suffering for mankind's sins, because, as the God-Man, He alone was able to accomplish that overwhelmingly important and key aspect of God's mission. A non-payment of humanity's debt of sin would have meant no *missio Dei*. As there was a final payment for sin, so in a similar way there will be an end, at least for the present age, for the Church on the earth as her part of the *missio Dei* will be finished.

To return to the beginning of this essay, the gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed as a witness or testimony to or against all nations, and then the end will come. That is the end or goal[33] toward which the Church of Jesus continually moves. That end will occur when Jesus, the Faithful and True, the Word of God, King of kings and Lord of lords appears in heaven and returns physically to the earth, followed by His armies. At that time the Church, as the Lamb's bride, will sit with Him to eat at the "marriage supper of the Lamb" (Rev. 19:11-16, 7-9). Then, as Piper says, missions will be no more, but worship will continue forever.[34]

God began His mission as he called to Adam in Eden: "Where are you?" Later He promised Abram that from him would come a multitude of nations, his spiritual descendants. That multitude of nations is still being saved, and will come from all the people groups of the world. These "sons of Abraham" will finish their tasks (some through martyrdom and persecutions) and will be gathered together to receive their rewards for faithful service in the *missio Dei*. This goal is not an interminable task. It has an end. Culver writes concerning this goal:

> This great task of world evangelism is the goal of history as announced to Abram: 'In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed' (Gen. 12:3b KJV). The same is implied by passages such as Matthew 8:11; Luke 2:32; Romans 9:24-26; and the many Old Testament prophecies of Messiah as light to the nations, as the one in whom the Gentiles would come to trust. . . .

33. Greek *telos*. In such New Testament passages as Matthew 24:6, 14; Mark 13:7; and Luke 21.9, *telos* is used as a technical term for the end of the world (as it is currently known).

34. Piper, 17.

> Most candid readers of Jesus' plain words about the evangelization of the world before His return will, I think, agree with J. O. Buswell, who devotes several paragraphs to the subject. He . . . concludes: 'Certainly the chief business of the church is the preaching of the Gospel in all the world for a witness to all nations. No man can judge when God will count the task completed; but when God sees it completed, then the end will come.'[35]

After the Lord's resurrection, and before His ascension, He again spoke concerning the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom to all nations. Luke writes that when the Lord appeared to His disciples in the room where they were hiding in Jerusalem, He commissioned them as witnesses so that "repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem" (Luke 24:47). Luke also records the apparent last words of the Lord to the eleven apostles as He ascended into heaven: "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8). Also interesting is the last question the eleven had just asked Him: "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" (1:6). His answer? "It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority" (1:7). The Lord commands the apostles that they are to make disciples as they go among the nations. His continual presence is promised to them and thus with the church (Matt. 28:18-20). The Lord's statement in Matthew 24:14, given some sixty days before, clearly speaks of the terminus of the *missio Dei* among lost humanity.

Köstenberger and O'Brien write concerning the eschatological framework of the *missio Dei*:

> Finally, together with 10:23 and 24:14, the concluding commission of 28:16-20 also places the Christian mission firmly within an eschatological framework: mission is the church's primary task between Christ's first coming and his return. The striking open-endedness of the commissioning scene, similar to the open-endedness of the book of Acts, is pregnant with anticipa-

35. Robert Duncan Culver, *Systematic Theology: Biblical & Historical* (Fern, Ross-shire, Great Britain: Mentor Imprint, 2005), 1123. Culver's work is one of the very few authors of systematic theologies who devote a section to the Church's mission: "The Mission of the Church in the World," 898-907.

> tion and potential. The eleven, as representatives of later generations of believers, are to embark on their mission, at the command and on the basis of the authority of the exalted Christ, the eschatological ruler, the Son of God.[36]

The time of the "end" is not a date that can be known by the church. However, it is known to God. Matthew 24:14 cannot (or at least, should not) be taken as a way to "force" Jesus to come back sooner, as if God might not have taken into account the zeal of His church to win the world. The Lord's prophecy, as recorded in the Gospel of Matthew, is simply that the task will be carried out, and then the end will come. God alone knows when that will be, and He alone empowers His church to fulfill its part in the *missio Dei*.

CONCLUSION

This brief essay has sought to demonstrate that God's mission is at the very center, the heart, of all that God Himself is doing in the world to redeem lost humanity. It is His mission. He is Trinity, and as Trinity He is involved intrinsically in every aspect of the mission. He established the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ as the only and absolute element that provided (and provides) the basis for the success of His mission. He alone birthed and commissioned His church to participate in His mission. He will bring about the end of the mission when He is ready, and that will occur when the Gospel has been proclaimed as a witness in all the world to every nation.

The *missio Dei* is the reason for the existence of Christian theology. While every aspect of the church's study of God and what He has done, and is doing, does not explicitly concern missional practices, every aspect of theology is an outflow from or a consequence of the *missio Dei*. For centuries the church has acted as if the mission of God was a given subset of the church without taking into account its central role and its governing goal. The time is far past that the church of the Lord Jesus, sent on mission, must awaken to the central point of the reason why the Lord Jesus was "sent" to glorify the Father with his death and with the corresponding offer of salvation to the nations of the world.

36. Andreas J. Köstenberger and Peter T. O'Brien, *Salvation to the Ends of the Earth: A Biblical Theology of Mission* (Downers Grove: Intervarsity, 2001), 108-9

37. Tennent, 506.

Even now, the sun never sets on God's kingdom. But, until his mission comes to His determined end, it is "missions at sunrise"[37] and missions until sunset.

W. Jackson Watts

"In One Accord": Bridging the Divide between Doctrine and Practice

The apostle Luke describes the earliest Christians using the phrase "one accord" (e.g. Acts 1:14; 2:46, 4:24). The contexts in which such passages occur reveal at least two features of early Christian piety that sustained and spread the faith despite intense persecution. First, they held radical beliefs about the identity of Jesus of Nazareth. In the face of imperial rule, they confessed Him to be the Son of God who had come to inaugurate His kingdom. Second, they were set apart because of their peculiar practices. For many in the Roman Empire, Christian worship seemed bizarre because of how it differed from pagan worship practices. Some ecclesial practices that elicited such confusion were the Lord's Supper, spouses referring to one another as "brother" and "sister," and worship of a resurrected Jew. For such reasons Christians were thought to be cannibals, sexual deviants, and even atheists. The connection between beliefs and practices was further exemplified in other practices of the church such as their hymnody, testimony through baptism, and commitment to the burial of the dead.[1]

Despite the clear, scriptural unity between faith and practice, perhaps no greater distinction exists in evangelical life than the one between doctrine and practice.[2] Though many acknowledge that there is a biblical and logical relationship between the two, a dichotomy remains. It is perhaps rooted in a larger problem that drives a wedge between theory and practice. Thus, in many academic settings, there are the "theoretical disciplines" and the "practical disciplines." Many institutions preserve the distinction in their course titles. In a great amount of religious literature "theology" and "ethics" are separated. Stanley Hauerwas, one of the more vocal critics of this disjunction, puts it this way:

1. Robert Louis Wilken's *The Christians as the Romans Saw Them* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003) is still a classic work that offers such as portrait.

2. Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *The Drama of Doctrine: A Canonical-Linguistic Approach to Christian Theology* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 2005), 12.

> Indeed, I have been uneasy with the description of my work as 'ethics,' especially if ethics denotes a discipline separate from theology. I understand myself as a theologian and my work as theology proper. I have accepted the current academic designation of 'ethics' only because as a theologian I am convinced that the intelligibility and truthfulness of Christian convictions reside in their practical force.[3]

Still, it is common to find church websites that provide a doctrinal statement but categorize their practices under other headings such as worship or ministries. Additional polarities such as "beliefs and behavior" or "creed and conduct" perpetuate the doctrine-practice distinction.

One also finds this distinction in the varieties of definitions of theology. Lewis and Demarest note that "theology is the topical and logical study of God's revealed nature and purposes."[4] Other theologians such as Wayne Grudem, Millard Erickson, and Dale Moody define it using the language of "study," "discipline," and "an effort to think."[5] Further, Alister McGrath says it is discourse.[6] These descriptions have in common a firm association between theology (doctrine) and the rational or cognitive. Doctrine, they say, comes in the form of ideas, concepts, and beliefs. Specifically, the Reformed and evangelical traditions closely connect theology with propositional revelation that one uncovers from exegesis of Scripture.[7] Practice, or what is also thought of as ethics, is another matter. Behavior, conduct, and habits are terms that ultimately relate to the same general notion of practice. These are concerned with the moral choices people make.[8]

3. Stanley Hauerwas, *A Community of Character: Toward a Constructive Christian Social Ethic* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981), 1. Also see pgs. 36-39, 90-91. Hauerwas has arguably been the most influential voice in the last 25-30 years rejecting this dichotomy.

4. Gordon R. Lewis and Bruce A. Demarest, *Integrative Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 23.

5. Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 21. Millard Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1998), 17. Dale Moody, *The Word of Truth: A Summary of Christian Doctrine Based on Biblical Revelation* (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1981), 1.

6. Alister E. McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 102.

7. Carl F.H. Henry's six-volume magnum opus *God, Revelation and Authority* is arguably the most definitive and comprehensive evangelical work on this subject (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1999).

8. Scott's Rae's *Moral Choices* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000) bears the subtitle, "An Introduction to Ethics." To his credit, however, he avoids divorcing ethics from conceptual theological categories in his actual argument.

Appropriate moral action (practice) is thought to derive from right theory (doctrine). Theology, then, is about what one knows or believes, and ethics is about moral action.

There is certainly a biblical and historic distinction between beliefs and practices.[9] They address different yet related realities. However, the account above is indicative of a pervasive outlook in Christian life today—one that enlarges the divide between doctrine and practice, particularly with respect to ecclesiology. Theologians and other writers have increasingly addressed this concern in recent years.[10] By failing to recognize the proper relationship between doctrine and practice, Christians fail to embody a holistic spiritual witness. The church, in particular, can fall prey to emphasizing doctrine or practice at the expense of the other. At worst, this leads either to false teaching or to immorality.

In recent decades this type of bifurcation is often evidenced in the grammar that surrounds Christian worship. Some authors reduce worship to a particular practice (singing), while considering other, more doctrinally oriented acts (preaching) something else—essential, but something different from worship. More generally, the church fails to consider how a particular doctrine they confess might constrain and shape a practice or ministry of the church. Instead, they allow disciplines such as sociology or psychology to define Christian practices and ministry methodology. General revelation certainly has something to offer the ministry of God's people. Yet we should consider whether the distinction between doctrine and practice has hindered our ability to embrace how God intended for the apostolic doctrine to shape and inform the Christian life in all its various dimensions.

This author shares the concerns cited above and writes with the conviction that the church today must bridge the gulf fixed between doctrine

9. Treatises of "faith and practice," such as that of the National Association of Free Will Baptists, illustrate the time-honored association of these two words and concepts.

10. These critiques have arisen from many Christian camps. The best recent attempt to link beliefs and practices is Beth Felker Jones' *Practicing Christian Doctrine: An Introduction to Thinking and Living Theologically* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014); Other examples include Stanley Hauerwas, *The Peaceable Kingdom: A Primer in Christian Ethics* (Notre Dame: The University of Notre Dame Press, 1983), 50-55. Miroslav Volf and Dorothy Bass, eds., *Practicing Theology: Beliefs and Practices in Christian Life* (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 2002); Bonnie Miller-McLemore, *Christian Theology in Practice: Discovering a Discipline* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012); David Clark represents a Reformed evangelical assessment in *To Know and Love God: Method for Theology* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2003).

and practice.[11] This is a divide that the theme of accordance in the New Testament beckons the church toward in the twenty-first century. Otherwise, evangelical life is compromised in several fundamental ways. Doctrine and practice should be recognized as being equally important because they exist in a symbiotic relationship with each other. Furthermore, the divide between doctrine and practice can be bridged by a theology that emphasizes wisdom and desire as crucial features that link doctrine with practice.[12]

In order to defend this argument, this essay will consider the unity of doctrine and practice as a biblical concern. Additionally, reflecting on some practical ways that beliefs and conduct relate will reinforce our understanding of their relationship. Such reflection will also allow us to consider the role of wisdom and desire in clarifying the relationship of beliefs and conduct. Finally, some case studies of how the ministry of the church might manifest this argument will reinforce our conclusions.

DOCTRINE AND PRACTICE AS A BIBLICAL ISSUE

Luke offers his readers many insights into the patterns and practices that characterized the early Christians, as well as the context out of which they arose. Determining what is intended to be descriptive in the Scriptures, especially in the book of Acts, and what is meant to be prescriptive (or normative) continues to be a conversation among Christians today, especially of the younger Reformed brand.[13] However, one thing that is beyond dispute is the portrait of unity in thought and practice in the early church. Most English translations render these images of the church as being "together," or in "one accord." The church was united in both its beliefs about the risen Christ as well as the practices that accompanied and evidenced those convictions. Certainly Luke intends his

11. Vanhoozer also uses topographical imagery in describing this situation by saying that "the mortal fault line" that separates theory from practice runs through the academy and the church. See *The Drama of Doctrine*, p. 13.

12. "Symbiosis" is a term with several meanings depending on which discipline uses it. However, in this paper the psychiatric notion of the word is meant. It refers to a relationship between two things in which each is dependent upon and receives reinforcement, whether beneficial or detrimental, from the other.

13. Justin Taylor's well-known blog at the Gospel Coalition is one representative of this ongoing dialogue. *http://thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/justintaylor/?s=normative+in+acts* Accessed on 3 October 2012. Brett McCracken's *Gray Matters* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2013) is somewhat of an attempt, though in a much less explicit way, at having this same type of discussion.

description not only to describe religious phenomena, but also to chart a course for the church through a decadent culture.

The apostle Paul exhorted the Philippians to be of "one mind" and "one spirit" (Phil. 1:27). Additionally, he uses the language of accordance to exemplify the proper character suitable to followers of the crucified Christ (Phil. 2:2). Other passages also emphasize the general theme of unity, but never at the expense of (1) sound doctrine or (2) sound practice. For the apostles, these two were non-negotiable even amid the early conflict concerning Jewish-Gentiles relations that had to be resolved in the new "Christian" environment. Of course, learning how the Gospel of Christ (doctrine) informs each particular step of ecclesial life (practice) is not always obvious. One might think that it would have been better for the new covenant to entail some elaborate system like the old, so as to offer Christians a "practical guide" for the decisions and situations they would encounter. Yet the apostles argued that grace and the Spirit are better teachers (Gal. 3:24).

Our reading of such texts, however, occurs within a particular religious landscape. For many readers, that landscape is Protestant evangelicalism. In the wake of the debates over inerrancy, evolution, and sexual ethics, evangelicals have often emphasized right-thinking more frequently than right-practices.[14] When we consider contemporary forces such as skepticism and agnosticism, it seems more urgent to focus on beliefs since the challenges we frequently face seem intellectual in nature.[15] Yet Paul's exhortation to Titus is a helpful reminder of how we must find the "accord" between doctrine and practice: "But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine" (Titus 2:1).[16]

In other words, there is a manner of life consistent with the beliefs of the church. Together they form an indissoluble unity that is intended to be embodied in holiness. The general structure of Pauline thought, James' discussion of faith and works, and Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount further demonstrate this important dialectic.

14. When one surveys the evangelical literature, books on basic Christian doctrine or beliefs outweigh books that survey "basic Christian practices." Books on topics such as prayer or Bible study are framed as "topical studies" more often than not. Perhaps more significantly, evangelicalism has witnessed a tremendous emphasis on "worldview *thinking*" in the last 15-25 years.

15. Kenneth A. Myers, "Waiting for Epimenedes," *Touchstone Magazine* (July/August 2009): 9-11. The notion of 'symbiosis' adopted in this paper is to be credited to Myers' use of it in his article.

16. All Scripture quotations are taken from the English Standard Version.

The Structure of Pauline Literature

One of the more common ways one can observe the relationship between doctrine and practice is by attending to the very structure of many of Paul's epistles. Often in the early chapters of epistles Paul addresses the person and work of Jesus Christ. Paul unpacks salvation in particular in Ephesians 1-2, for example. However, he does not give the instruction to Christians households, until the later chapters of those epistles. The epistle to the Romans is perhaps a better instance of the way Paul provides doctrine (theological foundations) before he gives ethics (practical implications/exhortations). First come the indicatives and then the imperatives. Many New Testament surveys reflect this understanding.[17]

Two important observations should be made here. First, it is clear that doctrine and practice are deeply important to the Christian outlook. Christians follow "the way, the truth, and the life," which entails both clear ideas about who Jesus is and a manner of life to which He calls His followers. There is little dispute over this. The question is over the nature of the relationship between the two. The problem is how to bridge the divide that often seems to keep the two from mutually reinforcing one another.

The second observation is that the shape of much New Testament literature sheds light on this divide. On the one hand, it does distinguish between doctrine and practice. So one could possibly possess the right belief but the wrong practice, or vice versa. Believing in the generosity of God but not understanding how that informs Christian giving is an actual dilemma a believer may experience. Thus, we have Paul's reminder to the Corinthians: "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich" (2 Cor. 8:9). However, acknowledging the distinction too readily can allow a form of separation between faith and practice that is inconsistent with Christian spirituality.

New Testament teaching exemplifies balance between the two. Consider Colossians 3:1 as a case study: "If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God." Paul is arguing for a particular way of life ("seek the things above") on the basis of the transformation that Christ has wrought

17. "Part I covers 1:1-8:39 and deals with the development of the doctrine of justification by faith and its implications. . . . Part III concludes the book and includes 12:1-16:27. Its contents are practical and personal." F. Leroy Forlines, "A Survey of the Book of Romans," in *A Survey of the New Testament: A Panoramic View of God's Unfolding Revelation*, ed. Harold Harrison (Nashville: Randall House, 1983), 82.

in their lives. He relates this to the affections, but he is reminding them of a state of affairs that they *believe* to be true about themselves by virtue of their profession.[18] F. F. Bruce helpfully relates this dynamic to our present discussion. He argues that the reference to the exaltation of Christ in the latter part of the verse is not intended for "ornamental purpose." Rather, didactic (*paraenetic* is his word) sections "regularly presuppose the content of the apostolic preaching. What God has done for his people in Christ is the grand argument and incentive for Christian living. The apostolic teaching or *didache* may be distinguished from the preaching or *kerygma*, but it is founded on the preaching—and in any case the distinction between the two should not be pressed too sharply."[19] Here Bruce is not only acknowledging observable, conceptual distinctions. There is also an implicit warning to those who would separate apostolic doctrine and moral instruction.

James on Faith and Works

Interpreters have often referred to the book of James as the "proverbs" or "wisdom literature" of the New Testament. They often present James as one whose chief purpose is to address practical concerns over against theological ones. The main reason for such a perception is his unique emphasis on the role of works in the Christian life. It is no wonder, then, that Martin Luther was so anxious about the canonicity of James's epistle.

The heart of this brief epistle is in 2:14-26. Prior to this, James's argument builds on the danger of being a hearer of the word but not a doer of the word (1:19-25). He offers tangible examples, such as the sin of partiality, to show how one might fail to appreciate the relationship between what God has done (choosing the poor in the world to be rich, that is, kingdom heirs) and the way Christians actually treat the poor. Yet this paves the way for the apex of James's theological argument about living faith when he says that the sort of faith that does not produce good works is dead (2:14-17). He is trying to persuade his readers not to pit faith against works, and instead see the superiority of a testimony that demonstrates real faith through good works (v. 18). True faith is recognizable only in works that accompany it. His letter upends hypocrites who would say, "I have faith," or, "I believe in the Christian God," while

18. I will say more about the affections later in the essay.

19. F. F. Bruce, *The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians, The New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984), 134.

their lives are devoid of any visible, active faith. Even demons are orthodox in their beliefs (v. 19).

James seems to contradict, at least at first glance, the Reformation's *sola fide* in verse 24: "You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone" (no wonder Luther questioned James' canonicity!). James is simply explaining and emphasizing the organic link between authentic saving faith and grace-oriented works. This tension is, of course, evident when juxtaposed with Paul's emphasis on justification by faith (Rom. 2:23-26; 4:3). Yet on closer inspection, Paul's account of faith frees one to be a slave to a new way of life filled with good works (Rom. 6:15-22). Paul's circumstances in Romans and Galatians were unique contexts that required a presentation shaped by different social and theological concerns.

James leaves the reader with a very precise argument: An affirmation of belief (*assensus*) is much more than mere mental assent. It must include something deeper (*fiducia*) that issues forth in good works. This is what true religion is all about. As ethicist Mark Liederbach puts it, "stated beliefs plus actual practice equals actual belief."[20] This formulation leads us to consider the danger of hypocrisy in a new light.

The Sermon on the Mount

The divide between doctrine and practice is characterized differently by James than, say, Jesus. However, the Sermon on the Mount performs the same bridging function designed to address the gap between doctrine and practice.

One of the aims of Scripture is to help people encounter the God who "discloses the purposes of the heart" (1 Cor. 4:5). As C. S. Lewis once said, "Human beings judge one another by their external actions. God judges them by their moral choices."[21] Jesus is uniquely capable of doing this because in Him the fullness of God dwells bodily (Col. 1:19; 2:9). His most famous section of discourse, the Sermon on the Mount, has received scholarly and popular expositions by evangelicals over the years.[22]

20. Mark Liederbach is the Vice President of Student Services and professor of Christian Ethics at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. This quotation comes from course notes for his introductory ethics course: "Ethics as Worship" (Fall, 2006), 13.

21. C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 2001), 91.

22. For example, D. A. Carson, *Jesus' Sermon on the Mount and His Confrontation with the World: An Exposition of Matthew 5-10* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2004). John R. W. Stott, *The Message of the Sermon on the Mount, The Bible Speaks Today* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 1985).

However, those studies do not always situate themselves within the context of this discussion.

In the earlier section, namely 5:21-48, Jesus tries to help His disciples rethink the true depth of righteousness and obedience concerning the Old Testament law. He hints at this when He speaks about the fulfillment of the law as opposed to its abolition and indicates that a new covenant morality reaches deeper (5:17). The law is in no way "relaxed" (5:19). In surprising fashion, He explains the powerful ways in which verbal and intellectual affirmations relate to actions, intentions, and desires.

Consider Jesus's words about adultery in Matthew 5:27-30. As He spoke ("you have heard it said"), His listeners no doubt affirmed the truthfulness of the commandment not to commit adultery, resting confidently in the fact that they had never broken it. Yet Jesus heightens the drama by saying, "But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart." The eye's activity, coupled with the heart's intent, proves to violate this seemingly external command. Jesus's morality, in other words, deals with the intellect and the body. It goes beyond our knowledge about right and wrong (beliefs) and our bodily conduct (practice) to deal also with our affections or desires ("lustful intent"). True morality has to do with our beliefs, our behavior, and our desires. What we want or love matters. We might also say that what shapes our affections, and what we direct them toward, are of great concern to Jesus.[23]

This latter concern will come as no surprise to many familiar with the larger corpus of Western thought. Ethical theories or outlooks often address notions such as desire and not merely conduct.[24] However, the attitude of the heart emerges as a pattern in other portions of this sermon as well. Jesus suggests that anger against one's brother violates the spirit of the commandment against murder (Mt. 5:21-26). Likewise, other earthly relationships where agreements might be forged (marriage, oaths) are subject to a particular form of moral judgments and action if one is truly to fulfill the law. In Richard Hays's words, "where the Law poses regulative limitations on divorce and revenge, Jesus calls his followers to renounce these options altogether."[25] In sum, our real theological commitments are evidenced and measured by, and are in some sense *coequal to*, our ethics. These claims are controversial—and rightly so.

23. I will discuss the role of desires more later.

24. Examples like hedonism or emotivism may come to mind because these ethical systems say more about passions, desires, and emotions than others.

25. Richard B. Hays, *The Moral Vision of the New Testament: A Contemporary Introduction to New Testament Ethics* (New York: HarperOne, 1996), 96.

Knowing that one's works and desires are just as important as his beliefs is a threat to human self-sufficiency. Yet it is consistent with the moral vision of the New Testament.

Summary

The structure and content of much of the New Testament displays this dynamic between doctrine and practice. On the one hand, they are distinct. On the other hand, too wide a distinction often results in disobedience. This in turn fosters a spiritual hypocrisy that Christ and the apostolic message repudiate. A further examination of the relationship between doctrine and practice, then, becomes crucial. Reframing the relationship between doctrine and practice certainly warrants the attention it is receiving in academic circles. Yet it unquestionably deserves more attention in the local church, the most crucial hub for cultivating Christian virtue. As Dorothy Bass contends, practices are "patterns of cooperative human activity in and through which life together takes shape over time in response to and in the light of God as known in Jesus Christ."[26] If this is true, then this means that focusing on practices invites "theological reflection on the ordinary, concrete activities of actual people—and also on the knowledge of God that shapes, infuses, and arises from these activities."[27]

When we reflect on the actual realities of contemporary experience, as well as on the corporate life of the church, we see the relationship between doctrine and practice as a *symbiotic* one. The biblical testimony says they belong together. What does practice today and in the past tell us?

DOCTRINE AND PRACTICE AS A PRACTICAL ISSUE

In order to understand better how belief and behavior relate, we might look to an unexpected place to find anecdotal evidence. The late twentieth century gave rise to an unprecedented amount of pornography. "*Porne*" (fornication) has always existed in various forms. But the rise of print and online pornography has fostered something of an epidemic. Gradually many researchers have published their findings, and the results have been astounding. Men who frequently view pornography begin to demonstrate adverse behavior toward women. They are also generally more abusive toward women. The research further shows that pornography not only affects their attitude and actions but their very

26. Dorothy Bass, "Introduction," in Volf and Bass, *Practicing Theology*, 3.
27. Ibid.

beliefs as well. Their estimation of women's worth and value is diminished because of their engagement with pornography.[28]

Therefore, while practices and habits reinforce beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions, they also appear to create them as well. The relationship is symbiotic (though not strictly cause-and-effect). Like traditional Christian thought, this study shows that humans' rational and moral capacities are tied to their bodies, and more specifically their behavior and affections. This then discredits the sharp distinction often drawn between beliefs and behavior, or from seeing the former as necessarily prior. It also challenges that paradigm that allows us conveniently to separate what we know from what we do.

Timothy Lane and Paul Tripp extend this argument by demonstrating that the experiences that human beings undergo are hermeneutical in nature. In their words, those experiences "become lenses we use to interpret life."[29] They explain it this way:

> Very few people wake up one morning and decide to change their theology. Changes in a person's belief system are seldom that self-conscious. . . . The emotions we feel as we first go through difficult experiences are not static. They morph into subtle but extremely influential conclusions about God, ourselves, others, and life. Yet these major changes in what we believe have not been well thought out. . . . Rather, our unresolved feelings become our interpretations of life. Emotions morph into conclusions, and we end up not believing the things we say we believe.[30]

Tripp and Lane write from a background in psychology. Yet they argue that this insight is crucial to understanding the nature of sanctification and human change.

Another instance in which we glimpse this symbiotic (mutually reinforcing) relationship between beliefs and practices is the ancient principle of *lex orandi, lex credendi* (Latin for "the law of prayer is the law of belief"). This maxim refers to an ancient Christian understanding concerning the relationship between worship and belief. More influential in

28. Judith K. Balswick and Jack O. Balswick, *Authentic Human Sexuality* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2008), 282-286. These authors provide an expanded summary of the research associated with these conclusions.

29. Timothy S. Lane and Paul D. Tripp, *How People Change* (Greensboro, NC: New Growth Press, 2008), 95.

30. Ibid., 95-96.

liturgical traditions, *lex orandi, lex credendi* provided a means for developing ancient creeds, the canon of Scripture, and other doctrinal questions on the basis of the church's prayer texts (liturgy). In the early church, a liturgical tradition predated a common creed and an official biblical canon. However, this ancient principle signals how liturgical traditions provided a framework for making such decisions. Prosper of Aquitaine is often credited for the articulation of this principle with his famous statement, "Let the rule of prayer establish the rule of belief."[31]

This ancient principle informs our present discussion, demonstrating the precedent in the Christian tradition of practices informing beliefs. It also emphasizes the intimate relation between the two.[32] *Lex orandi, lex credendi* is a useful principle in helping Christians realize that the practices of the church reinforce and shape certain beliefs. One might think that we need not worry about such a possibility since we have the Scriptures to inform our ecclesiology directly. However, many extra-biblical practices in worship and ministry have the capacity to reinforce or undermine particular beliefs. The challenge is for those living beyond the apostolic era to consider all that might "accord with sound practice," to use the words of the apostle Paul to Titus.

While more on the worship of the church will be considered later, the example of how pornography works helps show that the relationship between beliefs and behavior is not quite as simple as people often think. In other words, it is not always an issue of possessing right beliefs and right behavior naturally following. Behavior also has a direct bearing on the moral vision or disposition of an individual—which we might associate with beliefs. This coincides with a crucial question that Leroy Forlines asked several decades ago: "If orthodox thought is necessary for sound morality, the question might be asked if a sound morality is essential for orthodoxy."[33] Forlines goes on to answer that it is, indicating that in American culture the decline of morality is certainly related to a broad rejection of biblical authority. Yet he also argues that certain forms of

31. Frank Senn, *Christian Liturgy: Catholic and Evangelical* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997). 46-47.

32. John Henry Newman is an extremely important voice from the nineteenth century who addressed how certain implicit beliefs become explicit over time. His notion of the "development of doctrine" is one beyond the scope of this paper, but his argument is worthy of consideration even today. See *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., 1960).

33. F. Leroy Forlines, *Morals and Orthodoxy* (Nashville: Commission on Theological Liberalism, National Association of Free Will Baptists, 1974), 5.

behavior render particular beliefs more implausible. He uses the example of sin, for instance, as something that prevents one from forming a right perspective on hell and judgment.[34] He concludes his reflections by saying, "Orthodoxy and morality [orthopraxy] are inseparably bound together. Each needs the other. Anemic morality cannot continually support orthodox theology and orthodox Christian experiences."[35]

Additionally, *lex orandi, lex credendi* shows the historic and practical relationship between doctrine and practice in the life of the church. It further confirms Forlines's view that what we do shapes what we believe, even as our beliefs inform our behavior. It is easy for evangelicals to be concerned about sound doctrine in the church while "what accords with sound doctrine" (practices) is not given its deserved attention.[36] So what is more important—orthodoxy or orthopraxy? The solution is not to privilege practice over doctrine. After all, legalism is a default religion of the human heart. Thus attention to conduct will already exist without carelessly allowing the pendulum of emphasis to swing from beliefs to practices. However, once we understand that practices exist in a symbiotic relationship with doctrine, it is necessary for the church to refocus the angle of the lens through which it sees doctrine or theology.

BRIDGE ONE: THEOLOGY AS WISDOM

A well-orbed theology has two components that help us think of doctrine in a symbiotic relationship with practice, thus establishing a bridge between the two. These components are wisdom and desire. Theology since the Enlightenment has been frequently framed in distinctly rational terms.[37] In contending with the dueling outlooks of empiricism and rationalism, theologians have felt compelled to frame their work to respond in such terms. To borrow a sports metaphor, orthodox Christian theologians have increasingly become the "away team," trying to compete for intellectual plausibility. In the process, they have often lost a grip on many of the typical advantages associated with home-field advan-

34. Ibid., 6.

35. Ibid., 12.

36. It is worth clarifying here that legalism is indeed a danger. That is, we can also be anti-intellectual in our faith and excuse our ignorance of doctrine because we feel our participation in the right practices— church attendance, tithing, or whatever else—is sufficient for faithfulness.

37. For a lengthy discussion of the changing understanding of theology and ethics in the modern age, see Brian Brock, "Ethics" in *Mapping Modern Theology: A Thematic and Historical Introduction*, eds. Kelly Kapic and Bruce McCormack (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic 2012), 293-300.

tage: traditional categories and language, broad institutional support, and the social strength of incumbency.[38] Before passing judgment, we should be careful with our criticisms of our forebears, since theology throughout the centuries has always been contextual. In other words, the nature of the debates of each era has always shaped the way people have done theology.[39] Yet what has been lost in modernity's obsession with the conditions of knowledge (epistemic concerns) is a focus on how Christian truth claims about reality (ontology) takes form in the church and the world (ethics).

Ellen Charry says that theology in the modern age "came to be thought of as the intellectual justification of the faith, apart from the practice of the Christian life. The wisdom of God has ceased to function in the church as the foundation of the good life. Theology is no longer expected to be a practical discipline, burdened as it is in the modern period with the awkwardness of speaking of God at all."[40] In other words, there is historic evidence that theology and doctrine came to be severed from practice. Some argue that theology was reduced to metaphysics, while others say apologetics. However, in either case the result was the same: church dogma was no longer doctrine in service to the church's practices, namely its worship.

Charry argues that theology has traditionally related knowledge to practice. She develops this argument from several biblical and classical texts, including the apostle Paul, Augustine, Athanasius, Basil of Caesarea, Anselm, and Calvin. She points out the pastoral and moral aims that shaped the teachings of these theologians on a wide range of doctrines. Charry argues that "taking the doctrines of the Christian faith seriously was assumed to change how we think and act, that is, to remake us."[41] Thus, Charry calls for theology to recapture the "pastoral function" it once possessed. The church should consider doctrine an "aid in cultivating a skilled and excellent life."[42] Practically, this means that

38. To put this latter point more simply, reigning religious/philosophical and scientific paradigms are not toppled overnight. For instance, see Thomas Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1962). 39. David Clark's survey of various concepts of theology since the patristic age demonstrates the often *ad hoc* nature of the theological enterprise. *To Know and Love God*, 33-42.

40. Ellen T. Charry, *By the Renewing of Your Minds: The Pastoral Function of Christian Doctrine* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 5.

41. Ibid., 6.

42. Ibid., 225. Charry also emphasizes the role of happiness and love in this framework. This is explored further in her *God and the Art of Happiness* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010).

doctrine is a means to lead believers into a life of wisdom (*sapientia*). David Clark picks up this same point and explains further:

> Augustine preferred the word "wisdom" (in Latin, *sapientia*) to "knowledge" (in Latin, *scientia*; basically *episteme* in Greek and *Wissen* in German) as a description of the Christian reflection about God. *Sapientia* is contemplative understanding of divine and eternal things. *Scientia* is active knowledge of mundane and temporal things. . . . In Augustine's sense, theology goes beyond mere science to wisdom as the believer orders or applies knowledge according to the highest good, namely, the love of God. . . . It is information applied for the purpose of transformation.[43]

This outlook held sway over many of Augustine's followers, and a number of contemporary theologians are emphasizing it again. With this conception, Augustine steered Western Christianity to the view that "by knowing God we come to love him, and by loving him we come to know him."[44]

Though we will say more below about how love relates to this perspective, it is crucial to note here that Augustine calls our attention to something that is vital for bridging the divide between doctrine and practice. It is not enough to recognize that the relationship between what we believe or know and what we do is not as tidy as we often think. We must introduce this vision of wisdom. It reframes "knowing" as not just an exercise in the intellect, but a disposition of the heart that seeks transformation and renewal. For Aquinas, moral transformation came from knowing God, and individuals acquired virtue by practice. Augustine nuanced this perspective by arguing that knowing God was essential but insufficient apart from loving God. In Clark's words, "*Scientia*, isolated by itself, is a *truncated theology*." He argues that "the definitive purpose of theology is the knowledge of God applied as wisdom. It forms godly character in Christians as they live in community, and it governs the loves and the lives of faithful Christians who serve God and transform culture."[45] Doctrine, then, is knowledge about God aimed toward loving Him (i.e. living for Him). Seeing the relationship between doctrine and practice this way corresponds to the link the apostle Paul makes between sound doctrine and godliness (1 Tim. 1:10; 4:6; 6:3). Moral change is always in view, not doctrine for the sake of knowledge.

43. Clark, 36-37.
44. Charry, 4.
45. Clark, 37.

We might wonder why such emphasis on wisdom moves the discussion along. After all, scholars continue to emphasize the religious significance of the wisdom literature.[46] Ironically, the moniker "wisdom literature," for all its pedagogical benefits, often muddies our ability to discern the broader dimensions of wisdom. Simply put, some form of wisdom is guiding all decisions of how beliefs should inform behavior and determining what kind of behavior is consistent with a particular belief. This task is much broader than clippings from a handful of biblical books; it involves the entire canon as it forms and shapes its readers. This does not mean, of course, that practicing wisdom is a rapidly acquired skill in Christian experience. Determining what it means, for instance, for a church to embody a belief in penal substitutionary atonement or justification by faith in its practices is not always obvious. Besides the verbal proclamation of such doctrine, ascertaining how such beliefs actually shape the communal practices and worship of the church is an ongoing effort of reflection guided by a Christ-centered, scripturally informed imagination. However, because it is a challenge in contemporary culture to adjudicate between a range of appropriate practices, whether in ecclesial life or our engagement with the world, this provides additional reason to envision our doctrine as a form of wisdom.

One might argue that the Scriptures do not speak univocally about all of the practices of the community, which is evidence for the primacy of beliefs. After all, the example of early conflicts between Jews and Christians seems to prove this. Paul sets forth a theology of grace in Galatians that reframes the debate over whether the appropriate practice that follows will be circumcision. In this example, it seems that the case for orthodoxy is foundational for orthopraxy and thus is logically and spiritually prior. However, right thinking about grace and the law (orthodoxy) *requires* wisdom in deciding whether circumcision is an action to be taken or not (orthopraxy). A sort of ethic, namely wisdom and love, is essential to guiding the New Testament church in such situations that arise.[47] Once again, right doctrine and right practice are equally

46. Craig Bartholomew and Ryan O'Dowd, *Old Testament Wisdom Literature: A Theological Introduction* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2001); Robert Alter, *The Wisdom Books: Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes: A Translation with Commentary* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2011).

47. Adopting a Forlinesean model would require us to say more about holiness in this discussion. I am taking for granted that Spirit-led wisdom, rightly ordered loves, and a commitment to the authority of Scripture in our reflection on doctrine and practice will practically entail a concern for holiness.

important because they are mutually reinforcing aspects of the Christian experience—and especially the church's life.

In the Free Will Baptist tradition, Leroy Forlines helps unveil this dynamic in his *Biblical Ethics*.[48] In outlining the necessary considerations of biblical ethics, Forlines states that "all morals and ideals are reducible to four basic values."[49] Among these is wisdom. Wisdom, he says, has to do with "doctrinal, moral, and spiritual truth" being translated into "practical truth for real life situations."[50] The concrete shape of not only the lives of individual Christians but also the church's life and worship requires such wisdom. The Scriptures do not come to readers in the form of a twenty-first-century ecclesiology monograph. Rather, they come to the church in proverbs, narrative, poetry, epistle, and other genres. Because we need wisdom to make decisions about the church's practices, there is a significant temptation to draw from the norms, models, and liturgies of the world. However, seeking biblical wisdom is the only recipe for spiritual vitality.

This essay's emphasis on wisdom grounds itself largely in an Augustinian approach that emphasizes *sapientia* over *scientia*. It sees the intent of Christian doctrine as leading one to know and love God. Such an approach prepares us to consider the affective function of Christian doctrine, which connects with a concern for wisdom and its goal to guide believers to right practice.

BRIDGE TWO: THE AFFECTIVE FUNCTION OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

What happens when right beliefs do not lead to right behavior? Using New Testament language, one might simply call this hypocrisy. We have already considered the problems with separating theology (doctrine) from ethics (practice). Because these two belong together biblically, divorcing them renders Christianity incoherent. They flow in and out of one another. Christian faithfulness requires both. Seeing theology as a form of wisdom begins to bridge this gap. Yet more is needed. An unexpected question that may lead to a second essential bridge is, "What is a person?" Asking this question leads us to consider the important role love or desire plays in bridging the divide between doctrine and practice.

48. F. Leroy Forlines, *Biblical Ethics: Ethics for Happier Living* (Nashville: Randall House, 1973).

49. Ibid., 41.

50. Ibid., 43.

James K. A. Smith's *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation* is a helpful guide in answering this question.[51] He asserts that one reason so much teaching fails is that it emerges from an incorrect view of what human beings are. Because people are *lovers*, education is primarily a formative enterprise rather than an informative one. While he does not reject the importance of ideas or beliefs, Smith argues that people are primarily shaped and directed by their *desires*.[52] Often we think that beliefs are primary, while behaviors are secondary (which may explain why people tolerate inconsistent behavior more than they do bad doctrine). Yet this assumes that people are primarily *thinkers*—"knowing" or "believing creatures." Instead, Smith argues that we are primarily *lovers*—beings defined by desires.[53] Practically, he argues, it is more useful to ask what people *love or want*, as opposed to what they believe, if one really wants to know them. The heart is the center of man, biblically speaking. Often in Scripture one's true character is associated with desires, not merely beliefs.[54]

If this is true, where does this leave the significance of beliefs? Smith's proposal proceeds to maintain that the affections are the most central facet of the human personality. This, I believe, is unhelpful. We see Scripture holding the faculties of human beings together in a *symbiotic* relationship. However, Smith's argument is helpful because some of his reflections provide a corrective to others who have overemphasized beliefs, or practices, at the expense of the affections.

How, Smith asks, can seeing humans primarily as *lovers* help bring doctrine and practice together? He argues that desires constitute a crucial link between beliefs and behavior. Amy Plantinga Pouw echoes this per-

51. James K. A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009). I will also draw upon a lecture Smith gave for the Center for Faith and Work at Redeemer Presbyterian Church on May 22, 2011, entitled "Culture as Liturgy."

52. It is important to note at this point that Smith is quite clear that he is not offering a totally original proposal. Instead, he is taking most of his seminal reflections from Augustine of Hippo (fourth century A.D.) and constructing an approach to worship, worldview, and cultural formation upon that Augustinian foundation. From the outset, I would also add that Smith's account, while compelling and a helpful corrective to many of the overly idealist approaches to anthropology, goes a bit too far at points in his argument. Nevertheless, his proposal is useful.

53. Interestingly, sociologist Christian Smith includes love in his account of what a person is in his *What is a Person? Rethinking Humanity, Social Life, and the Moral Good from the Person Up* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2010).

54. This is true both of good and bad desires. For instance, consider the emphasis on "lusts," especially in the New Testament.

spective when she says, "thinking of these three collectively helps us attend to the gaps between beliefs and practices."[55] We may know what is right, but desires are pivotal to ethics. Rightly ordered desires can help actions to be consistent with beliefs. Smith believes desires are primarily ordered through "cultural liturgies" in the course of life. While "culture" has often been a notoriously difficult concept to define, Smith offers this simple definition: Culture is "the work that we do that unpacks the potential of the world."[56] We should see culture as the stuff humans make.[57]

The second element of his argument is that the cultural artifacts humans create function as "liturgies of desire." Our engagement with culture serves as formative practices that orient us to the world and direct our desires. While "liturgy" has religious overtones, it pertains to all of life—our practices, habits, and cultural influences.[59] Our experience with all aspects of culture educates and forms us. These experiences may be our social habits, the places we frequent, or the tools we use. Practices, institutions, and artifacts all comprise "culture." These elements of culture influence us, mold us, and direct our desires. They influence what we want. Practical engagement with culture creates habits, and those habits foster particular desires or loves.

Smith uses an account about a visit to a shopping mall to illustrate his argument. Visiting a mall can be exhilarating for some shoppers. An elegant banner hanging from the ceiling, an attractive figure in a storefront window, the aroma of the food court—each of these envelope people subtly. The mall then becomes a "religious," "liturgical," and even "pedagogical institution," since it teaches us what we should want. The mall's images, sounds, and aromas portray a vision of "the good life." On an instinctual level, they say to customers, "Try this! Experience this! Desire this! This is what will satisfy!"[60] This cultural experience orients individual desires to a certain pattern of life. This relationship between what one believes and what one does is complicated because evangelical thinking often ignores how human desire figures into that relationship.

55. Amy Plantinga Pouw, "Attending to the Gaps Between Beliefs and Practices," in *Practicing Theology: Beliefs and Practices in Christian Life*, eds. Miroslav Volf, Dorothy Bass (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002).

56. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, "Culture as Liturgy."

57. Andy Crouch, *Culture Making: Recovering Our Creative Calling* (Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 2008). Crouch adopts a similar perspective on culture.

58. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 25.

59. Ibid., 23.

60. This vocabulary is my own. However, it practically shows how cultural artifacts address questions of action, desire, *and* belief.

This leads to the final component in Smith's argument and returns us to the original question: How can one hold beliefs and behaviors together in Christian experience? Understanding the role of desire or love is crucial. Yet a final question is also important—namely, what should we desire and how does it make a difference? Even as we reject the proposition that we are *primarily* lovers, it is not difficult to acknowledge that what we love is an enormous component of who we are. Our passions and desires are strong, driving many of our actions. However, if there are countless institutions and practices at work in our lives forming our desires, it is crucial to consider which *direction* they are being pointed. As implied in Smith's title, he argues that everyone *desires a kingdom*. The kingdom is whatever constitutes human flourishing. Whatever is imagined to be "the good life" is a conception of this kingdom. Because all human beings love or desire something, whatever they love or desire most is their kingdom. It is their ultimate, highest aspiration. It is what their heart is set upon. It is also what they believe to be real.[61]

Admittedly, Smith's anthropology is complex. In fact, if one were to adopt his approach entirely it would undermine the very argument of this paper![62] Yet we can still learn from Smith that the aim of uniting right doctrine with right practice requires that we attend to the pivotal role that desire or affections play within the faculties of a Christian. Furthermore, Smith's anthropology also deals with the desires in such a way that it helps us think more deeply about practices as being *formative* of desires, and not always simply a studied, logical movement one makes as a result of possessing the right belief. An emphasis on love and the importance of its *direction* or orientation combines with wisdom to promote "accordance" between doctrine and practice. If what we love connects to what we believe in the depth of our being, it will inevitably result in a certain kind of behavior or ethics. To put it another way, if our practices shape our desires, which make certain beliefs more plausible or desirable, then this will help bridge the gap between doctrine and practice.

61. Inevitably, beliefs arise from this framework. Our desires, regardless of what practice has formed them, are directed toward some kingdom that we *believe* to be real. We have a particular mental picture of what the good life is, even if we cannot immediately put it into words. Sometimes it is more instinctual, but it is present. This also illuminates Jesus' call to "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness."

62. I would also add that Smith's anthropology is overstated at places in his argument. That is, desires function in a symbiotic relationship with doctrine and practice as well. Therefore, making affections or desires primary doesn't solve the problem. Nevertheless, emphasizing desire helps move the doctrine-practice discussion forward in a crucial way.

It is then our charge to be more attentive to the formative liturgies of life—our practices, habits, and cultural influences. As Smith cautions, "These practices [cultural influences] are not neutral or benign, but rather intentionally loaded to form us into certain kinds of people—to unwittingly make us disciples of rival kings and patriotic citizens of rival kingdoms."[63] It is through the rhythms of constant practices that our understanding and desires are formed and directed toward a biblical vision of kingdom life. Craig Dykstra and Dorothy Bass illustrate this principle by speaking about the Sabbath. They argue that

> Christians who keep holy a weekly day of rest and worship acquire . . . an embodied knowledge that the world does not depend on our capacity for ceaseless work and that its life is not under our control. Observing Sabbath on the Lord's Day, Christian practitioners come to know in their bones that creation is God's gift, that God does not intend that anyone should work without respite, and that God has conquered death in the resurrection of Christ.[64]

Beliefs and behavior go together, yet *desire* is often the missing link in theological reflection. Thus the rituals that form and aim desires deserve just as much scrutiny as beliefs.[65] When we take this proposal seriously, we begin to appreciate the complexity of the Christian life, which in turn better prepares us to embody sound doctrine. To return to Forlines's approach to ethics, his proposal also links wisdom with love.[66] In another work, he argues that discussions of orthodoxy and its relationship to morality must address the heart.[67]

It is easy to reduce this discussion of the heart to what people often refer to as the moral nature of man. Such an approach reduces "heart" to only the human conscience. Yet we know that regeneration includes a

63. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 90-91.

64. Craig Dykstra and Dorothy Bass, "A Theological Understanding of Christian Practices," in Volf and Bass, *Practicing Theology*, 25.

65. It is important to distinguish between "final practices" and "formative practices." According to Smith's proposal, the latter is defined as a series of practices that habituate our loves which ultimately lead to a change in direction. But in some sense, it may sound as if we're saying "practices lead to more practices." In a way, this is true. Yet it is a constellation of these smaller practices that lead up to a "final practice." In other words, Right Beliefs →Right Practices is too simplistic because it neglects our desires. A more accurate model might be: Beliefs←→Desires←→Practice←→Beliefs←→Desires←→Practices (in no particular order).

66. Forlines, *Biblical Ethics*, 41-43.

67. Forlines, *Morals and Orthodoxy*, 11.

renewal of the whole self. Scripture, in addressing our imaginations, "speaks to our minds, wills, and emotions alike."[68] This is why the Lukan account of the early church being "in one accord" is so important. Those accounts not only presuppose mutually held convictions about Christ and appropriate practices. Such accounts also speak about the joy and gladness that characterized such a community (Acts 2:46, 47). They were united in their loves or desires such that they could agree on doctrine and engage in practices together.

Considering this portrait of the early church's accordance leads the twenty-first-century church to evaluate its corporate life, namely its worship. What practices are believers pursuing that reinforce and exemplify the doctrine of the church? How does a thicker account of wisdom and desire inform one's theology so as to link sound doctrine to sound practice? The next section will consider some final case studies.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE CHURCH

In the preface to his *Doxology*, Geoffrey Wainwright says, "My conviction is that the relations between doctrine and worship are deeper rooted and further reaching than many theologians and liturgists have appeared to recognize in their writings."[69] Christian worship is a helpful place to evaluate the dialectic between doctrine and practice. Amid the "worship wars" waged in churches, much has been lost. While unity and witness are among the losses, these wars have often obscured the true purpose and nature of worship. Additionally, they have afforded little reflection to the relation of practices to beliefs or convictions. Here we will consider three examples in Christian worship today where we might find some correctives in light of the proposal of this paper.[70]

Singing the Word

The rhetoric regarding church music ("praise and worship") has made it difficult to overlook the affective and doxological dimensions of Christian worship. These themes typically resound in popular treatments of the subject. However, hymnody from the early church through the

68. Vanhoozer, 12.

69. Geoffrey Wainwright, *Doxology: The Praise of God in Worship, Doctrine and Life: A Systematic Theology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), preface.

70. The three headings that follow are among the five components of Christian worship given by Mark Dever, *The Deliberate Church: Building Your Ministry on the Gospel* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2005), 81-86.

Reformation era has emphasized the pedagogical aspect of singing.[71] In reality, the Christian tradition has simply tried to embody the principles taught in Scripture. Colossians 3:16 says, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God." In the same verse, there is an emphasis on doctrine (word of Christ), practice (singing), and affection or love (thankfulness to God). The function of song is to enable God's Word to dwell in the body of Christ to create an environment of gratitude.

This interpretation is relatively benign; all parties in the "worship wars" could agree on it. However, countless decisions will always have to be made concerning music. Which instruments will be used? How will acoustic concerns be managed? Will the church use hymnals or sing the lyrics from a screen? The list of questions could go on endlessly. Many will be tempted to look outside Scripture and the Christian tradition for wisdom to make such decisions. Yet church leaders must give deliberate reflection (applied wisdom) to such issues if the church's confession is to translate into sound practice. Rendering all decisions not explicitly addressed in Scripture as "gray" will ultimately allow preference to be the final arbiter of such decisions. However, how would wisdom inform such a discussion?

Consider the volume of the church's music. In many cases, a music director will make this determination based on the harmonization of the instruments, the particular song, or any number of other factors. However, wise reflection enables us to make a practical decision in this area by considering Colossians 3:16. If singing is to be instructive as well as to build up the church, then those singing must be able to hear their neighbor sing. Likewise, being able to hear oneself sing is a practical necessity if the purpose of singing—instruction and encouragement—is to be accomplished (a doctrinal issue). How can a spirit of thankfulness to God percolate among God's people when created instruments eclipse the only natural instrument given to the church: the human voice?

It is certainly true that Scripture mandates no specific decibel level. However, in this small example, we see how applied wisdom enables the church to embody its biblical beliefs through a practice. Particularly, it

71. There have been two essays on the Helwys Society Forum which better enhance my brief presentation on worship, particularly singing: Matt Bracey's "Christian Worship: Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs," and Phillip Morgan's "Musical Thought in the Early Church." Accessible at *www.thehsf.com*.

causes us to give attention to how various worship practices form and shape participants and in turn direct their hearts toward Christ.

Reading the Word

First and Second Timothy and Titus are commonly referred to as the Pastoral Epistles because Paul addresses themes that have direct bearing on the pastoral leadership of Timothy and Titus. Paul is also seeking to address the organization and form that a healthy Gospel community assumes. In the midst of 1 Timothy, Paul instructs a young pastor to be devoted to the public reading of Scripture (4:13). Hearing the word in such a manner has been a long tradition within the church. Even as far back as the Old Testament, we observe reading of the Scripture accompanying exposition of the Word. Moses's dispensing of the law in Deuteronomy and the ministry of Ezra are classic examples. It is then the intention of the New Testament writers to facilitate the church's worship by using multiple means to emphasize the hearing of the Word: singing, preaching, praying, and public reading. Aside from "ornamental purposes," to use the language of F. F. Bruce, the Word is to be heard in this latter fashion. It was not only to impart information, but also to produce transformation, as evidenced by the weeping of those hearing Ezra's public reading (Ez. 8:8-9). It reinforced the belief that Israel's God was holy and His words were to be revered.

Along these lines one should give consideration to the formative power of Christian worship. Worship is meant to form and mold worshippers into the kind of people who not only adore and praise God on Sunday mornings, but who also worship Him in all of life. This is why the Bible can speak of worship in a narrow sense (the corporate gathering), as well as a broader sense (Rom. 12:1, 2). Formation means that worship is not simply something we do. It actually does something to us as well. It refers to the gradual, embodied acts experienced and inculcated in worship. Every time people stand listening to a Scripture reading, write a tithe-check, handle a hymnal, or pray publicly, they are being molded to think, act, and feel certain ways.[72] While boredom and apathy are temptations, weekly practices can reinforce theological convictions about praying, singing, and giving, whether we realize it or not.

72. See Timothy Quill, "Liturgical Worship," in *Perspectives on Christian Worship: Five Views*, ed. J. Matthew Pinson (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2009). While Quill differs from a more Reformed evangelical outlook on worship, much of his explanation about how worship forms a worshipper is valid here. See especially pp. 27-42.

This is why typically the public reading of Scripture should include listeners standing out of reverence. Standing and bowing both connote attentiveness, reverence, and awe. In these bodily actions, a worshipper can demonstrate and learn a deeper humility and spiritual interest in God's truth. This corresponds with James's emphasis on humility, which is a disposition essential for receiving the Word (James 1:21). Standing can be a practice that honors the belief that God's mighty word is an extension of himself. Timothy Ward summarizes this well: "To disobey God himself, and to refuse to submit to the command God utters is simply to break one's relationship with him. Thus (we may say) God has *invested* himself in his words, or we could say that God has so *identified* himself with his words that whatever someone does to God's words (whether it is to obey or to disobey) they do directly to God himself."[73] It then becomes reasonable for the church to represent such a conviction in its worship.

Worship is indeed adoration, as well as teaching. Yet it is a way of embodying, displaying, and appropriating the church's theological claims. A psalm sung in a moment of anguish is our tongues' way of saying that our "head-knowledge" of God's attentive ear is inadequate by itself. Theology maps onto both the body and the mind.

Seeing the Word

A final example that Free Will Baptists are acquainted with shows how we might "see the Word" in worship and also link practices, beliefs, and the heart: the ordinance of feet washing. The Free Will Baptist *Treatise of Faith and Practices* states, "This is a sacred ordinance, which teaches humility and reminds the believers of the necessity of a daily cleansing from all sin."[74] This statement gets to the heart of the wedding of theology and practice. Feet washing teaches and reminds us, apart from words, that Christ condescended to our lowly estate to serve and not to be served. While the Scriptures entail words of institution in connection with the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:23-26), such a formula is absent from John 13. The practice does the work itself (though certainly couching it in Scriptural teaching is appropriate and helpful).

As baptism reminds us of God's gracious work of regeneration, and the Lord's supper provokes gratitude for the broken body and shed blood of Christ, feet washing has the capacity to make intelligible the

73. Timothy Ward, *Words of Life: Scripture as the Living and Active Word of God* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009), 27.

74. *Treatise of the Faith and Practices of the National Association of Free Will Baptists* (Nashville: The Executive Office, 2010), Chapter XVIII, Section 3, p. 15.

humility to which the Spirit calls us in a powerful way. It is certainly no guarantee of humility, but it is a biblical approach for cultivating a particular disposition of the heart as well as reinforcing the belief that God's sanctifying work is a daily, ongoing process. This goes much deeper than the mere affirmation of many non-feet washing traditions that simply affirm the value of humility and the need for sanctification, while ignoring practices that reinforce those beliefs. Yet we may argue that feet washing is the ideal ordinance for connecting doctrine and practice. We are only baptized once. Though we ingest the elements in the Lord's Supper, they are signs, not transformed objects. In feet washing, we regularly take the basin, towel, and the feet of another in hand because our Savior did physically and spiritually (Phil 2:5-11).

CONCLUSION

Miroslav Volf offers what may be the most common, observable example of what this essay has presented:

> As attested by the accounts of those who have experienced conversion through reading the Bible without having had previous contact with Christians, one can accept Christian beliefs without previously engaging in Christian practices or even observing Christian practices. A person can start engaging in Christian practices because he or she has found Christian beliefs intellectually compelling. In such cases, Christian beliefs come first and Christian practices follow. As a rule, however, this is not how things happen. People come to believe either because they find themselves already engaged in Christian practices (say, by being raised in a Christian home) or because they are attracted to them. In most cases, Christian practices come first and Christian beliefs follow—or rather, beliefs are already entailed in practices, so that their explicit espousing becomes a matter of bringing to consciousness what is implicit in the engagement in practices themselves.[75]

Our ability to identify with Volf's example should remind us not to pit beliefs against practices, or practices against beliefs. Both constitute crucial parts of Christian spirituality and worship. However, the divide that separates them often results in right practices without right convictions, or right convictions without right practices. Because they will

75. Miroslav Volf, "Theology for a Way of Life," in *Practicing Theology*, 256.

always reinforce one another—resulting in authenticity or hypocrisy—the need to envision doctrine as wisdom and to heed the way desires relates to beliefs and practices is paramount. When we adopt such an approach, Scripture and the Christian tradition combine to help bridge a perennial gulf between doctrine and practice.

Matthew Steven Bracey

America's Founding: Philosophical and Religious Influences

On July 4, 1776, fifty-six delegates from the thirteen colonies signed their names to a Declaration of Independence. This document served as the bedrock for American independence from Britain. Approximately eleven years later in 1787, the delegates met again. What resulted was the Constitution of the United States. This document, along with the Bill of Rights and subsequent amendments, serves as the foundation upon which the American system of government is built.

The Declaration espouses ideals; the Constitution applies them. The Declaration emphasizes natural law, unalienable rights, human dignity, social contract, and dissolution and revolution; the Constitution stresses the separation of powers and checks and balances, federalism, the rule of law, the Bill of Rights, and representation. Though distinct, these two documents demonstrate the most compelling philosophical and religious justifications of the day.

THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION AND ITS IMPACT

In considering the influences that animated America's founding, the Protestant Reformation is a necessary starting point. On October 31, 1517, Martin Luther (1483-1546) nailed his *Ninety-Five Theses on the Power and Efficacy of Indulgences* on a church door in Wittenburg, Germany, effectively marking the beginning of the Reformation. The Reformation would spread through Europe, into England, and throughout the Western world. Reformation reached England through King Henry VIII's establishment of the Church of England (1534). His reasons were not so much theological as they were personal and political. Within the Church of England, a group arose to reform or "purify" the church yet further: the Puritans. Another group, the Separatists, believed it beyond reform and thus "separated" themselves from it. State-sponsored persecution and even death followed for many of these nonconformists. As a result, some began seeking religious liberty. One significant voice was Baptist founder Thomas Helwys (c. 1575-c. 1616), "the forgotten leader of the

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Pilgrim flight from England,"[1] who led a band of Separatists from England to Holland, and then back from Holland to England again. Helwys established the first Baptist church on English soil in Spitalfields, London, and articulated a defense of universal religious liberty in *A Short Declaration of the Mystery of Iniquity* (1612). Eight years later, some of the very people who had traveled with him would later set sail on a ship called the *Mayflower*.

Thus, changes resulting from the Reformation were not just theological, but governmental, institutional, and social as well, as evident from the Swiss and English reformations. For example, over the next century or so, reformers such as John Calvin, Theodore Beza, John Ponet, Christopher Goodman, George Buchanan, John Knox, and Samuel Rutherford would articulate a distinct theology of government. Some of their emphases would include propositions such as that political power should reside with the people, the king should subject himself to the laws of the land, and a nation may lawfully resist and punish tyrants. Their political theology would come to occupy a significant place in this age of reformation, so much so that it would contribute to the American founding. (These men and their propositions will be further explored in the section below entitled, "Dissolution and Revolution.") By arguing for constitutionalism, limited government, religious liberty, the rule of law, and other such notions, these early voices influenced the American Pilgrims and the American founders in a profound way.[2] In addition, they served as important precursors to several key Enlightenment figures.

ENLIGHTENMENT THINKERS

In the 1970s Donald Lutz and Charles Hyneman analyzed about 15,000 original documents from the Founding Era, which they defined

1. Nick Bunker, Making Haste from Babylon: The Mayflower Pilgrims and Their World: A New History (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2010), 163.

2. Others early voices, some in Europe and others in America, included Lambert Daneau (c. 1535-c. 1590), Johannes Althusius (1563-1638), John Murton (1585-c. 1626), John Cotton (1585-1652), Thomas Hooker (1586-1647), John Winthrop (1587-1649), William Bradford (1590-1657), Roger Williams (c. 1603-1683), Cotton Mather (1663-1728), and William Penn (1644-1718). It must be strongly emphasized that the principles of religious liberty and the separation of church and state were articulated by the more-radical wing of the Protestant Reformation, including the Baptists, not by the Magisterial Reformers and their immediate successors. Thus, of the above-mentioned figures, Helwys, Murton, Williams, and Penn would have articulated an approach to religious liberty and the separation of church and state more akin to the founders. It is noteworthy that all these figures emerged out of Radical Puritanism.

from 1760 to 1805. Lutz published their findings in a 1984 paper entitled "The Relative Influence of European Writers on Late Eighteenth-Century American Political Thought."[3] Although they compiled a list of more than 180 names, they discovered that Locke, Montesquieu, and Blackstone were the three most cited thinkers during this period.[4] Like those voices of the Reformation, these three men constructed their political philosophy on the principle of divine authority and its implications for the state.

John Locke

Most remembered for his *Two Treatises of Government* (1689), John Locke (1632-1704) was a British philosopher and political theorist. He also wrote *The Reasonableness of Christianity, as Delivered in the Scriptures* (1695) and *A Vindication of the Reasonableness of Christianity* (1695). His political and religious views built on one another, producing a political philosophy known as Lockean Liberalism or Natural Rights Philosophy.

Locke's writings were instrumental for the founders. This was especially true for Jefferson, the primary architect of the Declaration of Independence, who echoed Locke's themes of equality, natural rights, the rule of law, and dissolution and revolution. In fact, Jefferson himself wrote, "Locke's little book on Government is perfect as far as it goes."[5] As Herbert Friedenwald puts it, "By [the founders] none was more often quoted [than Locke, and] none more frequently appealed to, to justify the rectitude of their convictions. . . . And of no one are these statements so true as of Jefferson, to whose metaphysical mind Locke seems to have made an especial appeal."[6]

3. Donald Lutz, "The Relative Influence of European Writers on Late Eighteenth-Century American Political Thought," *The American Political Science Review* 78 (1984): 189-197.

4. Somewhat humorously, David Hume (1711-1776) was the fourth most cited thinker. However, this was not because the founders found him particularly enlightening, but because they went to such lengths to criticize and refute him. Referring to Hume's work, Jefferson wrote, "I remember well the enthusiasm with which I devoured it when young, and the length of time, the research and reflection which were necessary to eradicate the poison it had instilled into my mind" [Thomas Jefferson, The *Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, v. 12 (Washington D.C.: The Thomas Jefferson Memorial Association, 1904), 405]. Garry Wills also writes about how Jefferson developed a "bitter hostility" toward Hume [Garry Wills, *Inventing America: Jefferson's Declaration of Independence* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1978), 201].

5. Garry Wills, *Inventing America: Jefferson's Declaration of Independence* (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1978), 172; quoting Thomas Jefferson, Papers, 16:449.

6. Herbert Friedenwald, *The Declaration of Independence: An Interpretation and an Analysis* (New York: Da Capo, 1974), 197.

Baron Charles Secondat de Montesquieu

The second figure to emerge from the research of Lutz and Hyneman was the French lawyer, Baron Charles Secondat de Montesquieu (1689-1755), remembered for *The Spirit of Laws* (1748). Whereas Locke inspired the founders' principles regarding rights and revolution, Montesquieu inspired them toward the rule of law, separation of powers, federalism, and the preservation of civil liberties. And whereas Locke's influence is seen more in the Declaration, Montesquieu's is seen more in the Constitution, especially America's organization and structure of government.

Montesquieu was quite popular at the time of the founding. As Bernard Bailyn states, "[C]onservative analysts like Montesquieu were quoted everywhere in the colonies, by everyone who claimed a broad awareness."[7] Benjamin Rush for example, one of the signers of the Declaration, stated in *Observations on the Government of Pennsylvania*, "Mr. Locke is an oracle as to the principles, Harrington and Montesquieu are the oracles as to the forms of government."[8] The authors of the *Federalist Papers* appealed to him frequently as well.[9] The sixth President of the United States, John Quincy Adams, even commented on Montesquieu's influence: "At the time of the Declaration of Independence, Montesquieu was one of the most recent and esteemed writers upon government, and he had shown the division of powers to be essentially necessary to the preservation of liberty."[10] Like Locke, Montesquieu's influence at America's founding was strong.

Sir William Blackstone

Finally, the founders also drew from English judge and law professor Sir William Blackstone (1723-1780), author of *Commentaries on the Laws of England* (1765-69). As Jefferson expounded on the doctrine of natural law

7. Bernard Bailyn, ed., *Pamphlets of the American Revolution* (1750-1776) (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1965), 23. He goes on to say that "the ancient formulations which Montesquieu had so deeply engraved on the minds of his contemporaries still continued to be used; Americans of 1776 still referred to the crown, the aristocracy, and the democracy as social categories basic to politics and to observe that each had its own fundamental principle or spirit in government: for monarchy, fear; for aristocracy, honor; for democracy, virtue" (188-89).

8. Wills, 172; quoting Benjamin Rush, *Observations on the Government of Pennsylvania.*

9. See for example *The Federalist No. 34* and *No. 47*.

10. John Quincy Adams, *An Oration Addressed to the Citizens of the Town of Quincy, on the Fourth of July, 1831, The Fifth-Fifth Anniversary of the Independence of the United States of America* (Boston: Richardson, Lord and Holbrook, 1831), 27.

in the Declaration, he relied in part on Blackstone. And as James Madison (1751-1836) and other founders expounded on constitutional law, property law, contract law, tort law, and criminal law, they too found support in Blackstone, who had divided his lectures into these four topics: the rights of persons, the rights of things, private wrongs, and public wrongs.[11]

In addition, America's earliest jurisprudential leaders and lawyers looked to Blackstone as their primary legal scholar. In 1799, Supreme Court Justice James Iredell, referring to the *Commentaries*, stated that "for near thirty years it has been the manual of almost every student of law in the United States, and its uncommon excellence has also introduced it into the libraries, and often to the favorite reading of private gentlemen."[12] John Quincy Adams referred to the *Commentaries* as conferring "'an inestimable advantage' to students in the profession."[13] In fact, Melvin Urofsky and Paul Finkelman comment that Blackstone's *Commentaries* was the "most important American treatise" in the early 1800s.[14] All of these thinkers on whom the American founders relied, whether from the Reformation or the Enlightenment, appealed to divine authority and religious principles to develop their political theologies and philosophies.

THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

Having sailed on the *Mayflower* seeking religious liberty in 1620, the Pilgrims established the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Although these Englishmen still considered themselves British subjects in 1750, they had a long list of grievances by 1775. At the forefront of their complaints was taxation and representation—thus the cry "no taxation without representation."

Independence was imminent, it seemed. In June 1776 the Second Continental Congress appointed a Committee of Five, composed of John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Robert Livingston, and Roger Sherman, to draft a document justifying independence. In the end, Jefferson wrote the Declaration. At least four themes emerge from it:

11. See Melvin I. Urofsky and Paul Finkelman, *A March of Liberty: A Constitutional History of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 75.

12. "James Iredell's Charge to the Grand Jury in the *Case of Fries*" [9 Fed. Case. 826, no. 5, 126 (C. C. D. Pa. 1799)], *The University of Chicago Press*, accessed on April 15, 2010, http://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/documents/amendI_speechs22.html.

13. David A. Lockmiller, *Sir William Blackstone* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1938), 177; quoting Warren, op. cit., 177.

14. Urofsky and Finkelman, 178.

(1) natural law, (2) the dignity of all persons, (3) social contract, and (4) dissolution and revolution. These themes illustrate well the American founders' indebtedness to the traditions that had come before them.

Natural Law

The Declaration reads:

> When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect of the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation. . . . And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.[15]

Terms such as "Laws of Nature," "Nature's God," "Creator," "self-evident," "unalienable rights," and "divine Providence" bespeak the doctrine of natural law. Generally, this doctrine refers to a universal body of unchanging principles, laws, and rules established by a deity that guides all human affairs. Natural law stands in contrast to positive law, which refers to a body of changeable laws established by a legislature, court, or other human authority. Natural law played an important role in the founders' thought.

Locke, Montesquieu, and Blackstone were instrumental in shaping Jefferson on this theme. Locke had stated: "[T]he Law of Nature stands as an Eternal Rule to all Men. . . . The Rules that they make for other Men's Actions must . . . be conformable to the Law of Nature, i.e. to the Will of God."[16] In another passage, quoting the Anglican priest and theologian Richard Hooker, Locke wrote, "[L]aws Humane must be made according to the general Laws of Nature, and without contradiction to any positive Law of Scripture, otherwise they are ill made."[17] Friedenwald writes that Jefferson "sought out the best model, and repeated the concepts, often even the very phraseology and arguments of his master John Locke."[18] "A reading of Locke's second *Treatise*," he

15. Thomas Jefferson, Declaration of Independence.

16. John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, Bk. II, Ch. XI, § 135 (New York: The Legal Classics Library, 1994), 270.

17. Locke, Bk. II, Ch. XI, § 136, 270; quoting Hooker's Eccl. Pol. 1. 3, sect. 9.

18. Friedenwald, 201.

continues, "will show how thoroughly every sentence and expression in it were graven on Jefferson's mind."[19]

In a similar vein, Montesquieu wrote, "God is related to the universe as creator and preserver; the laws by which he has created all things, are those by which he preserves them. . . . These rules are a fixt and invariable relation."[20] In these passages, Locke and Montesquieu referred to the law of nature, eternal rule, will of God, Scripture, God, Creator, Preserver, and the fixed and invariable rules of the universe.

Blackstone was even more explicit. In his *Commentaries*, he developed his theory of natural law, which included an explanation of how Scripture and reason might be used in the discernment of natural law. He began first by establishing mankind's relationship with and dependence on God his Creator: "Man, considered as a creature, must necessarily be subjected to the laws of his Creator, for he is entirely a dependent being."[21] He then argued that his Maker's will reflects these laws, and he defined that will as the law of nature: "[A]s man depends absolutely upon his Maker for everything, it is necessary that he should, in all points, conform to his Maker's will. This will of his Maker is called the law of nature."[22] Blackstone then considered the law of nature's priority and prescription on mankind and his societies: "This law of nature, being co-eval with mankind and dictated by God himself, is of course superior in obligation to any other. It is binding over all the globe, in all countries, and at all times: no human laws are of any validity, if contrary to this; and such of them as are valid derive all their force, and all their authority, mediately or immediately, from this original."[23]

Having established that the law of nature exists, Blackstone then turned to the question of its interpretation, in relation to the Holy Scriptures and human reason. First, he argued that the law of nature should be interpreted in light of what he termed the "holy scriptures": "The doctrines thus delivered we call the revealed or divine law, and they are to be found only in the holy scriptures. These precepts, when revealed, are found upon comparison to be really a part of the original law of nature, as they tend in all their consequences to man's felicity."[24]

19. Ibid., 201, footnote 1.

20. Baron de Montesquieu, *The Spirit of Laws*, Bk. I, Ch. 1 (Birmingham: The Legal Classics Library, 1984), 4.

21. Sir William Blackstone, *Commentaries on the Laws of England* (Clark: The Lawbook Exchange, Ltd., 2007), 39.

22. Ibid., 39.

23. Ibid., 41.

24. Ibid., 41-42.

From there, he explained that reason unaided cannot decipher these truths completely, because it is "corrupt": "But we are not from thence to conclude that the knowledge of these truths was attainable by reason, in its present corrupted state; since we find that, until they were revealed, they were hid from the wisdom of ages."[25] As a result, the law of God takes priority over the law of nature:

> As then the moral precepts of this law are indeed of the same original with those of the law of nature, so their intrinsic obligation is of equal strength and perpetuity. Yet undoubtedly the revealed law is (humanly speaking) of infinitely more authority than what we generally call the natural law. Because one is the law of nature, expressly declared so to be by God himself; the other is only what, by the assistance of human reason, we imagine to be that law. If we could be as certain of the latter as we are of the former, both would have an equal authority; but, till then, they can never be put in any competition together.[26]

"Upon these two foundations," Blackstone continued, "the law of nature and the law of revelation, depend all human laws; that is to say, no human laws should be suffered to contradict these."[27] To summarize, Blackstone placed the priority of laws as the Law of God, Law of Nature, Law of Nations, and Law of Municipalities.[28] Author of *The Federalist Papers* and signer of the Constitution, Alexander Hamilton would later quote part of this passage in a letter, "The Farmer Refuted."[29]

These authors' reliance on divine authority and religious principles was pronounced, and not without consequence for Jefferson, as the Declaration's language shows. For most of the founders, the God of the Bible had established natural law. In fact, Lutz and Hyneman observed in their research that the Bible was the most cited source during the Founding Era, with upwards of 34% of all of citations coming from it.[30] This illustrates the Reformation's influence as well.

25. Ibid., 42.
26. Ibid.
27. Ibid.
28. Urofsky and Finkelman, 165.
29. See Alexander Hamilton, "The Farmer Refuted" (February 23, 1775), in Morton J. Frisch (ed.), *Selected Writings and Speeches/Alexander Hamilton* (Washington: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1985), 20.
30. Lutz, 192.

The Dignity of All People

The Declaration reads, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."[31] In affirming the dignity of all people through these three self-evident truths, Jefferson illustrated his indebtedness to the Christian tradition before him.

First, Jefferson affirmed that all men are created equal. Locke had written, "Men [are] by Nature, all free, equal and independent.[32] Allen Jayne notes Locke's influence on Jefferson: "Locke's specific contribution to the theology of the Declaration . . . was his affirmation of God-given equality."[33] Second, Jefferson affirmed that the Creator has endowed all men with certain unalienable rights. This follows from a belief in natural law, established above.[34]

Third, Jefferson affirmed some examples of these unalienable rights. But whereas Jefferson's triad was life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; Locke's was life, liberty, and property (or estate). While these differ slightly, Locke's influence is clear. Garrett Ward Sheldon suggests that Jefferson's substitution of the pursuit of happiness for property or estate may reflect Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, reflecting Classical Republicanism.[35] After affirming these three self-existent truths, Jefferson continued by affirming two more: social contract, and dissolution and revolution.

Social Contract

The Declaration reads: "That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, depriving their just powers from the consent of the governed."[36] Jefferson thus made two important observations about the proper form of government in this fourth self-evident truth: (1) it derives its powers from the people, and (2) it exists to protect the

31. Jefferson, The Declaration of Independence.

32. Locke, *Treatises*, Bk. II, Ch. VIII, § 95, 238.

33. Allen Jayne, *Jefferson's Declaration of Independence: Origins, Philosophy, and Theology* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1998), 58.

34. See George Mace, *Locke, Hobbes, and the Federalist Papers: An Essay on the Genesis of the American Political Heritage* (Carbondale, Illinois: Southern Illinois University Press, 1979), 26. He distinguishes between Locke's natural rights and Jefferson's unalienable rights, suggesting that they are not the same. Mace is right to show how these rights are not precisely the same. Even so, they are not unrelated.

35. Garrett Ward Sheldon, Scott Douglas Gerber, ed., The Declaration of Independence, Origins and Impact (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2002), 18.

36. Jefferson, Declaration of Independence.

people's unalienable rights. Thus Jefferson affirmed the doctrine of social contract.

Social contract refers to an agreement among members of an organized society. Friedenwald explains: "As soon as men agree to associate to form a political society, they enter into a social compact with each other, and consent to be guided by the will of the majority to make and execute laws for the general good."[37] Informing this theory is the belief that governments should serve the ends of the ruled rather than the ruler(s). Government is of the people, by the people, and for the people, as later voices such as Daniel Webster (1782-1852), Theodore Parker (1810-1860), and Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865) would sound.[38]

By his statement in the Declaration, Jefferson followed a long tradition of social contract theory, including Locke, the Mayflower Pilgrims, and Buchanan. For Locke, the doctrine of social contract played a significant role in his theory of government.[39] "Men," he wrote in his *Two Treatises*, "joyn and unite into a Community, for their comfortable, safe, and peaceable living one amongst another, in a secure Enjoyment of their Properties, and a greater Security against any that are not of it."[40] Just as Jefferson relied on Locke in his comments on natural law, and life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, he also did so on social contract. In fact, natural law serves as an important foundation for social contract.

In stating that government derives its authority from the people, Jefferson gave "terse expression" to the convictions of the period.[41] For

37. Friedenwald, 189.

38. Daniel Webster stated in 1830: "It is, Sir, the people's Constitution, the people's government, made for the people, made by the people, and answerable to the people. The people of the United States have declared that the Constitution shall be the supreme law" ("The Second Reply to Hayne" [January 26-27, 1830], accessed December 29, 2014, http://www.dartmouth.edu/~dwebster/speeches/hayne-speech.html). Abolitionist preacher Theodore Parker defined "democracy,—that is, a government of all the people, by all the people, for all the people; of course, a government of the principles of eternal justice, the unchanging law of God; for shortness' sake I will call it the idea of Freedom" (Speech at the N. E. Anti-Slavery Convention, Boston (May 29, 1850), accessed December 29, 2014, http://www.bartleby.com/78/358.html); and again, "Democracy is direct self-government over all the people, for all the people, by all the people" (Sermon, "The Effect of Slavery on the American People, at Music Hall, Boston (July 4, 1858), accessed December 29, 2014, http://www.bartleby.com/78/358.html). Finally, Abraham Lincoln famously referred to American government as being a "government of the people, by the people, for the people" in the *Gettysburg Address* (November 19, 1863; accessed December 29, 2014, http://www.abrahamlincolnonline.org/lincoln/speeches/gettysburg.htm).

39. See Friedenwald, 186.

40. Locke, *Treatises*, Bk. II, Ch. VIII, § 95, 238.

41. Friedenwald, 201.

example, William Findley (c. 1741-1821), an early American Congressman and soldier, also commented on social contract and its connection to Locke: "Men must first associate together, before they can form rules for their civil government. When those rules are formed and put in operation, they have become a civil society, or organized government. For this purpose, some rights of individuals must have been given up to the society but repaid many fold by the protection of life, liberty, and property afforded by the strong arm of civil government."[42]

In affirming social contract, Jefferson also followed the Mayflower Pilgrims. These Puritans had come to America seeking religious liberty. Upon landing at Plymouth Rock, they had drafted the Mayflower Compact (1620), which stated: "Having undertaken, for the Glory of God, and advancements of the Christian faith and honor of our King and Country."[43] Then, only after affirming their religious motivations, they affirmed social contract, stating that they "solemnly and mutually, in the presence of God, and one another, covenant and combine [them]selves together into a civil body politic."[44]

They then stated their rationales for social contract, which included a "better ordering" of society, and the "preservation and furtherance" of "the Christian faith."[45] Of course, these Puritans were drawing on a yet older tradition. In his 1579 *De Jure Regni Apud Scotos*, George Buchanan had written that "the people have a right of investing whom they please with the sovereign power."[46] Jefferson would have been familiar with social contract principles as he drafted the Declaration. After affirming a statement of social contract, Jefferson continued with a fifth self-evident truth.

Dissolution and Revolution

The Declaration reads: "That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall

42. William Findley, *Observations on "The Two Sons of Oil"* (Pittsburgh: Patterson and Hopkins 1812), 35.

43. *U.S. Constitution*, "The Mayflower Compact," November 11, 1620, accessed December 29, 2014, http://www.usconstitution.net/mayflower.html.

44. "The Mayflower Compact."

45. Ibid.

46. George Buchanan, *De Jure Regni Apud Scotos; A Dialogue Concerning the Rights of the Crown in Scotland*, Robert MacFarlan, A.M. (trans.) (Colorado Springs: Portage, 2000), 12; accessed January 1, 2015, http://www.portagepub.com/dl/caa/buchanan.pdf.

see most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness."[47] In this passage, Jefferson was saying that the people within a government that harms these self-evident truths may dissolve their bonds from it and revolt. Jefferson and his contemporaries followed this principle to the point of revolution. As in these other cases, Jefferson benefitted from the tradition he had received.

David Hall states that before the Reformation no one had articulated the right to revolution.[48] But with the Reformation followed a stream of voices speaking in favor of resistance theories. In France, for example, hints of such theories began to appear in the writings of John Calvin (1509-1564) and Theodore Beza (1519-1605). In *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Calvin discussed topics like God's ordination of public authorities, the function of government, Christians' understanding of law and courts, kings' right to wage wars, and other similar topics. He then wrote this: "Here are revealed his [God's] goodness, his power, and his providence. For sometimes he raises up open avengers from among his servants, and arms them with his command to punish the wicked government and deliver his people, oppressed in unjust ways, from miserable calamity."[49]

After citing Moses and the judges as examples that had delivered an oppressed people from calamity, Calvin wrote further that "when they had been sent by God's lawful calling to carry out such acts, in taking up arms against kings, [they] did not at all violate that majesty which is implanted in kings by God's ordination."[50] Commenting on Calvin's statements, Hall writes, "Calvin acknowledged that at times divine providence was satisfied in the overthrowing of wicked rulers, but he still preferred to allow the Lord to correct unbridled despotism."[51] Thus, while such measures may be a last resort, they are nonetheless legitimate. Beza, perhaps Calvin's greatest disciple, advocated similar ideas in 1574, arguing that inferiors may lawfully oppose tyrants with armed force in certain circumstances.[52] Beza even talked about this question in the

47. Jefferson, Declaration of Independence.

48. David W. Hall, *The Genevan Reformation and the American Founding* (New York: Lexington, 2003), 421.

49. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Volume 2), ed. John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles, (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1960), 1517.

50. Calvin, *Institutes*, 1517.

51. Hall, *The Genevan Reformation and the American Founding*, 97.

52. See Theodore Beza, On the Rights of Magistrates, especially Question 5, "Whether Manifest Tyrants Can Lawfully Be Checked By Armed Force," accessible at http://www.constitution.org/cmt/beza/magistrates.htm#ques1.

context of suffering persecution on account of one's beliefs.[53] Calvin's remarks on resistance gave way to and represented a significant, theological emphasis in Reformed theology, not simply in France, but throughout Europe, in the fifteen, sixteen, and seventeen hundreds.

Similar resistance themes emerged in England as well. In his 1556 treatise, the Protestant John Ponet (1515-1556) asked "whether Kings, Princes, and other Governors have absolute power and authority over their subjects."[54] To answer this question, he first explained rulers' functions: God ordains rulers "to do good, not to do evil: to take away evil, not to increase it: to give example of well doing, not to be the procurers of evil: to procure the wealth and benefit of their subjects, and not to work to their hurt or undoing."[55] Ponet thus derived this principle: "Now kings, princes, and governors of commonwealths have not, nor can justly claim, an absolute authority, but the end of their authority is the maintenance of justice, to defend the innocent, and to punish evil."[56] Having thus established that rulers do not have absolute authority over their subjects, Ponet asked a further question, "whether it be lawful to depose an evil governor, and kill a tyrant," or "whether it is lawful to kill such a monster and cruel beast covered with the shape of a man."[57] His response was unequivocal: "[T]he manifold and continual examples that have been from time to time of the deposing of kings, and killing of tyrants,"

53. See Beza, *On the Rights of Magistrates*, Question 10.

54. John Ponet, "A Short Treatise on Political Power, and of the true obedience which subjects our to kings and other civil governors, with an Exhortation to all true and natural English men," Chapter II, "Whether Kings, Princes, and other Governors have absolute power and authority over their subjects" (1556), accessed June 23, 2015, http://www.constitution.org/cmt/ponet/polpower.htm; see also Samuel Rutherford, *Lex Rex, or The Law and the Prince; A Dispute for the Just Prerogative of King and People: Containing the Reasons and Causes of the Most Necessary Defensive Wars of the Kingdom of Scotland, and of Their Expedition for the Aid and Help of Their Dear Brethren of England; in Which Their Innocency Is Asserted, and a Full Answer Is Given to a Seditious Pamphlet, Entituled, "Sacro-Sancta Regum Majestas," or The Sacred and Royal Prerogative of Christian Kings; Under the Name of J. A., But Penned by John Maxwell, the Excommunicate Popish Prelate; with a Scriptural Confutation of the Ruinous Grounds of W. Barclay, H. Grotius, H. Arnisæus, Ant. De Domi. Popish Bishop of Spalato, and of Other Late Anti-Magistratical Royalists, as the Author of Ossorianum, Dr Ferne, E. Symmons, the Doctors of Aberdeen, Etc. in Forty-Four Questions*, Chapter XL, "Whether or No the People Have Any Power Over the King, Either By His Oath, Covenant, or Any Other Way" (Colorado Springs: Portage, 2000), 361-372; accessed June 23, 2015, http://www.portagepub.com/dl/caa/sr-lexrex17.pdf.

55. Ponet, "A Short Treatise on Political Power."

56. Ibid.

57. Ibid.

having given biblical and extra-biblical examples, "do most certainly confirm it to be most true, just and constant to God's judgment."[58] Thus, like Calvin, Beza and Ponet held that resistance and even revolution is theologically justifiable. Two years after Ponet's treatise, the English minister Christopher Goodman (1520-1603) argued similarly in 1558 "that it is both lawful and necessary some times to disobey and also to resist ungodly magistrates and wherein" in *How Superior Powers Ought To Be Obeyed By Their Subjects: And Wherein They May Lawfully By God's Word Be Disobeyed And Resisted*.[59]

As in France and England, Reformation thinkers in Scotland, including John Knox (c. 1514-1572), George Buchanan (1506-1582), and Samuel Rutherford (c. 1600-1661) also added voice to this resistance literature.[60] For example, in the 1560s, Knox, founder of the Presbyterian denomination, replied, in response to Queen Mary's question, "Think ye that subjects having the power may resist their princes?" by saying, "If princes exceed their bounds, madam, and do that which they ought not, they may doubtless be resisted even by power."[61] For Knox, who took Calvin's theology of resistance and traced its implications further, the relationship that a ruler has with his or her subjects is based on a theology of covenant. He thus offered this rationale for his response to the Queen:

> For neither is greater honour nor greater obedience to be given to kings and princes, than God has commanded to be given to father and mother. But, madam, the father may be struck with a frenzy, in which he would slay his own children. Now, madam, if the children arise, join together, apprehend him, take the sword from him, bind his hands, and keep him in prison till the frenzy be over, think ye, madam, that the children do any wrong? Even so is it, madam, with princes who would murder the children of God who are subject unto them. Their blind zeal

58. Ibid.

59. Christopher Goodman, *How Superior Powers Ought To Be Obeyed By Their Subjects: And Wherein They May Lawfully By God's Word Be Disobeyed And Resisted*, Chapter VIII, "The conclusion of these two parts with a further declaration of the same, that it is both lawful and necessary some times to disobey and also to resist ungodly magistrates and wherein" (1558), accessed June 23, 2015, http://www.constitution.org/cmt/goodman/obeyed.htm.

60. See Hall, 252; Francis Schaeffer, *A Christian Manifesto* (Westchester: Crossway, 1981), 127.

61. John Knox; cited in J. A. Wylie, *The History of Protestantism* (Volume III) (New York: Cassell, Petter, Galpin & Co, 1882), 502-503; accessed on June 23, 2015, https://books.google.com/books?id=o-oCAAAAQAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false

> is nothing but mad frenzy; and, therefore, to take the sword from them, to bind their hands, and to cast them into prison till they be brought to a sober mind, is no[t] disobedience against princes, but a just obedience, because it agreeth with the will of God.[62]

With this chorus of resistance writers, Knox tied a ruler's legitimacy to the nature of his or her oversight. As murderous parents effectively forfeit their right to function as parents, thus violating their implied covenant with their children, so is the case with evil rulers of government and their subjects. As regards Knox's far-reaching influence, J. W. Allen cites Knox as "one of the chief personal factors in the history of political thought in the sixteenth century."[63] Some even regard him as the "father of the American Revolution."[64]

About fifteen years later in 1579, Buchanan also contributed to the conversation. After interacting with passages such as Romans 13:1-7, 1 Timothy 2:1-2, and Titus 3:1-2, which all affirm the general legitimacy of, and call to obedience to and prayer for governmental authorities, Buchanan discussed these passages' implications for resistance: "Yet, though we should pray for bad princes, we ought not to infer directly that their vices should not be punished like the crimes of robbers, for whom also we are ordered to pray." Buchanan asked, "If we are bound to obey a good [prince], does it follow that we should not resist a bad prince?"[65] Referring back to Scripture, Buchanan explained how this is consistent with Paul's teaching: "Paul, therefore, does not here treat of the magistrate, but of the magistracy"—that is, Paul was upholding the legitimacy of public authority, and not necessarily the legitimacy of those who hold it.[66] This is the same thing Calvin had said: "The Lord has . . . testified that the office of magistrate is approved by and acceptable to him."[67] Buchanan warns, "[I]f you should contend that even bad princes are ordained by God, take care lest your language should be charged with captiousness."[68]

62. Wylie, *The History of Protestantism*, 503.

63. W. Stanford Reid, "John Knox's Theology of Political Government," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 19 (1998), 530.

64. Hall, 230.

65. Buchanan, *De Jure Regni Apud Scotos*, 53. See also Rutherford, *Lex Rex*, Chapter XXXIII, "Whether or No the Place, Rom. XIII. 1, Prove That in No Case It Is Lawful to Resist the King," 313-17.

66. Buchanan, 53.

67. Calvin, 1489.

68. Buchanan, 54.

Having considered the hermeneutical question of Paul's writings, Buchanan then posed this question: "What is to be the result, if the king should refuse, of his own accord, and cannot be dragged by force, to appear in a court of justice?"[69] Similar to how Knox had compared evil rulers to evil parents, Buchanan made a similar analogy, using the example of a criminal: "Here he [an evil ruler] stands in the same predicament with all malefactors; for no robber or murderer will spontaneously submit to justice."[70] "But you know, I presume, the extent of the law, and that it allows a thief in the night to be killed any how, and a thief in the day to be killed if he uses a weapon in his defense." He explained further and quite explicitly: "If nothing but force can drag him before a court of judicature, you recollect what then is the usual practice. For robbers, too powerful to be reduced to order by the regular course of law, we master by war and arms."[71] Thus, Buchanan, consistent with Calvin, Ponet, Knox, and other resistance writers, believed that an evil, unjust ruler who refuses justice may be made to receive justice, even if through war and weapons. He believed that this was consistent with the apostle Paul's writings in Romans, 1 Timothy, and Titus.

As a final example, Samuel Rutherford, the Scottish Presbyterian pastor, famously added to this chorus of resistance literature. About twenty years after the Pilgrims landed on Plymouth Rock, he released *Lex Rex* (*Law Is King*, 1644) in which he presented theories of limited government and constitutionalism. He considered the idea that God "by a divine institution, make[s] kings absolute, and above all laws" to be "a blasphemous supposition."[72] In contrast, he held that "because God (Deut. xvii.) hath limited the first lawful king, the mould of all the rest, the people ought also to limit him by a voluntary covenant"; and as a result, "It is not a sin for the people to take some power."[73] Like those before him, Rutherford applied a theology of covenant to the question of civil disobedience, dissolution, and revolution. "That power which is contrary to law, and is evil and tyrannical," Rutherford concluded, "can tie none to subjection, but is a mere tyrannical power and unlawful; and if it tie not to subjection, it may lawfuly be resisted."[74] He wrote, "[A] power ethical, politic, or moral, to oppress, is not from God, and is not a power, but a licentious deviation of a power; and is no more from God,

69. Ibid., 72.
70. Ibid.
71. Ibid.
72. Rutherford, *Lex Rex*, 256.
73. Ibid.
74. Ibid., 258.

but from sinful nature and the old serpent, than a license to sin."[75] Again, Rutherford confirmed the general trajectory of the resistance writers who preceeded him. Hall comments on its influence in the American colonies: "A systematic review of *Lex Rex* can help moderns understand the Calvinistic mindset at the time of the founding of colonial America."[76] Indeed, these themes would be felt all the way to the American Revolution and founding, as Hall explains in *The Genevan Reformation and the American Founding*.[77]

In summary, this representative literature from France, England, and Scotland stands for these general propositions: According to Scripture, God institutes governments and public authorities. Properly, governmental leaders who occupy these positions should encourage and foster good and discourage and punish evil. However, sometimes leaders are evil. Thus leaders of government do not have absolute authority. To suggest otherwise is blasphemy, for God alone has absolute power. Generally then, subjects should obey and pray for good leaders; they should even pray for bad leaders, but they should not obey bad leaders absolutely. Sometimes, subjects may even oppose, resist, and depose bad leaders, even through force and imposition, depending on how egregious their wickedness is. God is just and will not suffer injustice indefinitely.

The resistance literature of the Reformation period influenced its world in a profound way, including the American revolutionary period. This is evident in the many examples of resistance sermons, as well as sermons containing resistance language, from this period, such as Jonathan Mayhew's 1750 "A Discourse Concerning Unlimited Submission and Non-Resistance to the Higher Powers"; Jonathan Ellis's 1755 "The Justice of the Present War Against the French in America, and the Principles That Should Influence Us in This Undertaking, Asserted"; John Lidenius's 1756 "The Lawfulness of Defensive War"; Charles Chauncy's 1766 "A Discourse on the Good News from a Far Country"; Samuel Cooke's 1770 "A Sermon Preached at Cambridge"; Samuel Langdon's 1775 "Government Corrupted by Vice, and Recovered by Righteousness"; John Witherspoon's 1776 "The Dominion of Providence over the Passions of Men"; Abraham Keteltas's 1777 "God Arising and Pleading His People's Cause"; Peter Bowers's 1778 "Jesus Christ the true King and Head of Government"; Phillips Payson's 1778 "A Sermon

75. Rutherford, cited in Schaeffer, 100.
76. Hall, 255.
77. Ibid., 386.

Preached Before the Honorable Council"; Simeon Howard's 1780 "Sermon Preached before the Honorable Council"; and Ezra Stiles's 1783 "The United States elevated to Glory and Honor"—to name a few.[78]

Indebted to the influence of resistance literature, and from within this cultural context, Jefferson penned the Declaration's famous words of dissolution and revolution. Hall, for example, explicitly notes this connection: "Thomas Jefferson would later crystallize [his] thought in virtually identical Knoxian accents: Rebellion against tyrants is obedience to God," which, "appeared not only as Thomas Jefferson's motto but was also proposed as the official seal of the United States on the afternoon of July 4, 1776."[79] Indeed, the resistance literature of the Reformation gave theological justification for the American Revolution, and in the Declaration Jefferson listed more than twenty-five grievances against King George III, thereby illustrating that he had violated his covenant with his subjects and had unjustly oppressed them.

Yet just as Jefferson stood in the shadow of Reformation resistance literature, he also stood in the shadow of Enlightenment resistance literature. In his chapter "Of Dissolution of Governments" in *Two Treatises*, Locke explained that the people may dissolve their government from within and enact their own when the Supreme Executive Power neglects the charge to protect its subjects' natural rights: "Men can never be secure from Tyranny, if there be no means to escape it. . . . And therefore it is, that they have not only a Right to get out of it, but to prevent it."[80] Locke then penned some of the most revolutionary language he ever wrote:

> Whensoever therefore the Legislative shall transgress this fundamental Rule of Society; and either by Ambition, Fear, Folly or Corruption, endeavour to grasp themselves, or put into the hands of any other an Absolute Power over the Lives, Liberties, and Estates of the People: By this breach of Trust they forfeit the Power the People had put into their hands for quite contrary ends, and it devolves to the People; who have a Right to resume their original Liberty, and, by the Establishment of a new Legislative (such as they shall think fit) provide for their own Safety and Security, which is the end for which they are in Society . . . This I am sure, whoever, either Ruler or Subject, by force goes about to invade the Rights of either Prince or People, and lays the foundation for overturning the Constitution and

78. See Hall, chapter 7; and Alice M. Baldwin, *The New England Clergy and the American Revolution*.

79. Hall, 232, 252.

80. Locke, *Treatises*, Bk. II, Ch. XIX, § 220, 336.

> Frame of any Just Government; he is guilty of the greatest Crime, I think . . . And he who does it, is justly to be esteemed the common Enemy and Pest of Mankind; and is to be treated accordingly.[81]

By 1775 the founders had a long list of grievances, believing their rights to have been trampled upon. Thinkers like Locke gave them a foundation upon which to dissolve their ties to the British government and enact their own government. Lutz comments, "References to Locke in the 1770s are found heavily in pieces justifying the break with England," and again, "Locke is profound when it comes to the bases for establishing a government and for opposing tyranny."[82]

By 1776 Jefferson echoed these themes along with the other founders. "When Jefferson comes to give the reasons for overturning the existing form of government," writes Friedenwald, "we find ourselves in the immediate presence of Locke, listening to his very voice."[83] And by 1787, Jefferson himself had written, "A little rebellion now and then is a good thing,"[84] as well as, "And what country can preserve its liberties, if its rulers are not warned from time to time that his people preserve the spirit of resistance? Let them take arms. . . . The tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time, with the blood of patriots and tyrants."[85] Of course, what had resulted from this talk of dissolution and revolution was the Revolutionary War (1775-83) and Constitution (1787). In expounding the Declaration's dominant themes, which includes natural law, the dignity of all people, social contract, and dissolution and revolution, Jefferson showed his reliance upon Reformation and Enlightenment voices.

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES

In 1787, delegates from the Second Continental Congress set forth to draft the United States Constitution. Because they had experienced what happens when too much power is vested in any one branch of government, they imbedded doctrines in the Constitution to curb these abuses. Some of these included the separation of powers, checks and balances,

81. Ibid., Bk. II, Ch. XIX, § 222, pp. 337-38, § 230, 345-46. See also § 220, 336.
82. Lutz, 192-93.
83. Friedenwald, 202-03.
84. Thomas Jefferson, "Letter to James Madison, 30 Jan. 1787." *The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations* (Third Edition) (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 272.
85. Ibid., "Letter to W.S. Smith," 13 Nov. 1787.

federalism, the rule of law, a bill of rights, and representation. By emphasizing these themes, and others like them, America's founders showed their indebtedness to those thinkers who preceded them.

The Separation of Powers and Checks and Balances

The framers believed that part of government's role is to protect its citizens' natural and unalienable rights. However, they knew from experience that any one branch of government that amasses too much power is more likely to usurp such rights. As a result, they imbedded the principle of the separation of powers into the Constitution, whereby one branch acts as a check and balance over the other two. Founders such as John Knox Witherspoon (1723-1794), George Washington (1732-1799), and John Quincy Adams (1767-1848) illustrate this emphasis.

For example, Witherspoon strongly advocated for the separation of powers and checks and balances. He was a pastor who had signed the Declaration of Independence. In Witherspoon, the Reformation influence was pronounced, as he drew from the Scottish Presbyterian tradition of political thought, which included thinkers such as John Knox and Samuel Rutherford.[86] In fact, Witherspoon was named after and descended from Knox himself.

Several United States Presidents also remarked about the importance of these doctrines. In his "Farewell Address," Washington celebrated, "The necessity of reciprocal checks in the exercise of political power by dividing and distributing it into different depositories . . . has been evinced."[87] Similarly, Adams remarked on the separation of powers: "Montesquieu was one of the most recent and esteemed writers upon government, and he had shown the division of powers to be essentially necessary to the preservation of liberty."[88]

Locke had written on these doctrines in *Two Treatises*, "Of the Legislative, Executive, and Federative Power of the Commonwealth" (chapter XII). Montesquieu, whom Hall describes as a "most clear-sighted and influential guide . . . for American revolutionary thinkers,"[89] popularized them as "perhaps the best known of his contributions to political science."[90]

86. Hall, 252-55.

87. George Washington, *Address of George Washington, President of the United States…Preparatory to His Declination* (Baltimore: George & Henry S. Keatinge, 1796), 22.

88. John Quincy Adams, *An Oration Addressed to the Citizens of the Town of Quincy, on the Fourth of July*, 1831 (Boston: Richardson, Lord and Holbrook, 1831), 27.

89. Hall, 347.

90. Friedenwald, 198.

> When the legislature and executive powers are united in the same person . . . there can be then no liberty . . . Again, there is no liberty if the power of judging be not separated from the legislative and executive powers. Were it joined with the legislative, the life and liberty of the subject would be exposed to arbitrary controul; for the judge would then be the legislator. Were it joined to the executive power, the judge might behave with all the violence of an oppressor.[91]

Because of these doctrines, no one branch, whether the legislative, executive, or judicial, may seize ultimate authority. Examples abound. The legislature may not enact a law on its own authority; the President has veto power.[92] Even if the President vetoes a bill, he or she may not put an absolute hold on it, since he or she may be overridden by two-thirds of both Houses.[93] The legislature cannot amend the Constitution at will, but only after the ratification of two-thirds of both Houses and three-fourths of the states.[94] Still other examples include the Constitution's impeachment clauses of the President and the Supreme Court justices. The President is subject to removal for "Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors,"[95] and Supreme Court justices for not maintaining "good Behavior."[96]

Unlike the legislative and executive branches, the judicial branch has neither the "power of the purse," nor the "power of the sword," as Alexander Hamilton (1755-1804) put it in *Federalist No. 78*.[97] In itself, it cannot even enforce its opinions, except by judgment and persuasive words. Montesquieu described the judicial branch as "next to nothing,"[98] and Hamilton as the "least dangerous" branch (although it has amassed more and more power through American history).[99] From these examples, the philosophical and religious influences in American government

91. Montesquieu, *Spirit of Laws*, Bk. XI, Ch. 6, 185-86.

92. The Constitution of the United States, Art. I, § 7, cls. 1-3.

93. Ibid., Art. I, § 7, cls. 1-3.

94. Ibid., Art. V.

95. Ibid., Art. II, § 4.

96. Ibid., Art. III, § 1.

97. Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, and James Madison, *The Federalist Papers*, No. 78 (Sweetwater Press, 2006), 594.

98. Ibid., 602, footnote 1; quoting Montesquieu, *Spirit of Laws*, Vol. 1, 186.

99. Hamilton, *Federalist No. 78*, 594. So ingrained is this notion in American, legal scholarship that Yale University professor of law Alexander M. Bickel named his book after it. See Alexander M. Bickel, *The Least Dangerous Branch: The Supreme Court at the Bar of Politics* (Second Edition) (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986).

are evident in its inherent system of the separation of powers and checks and balances.

Federalism

The framers also imbedded federalism into the Constitution. American federalism does not refer to some preference for a stronger federal government, but to a balance of power shared between the federal and state governments, protecting citizens from tyranny on the one hand, and invasion on the other. Where authority is too heavily concentrated in the federal government, American federalism is failing. Again, in emphasizing this principle at the founding, the framers stood on the shoulders of those who had gone before them. Montesquieu was particularly influential here:

> If a republic is small, it is destroyed by a foreign force; it if be large, it is ruined by an internal imperfection . . . [M]ankind . . . contrived a kind of constitution that has all the internal advantages of a republican, together with the external force of a monarchial, government. I mean a confederate republic. This form of government is a convention by which several small states agree to become members of a larger one which they intend to form. It is a kind of assemblage of societies, that constitutes a new one, capable of increasing by means of new associations, till they arrive to such a degree of power, as to be able to provide for the security of the whole united body. . . . As this government is composed of petty republics, it enjoys the internal happiness of each; and with respect to its external situation, it is possessed by means of association, of all the advantages of large monarchies.[100]

Hamilton remarked on this passage in *Federalist No. 9*.

In some ways, the balance of powers that federalism ensures for the federal and state governments is analogous to the balance that the separation of powers ensures for the three branches of government. Examples of federalism exist all through the American system. The Congress is composed of a bicameral body, consisting of a House and Senate. According to Hamilton, this helps avoid a singularity of factions in the legislature.[101] Additionally, the Constitution explicitly enumerates the legislature's powers to guard against its amassing too much power.[102] All

100. Montesquieu, *The Spirit of Laws*, Bk. IX, Ch.1, 156-58.
101. Constitution, Art. I, § 1.
102. Ibid., Art. I, § 8.

powers not otherwise stipulated to the federal government are reserved for the states and the people via the Tenth Amendment.[103]

The Rule of Law

The founders had experienced power run amuck. They had experienced monarchs who believed themselves above the law, and who had usurped their rights. They knew firsthand that peoples' rights, natural and unalienable, are not protected when the rule of law is not respected. As a result, the framers imbedded into the Constitution a third principle: the rule of law.

This too demonstrates their reliance on thinkers such as Knox, Locke, Montesquieu, and Blackstone, all of whom wrote about the necessity of a stable law to ensure peoples' rights. For example, Knox wrote about the rule of law in the context of the Word of God: "Kings then have not an absolute power in their regiment to do what pleases them; but their power is limited by God's word."[104] Whereas Knox gave a theological rationale, Locke gave an anthropological one: "In monarchies the prince is the source of all power political and civil. . . . For it is clear that in a monarchy, [he] who commands the execution of the laws generally thinks himself above them."[105] Locke believed that the further a society moves from a theory of social contract, the further it moves from the rule of law.

As a result of influences such as these, the framers provided for the rule of law, so that neither the legislative, nor the executive, nor the judicial branch should stand above law. While the founding documents contain numerous instances of this emphasis, the Supremacy Clause offers a good example: "This Constitution, and the Laws of the United States which shall be made in Pursuance thereof, and all Treatises made, or which shall be made, under the Authority of the United States, shall be the supreme Law of the Land; and the Judges in every State shall be bound thereby, any Thing in the Constitution or Laws of any State to the Contrary notwithstanding."[106]

The Supremacy Clause protects the rule of law by ensuring that laws do not conflict. Inconsistent laws create an unpredictable standard, which threatens the rule of law and the rights of the people. In addition, the Supremacy Clause serves as a vehicle through which the Supreme

103. Ibid., Bill of Rights, Amendment 10.
104. Schaeffer, 98; quoting Knox.
105. Montesquieu, Bk. II, Ch. IV, 19; Bk. III, Ch. III, 24.
106. Constitution, Art. VI, § 1, cl. 2.

Court may exercise judicial review and declare unconstitutional those laws that violate the rights protected in the Constitution and Bill of Rights. If laws, which are otherwise unconstitutional, are allowed to persist, the very foundation on which America was founded is threatened, and a government that is of, by, and for the people ceases to be so.

The Bill of Rights

So serious were the founders about their natural, unalienable rights that they enacted a Bill of Rights in 1791, in which they enumerated specific rights. As considered previously, Locke had stated that the rules of men should conform to the laws of nature, which he defined as the will of God.[107] Montesquieu had argued that the Creator uses the fixed laws of nature to preserve all things.[108] Blackstone had written that man must subject himself to the Creator's laws and conform his behavior to his Maker's will.[109] More specifically, Blackstone had said that "the principal aim of society is to protect individuals in the enjoyment of those absolute rights, which were vested in them by the immutable laws of nature."[110]

In addition, statements from Helwys, Locke, and Blackstone had specifically enumerated certain rights. For example, Hewlys had advocated for universal religious freedom in his 1612 *A Short Declaration of the Mystery of Iniquity*,

> [T]he king's sword cannot smite the spirits of men. If our lord the king will force and compel men to worship and eat the Lord's Supper against their consciences, he will make his poor subjects worship and eat unworthily. In doing so, he compels them to sin against God, and increase their own judgments. . . . For men's religion to God is between God and themselves. The king will not answer for it. Neither may the king be judge between God and man. Let them be heretics, Turks, Jews, or whatsoever, it does not appertain to the earthly power to punish them in the least measure. This is made evident to our lord the king by scriptures.[111]

107. John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, Bk. II, Ch. XI, § 135 (New York: The Legal Classics Library, 1994), 270.

108. See Montesquieu, The Spirit of Laws, Bk. I, Ch. I, 4.

109. Sir William Blackstone, *Commentaries on the Laws of England* (Clark: The Lawbook Exchange, Ltd., 2007), 39, 41-42.

110. Blackstone, *Commentaries*, 1:124, 109.

111. Thomas Helwys, *A Short Declaration of the Mystery of Iniquity*, in Joe Early, Jr., ed., *The Life and Writings of Thomas Helwys* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 2009), 193, 209.

Many voices later echoed Helwys's emphasis, including Thomas Hooker (1586-1647), Roger Williams (c. 1603-1683), William Penn (1644-1718), and at the founding Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826) and James Madison (1751-1836), the primary architect of the Bill of Rights. For example, in the *Virginia Statute for Religious Liberty*, which served as an important precursor to Madison's First Amendment in the Bill of Rights, Jefferson famously commented, "Almighty God hath created the mind free."[112]

Locke had also enumerated the rights of life, liberty, and property in his *Two Treatises of Government* in 1689, which Jefferson had later adapted in 1776 to the rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. However, more than anyone, Blackstone was most explicit about specific rights. Some of the rights about which he wrote included the right to personal security, the right against defamation (slander or libel), the right to personal liberty, the right to a fair trial, the right of property, the right to appeal to the courts, the right of habeas corpus, and the right to bear arms.[113]

In 1924, the American Bar Association presented a marble statue of Blackstone to the British Bar. At this presentation, United States Attorney General George W. Wickersham spoke about the importance of Blackstone's legacy for the Bill of Rights, American law, liberty, and rights generally:

> So long as the great conceptions of civil liberty which were embodied in Magna Charta, in the Petition of Right and the Bill of Rights and the Habeas Corpus Act and which have been enshrined in the American Constitutions, continue fitly to express the fundamental principles of the common civilization of the men of English speech throughout the world, all men may have continued confidence that liberty will not perish from the earth, and that the highest type of civilization will be secure.[114]

Whereas Locke and Montesquieu wrote about natural law and natural rights, Blackstone gave these concepts flesh and blood. And whereas Jefferson spoke of Nature's God and unalienable rights, Madison put them in an enumerated form called the Bill of Rights, which echoed, at

112. Thomas Jefferson, "Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom," *Virginia Historical Society*, accessed on January 6, 2015, http://www.vahistorical.org/collections-and-resources/virginia-history-explorer/thomas-jefferson.

113. Ibid., 1:129, 117; 1:134, 122; 1:36, 124; 1:138, 126; 1:141, 130; 1:143-44, 131-32.

114. Lockmiller, 188; quoting Wigmore, *op. cit.*, III, 369-84.

least indirectly, rights previously expounded by Helwys, Blackstone, and others. These rights represent the defenses that the framers built to protect and preserve liberty.

Some of these rights include a right against an established religion, the right of the free exercise of religion, the right of free speech, the right of the press, the right to peaceably assemble, the right to petition the government, the right to bear arms, the right against unreasonable searches and seizures, the right to a trial by jury, the right against self-incrimination.[115] Throughout America's history, these rights have continued to expand. Some examples include the right to privacy and the right for black people, women, and citizens at least eighteen-years-old to vote.[116]

In addition to being influenced by these thinkers and their legacies, Madison was also influenced by founder John Witherspoon. Witherspoon, a Presbyterian minister, served as president of the College of New Jersey (now Princeton University) like Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758) before him. Witherspoon placed a high premium on the protection of natural rights.[117] At the college, Witherspoon mentored Madison. Hall notes the connection: "Witherspoon's republican views had a decisive influence on James Madison and other founding fathers"[118] Witherspoon himself was strongly influenced by the Reformation, John Calvin, Pierre Viret, Theodore Beza, John Knox, Samuel Rutherford, Jonathan Edwards, and others.[119] According to Hall, his contribution at America's founding "indicates" the "continuation" and "refinement" of this tradition in America.[120] For example, Witherspoon had linked the Reformation tradition to the founding of America when he said: "He is the best friend to American liberty who is most sincere and active in promoting true and undefiled religion. . . . Whoever is an avowed enemy to God, I scruple not to call him an enemy to his country. . . . Love to God and love to man is the substance of religion; when these prevail, civil laws will have little to do."[121]

115. See Constitution, Amendments 1-2, 4-5, 7.

116. See Ibid., Amendments 13-15, 19, 26.

117. Hall, 347.

118. Ibid., 367.

119. Ibid., 373.

120. Ibid.

121. John Witherspoon, *The Selected Writings of John Witherspoon*, Thomas Miller, ed. (United States of America: Board of Trustees, Southern Illinois University, 1990), 144, 212; accessed December 2, 2014, https://books.google.com/books?id=6wjRNWv_iI8C&printsec=frontcover&dq=the+selected+writings+of+john+witherspoon+thomas+miller&hl=en&sa=X&ei=uwiyVKiOLYbQggTXtoQY&ved=0CCIQuwUwAA#v=onepage&q&f=false.

In *The Tempting of America*, legal scholar Robert Bork wrote about what he called the "Madisonian dilemma." He stated that "two opposing principles [must] continually be reconciled" in American government: (1) "The first principle is self-government, which means that in wide areas of life majorities are entitled to rule." (2) "The second is that there are nonetheless some things majorities must not do to minorities, some areas of life in which the individual must be free of majority rule."[122] The founders understood this well. They had experienced the tyranny of government, and had taken steps to balance the tension that these two principles present by enacting a Bill of Rights.

Representation

A fifth and final doctrine that the founders imbedded in the Constitution to curb abuses against freedom and rights was representation. The right of representation is simply an application of the theory of social contract previously expounded, showing the influence of thinkers like Rutherford, Locke, and others.[123] This right directly places political power in the hands of the people to ensure the separation of powers among the three branches of government as they act as checks and balance toward one another. It gives the people the prerogative of ensuring that government leaders properly respect principles such as federalism and the rule of law, as well as the Bill of Rights.

Two examples illustrate the people's right of representation. The first concerns the power of the legislature. Of the Constitution's seven articles, it is no coincidence that Article I concerns the legislature and occupies the most space, for it is the branch of the people. In the executive branch, the Electoral College elects the President (not the people); and in the judiciary, the President elects with the Supreme Court justices with the advice and consent of the Senate (again, not the people).[124] However, the legislature is the only branch in which the people directly participate. The House represents the power of the people; the Senate, the power of the states (which comprise the people).[125] Together these make up Congress. Such representation is not as direct in the other two branches.

The second concerns initiatives by majorities. For example, citizens may give their approval or disapproval to a referendum. They may begin an initiative, under which they hope to get a particular piece of legislation passed. They may recall a judge if they are dissatisfied with him or

122. Robert H. Bork, *The Tempting of America* (New York: The Free Press, 1990), 139.
123. Frisch, 277.
124. Ibid., Art. II, § 2, cl. 2.
125. See Constitution, Art. I, § 2, cl. 3, § 3, cl. 1.

her. Other ideas that have been proposed (some successful and some not) include a judicial referendum, an election for federal and state judges, congressional overrides of Supreme Court decisions, the requirements of a supermajority, and constitutional amendments. Such ideas indicate a general trend in American society that the will of the people should occupy an important role in American society.

CONCLUSION

In 1776, America's founders, believing their rights to have been usurped, issued a Declaration of Independence. After a bloody Revolutionary War, they drafted a Constitution and Bill of Rights to protect these rights. In the Declaration, they included ideas such as natural law, the dignity of all people, social contract, and dissolution and revolution. In the Constitution, they emphasized the separation of powers and checks and balances, federalism, the rule of law, the Bill of Rights, and representation. Indeed, the American experiment was truly a unique opportunity in the history of the world, and the founders seized upon the very best theological and philosophical doctrines that had preceded them in so executing it.

BOOK REVIEWS

Biblical Beliefs: Doctrines Every Believer Should Know. By W. Jackson Watts. Wheaton, Ill.: Evangelical Training Association, 2014. 128 pp. $16.99 paperback.

Jackson Watts's exposure to theological training in the academy, coupled with his experience in a local church as a pastor, enable him to write *Biblical Beliefs* with both accuracy and clarity. The book is published by the Evangelical Training Association (ETA). ETA's purpose is to assist with equipping leaders in local churches, particularly the training of laity. Several courses are offered as part of a certificate-training program. *Biblical Beliefs* serves as the textbook for the course offered on Bible Doctrines. The description of the course states, "This course presents foundational Bible doctrines in a popular, easy to understand format. Covered in the course are creation and the fall of man, faith and regeneration, justification and adoption, prayer and worship, angels, Satan, resurrection and judgment, and the church."

According to the author, the book's purpose is to provide an overview of basic Christian theology. In the Introduction, he writes, "*Biblical Beliefs* . . . is intended to be a theology book. . . . Theology, though a broad term, speaks to our knowledge of and response to God's truth. It [theology] describes both the content of Scripture as well as our conclusions based on Scripture. This book is written with the conviction that doctrine matters for all of life" (8).

Biblical Beliefs has a total of 128 pages. Given the book's brevity, the reader should not expect that every doctrine found in Scripture will be discussed. Rather, as mentioned earlier, the core doctrines of Christianity are examined in the following order:

- The Authority of Scripture
- The Godhead
- Creation and the Fall
- The Person and Work of Christ
- The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit
- The Doctrine of Salvation
- Spirituality
- The Church: Origin and Identity

- The Church: Mission and Ministry
- Angels and Demons
- Heaven and Hell
- The Coming Kingdom

The concise nature of the book's chapters could possibly leave the reader either wanting or needing more information. However, one unique and helpful feature of the work is the resource guide at the end of each chapter. This resource guide/reading list provides additional books to which readers may refer in order to examine particular doctrines in more detail. Books are arranged under three levels: beginner, intermediate, and advanced. Also, almost every point of doctrine in the book has corresponding passages in the Bible so that the student may personally examine the doctrines as they appear in the Scriptures.

Watts is true to the focus of the book stated earlier, giving primary attention to historic and biblical orthodoxy. He clearly writes in a way that seeks to make connections between each of the doctrines, and he demonstrates that biblical doctrines are coherent. Even though there is a primary emphasis on Christian orthodoxy throughout the work, there is a healthy dose of application as well. The book is written in an easy-to-understand format, yet there is not an absence of necessary biblical and theological terms, such as justification, sanctification, regeneration, and so forth.

Since the book "is designed to give an overview of some of the foundational doctrines upon which the Christian faith has rested historically," readers would not expect to find any "new" material in a treatment on Christian doctrine. Thankfully, this book drives the reader back to reliable, historical, and biblical doctrines that have stood the test of time.

Of particular interest to me personally was Watts's section on Christian "spirituality." Several authors have recently drawn our attention to the type of spirituality in vogue in America. The current spiritual climate is a smorgasbord of sorts, a blending and merging together of various beliefs and practices. According to Watts, this climate is one that "resists three essential dimensions of Christian spirituality: doctrine, character, and community" (81).

Christian spirituality or sanctification is "rooted in Christ" and "led by the Spirit" (82). The goal of spiritual formation is the conformity of our character to the image or likeness of Christ. Watts, picking up on this biblical goal, further explains the progressive nature of Christian spirituality in terms of the "twin images of restoration and renovation." The image of restoration is found in Ephesians 4:24, where believers find they must

"put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness." As believers, we have been set apart (definitive or positional sanctification at conversion) and are now called to "embrace our new selves" (84). Watts rightly points readers to Colossians 3, where both aspects of sanctification are presented: "seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator."

There are ordained means that Christians should pursue concerning their walk with Christ. We are told in the book that "there are some important biblical practices that utilize God's appointed means—His Spirit Using His Word—to help us walk with Him daily. We call these spiritual disciplines" (86). Among the disciplines discussed are Bible study, prayer, fasting, and worship.

Many books are available in today's market that discuss spirituality from an individualistic perspective. Few highlight the necessity of spirituality within community. However, truly biblical spirituality is always within the context of relating to other people. I was glad to read this book on doctrine and to find within it a heavy emphasis on the local church. The local church is not only God's plan for communicating the Gospel to the world; it is also the context in which we pursue growth in Christ. Perhaps the following statement captures the importance of shared spirituality best: "The communal aspect of Christian spirituality must not be overlooked. The local community of followers of Christ—the church—is the main area where the outcome of Christian spirituality is visible" (87).

Biblical Beliefs is a solid and clear treatment of the basic doctrines of Christianity. As such, I think it definitely will prove beneficial for small groups in local churches, or even in personal discipleship efforts with individual believers. In such contexts or relationships, a series of study or discussion questions at the end of each chapter would be very helpful in applying the material.

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Classical Arminianism: A Theology of Salvation. By F. Leroy Forlines. Edited by J. Matthew Pinson. Nashville: Randall House, 2011. 392 pp. $27.99 paperback.

The distinguished British evangelical John Stott once said, "Theology is a serious quest for the true knowledge of God, undertaken in response to His self-revelation, illumined by Christian tradition, manifesting a rational inner coherence, issuing in ethical conduct, resonating with the contemporary world and concerned for the greater glory of God" ("Theology: A Multidimensional Discipline" in Donald Lewis and Alister McGrath, eds., *Doing Theology for the People of God: Studies in Honour of J. I. Packer* [Leicester: Apollos, 1996], 17, 18). If one seeks to understand God through His revealed word, the Bible, then theology is inevitable.

In a culture of diverse theological opinions, a biblical perspective on systematic theology is scarce to say the least. Even more rare is an academic Arminian theology, particularly since Calvinism is dominant in many evangelical seminaries in America. That is the precise reason F. Leroy Forlines's book *Classical Arminianism* is so important. Forlines has been on the frontlines of a growing movement that many are calling "Reformed Arminianism" (iv). The reason for this is found in his balanced treatment of biblical texts, leading to well-reasoned arguments on the nature of salvation and God.

Classical Arminianism is largely a revised volume of the soteriological material found in Forlines's systematic theology, *The Quest for Truth*. J. Matthew Pinson, President of Welch College, took on the task of editing Forlines's material into a more readable and structured collection. Pinson reconstructed the material under more concise headings, and outlined the subject matter more sequentially.

The book's purpose is simple: to present a soteriology that would (1) adequately represent the theology of Jacobus Arminius in his Reformed views and (2) systematically explain a biblical theology of salvation. Forlines accomplishes this goal with sound logic and diligence. He surveys a wide host of scholars, interacting with those who generally oppose his viewpoints. In so doing, he gives a fair evaluation of their theological statements but logically reasons to reaffirm his own thesis. For example, he emphasizes the importance of fair, scholarly evaluation even in dealing with the view of apostasy: "A well-formulated doctrine of security requires much careful thought and study. The same is true if we are going to understand the other person" (356).

Forlines begins his first chapter by stating, "The psalmist asks one of the most important questions ever to be raised by a human being in

Psalm 8:4: 'What is man, that you are mindful of him?' The answer to this question is not simply an exercise in mental curiosity by those seated at the intellectual round table. Our whole being cries out for an answer" (1). By bringing to light the greatest question concerning one's humanity, Forlines lays a beautiful foundation for the rest of his book.

The organization of the book is simple. It is separated into ten chapters. The book begins by discussing human nature, total human depravity, and the effects of the latter on the *imago dei*. In dealing with this principle of depravity and human free will, one of the greatest misconceptions of Arminianism arises, namely, that Arminianism is in some way semi-Pelagian. Forlines asserts that this is fallacious. He writes, "Most interpreters have assumed that Arminius was a semi-Pelagian, thus espousing a view of freedom of the will that 'makes individuals totally able to choose God or spurn Him.' Yet . . . Arminius holds that human beings have no freedom to do anything good in God's sight" (22).

After discussing depravity and human personhood, the book continues by examining the doctrine of election in chapters two through five. Chapter two explains the theology behind election, while chapters three and four evaluate major proof texts, giving extensive attention to Romans 9. Forlines uses chapter five to present an argument for conditional election.

The book proceeds in chapter six to discuss a theology of the nature of atonement and justification, explaining the interrelation between the two. Within this chapter Forlines draws a dichotomy between Classical Arminianism and Wesleyan Arminianism, discussing in particular the differences in their doctrines and theologies. Forlines provides an invaluable tool in doing so. He is careful to contrast his views with those of Hugo Grotius, Charles Finney, and John Miley, among many others. He allocates ample time in making the much-needed distinction between the substitutionary view of atonement of Classical Arminianism and the governmental view of atonement of popular Wesleyan Arminianism. Forlines carefully explains these differences, not only with the doctrine of atonement, but also with many other doctrines related to soteriology.

Forlines then provides a systematic explanation of the condition for salvation in the believer in chapter seven, followed by a study of sanctification in chapter eight. Logically, he concludes chapters nine and ten by contrasting Calvinistic views on the perseverance of the saints with the biblical view of apostasy.

The strengths and weaknesses of a book are often dependent on the preference of the reader. What one reader may view as a nuisance another may appreciate as a helpful tool. Such is the case with *Classical*

Arminianism. There are many times throughout the book that Forlines is quite "thorough" on a specific subject, giving a particular concept multiple pages and excessive evaluation. For example, Forlines spends an entire chapter just on election in Romans 9. More specifically than election, he also spends a vast amount of time on the soteriology of the Jewish nation. Part of this is because of the context of Romans 9. Another reason for this is Forlines's writing style. He is very diligent to be exhaustive when dealing with important issues. This can become redundant for more knowledgeable readers, while being very helpful to new students of academic theology. One is forced to appreciate Forlines's dedication to truth and fairness to the material at hand.

Countering that point, Forlines could have covered a few subjects more extensively. These are few and far between, but nonetheless they are present. Two areas in particular would have benefited greatly from more discussion. The first area is definitions (e.g., his understanding of the intellect, will, and emotions [5-6] and his treatment of traducianism vs. creationism regarding the origin of the soul [14-15]). The second area is his explanation of texts such as 1 Timothy 2:6; Hebrews 2:9; 2 Peter 3:17 (175, 191). In other words, certain sections could have used more explanation.

One helpful aspect of this book is its "self-awareness." There are multiple times throughout the book in which Forlines refers to other chapters or sections of the book for a better understanding of the subject at hand. This makes the volume a helpful reference tool. In looking for information on a specific doctrine, the book itself will direct you to other areas within it that may be helpful for understanding. Reading along and being directed back or forth to know more about a certain doctrine is very helpful in understanding this systematic theology.

Forlines writes his books in a way that any student of the Word may read and understand it. In a logical manner, he explains challenging theological truths in a way that any eager person could comprehend. With that said, Forlines does deal with some considerable theological content in the book. With thick theological matter spanning across 357 pages, it may become wearisome for a layman or novice to work his or her way through this volume. It seems that this specific work of theology is directed to one of the following: the intellectually curious pastor, the college or seminary student, or the seasoned theologian. As stated above, Forlines writes in a way that a diverse audience can understand. A young amateur theologian can understand these concepts, while a more advanced scholar can also evaluate Forlines's more weighty arguments.

If you are looking for a brief survey of Arminianism, this book is certainly not for you. On the other hand, if you are interested in having an extensive theological understanding of salvation from an Arminian perspective, not only is this book for you, it is one of a very few books for you. Seldom is Classical Arminianism explained so thoroughly, which makes this book a high commodity. For this reason alone, any avid student of theology should read this book. Both Calvinists and Arminians alike should weigh the theological arguments for themselves. Forlines's *Classical Arminianism* is a pivotal tool in the ongoing discussion of the ways of God in salvation.

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Arminian and Baptist: Explorations in a Theological Tradition. By J. Matthew Pinson. Nashville: Randall House, 2014. 282 pp. $22.99 paperback.

"What are Free Will Baptists?" is one of the most common questions people ask when they encounter our denominational name. Even for theologically savvy Free Will Baptists, this can be a tricky question to answer. This is because a primary distinctive of Free Will Baptist doctrine, our adherence to Reformed Arminianism, is constantly confused with the myriad expressions and misrepresentations of Arminian theology: How does Reformed Arminianism differ from Calvinism? Are we actually semi-Pelagians? Do we, like some Arminians, hold to a works-based soteriology? We must address each of these misleading detours if we are accurately going to communicate what we believe.

For this reason, J. Matthew Pinson's latest book, *Arminian and Baptist: Explorations in a Theological Tradition* is a welcome addition to the Reformed Arminian landscape. Building on the foundation laid by F. Leroy Forlines and Robert E. Picirilli, Pinson has over the past twenty years crafted a number of essays that help to clear the air concerning Reformed Arminian theology. These essays, one of which was previously unpublished, have been collected into one volume to offer an accessible reference source for pastors and laity alike. Each chapter addresses different misconceptions of Reformed Arminianism or helps distinguish it from both Calvinist and Weslyan theologies.

In the first chapter, "Jacobus Arminius: Reformed and Always Reforming," Pinson separates the real Arminius from the Arminius por-

trayed by his interpreters. As G. K. Chesterton wrote about Homer, "[He] is complete and calm enough; it is his critics who tear him into extravagant tatters" (*Orthodoxy* [New York: Image Books, 1908, repr. 1959], 17). Arminius has suffered much the same fate. Pinson gives a brief but informative biographical sketch of Arminius and then parses out just what Arminius truly believed by consulting his actual writings. What we find is that, though Arminius is accused of being diametrically opposed to Reformed theology, he actually had no desire to do anything beyond modifying John Calvin's paradigm.

Pinson shows that Arminius was in "essential agreement with the Augstinian, Calvinistic, and Reformed expressions of the Faith with regard to original sin, the radical depravity and inability of humanity, the nature of atonement, and justification" (10). However, Arminius did want to alter the mainstream Reformed model of "how one comes to be in a state of grace" (10). Pinson makes it clear that Arminius's understanding of predestination was conditional, Christ-centered, and according to God's foreknowledge. This differs from the Reformed paradigm of unconditional predestination, which places the work of salvation in God's incontrovertible sovereign will rather than in the mediating work of Christ.

Pinson then delves deeper into Arminius's Christ-centered concept of salvation in his chapter entitled, "The Nature of Atonement in the Theology of Jacobus Arminius." Here Pinson clearly describes Arminius's argument for the penal-substitution view of atonement. Christ's priestly office is the foundation of Arminius's view of atonement. Because Christ was both God and man, He was able to represent mankind and offer Himself as the perfect sacrifice offered by a sinless priest. Though later Arminians such as Hugo Grotius viewed atonement as governmental in nature, Pinson shows that Arminius firmly held that Christ satisfied God's demand for justice through His substitutionary death. According to Arminius it was only through Christ's death that God's justice could be satisfied and His mercy extended to fallen man. However, after Arminius's death, his followers began to slide into semi-Pelagianism.

Because the General/Free Will Baptist movement was birthed in a unique milieu of Puritan piety, Anabaptist ecclesiology, and Arminian soteriology, it is often improperly associated with the seventeenth-century Anglican expression of Arminianism. Pinson however, argues that Thomas Helwys and the English General Baptists developed their own Arminian soteriology that was "much more like that of Arminius and

conspicuously different" from that of both Anglican Arminians and Dutch Mennonites (57).

Though Helwys is usually discussed in tandem with John Smyth, Pinson emphasizes that they settled on different expressions of anti-Calvinist soteriology. Before 1611 Smyth and Helwys were in virtual agreement on matters concerning general atonement, resistible grace, and conditional predestination. However, Pinson argues, after 1611 Helwys and Smyth diverged over the doctrine of original sin. In 1609 Smyth began to move in the direction of the Dutch Waterlander Mennonites by rejecting original sin. This was a drastic departure from Reformed theology and a sign of Smyth's growing affinity for Mennonite and Pelagian theology.

Though Helwys originally considered following Smyth down this detour, he eventually broke with him. Instead, Helwys contended for a "more Reformed understanding of original sin much like that of Jacobus Arminius" (71). Pinson shows that, rather than following Smyth into a semi-Pelagian and Creationist anthropology, Helwys developed a robust Augustinian-Reformed, Traducian position. Helwys also held firm to the "forensic notion that the alien righteousness of Christ becomes the believer's by imputation through faith" (78).

Unlike Smyth, Helwys's Arminianism aligns more with the writings of Arminius than with later Arminians. Smyth's semi-Pelagian capitulations reflected Hugo Grotius's expression of Arminian theology popular in both the seventeenth-century Anglican Church and among the Dutch Waterlander Mennonites. Pinson draws an intriguing inference from Helwys's final theological position. He suggests that Helwys might have developed his position by studying the works of Arminius. This conclusion more organically explains Helwys's theological development than previous models which assumed that it resulted from adjusting Mennonite and Anglican Arminianism or from Helwys's strict Biblicism.

Deepening Helwys's connection to Arminius is his anti-predestinarian work, *A Short and Plaine Proofe*. Pinson makes it clear that there is no definitive connection between Helwys and Arminius. However, he writes that even though "Helwys did not mention Arminius's name, in his preface [to *A Short And Plaine Proofe*] he referred positively to the fact that the truth of general redemption was breaking forth in . . . the Dutch Reformed churches" (78). Because Helwys associated his doctrine with the Arminian movement in the Dutch Reformed churches, Pinson concludes that "it seems clear that Arminius's thought directly influenced Helwys and General Baptist soteriology" (78).

Because the General/Free Will Baptist tradition finds its roots in the works of Thomas Helwys, we are "pre-Wesleyan Arminians" (129). We differentiate our theology from John Wesley's expression of Arminianism. Pinson argues that Wesley formed a uniquely "synchronic" theology that combined elements of Reformation theology and Anglican Arminian thought. Pinson suggests that of the two influences on Wesley, his parents' Anglican Arminiansim was the stronger.

Wesley did retain some elements of Reformation theology, however. In the tradition of Anselm of Canterbury, Calvin, Luther, and Cranmer, Wesley also "was at great pains to affirm a retributive or penal satisfaction view of atonement" (139). However, Wesley also modified the penal satisfaction model of atonement. He saw Christ's passive obedience as the sole aspect of the atonement. Pinson states that for Wesley "Christ's active obedience . . . was coincidental," and therefore "he denied its salvific efficacy" (140). Therefore, Christ's atonement applied only to the past sins of the believer. This meant that assurance of salvation was nonexistent and all future sins committed by the Christian must be confessed to maintain his or her salvation. The end result was a theory of atonement that "[relied] on the logic of penal satisfaction" yet had "the spirit of governementalism" (141).

Pinson argues that Wesley's amalgamated theology results in a works-oriented soteriology. Wesley held that there were two types of apostasy: irremediable and remediable. According to Pinson, Wesley viewed defection from the faith as the only total apostasy from which there was no return. The second form of apostasy in Wesley's view is willful acts of sin termed by him as "backsliding." These apostate believers must confess their sins to regain the grace of God, thereby making their continuance in the faith dependent upon their works. Pinson deftly analyzes Wesley's Arminian theology to show clearly that the Wesleyan manifestation of works-oriented salvation bears no relation to historic General/Free Will Baptist Reformed Arminianism.

In times of doctrinal confusion, it is important to reinforce right doctrine and retrace the old paths. This is exactly what Matthew Pinson does in *Arminian and Baptist*. By recovering the actual Arminius, he helps us to contest claims of semi-Pelagianism. In likening Thomas Helwys's theology to Arminius, Pinson reaffirms our historic Reformed Arminianism as opposed to Anglican and Mennonite anti-Calvinism. Yet, lest any confuse us with the Wesleyans, he also differentiates our theology from that of John Wesley. This book will be a helpful refresher for those who have spent long hours in these studies while also serving as an insightful and accessible primer for newcomers.

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Shepherds after My own Heart: Pastoral Traditions and Leadership in the Bible. By Timothy S. Laniak. Downers Grove, Ill.: Apollos/Inter-Varsity Press, 2006. 313 pp. $28.00 paperback.

What does it mean to be a shepherd in the church? What does it involve? When we consider these questions, it rightly leads to a discussion of leadership. Unfortunately, there often seems to be a flaw in the way we proceed from that point forward. There is a temptation to look to the corporate world or to socially established practices to develop an understanding of what qualities leaders ought to possess. Since, however, the term *shepherd* (as it concerns the church) applies specifically to a role established in Scripture, we should look there for developing our understanding of what shepherding entails.

That is exactly what Timothy Laniak sets out to do in his contribution to the New Studies in Biblical Theology series edited by Donald A. Carson. In *Shepherds After My Own Heart: Pastoral Traditions and Leadership in the Bible*, Laniak seeks to plant our feet firmly on ancient Near Eastern soil and to guide us through God's revelation of what He values in a leader of His people.

To call this a scholarly work would almost be a disservice to its author. With a twenty-eight-page bibliography with hundreds of sources, it is incredibly dense. In fact, the author includes within his introduction a section titled "Critical Paths for Reading," where he suggests how those with a purely academic interest versus those with a more practical, pastoral interest ought to proceed. The latter are cautioned that they "may need to skim at times with an eye towards the main points. Consider especially the introductions and concluding summary statements in each chapter, and hang on till the end" (27).

To follow those instructions, tempting though it may be at times, would rob the reader of great value. The book is extremely detailed, and it builds on those details as the reader progresses. The whole work's premise is to understand better (in every sense, e.g., historically, culturally, scripturally) what is being conveyed by the use of pastoral language throughout the biblical context. Much of what the author explores in the

New Testament books will be lost if the reader merely skims previous material.

Unlike many books, Laniak's introduction is an integral part of the work, clearly plotting the course forward. He then divides the work into four major sections, the first of which contains chapters that provide textual and cultural background information. While its inclusion is somewhat understandable, the opening chapter's general discussion of metaphors ultimately feels somewhat superfluous. The same cannot be said of the next two chapters, however.

Laniak declares that, to understand "pastoral imagery, modern Bible readers need an immersion in the sights and sounds (and smells!) of ancient shepherd life" (42). He accomplishes this through a detailed account of the economic and social role, physical surroundings, and day-to-day tasks of shepherding in the scriptural times. The following chapter continues in the same vein by presenting the prevalence with which pastoral imagery was used in the writings of pagan societies of those times. It becomes clear that such language was an extremely common tool for discussions of leadership, driving home how apropos the scriptural usage was for the culture.

The second major division provides the meat of the biblical analysis, working chronologically through the corpus. As the storyline of Scripture developed organically, the author observes, "foundational events and persons appear and become paradigmatic in the rest of Scripture" (78). Laniak highlights the emphasis given to the archetypes and prototypes established in the early stages of the Old Testament. Thus, he gives much attention to Moses, the Exodus/wilderness wanderings, and David as the primary foundations for the use of pastoral metaphors in Scripture. The deep concern for and identification with the flock by the shepherds is especially highlighted. This portion of the book is followed by a division devoted to the significant shepherd imagery of the prophets.

Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Zechariah each receive a chapter examining the ways they refer to the established aforementioned prototypes in commentary and critique of the leaders of their time, as well as their usage of the shepherd metaphor to cast a vision for the ultimate Shepherd that was to come. The criticism is chiefly directed at the leaders' hubris. Their use of the leadership position for selfish purposes as a result of failing to recognize God as both owner and sustainer of the flock is the theme of their faulty shepherding.

The next two primary divisions of the text give attention to the New Testament, the first of which dissects the pastoral usage in the Gospels.

This portion of the book clearly ties Jesus's life and work to the foundational elements presented in the Mosaic and Davidic discussions throughout the Old Testament. It also links Him with the pastoral references present in the prophets, establishing the qualities that made Him the perfect Shepherd. Here the book excels at tying all the previous details and imagery together, including examples such as the following:

- Identifying the motif/use of *artos* (bread) by Mark, and tying it to the manna of the wilderness and the purpose that it served: not just for physical provision, but to teach spiritual reliance upon God, eventually leading to: "*Artos* is, thus, a cipher for God's word. . . . It was the teaching of this shepherd—in contrast to the teaching (i.e. 'leaven') of the scribes and Pharisees—that would bring them to life" (177).
- Linking the healings in Matthew with Jesus's fulfillment of the role of Davidic Messiah, chiefly referencing Ezekiel and the notion that God brings healing by replacing poor leadership with good leadership (correcting bad shepherding).
- Connecting Jesus's "I Am" sayings in John to the Exodus 3 "I Am" account, as well as the "signs" and "wonders" located in both texts according to their purpose ("means by which the Egyptians and the Israelites would 'know YHWH'" (208) in Exodus and "miraculous manifestations of God's glory and revelations of his identity" (208) in John) and response ("faith [Exodus 14:31; John 2:11; 20:8]), and hardness of heart (Exodus 4:21; 7:3, 13; et al.; John 12:40)." [208]).

The author accomplishes all of this through careful attention to the use of specific terminology and phraseology in key passages and contexts.

Section V covers 1 Peter and Revelation. Laniak states that Peter's focus on believers' condition as "aliens and sojourners" was meant to elicit a connection with "the patriarchs, living as strangers on this earth . . . [and] . . . Old Testament Israel, a people in exile, awaiting their promised homeland" (226). The detailed attention to the prophets' use of pastoral language provides depth and understanding relative to 1 Peter 5:1-4: "Peter's concern is that the hard work of oversight be done 'willingly' (hekousios; 5:2) . . . In contrast to this response is the self-seeking interest in financial gain mentioned in verse 2 (cf. Ezekiel 34:3; Acts 20:32-35; 2 Corinthians 11:7-21; 1 Timothy 3:8). Feeding on the flock is a sign of predators, not shepherds" (Ezekiel 34:7; 1 Timothy 6:5-6) (233). The related discussion serves to establish more firmly the principles of self-sacrifice

and close attention to the needs of the flock as essential to biblical shepherding.

The book closes with a brief section summarizing the leadership principles Laniak gleaned from the preceding exegesis. Short and straightforward, he resists the urge to belabor the points with unnecessary additional analysis and allows the scriptural evidence to drive home the weight and value of these precepts. Among all the principles, the most powerful were the desire that God has for His under-shepherds to care for His people as He does (wonderfully traced through Moses' God-driven changes in attitude, prayers, and word selection [88-90]), and the widespread reminder that the flock belongs to God. As Laniak succinctly summarizes, "To be a shepherd is to be both responsible for (the flock) and responsible to (the Owner)" (248).

This is neither a work for leisurely consumption nor a typical leadership manual. Laniak allows the Scriptures to paint the portrait of the shepherd, not as a list of things to do, but rather as a picture of what to become and the qualities that a pastor should pursue as the process.

The work's value does not lie in novelty or cleverness. The basic leadership qualities are probably nothing most readers have not heard before. However, through the volume and depth of details Laniak presents, he teaches the reader to appreciate those leadership qualities as not only valuable, but as absolutely necessary. Convicting and motivating, the cumulative effect of all the book presents is accurately summed up by the author in his introduction ". . . as being like a tide. Each wave will move you a little, and by the end you will find yourself surprisingly far up the shore . . . The mounting force of the metaphor should make some lasting impressions" (27).

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Discipleship: The Expression of Saving Faith. By Robert E. Picirilli. Nashville, TN.: Randall House, 2013. 216 pp. $14.99 paperback.

Robert E. Picirilli's work, *Discipleship: the Expression of Saving Faith*, is a masterful exegesis of a number of New Testament passages on what it means to be a disciple of Christ. The practical theology that results gracefully inhabits the space between two poles of tension in Free Will Baptist thought about the nature of discipleship and the possibility of apostasy.

While he argues that discipleship flows as a natural component of the sanctification process, at the same time he points out Scripture's demand that true disciples wage war with sin and live lives distinguished by righteous deeds. The work answers, at least in part, a number of pastoral questions related to the topic, and it has implications for church discipline, evangelism, and eschatological expectation. Such teaching on holiness from the context of Scripture and of Free Will Baptist theology is desperately needed in an evangelical world often caught between legalism and non-lordship salvation.

Partly as a result of the Protestant distinction from Roman Catholicism, Evangelicals have often viewed discipleship as a secondary component of salvation that follows after or apart from the conversion experience. A review of published books on discipleship returns scores of programs and manuals on how to make disciples as if the process is distinct from salvation proper. Picirilli's work challenges this perspective at its roots. Instead, he makes the claim that Scripture knows nothing of salvation without obedience to God's demands. Salvation is not merely intellectual assent to a proposition but a commitment to a way of life.

In order to substantiate this thesis, Picirilli reviews the New Testament's teaching on what it means to be a disciple. He begins by positing two models of salvation as presented in Scripture. He first outlines what he calls the "transaction model" as found in Paul's writings. This model describes salvation as occurring by grace through faith. When an individual exercises faith, Christ's righteousness is imputed to him or her apart from works. Evangelical readers will rightly recognize the Reformation call of justification by faith alone in the presentation. However, Picirilli moves in his second chapter to another model identified in Jesus's own teaching from the synoptic gospels. In expounding what he calls the "discipleship model," he argues that Jesus's only understanding of salvation is identified with being a disciple and to be a disciple [i.e., to be saved] one "lays aside every other influence for giving direction to his life and pledges allegiance to Jesus, . . . follows where Jesus leads, . . . and [puts] his teachings into practice."

Picirilli argues that the synthesis of what might appear to be mutually exclusive images of salvation in Paul and the synoptic gospels can be found in the Gospel of John. Here, he rightly notes John's preference for the term "believe" as instrumental to salvation but points out the necessity of continuity in this belief (54-55). One demonstrates such continuity in belief by abiding in or keeping Jesus's commandments. In this way the saving faith of Paul and the commitment to the obedience of discipleship as found in the synoptic gospels are wed. Thus, in the Gospel of John,

"believing and doing good [are brought] into a relationship where the one essentially equals the other" (60, italics his).

Chapter four of the book furthers Picirilli's thesis by explaining the concept of salvation and saving faith and by looking at some thorny issues raised by several verses in 1 John related to the absence (or presence) of sin in the lives of believers. This chapter is at the same time a linchpin in Picirilli's argument, providing several applications to modern church ministry. Picirilli points out that advances in verbal aspect theory help us to understand that, though one need not be perfectly sinless to be a disciple, he or she will "practice righteousness and avoid sin" (84). These actions are therefore not the condition of salvation but express "evidences of faith" (82). Picirilli then makes a practical turn by describing the practice of obedience rather than the exercise of faith as the basis of one's assurance of salvation. While such a statement will find its detractors, perhaps even among Free Will Baptist readers, such will be required to answer his deft pairing of faith and action in these verses in particular.

Chapter five returns to a discussion of the Christian life in Paul's corpus by pointing out that although he insists upon justification by faith alone, this faith will necessarily work itself out in a life of obedience. Picirilli highlights the same theme again in chapter six, where he discusses the relationship between faith and works in James and Hebrews. He concludes by reminding the reader that "faith is always expressed in obedience [and] visible only in obedience" (124).

Chapter seven provides a very helpful biblical exegesis of a number of passages that touch on the theological concept of sanctification. The importance of this subject is heightened not only by the moral condition of the modern church but also in light of his thesis that true believers reveal their faith in and by obedience to the commands of Christ for their lives. He rightly distinguishes initial (regeneration), progressive, and final sanctification (glorification) and recognizes all aspects as an act of God's grace. He also clearly demonstrates that Scripture knows nothing of a "second work" of grace separate from conversion as taught in some "Holiness" traditions. Sanctification or growth in holiness is never an optional component of salvation but is the common experience of all regenerate believers.

Sanctification is an act of God whereby the believer is made holy throughout his life and sin is consistently and persistently rooted out. This is why Picirilli turns in chapter eight to a discussion of biblical teaching on sin. He rightly concludes that sin is not confined merely to intentional acts of commission that run counter to God's will, as in some teach-

ings. He also rightly concludes that there is no ontological sin, as if being something less than God renders humanity culpable before Him. However, I do not find the discussion fully satisfying. On the one hand, he recognizes the reality of our depravity and argues that we are culpable for it. However, he seems to want to characterize all such sin as "omission" and appears to distinguish the two in a way that I do not believe can be fully justified. (Picirilli himself seems to reveal some hesitancy here, 180). Perhaps this tension is a good thing. When rightly understood, it teaches us to trust in Christ alone for our salvation but also encourages us to follow after His holiness.

Chapter nine and the conclusion seek to draw out the implications for this biblical study on discipleship and the life of the church. As another reviewer has commented, "chapter nine is worth the price of the book." (Jackson Watts, "Robert Picirilli's *Discipleship*: *The Expression of Saving Faith*: A Review Essay." http://www.helwyssocietyforum.com /?p=4268 [accessed August 29, 2014].)

It is here that Picirilli brings the fruits of his exegetical and theological labor into the life of the church. He outlines that this understanding of saving faith means that when we present the gospel we should emphasize that the free offer of salvation includes the radical call of Jesus to take up one's cross. He also speaks to the unfortunate reality of church members who claim to be Christian but whose lives do not indicate a serious commitment to discipleship. While the theological question posed by this situation is a difficult one in light of perseverance and apostasy, the pastoral response is clear: no pastor can extend assurance of salvation to one in unrepentant sin. Finally, he emphasizes the central role of a local body of covenanted believers in nurturing discipleship and holding believers accountable for gospel obedience.

The work has many attributes that commend it. I know of no other Free Will Baptist exegete who is more at home in the text of the New Testament than Picirilli. His technical training and his experience in denominational polity (especially his efforts in the 1967 Appendix to the Treatise) provide a helpful background for his work. He is balanced and fair in his presentation and succeeds in almost all places to allow the text to speak for itself. His work readily engages the research of some of the most important New Testament scholars today and makes important contributions to their work. Though it might sound strange to many, his advocacy for multiple "models" of salvation presented in the New Testament is in line with the most modern critical research on the text. Yet he, at the same time, maintains a full commitment to the inspiration,

inerrancy, and authority of each text he expounds. The work successfully establishes a high-water-mark for Free Will Baptist textual scholarship.

There are however some difficulties apparent in the perceived audience of this work. It seems at times to waver between a learned audience and a popular one. Especially in the exegetical portions, the work can be technical and some discussions are not readily understandable without at least a passing knowledge of Koine Greek and its structure. However, the synthesis of chapter nine and the conclusion return to a pragmatic discussion of the practical implications of his exegesis in the life of the church. For this reason, the work will be beneficial for readers from all skill levels.

Another negative is his refusal to discuss adequately the implications of the new perspective on Paul. I believe this discussion has broader implications for his research than he is willing to concede. Such a discussion would have substantiated his thesis in places and at the same time allowed him to challenge some of their incorrect assumptions related to the concept of Pauline justification and the imputation of Christ's righteousness.

Rather than engaging his topic from the vantage of developed theological systems of thinking, Picirilli provides for the reader a true New Testament theology of what it means to be a follower of Christ. He works diligently to answer the question, "What must I do to be saved?" The biblical scholarship present in this work is top-notch. It fairly and rigorously interprets the biblical texts and makes appropriate applications. This work is to be highly commended. It makes important contributions to theology and the practical Sunday-to-Sunday work of the church in making disciples of all nations (Mt. 28:18-20).

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The Awakening of the Freewill Baptists: Benjamin Randall and the Founding of an American Religious Tradition. By Scott Bryant. Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 2011, xii + 228 pp., $35.00 hardcover.

In Scott Bryant's *The Awakening of the Freewill Baptists: Benjamin Randall and the Founding of an American Religious Tradition*, we have the first-ever critical biography of Benjamin Randall. Randall was the principal founder of the northern Free Baptists (originally called Freewill Baptists),

an Arminian denomination that arose in the late eighteenth century, grew explosively in the nineteenth, and then went out of existence in 1911 when it merged with the Northern Baptist Convention. Here Bryant carefully yet sympathetically chronicles Randall's life and ministry.

The introductory chapters of the book should be read by people interested in American religious history, even if they have no interest in the Free Baptists. These chapters describe the context of the founding of the Free Baptist movement in the complex milieu of Baptist life in the middle-to-late-eighteenth century. Bryant then painstakingly recounts Benjamin Randall's conversion, early ministry, and role in the founding of the northern Freewill Baptists. He concludes the book by discussing the theology of Randall and his early cohorts, as well as the legacy of Randall and his faith and practice for the movement he organized. Bryant's basic thesis, which he argues masterfully, is that the northern Free Baptists, as exemplified by Randall, served as a bridge movement between the first and second Great Awakenings. Randall was converted after hearing of the death of George Whitefield, whose itinerant revival ministry in many ways set the tone for Randall's ministry. Of course, the primary difference between Randall and his New England religious counterparts was his brand of Arminianism. This theological distinction is therefore the most important part of Bryant's narrative.

Bryant breaks new ground in his discussion of Randall's personal doctrinal development. He believes that Randall was never a Calvinist and cites Randall's statement that he never knew anything about Calvin's doctrine of election. Bryant is convincing in showing that Randall did not go through a Calvinist phase, as some historians (including myself) have concluded. Bryant paints Randall as theologically naïve when he first began preaching: "Randall wrongly assumed that he was theologically in line with his Baptist peers. He recounted, 'As the doctrine of Calvin had not been in dispute among us, I had not considered whether I believed it or not'" (83). When asked on one occasion early in his ministry why he did not preach Calvinist doctrine, Randall responded plainly, "Because I do not believe it" (83). Previous historians have concluded that, because Randall moved from the Congregational Church and became a Regular Baptist that he had, during all that period, accepted the Calvinist theology of those two denominations. Yet Bryant succeeds in showing that Randall never saw himself as a high Calvinist.

Bryant's portrayal of the Arminianism of Randall and his colleagues, while accurate on the whole, fails to delve into the nuances of Arminian thought in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. He discusses only the doctrines all Arminians have in common (universal atonement, pre-

destination conditioned on God's foreknowledge, the resistibility of divine calling and grace, and the possibility of apostatizing from the faith). Thus he obscures important features of Randall's Arminianism that are closer to Wesleyan thought than to the views of the General Baptists, which were similar to the Dutch Reformed theologian Jacobus Arminius.

Another subplot of the theme is the more-complex church government Randall instituted. That polity vested more power in the hands of conferences, known as quarterly meetings (local conferences), yearly meetings (regional conferences), and the General Conference than was typical of the Regular or Separate Baptists, while ensuring the self-government of local congregations. (Ironically, the same was true of the other Arminian Baptists in eighteenth-century America, those General Baptists whose forebears had migrated from England in the late seventeenth century—who in the South soon became known as Free Will Baptists).

Yet the most interesting and provocative of Bryant's subplots is his treatment of Randall's experientialism. Bryant shows that, early on, Randall rooted his Arminian theological views in a supernatural vision he said he experienced when he was converted. Bryant notes that Randall's original church covenant that he wrote for his first church in New Durham, New Hampshire, emphasized "the power of the Holy Spirit to teach and lead the congregation." Bryant argues that this view was different from that of the Calvinist Baptists, who did not allow "for the possibility of the Holy Spirit leading outside of what is already established in Scripture." Thus Bryant infers that Randall made his own experience a source of revelation or theological truth alongside Scripture.

However, this inference is doubtful, as is evidenced by Randall's statement in his church covenant: "We promise to practice all the commands of and the ordinances of the New Testament of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, so far as they are or shall be made known unto us by the light of the Holy Spirit of truth, without which, we are sensible, we cannot attain to the true knowledge thereof." Bryant attempts to contrast Randall's view with the Calvinistic Second London Confession (1689), which said, "The whole Councel of God concerning all things necessary for his own Glory, Mans Salvation, Faith and Life, is either expressly set down or necessarily contained in the Holy Scripture; unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new Revelation of the Spirit, or traditions of men." However, there is nothing in Randall's covenant that suggests that he believed in new revelation. The "light of the Spirit" of which he spoke is, as all the Free Baptists of the North taught, the Spirit speaking in Scripture.

Doubtless, Randall and some of his early followers in the north did place more emphasis on mystical experience, such as Randall's own cornfield experience, second works of grace, and other supernatural phenomena that would embarrass later more rationalistic Free Baptists in the mid- to late-nineteenth century. However, they stopped short of asserting that private experience is on par with Scripture.

Still, the differences between Randall and the southern Free Will Baptists concerning experientialism are striking. The southern Free Will Baptists, who originated in the Carolinas from the English General Baptists a century earlier, about whom Randall knew nothing, were the object of prosyletizing efforts from the Calvinistic Philadelphia Association of Baptists (their Philadelphia Confession was a slight revision of the Second London Confession). One of the chief criticisms of the eighteenth-century New Light Calvinist Baptists regarding the General Baptists (later dubbed "Free Will Baptists") in Carolina was that the latter were not experiential enough! Whereas the New Lights required, as a prerequisite for baptism, a long, drawn-out, and in many cases highly emotional rehearsal of an "experience of grace"—how one came to be converted—the General Baptists required a simple confession of repentance and faith. The Calvinist Baptists criticized them for being spiritually cold and not requiring an experiential account of conversion.

John G. Crowley, in *Primitive Baptists of the Wiregrass South* (University Press of Florida, 1999), explains that it was commonplace for the Calvinistic Separate Baptists to require, before baptism, an experience of grace consisting of dramatic visions and dreams. This is precisely what Bryant describes of Randall, which would have been expected, given Randall's context as being a part of the Separate Baptist milieu in New England. But the lack of an experiential approach to conversion is precisely what the Philadelphia Association Baptists criticized the southern Free Will Baptists for, accusing them and even their ministers of being unconverted. However, later southern Free Will Baptist leaders such as R. K. Hearn defended their practice, arguing that such an approach to conversion was not warranted in the New Testament and was not apostolic in origin.

Yet this understanding of experientialism in Randall also dislodges Bryant's notion of Randall's experientialism as somehow being radically different in character from the Calvinistic Baptists of his day. On the contrary, Randall's vision was commonplace among the Calvinistic Separates, even though his southern General Baptist counterparts would hear nothing of it. Indeed, after the Philadelphia Association prosyletized some of the General Baptist ministers in the 1750s and they founded the

Kehukee Association, that new association immediately adopted the Second London Confession as their official confession of faith, all the while attacking the southern Free Will Baptists for not believing in experiential phenomena as a requirement for baptism.

When Elias Hutchins, a Randall Freewill Baptist, traveled among some of the southern Free Will Baptists in the 1830s, he sold them some hymnals, and one of the hymns spoke positively of New Light revivalism. R. K. Hearn, the leading minister and historian of the North Carolina Free Will Baptists in the nineteenth century, stated, "The hymn, which commends all New Lights . . . was read by the purchasers with grief and almost indignant astonishment."

Continuing to explain Randall's theological pilgrimage, Bryant shows that Randall shared his Arminian views with other Baptist ministers at the time, such as Edward Lock and Tosier Lord, who participated in Randall's ordination service. Thus, Bryant concludes, Randall was not the sole founder of the Freewill Baptist movement in New England. Randall began to be persecuted for his Arminian theology because it was so rare in New England in his day. He began to doubt his theological convictions. Then, Bryant recounts, Randall had what later became known as his "cornfield experience." "Prior to this mystical experience Randall had difficulty reconciling the passages of the opponents with his own theology," Bryant explains. "Randall then experienced a revelation that enlightened him on how the passages of the opponents could in fact be consistent with his own personal theology. The spiritual authority of this trance-like experience did not supercede that of the scriptures, but it did enable him to reconcile his theology with the scripture. Even a spiritual revelation directly from God in the form of his vision could not keep Randall from recognizing the authority of the scriptures as the rule for faith and practice of the Christian tradition" (95-96).

Despite the book's many strengths, its most misleading element arises not from its subject matter per se, but in the author's failure to root his topic in the ongoing history of Free Will Baptists in America. As a result of the book and its subtitle, as well as its preface, authored by the eminent historian William H. Brackney, the reader is left with the impression that Randall is the founder of the Free Will Baptist movement in America which exists to this day. In reality, the movement Randall founded merged with the Northern Baptist Convention in 1911, motivated by leaders such as Alfred Williams Anthony who were strongly influenced by the theological liberalism, social gospel, and ecumenism of the era. A small remnant in the Midwest and Southwest refused to go along with

the merger, only later to merge with the Free Will Baptist General Conference in the South.

The origins of the General Conference in the South, however, are distinct from those of the Randall movement. The southern movement originated with English General Baptists who had migrated to the American colonies in the seventeenth century. This movement is often referred to as the Palmer movement, after the early eighteenth-century North Carolina General Baptist minister Paul Palmer. In the nineteenth century, pockets of Separate and Regular Baptists in the South became Arminian and identified with the Palmer movement. In 1935, the General Conference of the South merged with the smaller Cooperative General Association in the Midwest and Southwest, which included Palmer elements as well as remnants of the Randall movement.

Despite these few misunderstandings, Bryant's biographical account is a model of careful scholarship and is must-reading for historians of the transatlantic Baptist movement. Yet it is also a book that needs to be read by those interested in the developing history of evangelicalism in North America in the context of the religious awakenings of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

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Text Messaging: A Conversation on Preaching. By Douglas D. Webster. Toronto, ON: Clements, 2010. 130 pp. $14.95 Paperback.

We live in a fast-paced, technology-saturated, largely biblically illiterate society. In this postmodern context, the preacher of God's Word often asks himself what effect preaching has on society. Our world is changing at a before-unheard-of pace. Attention spans continue to decline dramatically. How can the pastor who desires to be faithful to the biblical text and see its message transform society faithfully handle the text of Scripture?

Doug Webster, Professor of Christian Preaching at Samford University's Beeson Divinity School, has written a short work that is well worth the pastor's time in considering these issues. Dr. Webster served for fourteen years as the Senior Pastor of First Presbyterian Church in San Diego, California, before moving to Birmingham to assume his current role in preparing preachers for the work of the ministry. While Free Will

Baptists will have differences with Webster's polity and Reformed theology, the book largely sets aside such theological differences and concentrates on the question of preaching that is faithful to the Bible. Specifically, he examines what results in good, life-changing preaching in this postmodern world. His assertions will cause anyone who is seriously concerned about effectively reaching postmodern listeners with the transformative power of the Gospel to examine the purpose of preaching and whose message is to be preached.

Webster divides this short work into an introduction and eight chapters. The introduction appropriately sets the tone for the work by presenting some basic assumptions he makes about the current state of preaching in the Christian church. He observes that sermons "have largely become a recital of evangelical platitudes, privately prepared, without interaction with the thinking and praying community. They are publicly performed without lasting impact, usually in a style that does not flow from or serve the text" (11). Unfortunately, I find this observation to be true in many congregations that I have visited over the years, including Free Will Baptist churches. The crisis is not limited to one theological persuasion or denomination (70). Pastors of many different stripes are pressured to preach "soft" and short messages to attract a crowd. Another unfortunate trend that has developed in the church is its over-reliance on media and "bells and whistles" in the worship service. We as a church have strayed far from where Jesus calls us to be as it relates to the preaching ministry of the Church. Webster will argue that the key to correcting these unfortunate trends is the rediscovery of the priority of the biblical text in its proper biblical context. We must realize that the Bible cannot say today what it did not say in its original context.

In chapter one, Webster addresses the power of story to transform. He rightly points out that two ideas or paradigms of texting are at work in our world today. He reminds the reader that "God chose language as the primary medium to communicate his salvation to us" (15). The pastor's theology and orthopraxy of language has deep and significant implications not only for the manner in which he preaches, but also for the health and stability of the local congregation. The pastor must lead his people in a proper understanding of what God's Word is and how we as His people are to approach it. People not only have difficulty concentrating on a sermon for more than ten minutes, but they also have difficulty conversing with one another in deep and meaningful ways. This unfortunate trend has led to a large-scale loss of the Christian metanarrative, not just in society, but in the church. Webster rightly argues that the answer to recapturing the Christian narrative is found by God's spokesmen (pas-

tors and teachers) immersing themselves in the Word of God through the week as they dig out the original intended meaning of the Scripture under current consideration. As God's spokesmen are changed and impacted by God's Word, they are able to share it with a congregation that needs to soak it up as well.

In chapter two, titled "Textus Receptus," Webster plays on the term *Textus Receptus*, the Greek manuscripts Erasmus used to make his New Testament translation. The term means literally "the received text." The chapter makes the argument that we have received the text that God intends for us to have. It is everywhere. With the advent of the Internet and smart phones, Bible translations and resources are readily available in many languages and in many places. Anyone with an Internet connection has easy access to the original Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, Hebrew manuscripts of the Old Testament, dozens of English translations of the Bible, and translations in nearly every other major world language. However, that does not mean that the message has been heard (25). Pastors have the added responsibility of not only making sure their congregation hears the message, but also making sure they understand and take action on it. "For Jesus, nothing other than hearing and obeying the Word of God can bring us together as the family of God" (37, italics added). Webster concludes the chapter by rightly observing that this life transformation is difficult work, but it will happen when we let the Word of God do its work. "Instead of tinkering, embrace the Word of God. Let the Text shape the subject of your life, and not the other way around. . . . The secrets of the kingdom of God have been given to you. Listen up!" (41).

Webster continues the theme of the transformative power of Scripture in chapter three. This chapter focuses on the tension that exists between a finite (settled) text and the infinite truth it contains. God's Word is a living Word that still speaks to human hearts millennia after it was penned. However, if we are not careful, it easily becomes a book of proof-texts to get our way or justify our actions. God's Word does speak to our life situation today. We can find comfort in it. But it must be remembered that we also find "correction and reproof" as well. The Bible speaks today, but we must remember that it cannot be made to say what we would like it to say to fit our felt needs. Many a church and believers have been ruined by the unscrupulous use of God's Word. Pastors and teachers must see and then must train their people to see that the Bible is an unfolding of His Story and must diligently work to recognize and live within their part of that Story.

In chapter four, Webster further develops the matter of seeing the Bible as an unfolding account of redemptive or salvation history. While the words of the Word are important, and should be studied using sound hermeneutical principles, it must be remembered that the words of Paul do not occur in isolation. They occur as a complement to the words of Matthew, John, Moses, Joshua, the Chronicler, and the prophets of the Old Testament. The work of the biblical exegete is, first, to determine what the text meant when it was originally written. He must consider how God's people interpreted and applied the current text in light of the rest of the biblical text. The Bible is not a collection of sixty-six separate books. It is one book, with one theme, and one overarching message.

In chapter five, Webster turns his attention to the "tension in the text." Fond of this metaphor of tension, he reminds us that God's Word speaks to a reality that we in many ways have not realized and cannot fully understand. "The tension in the text is found in the clash between the mystery of God and the mess of the human condition, between humanity's fallen condition and God's work of redemption" (69). Empty preaching that does not help the hearers to engage in the metanarrative of the Christian story and find life change is foreign to God's intention for His church. However, we must note that biblical preaching, like biblical living, will put the people of God at odds not only with their own instincts, but also with their own worlds. In today's world of "political correctness," preachers are tempted not to make waves and not to offend. However, Jesus did not worry about offending, He proclaimed the Truth and let it lie where it may. Today's pastors and teachers would do well to follow the model of the Master. "If our context controls the text then we are the text, not the Bible. Much of our devotional and sermonic material fails to identify the tension in the text and thus fails to grasp the true passion of the passage" (80).

In chapter six, titled "Text Savvy," Webster continues to develop a call to preachers to preach the text of Scripture differently, to preach it incarnationally. "The paradigm for all Christian communication," he argues, "is the Incarnate One." He further explains that belief "is not a cognitive assent to ideas, but a living relationship of obedience, a daily following after Jesus our crucified and risen Lord. We don't become Jesus, but we become like Jesus as the Spirit of Christ indwells us. The Word in-bodied defines us as we follow the Incarnate Word" (85-86). Too often we are tempted to preach messages that feel good or help us make our point rather than digging in to the text and allowing it to penetrate our heart and the hearts of the congregation. God never intended preaching always to make us feel good or to be able to be reduced to "three points and

poem." He intends for it to cause us to wrestle with the truth of Scripture and apply it to our lives. He intends for us to find redemption and the gospel of Jesus Christ in each passage.

As the formal, though not official, conclusion of the book, chapter seven is titled "Texting Jesus' Style." It is a call to the preacher to follow the example of the Master Preacher, Jesus Christ. Webster argues that the key to preaching better sermons is "learning to handle the text the way that Jesus did; proclaiming the Truth the way that Jesus did" (99). While Jesus was concerned that people be transformed by His preaching, He did not start with their felt needs; rather He proclaimed the Scriptures. "Good preaching does not bow before our felt need questions or cater to our sense of relevancy. Good preaching shifts the focus from our questions to necessary truth" (105). For instance, the truth of a person's being lost and needing salvation is not comfortable, but it is a necessary truth, and until a person hears it and accepts it, he or she cannot receive salvation. However, because God's Word is a living, powerful Word, as it is faithfully preached, it will meet the needs of the hearers. Jesus also did not sugar-coat or water down the demands of discipleship. Jesus also makes it clear that it was faith that saved a person, but that faith also was followed with action. "The Reformers insisted that we are saved by faith alone, but saving faith is never alone. The works of Christ always accompany true faith in Christ. We not only have faith in Jesus but we demonstrate the faith of Jesus" (122).

In the final chapter, which amounts to a wonderful conclusion of the matter, Webster shows his high view of communion, which he refers to as "the Eucharistic celebration." He argues, "Every sermon should move from the pulpit to the table smoothly. . . . Preaching weaves together proclamation and the Eucharistic celebration" (127). God intends for His Word to be internalized, and every sermon should help that occur. Though most Free Will Baptists do not celebrate the Lord's Supper on a weekly basis, as Webster's church does, we also hold to a high view of the Supper. The point should be well taken that every sermon preached should point the hearers to Christ and call or help them grow deeper in their discipleship journey. This happens only through transformative, Christ-centered preaching.

The local congregation must be committed to the regular, unapologetic preaching of the Word of God. We have been given the answers our world seeks. We must embrace them personally and then share them with both the saved and lost so that the Word may transform them. Dr. Webster's book gives contemporary preachers of the Good News good

"food for thought" as they seek faithfully to deliver the text of God and see it have its empowered effect.

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The Juvenilization of American Christianity. By Thomas Bergler. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012. 229 pp. $19.17 paperback.

Like many book-reading pastors, I pay attention to suggested reading lists. For a number of years now, Al Mohler, the president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, has published a top ten list of books that would be helpful to those in the ministry. Thomas Bergler's excellent book *The Juvenilization of American Christianity* made Mohler's list for 2012.

The thesis of the volume is that, from the 1940s and onward, the church has been gearing itself toward winning its young people. This is summarized in the introduction: "By personalizing Christianity and creatively blending it with elements of popular culture ranging from rock music to political protests, youth ministries helped ensure the ongoing vitality of Christianity in America. But these same ministries also sometimes pandered to the consumerism, self-centeredness, and even outright immaturity of American believers. For good or ill, American Christianity would never be the same" (5).

It is interesting to see how the various branches of American Christianity have gone about "juvenilizing" Christianity. The author divides it into four large religious bodies: Roman Catholics, Liberal Protestants, Black Protestants, and Evangelical Whites. The Roman Catholic Church wanted to say that Catholics made good Americans but tried to keep them in a cultural ghetto. The Liberals thought that the key was to champion progressive political involvement. The black evangelicals did a version of this same thing, but it was more focused on their own life situation, and therefore they had greater involvement. The white evangelicals followed the lead of Youth For Christ and determined to be entertaining and to emphasize how God could help people live a happy, fulfilled life. Of these approaches, the author says that the white Evangelicals had the most numerical success.

The problem with that success, however, was that it has produced at least two generations of Christians who, according to Bergler, do not

seem to understand what spiritual maturity would even look like. This is reflected in much of the popular Christian music, which speaks of falling in love with Jesus, almost as though He is one's lover. The idea, Bergler explains, is that we are to have something of an adolescent crush on Jesus. To quote the author, "If we believe that a mature faith involves more than good feelings, vague beliefs, and living however we want, we must conclude that juvenilization has revitalized American Christianity at the cost of leaving many individuals mired in spiritual immaturity" (225).

While I found all of this book interesting in its entirety, I would have to say that the concluding chapter by itself is worth the price of the book. The author asks, "In our attempts to 'reach' people in our community, are we conceding too much to the characteristic weaknesses and besetting sins of our culture? We will always have to build cultural bridges to people outside the church (Acts 17:16-34, 1 Cor. 9:19-27). But which direction is the traffic flowing on those bridges? Are unbelievers crossing the bridge to reach a countercultural, spiritually mature way of life, or are believers crossing back into the spiritually immature ways of the world?" (227).

I did not expect it, but reading this book challenged me to ask myself how mature my faith really is. What is more, as a pastor, what sort of Christianity am I hoping to develop in the lives of the people I serve?

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