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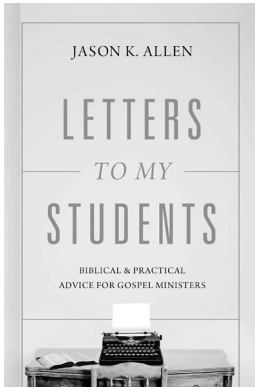

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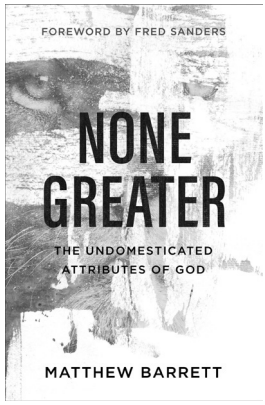

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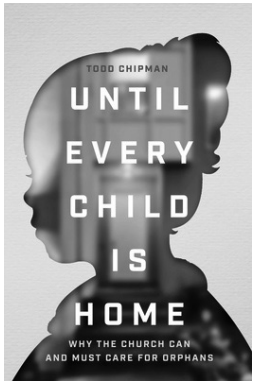

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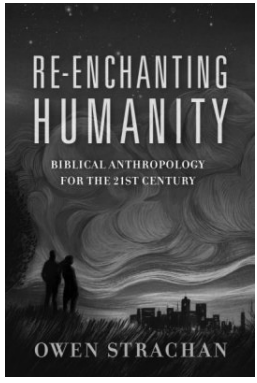

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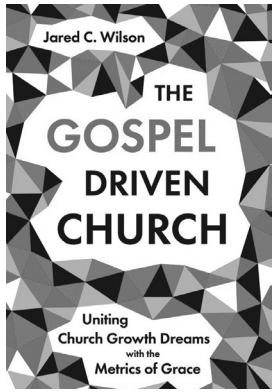

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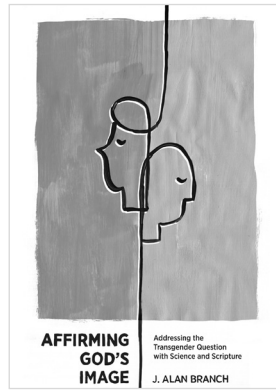

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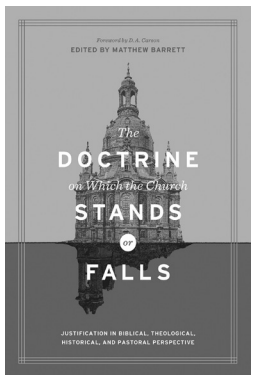

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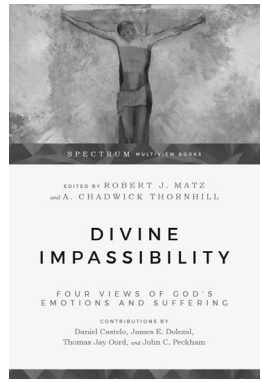

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EDITORIAL

Welcome you to the Spring 2019 issue of the Midwestern Journal of Theology. I am again indebted to those who work so hard each Semester, to ensure the Journal appears. As usual, particular thanks go to Dr. Jason Duesing, Provost and Academic Editor, for all his invaluable assistance, and also to Mrs. Kaylee Freeman, for all her work as Journal secretary.

We are pleased and honored to begin this issue, by publishing the 2019 'For The Church' Workshop lectures given by Midwestern's Research Professor of New Testament and Biblical Theology Andreas J. Köstenberger. The lectures both scholarly as well as extremely helpful, examined significant aspects of the early chapters of the Gospel of John, including authorship, the Prologue and the Cana Cycle. We are similarly pleased to publish an important Biblical reflection on the #MeToo movement, by Katie McCoy of Southwestern Seminary. In her timely piece, McCoy argues that what is missing from this present-day movement is the influence of the redeemed, those who hold to a worldview that really does value a woman's worth.

Our next article brings us back to Midwestern, with Jared Wilson's thought-provoking and insightful study of the unlikely pilgrimage partnership of CS Lewis and TS Eliot. We are honored to publish another important contribution, this time from Professor James Hamilton of Southern Seminary, with his careful analysis of the relationship between the Holy Spirit and Christian worship, in which he argues that Baptist ecclesiology and worship is most attuned to the Holy Spirit in Christian worship.

Our penultimate article, from Midwestern's Adjunct Faculty member Lance Higginbotham, is a further study on the Holy Spirit, wherein he very helpfully examines the Spirit's role as the giver of wisdom in Biblical theology. Our final contribution is from three of the Spurgeon scholars at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, including the Director of the Spurgeon Library Phillip Ort, together with research assistants and Residency PhD students Ed Romine and Timothy Gatewood. Their combined scholarship has resulted in this challenging and encouraging reassessment of Charles Spurgeon as the quintessential evangelical.

We again conclude this issue of the MJT with a good number of relevant and thought provoking book reviews, helpfully secured and edited by Dr. Blake Hearson.

Midwestern Journal of Theology 18.1 (2019): 1-40

'For The Church' Workshop on the Gospel of John: Authorship, John's Prologue, and the Cana Cycle (John 2-4)

ANDREAS J. KÖSTENBERGER
Research Professor of New Testament and Biblical Theology,
Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

I am excited to be part of all that God is doing here at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and to lead the first-ever For The Church workshop. Thank you for joining me today as we set out on a journey to explore the theology of John, especially in his Gospel. I love the Gospel of John, because John is profoundly theological and has such a deep grasp of who Jesus is. When we talk about *John's* theology, and when we talk about *John's* Gospel, this raises the important questions: Who was John? And what was his relationship with Jesus?

It is my privilege to deliver three lectures on the Gospel of John. In my first lecture, I will be discussing the authorship of John's Gospel and John' prologue, the first eighteen verses of the Gospel. The remainder of my study will be devoted to a close examination of the so-called "Cana Cycle," chapters 2–4, which includes Jesus' initial sign—the turning of water into wine—as well as the temple cleansing, his conversations with Nicodemus and the Samaritan woman, and the healing of the Gentile centurion's son.

I am firmly committed to the importance of introductory matters for the study of a given book of Scripture: authorship, date, provenance, destination, occasion, and purpose.[1] That is not merely something you determine and then leave behind as you go on to study a passage in a given book. Rather, as you try to discern the authorial intent underlying that passage, you need to constantly keep in mind who the author was.

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[1] See Andreas J. Köstenberger, L. Scott Kellum, and Charles L. Quarles, *The Cradle, the Cross, and the Crown: An Introduction to the New Testament* (2nd ed.; Nashville: B&H Academic, 2016), for which I wrote the chapter on John's Gospel.

It's also important to use a sound hermeneutical method. In my three lectures today, I am presupposing what I call the "hermeneutical triad," that is, looking at the interpretation of a given book, in our case John's Gospel, through the trifocal lens of history, literature, and theology.[2] In each case, we'll try to keep in mind any relevant historical-cultural background issues. We'll also be mindful of literary devices such as chiasm or *inclusio* and narrative features such as plot or characterization. When it comes to theology, we'll try to discern any Old Testament usage, whether by way of direct quotation, allusion, or typology, and we'll remember throughout that John is the "spiritual Gospel," that is, he focuses primarily on Christology, the true identity of the Lord Jesus Christ as Messiah and Son of God, in keeping with his purpose statement (20:30–31).

My hope in these lectures is to help you build a solid foundation as you study, preach, or teach John's Gospel, and by extension, even other books of the Bible. Even though we'll only be able to cover the first four chapters, I'll try to model sound exegesis and hermeneutics in breaking down the Gospel unit by unit and to discern the central message in each unit within the scope of the entire Gospel. In this way, I hope you'll be thoroughly equipped to communicate the amazing spiritual truths contained in John's Gospel to your audience.

Who Wrote John's Gospel?

So, then, let's first turn our attention to the question of who wrote John's Gospel. There are many scholars today, critical scholars, who don't believe the apostle John wrote the Gospel that bears his name. Some believe that another person named John, perhaps one commonly called "John the elder," wrote the Gospel. Others believe that a so-called "Johannine community" that traced its roots to the apostle wrote the Gospel sometime after John's death. Yet others say someone else wrote the Gospel, such as Lazarus.

I believe this is not merely an academic squabble. It is very important to determine who is the author of John's Gospel and what his relationship to Jesus is because the credibility of a given writing depends

[2] See my book, co-authored with Richard D. Patterson, *Invitation to Biblical Interpretation: Exploring the Hermeneutical Triad of History, Literature, and Theology* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2011).

to a great deal on the credibility of the author. If the apostle John wrote the Gospel, given that he was one of the twelve apostles—in fact, one of only three in Jesus' inner circle—he would wield considerable authority and be one of the most important eyewitnesses of Jesus.

If, on the other hand, the Gospel had been written by a community, based on some Johannine traditions after John the apostle had already died, the connection would be a lot more indirect, and the Gospel would therefore be less credible and authoritative. At best, it would reflect indirect rather than direct eyewitness testimony. At worst, as J. Louis Martyn, Raymond Brown, and others have argued, it would essentially project the history of such a "Johannine community" onto the life and times of Jesus.[3] So, the authority of John's Gospel hinges to a significant extent on the question of who its author is.

How, then, do we go about determining who the author of John's Gospel was? There are two main avenues: internal and external evidence. Sometimes people start with the external evidence, that is, to whom the authorship of John's Gospel was attributed in the early centuries of the church; but I prefer to start with the internal evidence, that is, internal clues as to who the Gospel itself claims wrote it (I'll tell you why a little bit later). So, let's start there.

Internal Evidence

Formally, like all the Gospels, John's Gospel is anonymous, that is, unlike any of the New Testament letters, it doesn't start out by saying, for example, "I, the apostle John, wrote this Gospel." That's because a Gospel is not person-to-person or person-to-group communication, like an epistle, but, as Richard Bauckham and others have argued in *The Gospels for All Christians*, a universal document that sets forth the story of Jesus more broadly to a wide reading public.[4]

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[3] See J. Louis Martyn, *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospe*l (3rd ed.; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003); Raymond E. Brown, *The Community of the Beloved Disciple: The Life, Loves, and Hates of an Individual Church in New Testament Times* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist, 1979).

[4] Richard Bauckham, ed., *The Gospels for All Christians: Rethinking the Gospel Audiences* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997).

The "Disciple Whom Jesus Loved"

Nevertheless, when we investigate John's Gospel as to clues regarding its authorship, we find several important internal pieces of information. To begin with, we notice several references to a person called "the disciple whom Jesus loved." He first appears in the Upper Room, where we read, "One of his disciples, whom Jesus loved, was reclining at table at Jesus' side" (13:23). Later, the same disciple (called "another disciple") reappears at the high priest's courtyard after Jesus' arrest (18:15–16), at the scene of the crucifixion (19:35), and at the empty tomb (20:2: "the other disciple, whom Jesus loved," 8–9).

The final set of references is at Jesus' third and last resurrection appearance to his disciples (21:7: "that disciple whom Jesus loved") and Jesus' conversation with him and Peter about their respective future callings (21:15–23). Then, the clincher in the penultimate verse of the Gospel: "This is the disciple who is bearing witness about these things, and who has written these things, and we know that his testimony is true" (21:24). So, here we are told (in the third-person singular and then first-person plural) that "the disciple whom Jesus loved" and the author of the Gospel, "the disciple who is bearing witness about these things," are one and the same. The Gospel closes with a (for a Gospel) highly unusual first-person reference: "Now there are also many other things that Jesus did. Were every one of them to be written, *I suppose* that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written" (21:25). In a scholarly article, I have investigated similar references in ancient literature and concluded that this is an epithet of authorial modesty on John's part.[5]

So, the internal evidence from the Gospel itself indicates that it was written by a disciple who was at Jesus' side at the Last Supper (and hence one of the Twelve); who was at the scene of Jesus' arrest and trial; and who witnessed Jesus' crucifixion and saw Jesus following his resurrection. What an incredible claim the Gospel stakes regarding its author! To sit at either side of Jesus at the Last Supper would have been places of honor reserved for the two closest associates of Jesus.

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[5] "I Suppose (*oimai*): The Conclusion of John's Gospel in its Contemporary Literary and Historical Context," in *The New Testament in Its First Century Setting: Essays on Context and Backgrounds in Honour of B. W. Winter on His 65th Birthday* (ed. P. J. Williams, A. D. Clarke, P. M. Head, and D. Instone-Brewer; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 72–88.

If you were to compare this to, say, the biography of a U.S. president or another important individual, John's Gospel would be the equivalent to having been written by the president's chief of staff or closest confidant or another trusted advisor who was by his side at all the major junctures of his presidency, as opposed to, say, having been written by a journalist who knows about such events only through secondhand sources or hearsay.

The "Disciple Whom Jesus Loved" and Peter

There are a few other interesting pieces of information as far as the internal evidence is concerned. One fascinating datum relates to the number of passages in John's Gospel where the "disciple whom Jesus loved" appears in close conjunction with Peter.[6] As a matter of fact, virtually every time where the "disciple whom Jesus loved" is mentioned in the second half of John's Gospel, there Peter is as well.

- Both are present in the Upper Room when Peter asks the "disciple whom Jesus loved" to inquire regarding the identity of the betrayer (13:23–24).
- Both are there in the high priest's courtyard; in fact, it is the "disciple whom Jesus loved" who gives Peter access as he is acquainted with the high priestly family (18:15–16).
- Both are also found at the empty tomb following Jesus' resurrection; in fact, they both run there together, though the "disciple whom Jesus loved" (who apparently was the younger of the two) outran Peter. But then he respectfully waits for Peter and allows him to peer into the tomb first before he, too, looks inside and sees that the tomb is empty (20:2–9).
- Both are there at the Sea of Galilee where they see the risen Jesus at the shore, and it is only when the "disciple whom Jesus loves" exclaims, "It's the Lord!" that Peter jumps into the lake and swims excitedly toward Jesus (21:7).
- Finally, as mentioned, Peter and the "disciple whom Jesus loved" are featured alongside each other in Jesus' final

[6] See Kevin Quast, *Peter and the Beloved Disciple: Figures for a Community in Crisis* (LNTS; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1989).

> conversation with both of them at the very end of the Gospel (21:15–23).

Why this consistent parallel characterization of Peter and the "disciple Jesus loved"? And who is the person who best fits this description historically? The best answer to both questions is that the person who is most closely connected to Peter according to the witness of the other Gospels as well as the book of Acts and even Paul's writings is the apostle John.

John and Peter, together with John's brother James, make up the inner circle of three who alone witness the raising of Jairus' daughter (Mark 5:37; Luke 8:51), accompany Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matt 17:1; Mark 9:2; Luke 9:28), and are taken with him to the Garden of Gethsemane (Matt 26:37; Mark 14:33).

In the book of Acts, we see Peter and John together go to the temple at the hour of prayer in chapter 3; both witness to the Sanhedrin in chapter 4; and both are in chapter 8 shown to travel together to Samaria to certify the genuineness of Samaritan conversions there (8:14–25).

Finally, in Galatians 2:9, Paul calls James (the half-brother of Jesus), as well as Peter (called "Cephas") and John, "pillars" of the church. So, we see that Peter and John are linked closely in the other Gospels and the book of Acts, and even in Paul's first letter. Therefore, there can be little doubt that when Peter is linked consistently in the Fourth Gospel with "the disciple whom Jesus loved," that disciple is none other than the apostle John. So we've seen that the internal evidence of John's Gospel decisively and unmistakably points to the apostle John as its author.

Why "Disciple Whom Jesus Loved"?

But why does the author (John) use the unusual phrase "the disciple whom Jesus loved" to identify himself? There are probably multiple reasons, not the least of them being that he does so to avoid confusion, since there is already another person named "John" featured in this Gospel: John the Baptist. By calling himself simply "the disciple whom Jesus loved," the author reserves the name "John" in this Gospel exclusively for the Baptist. Thus, when the Baptist is first introduced in the Gospel, the author simply writes, "There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light ...." (1:6).

The same phenomenon can be observed with regard to another common name, the name "Mary." In fact, Richard Bauckham, who has engaged in an extensive study of personal names in first-century Palestine, conjectures that close to 30% of all girls at that time were named either Mary or Salome, with Mary being the most common name.[7] Yet while, as was widely known, Jesus' mother's name was "Mary," in John's Gospel she is never called by that name but simply referred to as "the mother of Jesus" (cf., e.g., 2:1–11). In this way, the name "Mary" is in John's Gospel reserved for Mary Magdalene, to whom the author usually refers to simply as "Mary" (e.g., 20:11, 16; but cf. v. 18: "Mary Magdalene").

In addition, the phrase "the disciple whom Jesus loved" expresses the important truth that John knew himself to be deeply loved by Jesus, in keeping with his theology and ethic of love, which can be seen not only at the footwashing but also in John's signature verse, John 3:16: "God so loved the world, that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." The most important truth John believed in relation to Jesus was that he was an undeserving recipient of his redeeming love.[8] I could go on, but hopefully you'll agree that the internal evidence points unequivocally to the apostle John as the author of the Gospel.

External Evidence

Let's now turn for a moment to the external evidence. I've started with the internal evidence and have surveyed it at some length because I believe the internal evidence is in some ways more important and decisive than the external evidence in that it is embedded in the canonical, inspired, and inerrant text of the Gospel itself. Nevertheless, the external evidence carries some weight as well, and as we'll see, in the present case the internal and external evidence converge.

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[7] Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony* (2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2017), 39–92, drawing on Tal Ilan, *Lexicon of Jewish Names in Late Antiquity: Part I: Palestine 330 BCE–200 CE* (Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism 91; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2002).

[8] See chapter 13, "The Johannine Love Ethic," in Andreas J. Köstenberger, *A Theology of John's Gospel and Letters: The Word, the Christ, the Son of God* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009).

Perhaps the first external piece of evidence I should mention is the title "The Gospel according to John." Of course, this could refer to a John other than the apostle, but this is highly unlikely, since there is no other John mentioned in any of the Gospels who had anywhere near the stature of the apostle John, the son of Zebedee, and one of the Twelve.

Then, second, we see that virtually all the earliest Church Fathers refer to the apostle John as the author of the Gospel. For example, Irenaeus of Lyons (AD 130–200) wrote, "John the disciple of the Lord, who leaned back on his breast, published the Gospel while he was a resident at Ephesus in Asia" (*Heresies* 3.1.2). So we see that Irenaeus linked the authorship of John's Gospel directly to "the disciple whom Jesus loved" who is mentioned in John 13:23 as being at the Lord's Supper. Similarly, Clement of Alexandria (AD 150–215) wrote, "Last of all, John … composed a spiritual Gospel" (quoted by Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 6.14.7). So, we see that the earliest Church Fathers, who in some cases had a direct connection with the apostle John (e.g., Irenaeus was a student of Polycarp, who was a student of John), attributed the Gospel to him as the author.[9]

In fact, it was only in the late eighteenth century that a small group of scholars first began to question the apostolic authorship of John's Gospel. When I was a PhD student at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in the early 1990s, I wrote a detailed study entitled "Early Doubts of the Apostolic Authorship of the Fourth Gospel in the History of Modern Biblical Criticism," which was published first in German in the *European Journal of Theology* and subsequently in English in a collected essays volume, *Studies in John and Gender*.[10] In that study, I investigated works written between 1790 and 1810 which questioned apostolic Johannine authorship. What I found was that many of these doubts were not well supported by the historical evidence and often based on doubtful philosophical, theological, or ideological presuppositions.

In each case, defenders of apostolic authorship quickly arose who ably refuted all the arguments advanced against apostolic authorship.

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[9] Cf. Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 3.3.

[10] "Frühe Zweifel an der johanneischen Verfasserschaft des vierten Evangeliums in der modernen Interpretationsgeschichte," *European Journal of Theology* 5 (1996): 37–46; "Early Doubts of the Apostolic Authorship of the Fourth Gospel in the History of Modern Biblical Criticism," in *Studies in John and Gender: A Decade of Scholarship* (Studies in Biblical Literature; New York: Peter Lang, 2001).

Nevertheless, today scholars who believe that the apostle John wrote the Gospel are in the minority—not, I believe, because the historical evidence is lacking, but because critical scholarship has turned out to be increasingly biased toward traditional authorship of the Gospels and the New Testament letters as part of a reaction against the established church and an antipathy toward taking Scripture at face value.[11]

Recent Scholarship

In my work on John's Gospel, I have interacted extensively with recent scholars who dispute the apostolic authorship of John's Gospel such as Martin Hengel, Richard Bauckham, Ben Witherington, Robert Kysar, and many others. Martin Hengel, a leading German New Testament scholar and historian, speaks of a Johannine *Doppelantlitz*, that is, a "dual face." By this, he acknowledges that the internal evidence points in the direction of apostolic authorship but then goes on to argue that while the author wants his readers to believe the apostle John wrote the Gospel, he didn't in fact write it. Rather, Hengel argues that the actual author of the Gospel was the nebulous figure of a "John the elder" of whom virtually nothing is known other than a passing reference in one of the Church Father Papias's writings, which is now lost but has come down to us in the writings of the church historian Eusebius.[12]

Richard Bauckham, similarly, while defending the eyewitness nature of the biblical Gospels in general in his important book *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, at the same time somewhat inexplicably denies both Matthean and Johannine authorship. Similar to Hengel, Bauckham believes a member of the Jerusalem aristocracy, perhaps the host of the Last Supper, a man by the name of John (John the elder?) wrote the Gospel.[13] Ben Witherington, a prolific Wesleyan scholar who teaches at

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[11] You can read more about this in chap. 1 in *The Cradle, the Cross, and the Crown* as well as in the introduction to *A Theology of John's Gospel and Letters*.

[12] See my review of Martin Hengel, *Die johanneische Frage*, *JETS* 39 (1996): 154–55.

[13] Bauckham believes the apostle John, if he had been the author, would not, as he does in 21:2, obliquely refer to the "sons of Zebedee." However, I don't think this is an insurmountable objection, as ancient authors frequently referred to themselves in the third person. Note also that Jesus refers to himself in the third person as "Jesus Christ whom you have sent" in his final prayer (17:3). See Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 412–471.

Asbury Seminary, believes Lazarus wrote the Gospel,[14] while others, as mentioned, posit an anonymous "Johannine community." Interestingly, though, some adherents of the "Johannine community hypothesis," such as Robert Kysar, have changed their mind and now advocate a postmodern reading of the Gospel.

Why this almost inexplicable aversion to apostolic authorship, even by otherwise competent historians such as Hengel or Bauckham? It seems that there are some underlying presuppositions at work that preclude apostolic authorship at the very outset without adequate consideration being given to the actual historical evidence for apostolic authorship, both internal and external, which I have briefly sketched above. Apostolic authorship is typically ruled out *a priori* as a possible option—no wonder that such critical scholars arrive at the conclusion that someone other than the apostle John wrote the Gospel! Sadly, it is virtually impossible in today's intellectual climate to hold to apostolic Johannine authorship and to be respected and accepted by mainstream academic scholarship.[15] But then, to paraphrase the apostle Paul, it is a small thing to be rejected by mainstream academia; the only thing that matters in the end is that we are approved by God as those who accurately handle his word of truth (1 Cor 4:3–4; 2 Tim 2:15).

Conclusion on Authorship

Hopefully, I have proven sufficiently and beyond reasonable doubt for our purposes that the apostle John wrote the Gospel that bears his name. This will be an important foundation for the rest of our time together, for the following reasons.

1. It will clarify what we are talking about when we speak of "John's theology." We are talking about the theology of the

[14] Ben Witherington, "Was Lazarus the Beloved Disciple?" (January 9, 2007), http://benwitherington.blogspot.com/2007/01/was-lazarus-beloved-disciple.html.

[15] Incidentally, there are a few fascinating paragraphs on this in Leon Morris's excellent volume, *Studies in the Fourth Gospel* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1969), where he voices similar concerns. You can read up on this in my essay, "Leon Morris's Scholarship on John's Gospel: An Assessment and Critical Reflection on His Scholarship," in *The Gospel of John in Modern Interpretation (*Milestones in New Testament Scholarship; ed. Stanley E. Porter and Ron C. Fay; Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2018), 197–209.

apostle John, who was the closest eyewitness to Jesus during his earthly ministry.

2. A strong belief in apostolic Johannine authorship will provide us with a strong positive conviction as to the authority, accuracy, and reliability of John's witness, especially in a Gospel that highly prizes eyewitness testimony.

3. We have a strong basis for affirming that the theology conveyed in John's Gospel is coherent and flows out of intimate personal acquaintance with its main subject, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the experience of following him closely in discipleship.

While some would consider this a liability and allege that any personal commitment to the subject of one's work automatically results in bias and inaccuracy, I would disagree. It is very possible to be strongly invested in a subject and to be passionate about it and yet, precisely because one is passionate about a subject, to be committed to accurate reporting. To the contrary, if anyone is detached and dispassionate in their writing and thinking about a person like Jesus who staked such astonishing claims regarding himself, it makes me wonder if they really understand who he claimed to be and how earthshattering the significance of his coming is.

John's Prologue

In my two lectures later today, as mentioned, I'll walk us through the Cana Cycle in John's Gospel, chapters 2–4. But now, for the rest of my time with you this morning, I would like us to take a brief look at the prologue to John's Gospel, which is of supreme importance in understanding where John is going in his Gospel and how John's Gospel is distinctive and unique.

I can't stress the importance of John's prologue for understanding his Gospel as a whole enough. As we'll see, the prologue gives us the lenses through which we can view John's entire presentation of Jesus in the remainder of the Gospel. To provide a framework for our study of John's

prologue, here is a possible outline that shows that John most likely structured the prologue using a chiastic construction, ABCB'A':[16]

A: The Word's Activity in Creation (1:1–5)
B: John's Witness Concerning the Light (1:6–8)
C: The Incarnation of the Word & the Privilege of Becoming God's Children (1:9–14)
B': John's Witness Concerning the Word's Preeminence (1:15)
A': The Final Revelation Brought by Jesus Christ (1:16–18)

This could be a helpful outline as you teach or preach through the prologue. You could go through it in linear fashion verse by verse, or you could start with verses 1–5, then go to the corresponding bookend, verses 16–18; after this, cover verses 6–8 and 15 about John the Baptist and conclude with the center of the prologue, verses 9–14, which deal with the incarnation of the Word and the privilege of becoming God's children by faith in Christ.

The Incarnate Word

John opens his Gospel with the well-known words, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God" (1:1–2). This is an incredibly momentous declaration with its opening allusion to the first book in the Bible, the first verse in the book of Genesis. You can see right out of the gate why many believe that John has an exceedingly high Christology. What John is saying here at the very outset is that before Jesus was born as a baby in a manger in Bethlehem, he preexisted eternally with God the Father. As a matter of fact, as John continues to develop in the verses that follow, it was through Jesus—the preincarnate Word—that God spoke the created universe into being (1:3–4).

What is more, not only is the preincarnate Jesus called "the Word" and said to have been the agent of creation, he himself is identified as "God" (Greek *theos*) on par with God the Father, the Creator and Yahweh, God of Israel. It is impossible to overstate the impact that the opening

[16] I am indebted here to the work of the very astute Johannine literary scholar R. Alan Culpepper and his article, "The Pivot of John's Prologue," *NTS* 27 (1980): 1–31.

words of John's prologue have made on the subsequent history of the church's doctrinal formulation of the Trinity, the deity of Christ, and Christology in the early centuries of the Christian era. In many ways, we owe to John an immeasurable theological and Christological debt as he considerably deepened the presentation of Jesus as virgin-born, preexistent and divine in the other Synoptic Gospels.

This same preexistent Word through whom God spoke creation into being, John argues, subsequently became flesh in Jesus, who "pitched his tent" among his people (Greek *skenoō*, v. 14; our word "skin" is a derivative of this word), and John and his fellow apostles perceived his glory (Greek *theaomai*, a more specific word than the Greek word for simply seeing, a precursor of our word "theater").

The glory the apostles perceived in Jesus, John continues to elaborate, is that of the one and only Son—the unique, one-of-a-kind Son—of the Father, full of grace and truth (v. 14). Here we see a reference to Jesus as the eschatological (end-time) manifestation of God's presence in the midst of his people in continuity with previous divine manifestations in the Tabernacle and later the Temple, which, Scripture tells us, was filled with God's glory in Solomon's time (1 Kgs 8:11 = 2 Chr 5:14; 7:1–3):

> As soon as Solomon finished his prayer, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the LORD filled the temple. And the priests could not enter the house of the LORD, because the glory of the LORD filled the LORD's house. When all the people of Israel saw the fire come down and the glory of the LORD on the temple, they bowed down with their faces to the ground on the pavement and worshiped and gave thanks to the LORD, saying, "For he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever."

Now John tells us that in Jesus, God's glory had come to earth in all its fullness, and from this fullness, God's people had all received "grace instead of grace" (not "grace upon grace" as the ESV has it, because the preposition is *anti*, "instead of," not *epi*, "upon").

John continues, "For the law was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" (v. 17). In other words, the law was

good, but Jesus is better—so much better! Moses asked to see God's glory but was told he would not be able to see God and live (Exod 33:18–23). By contrast, John tells us in the last verse of the prologue that while "no one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known" (v. 18).

John's Sending Christology

Jesus, who eternally preexisted with God the Father, "has made him known"; he came to give a "full account" of God the Father (Greek *exēgeomai*; a loose paraphrase might be that Jesus has "exegeted" the Father). In this way, John tells us that we should read the rest of the Gospel as Jesus giving a full account of what God is like and to see both Jesus' works (especially his signs) and his words (his discourses) as a manifestation of God's glory.

As we'll see in my next lecture, when Jesus performs his first sign at the wedding at Cana, John concludes his account by saying that "his disciples saw his glory, and they believed in him" (2:11). And when later, in the Upper Room, one of Jesus' followers, Philip, asks Jesus to show him the Father, Jesus asks, almost as if Philip hurt his feelings by even asking the question:

> Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, "Show us the Father"? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves. (14:9–11)

In fact, John's entire sending Christology is encapsulated in the unity between Jesus the Word and God the Father, most likely due to Isaiah's influence, particularly his depiction of God's word in Isaiah 55:10–11:

> For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven
> and do not return there but water the earth,
> making it bring forth and sprout,
> giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,
> so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth;

it shall not return to me empty,
but it shall accomplish that which I purpose,
and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

Children of God

But I've saved the best for last. If John's prologue is constructed in form of a chiasm, at the very center of the chiasm is not the incarnation, the Word-become-flesh in Jesus, as important as this affirmation is theologically and Christologically. Rather, the central affirmation in John's prologue is found in verse 12 where John writes (I'm starting with v. 11 and continue through v. 13), "He came to his own, yet his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God."

The central affirmation, therefore, which has supreme relevance for all of humanity, is that "to all who did receive Jesus, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God," to be reborn spiritually by God. As we'll see in my third lecture, Jesus develops this truth further in his conversation with Nicodemus, the Teacher of Israel, in chapter 3, but John states this vital spiritual truth at the very outset of his Gospel. If we believe in Jesus' name, we are given the right to become God's children! In Old Testament times, God's chosen people were the people of Israel, but now this privilege has been extended to anyone who believes in Jesus (3:16). Can anything be more important?

When people later in John's Gospel ask Jesus, "What must we do, to be doing the works of God?" Jesus answers them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent" (6:28–29). As always, Jesus' answer is simple and yet incredibly profound. People were looking for works they could accomplish for God. But Jesus said, the only "work of God," the only "work" God requires of any of us is to believe in the one whom he has sent, the Lord Jesus Christ. To believe or not to believe, that is the question. So simple, and yet so profound.

That's one of the many things I love about John's Gospel. He reduces everything to the central question with which each one of us is confronted. It's as if John wrote his entire Gospel as an answer to the question Jesus asked his disciples as recorded in the other three Gospels:

"Who do you say that I am?" John's answer is given in his purpose statement at the end of his Gospel: "Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name" (20:30–31).

The Cana Cycle (Part 1): The Cana Wedding and the Temple Clearing (chapter 2)

In my first lecture, I've attempted to make a case for the apostolic authorship of John's Gospel, that is, the proposal that the author of the Fourth Gospel was none other than the apostle John. I've tried to support this primarily from internal evidence in the Gospel itself and showed that the external evidence also supports this notion. If I'm right, and almost 1,800 years of church history—not to mention the claims embedded in the Gospel itself—would agree, the author was a man who knew Jesus extremely well, probably better than anyone else ever knew him. That's really incredible. We shouldn't lose sight of that in the hubbub of the scholarly squabble about Johannine authorship.

During Jesus' earthly ministry, John would have been about thirty years old; tradition has it that he was the youngest disciple. In fact, he is often depicted in paintings with effeminate features, as was common in certain artistic periods with regard to youths. As some of you might recall, this was cleverly used by Dan Brown, the author of the *Da Vinci Code*, to suggest that the person on Jesus' side at the Last Supper was in fact not the apostle John but a woman, Mary Magdalene, who allegedly was Jesus' wife. Later, Karen King of Harvard University claimed to have identified what she called "The Gospel of Jesus' Wife." However, not too long ago she had to admit that this document was forged and inauthentic.

In any case, John was quite young during Jesus' earthly ministry, and apparently rather zealous. There is one episode recorded in one of the other Gospels where John and his brother James (likely his older brother) asked Jesus if he wanted them to call down fire from heaven when some Samaritan villages didn't allow them passage through their territory (Luke 9:54). This earned the sons of Zebedee the playful nickname *Boanerges*, which means "sons of thunder" (Mark 3:17).

Now, when writing his Gospel, John is half a century older and no doubt a lot wiser, probably in his eighties. He had half a century to reflect

on his experience of following the earthly Jesus and to ponder the significance of what had happened. He also had the benefit of several other Gospels being published which present in more pedestrian fashion—though still with great theological acuity—the string of events that took place during Jesus' earthly ministry, as well as much of his teaching.

In this and the next lecture, we'll study the "Cana Cycle" which spans chapters 2–4. In this lecture, we'll look at the first two units, turning water into wine and clearing the temple. In the next and final lecture, we'll look at Jesus' conversations with Nicodemus and the Samaritan woman and the healing of the Gentile centurion's son, which complete the "Cana Cycle." If you're teaching or preaching through John's Gospel, you could use the following outline:

1. Turning Water into Wine: Jesus' First Cana Sign (2:1–12)
2. Clearing the Temple: A Jerusalem Sign (2:13–22)
3. Jesus' Conversation with Nicodemus (2:23–3:21)
4. Jesus' Conversation with the Samaritan Woman (4:1–45)
5. Healing the Centurion's Son: Second Sign in Cana (4:46–54)

Relationship to the Other Gospels

Before we delve into chapter 2, you may find it helpful if we spend a moment to situate John's Gospel in relation to the other Gospels. As you look at these five units, you'll quickly realize just how unique John's Gospel really is. Matthew and Luke include accounts of the virgin birth of Jesus as part of their birth narrative. Both feature the Sermon on the Mount (or Plain), including the Lord's Prayer, recount Jesus' teaching on the kingdom of God, especially numerous kingdom parables, and Jesus' Olivet Discourse on the end times. Matthew and Luke also include a final commissioning of disciples: Matthew ends with the "Great Commission," while Luke writes a whole other volume, the Book of Acts.

John doesn't include any of these things: no virgin birth, no Sermon on the Mount, no Lord's Prayer, no teaching on God's kingdom, no parables, no demon exorcisms, and no end-time discourse! Instead, he features seven signs of Jesus, as well as seven witnesses to Jesus and seven "I am" sayings—do you get the idea that he likes the number 7? He also features Jesus, as we've seen, as the preexistent Word become flesh, includes the Upper Room or Farewell discourse, which is utterly unique, has Jesus' final or high-priestly prayer, discovers many ironies and

misunderstandings during the course of Jesus' ministry, and presents the entire story of Jesus as a grand cosmic battle against the power of darkness, in particular Satan, the "ruler of this world." He also says that Jesus' glory can be seen not only at the Transfiguration but throughout his ministry and states that those who believe in him have *already* passed from death to life (his famous "realized eschatology"). So, while John omits an awful lot that the Synoptics cover, he also adds a great deal of new material, not to mention beloved characters (some of which we'll be talking about later today) such as Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman, the man born blind, or Lazarus.

Scholars debate whether John knew about the three earlier New Testament Gospels, and if so, had read all or at least one or two of them, primarily because his Gospel shows so little overlap with them. In fact, the critical scholarly consensus today is that John wrote independently of the other Gospels (radical independence view), a reaction against the traditional understanding that John did know the Synoptic accounts but chose to write his own Gospel.

In an article published a few years ago, however, I have argued that a radical independence view is highly implausible. As we can see from Acts and the New Testament epistles, the early Christian movement was a close-knit network, a "holy internet," as one writer has called it.[17] I find it almost unimaginable that someone of the stature of the apostle John would have been unaware of the existence of several earlier Gospels, and that, if aware, he would not have wanted to read them before writing his own Gospel.

So, then, some of you may ask, if John knew the other Gospels, why did he make so little use of them? That's a fair question. My answer, in short, is this: theological transposition. By that I mean that John was not content merely to restate what the earlier Gospels had already competently and accurately set forth. Rather, he assumed much of the content of the earlier Gospels and transposed various theological motifs theologically to bring out the underlying significance of particular aspects of Jesus' person or work, just like in music you may transpose a tune into a different key.

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[17] Michael B. Thompson, "The Holy Internet: Communication Between Churches in the First Christian Generation," in Richard J. Bauckham, ed., *The Gospels for All Christians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 49–70.

Take Jesus' miracles, for example.[18] This is a very pertinent example since, as we'll see, the "Cana Cycle" features as many as two or even three of the seven signs included in John's Gospel. So looking at John's signs globally now will help us save a lot of time later when studying chapters 2 and 4 (there are no signs in chapter 3).

The word used for "miracle" in Matthew, Mark, and Luke is *dynamis*, "powerful work." The focus here is on Jesus' authority over the natural and supernatural world, including sickness, the natural realm, and the demonic. The only "sign" of his authority Jesus gives those who oppose him is the "sign of Jonah"—being in the belly of the big fish for three days and three nights, which, Jesus implies, foreshadows his own crucifixion and resurrection after three days.

Now look at what John does: he never uses the word *dynamis*, "powerful work," but instead selects seven messianic signs of Jesus:

1. turning water into wine at the Cana wedding (2:1–12);
2. clearing the temple in Jerusalem (2:13–22);
3. healing the Gentile centurion's son (4:46–54; all three in the Cana cycle);
4. healing the lame man in Jerusalem (5:1–15);
5. feeding the 5,000 in Galilee (6:1–15);
6. healing the man born blind (chap. 9; all in the Festival cycle); and
7. the climactic sign of Jesus, the raising of Lazarus, which, fittingly, foreshadows Jesus' own resurrection (11:1–44).

This theological and terminological recasting, I believe, is anything but coincidental; in all probability, it is deliberate and gives us a fascinating glimpse into John's thought world. John's seminal insight is that Jesus' miracles are not primarily a display of his power but a demonstration of his messianic identity. In other words, people may have marveled at the displays of Jesus' dazzling ability to transform water into wine, or even

[18] If you want more, by the way, you can read an article I've written on this topic, published in a scholarly monograph and posted on my website, where I list as many as twenty Johannine transpositions: "John's Transposition Theology: Retelling the Story of Jesus in a Different Key," in *Earliest Christian History: History, Literature, and Theology. Essays from the Tyndale Fellowship in Honor of Martin Hengel (*ed. Michael F. Bird and Jason Maston; WUNT 2/320; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2012), 191–226.

more so to raise a man who had been in the tomb for four days and was already exuding a strong odor from the dead, but they may still have missed the ultimate purpose of that particular feat – namely, to lead them to believe that the Messiah, the Son of God, had come in Jesus.

Remember John's purpose statement? "Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book (in other words, John was highly selective; compare the other Gospels); but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name" (20:30–31). The miracles are messianic signs! To miss their significance—the way they point to Jesus' true identity as the God-sent Messiah and Son of God—is to miss the very purpose for which they were intended!

So, what in the Synoptic Gospels is presented as evidence for Jesus' comprehensive authority as the messenger of God's kingdom—as Jesus says at the end of Matthew, "All authority has been given to me on heaven and on earth" (28:19)—John presents as signs, acts pointing beyond themselves to who Jesus is.

That's what brilliant theologians do: help us see the significance of certain events in deeper ways. Now don't get me wrong—I believe all four Gospels were written by men who were historically, literarily, and theologically competent and highly astute. But I believe John's Gospel comes at the apex, at the very peak of revealing the purpose of Jesus' coming and redemptive work, as John could build on the material presented in the earlier Gospels, wrote a generation after them, and was the disciple who had been the closest to Jesus during his earthly ministry.

Nobody Better

If you had been looking for anyone to write the fourth, final Gospel to be included in the New Testament, there would have been no one better than the apostle John. In fact, despite his characteristic authorial modesty, which is on display both in the humble title "the disciple whom Jesus loved" and in the concluding phrase "I suppose" in the last verse of the Gospel, this is exactly the claim John himself stakes in the Gospel. Take a look with me at a startling verbal similarity that makes an astonishing assertion regarding his closeness to Jesus. We've seen earlier that John says about Jesus in his prologue that "no one has ever seen God; the only God, *who is at the Father's side* (Greek *eis ton kolpon*), he has made him known (1:18). Structurally, John's Gospel neatly and

symmetrically breaks down into two roughly equal halves, often called "The Book of Signs" (chaps. 1–12) and "The Book of Glory" or "The Book of Exaltation" (chaps. 13–20), framed by a prologue (1:1–18) and an epilogue (chap. 21).

Chapter 13, therefore, kicks off the second half of the Gospel, similar to a play or a football game after intermission or half-time. The stage is set for the Last Supper: Jesus washes the disciples' feet and then reclines at supper with his closest followers. At this, John tells us that "one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved, [was] reclining at table *at Jesus' side*" (13:23). The Greek expression, *en tō kolpō*, is an almost exact verbal parallel to the description of Jesus being "at the Father's side" in the prologue (1:18)! Coincidence? Hardly. Especially since at the end of the Gospel, John writes, "Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them, the one who also had leaned back against his chest (Greek *epi to stēthos*) during the supper and had said, 'Lord, who is it that is going to betray you?" (21:20).

So, then, John is deliberately casting the "disciple whom Jesus loved"—himself—in a position parallel to none other than Jesus! Specifically, he is implying that the way in which *Jesus* was closely and intimately related to God the *Father* resembles the way in which he, *John*, was closely and intimately related to *Jesus*. This closeness to God the Father, in turn, put Jesus in an ideal position to explain God and to give a full account of him, just as John's proximity to Jesus put him in an ideal position to explain Jesus and to give a full account of him. That's an astonishing claim!

Add to this the fact that, as I mentioned in my first lecture, John is regularly featured alongside the apostle Peter in the second half of the Gospel. Peter, of course, is presented in the Synoptic Gospels as the one to whom Jesus gave the keys to the kingdom of heaven and who was the preeminent spokesman of the Twelve. In John's Gospel, however, John shows his own preeminence when it comes to his spiritual insight and closeness to Jesus.

At the Last Supper, Peter asks the "disciple whom Jesus loved" (who is at Jesus' side) to inquire about the identity of the betrayer (13:23–24). At the high priest's courtyard, it is again Peter who asks "the other disciple" to help him gain access to the courtyard, and that disciple is able to do so because he was known to the high priest's family (18:15–16). Later, on Resurrection Day, when Peter and the "disciple whom Jesus

loved" run to the empty tomb, John outruns Peter (though he respectfully waits for him and lets him peer into the tomb first; 20:8–9).

Then, in chapter 21, again it is the "disciple whom Jesus loved" who first recognizes the risen Jesus, at which Peter jumps into the lake to swim toward Jesus (20:7). Lastly, the parallel characterization of Peter and John comes to a climax in the final scene of the Gospel where Jesus recommissions Peter three times after Peter had denied him three times. Subsequently, when Jesus tells Peter that he will die a martyr's death, Peter asks Jesus, "But what about John?" In response, Jesus puts Peter in his place and tells him, in so many words, to mind his own business.[19]

So, you see, in each of the five scenes in which John and Peter are featured together, it is John who possesses unique spiritual insight or access to Jesus and becomes the gateway to such insight and access for others. This reinforces the parallelism between the evangelist's characterization of Jesus in relation to the Father on the one hand and of John in relation to Jesus on the other. The bottom line is this: No one was closer to Jesus during his earthly ministry than John! For this reason, no Gospel presents Jesus' person and work in a more perceptive and spiritually penetrating manner than does the Fourth Gospel. I believe this is what Clement of Alexandria meant when he wrote that "John, last of all, composed a spiritual Gospel."

I believe I've made my point rather emphatically that it does indeed matter who wrote John's Gospel. John had known Jesus like no other; he loved Jesus more than anything; and he wanted to share that love and spiritual insight with others who had not had the privilege of knowing Jesus personally during his earthly ministry. At the time of writing, he was a man in his eighties who had seen many of his fellow apostles and other Christians die a martyr's death in witnessing to their Christian faith. He had seen the Roman empire persecute Christians, herd them into the Coliseum, and feed them to the lions as in a circus. But he had also seen the success of the early Christian mission; Christianity—belief in Jesus as Messiah—had spread from Jerusalem and Judea to Samaria and the ends of the earth. He may even have seen incipient forms of the heresy of Gnosticism which diminished the humanity or deity of Jesus

[19] Though note that similar to the parallel characterization of John in relation to Jesus, the author also features Peter in terms parallel to Jesus: just like Jesus, Peter would die a martyr's death and glorify God by giving his life for his faith; 21:19: cf. 12:33).

or both. Perhaps this is why he insisted that Jesus was the eternal, pre-existent Word become flesh.

The Cana Cycle (Part 1)

For the second part of this study, I would like to now turn to the Cana cycle which covers chapters 2–4. This is a good example of John not merely repeating information found in the other Gospels but breaking new ground. Cana is not even mentioned in those earlier Gospels. Neither is Jesus' turning of water into wine. At the heart of the Cana cycle are Jesus' conversations with Nicodemus, the Teacher of Israel, and the Samaritan woman, neither of which is included in any of the other Gospels either. So, we have here rather unique material, though there is some overlap, such as the clearing of the temple.

Or is there? In the earlier three Gospels, Jesus is shown to cleanse the temple during his final week of ministry just prior to the crucifixion. Here, in John's Gospel, he is shown to do so at the very *beginning* of his ministry, the first time he travels to Jerusalem for the annual Passover. Is this another example of theological transposition? Some, such as Craig Keener, who wrote a massive, two-volume commentary on John's Gospel, say John here engages in historical and literary transposition, that is, he transferred an event that historically happened at the *end* of Jesus' ministry to the *beginning* for theological reasons.[20]

Personally, I doubt this is the case. When you look at the way in which John tells the story, the time markers are very tight. In chapter 2 verse 12 he says, "After this he [Jesus] went down to Capernaum, with his mother and his brothers and his disciples, and they stayed there for a few days." And then, in verse 13, he says, "The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem." John gives every indication that he tells the story chronologically. I believe history and theology go together. You can't easily elevate theology and sacrifice history in order to do so. Good theology respects history rather than changing or overriding it.

For this and other reasons, I believe it is more likely that John knew of an earlier temple cleansing by Jesus in addition to the one recorded in the earlier Gospels, and that he chose to include the former rather than the latter. Why would he do that? I believe the likely reason is that John

[20] Craig S. Keener, *John* (2 vols.; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2003), 1:518.

wanted to make room for the raising of Lazarus, the seventh sign of Jesus, at the climax of his narrative. In the earlier Gospels, the temple cleansing is that climax, the final straw, as it were, that broke the camel's back. Jesus frontally challenged the authority of the Jewish leaders who were in charge of the temple worship and the sacrificial system, and it became clear that there was going to be a head-on collision between their conflicting interests and claims. Now John, I believe, supplementing rather than contradicting the earlier Gospels, makes clear that Jesus challenged the temple establishment not just at the very end of his ministry but that he did so from the very beginning.

The Wedding at Cana: Jesus' First Messianic Sign (2:1–12)

Let us now look at the beginning of the Cana Cycle, the wedding at Cana, Jesus' first of seven signs in the first half of his Gospel, the "Book of Signs." In chapter 1, following the prologue, John began to narrate, in effect, Jesus' first week of ministry. The narrative breaks down neatly into several days, whereby each day is introduced by the phrase "the next day" (vv. 29, 35, 43). So, here we are, then, "On the third day." On one level, this completes the first week of Jesus' ministry. On another level, John may see here a parallel with creation week as part of the "new creation" motif in John's Gospel.[21] Also, John may be hinting at Jesus' resurrection, which also happened "on the third day" (cf. 2:19, 20).

Then, John mentions a wedding that took place at Cana in Galilee. The corresponding bookend to this is 4:46, which says, "So he came again to Cana in Galilee, where he had made the water wine." Notice that John himself draws the reader's attention to the fact that Jesus has come full circle, as it were, and that he has returned to where he started his ministry, the little Galilean village of Cana. Then, in 4:54, the "Cana Cycle" closes with the reference that "this was now the second sign that Jesus did when he had come from Judea into Galilee."

Many take this to mean that there are no intervening signs between the turning of water into wine in chapter 2 and the healing of the centurion's son in chapter 4, but I believe that 4:54 refers only to signs in Cana. In 2:23 and 3:2, you'll find two additional references to Jesus' signs, performed in Jerusalem, and I believe that the cleansing of the temple is in fact such a messianic sign. If so, there are actually three signs

[21] For further details, see my *Theology of John's Gospel*, 336–54.

narrated in the Cana Cycle, the two bookends being signs in Cana, plus an intervening sign in Jerusalem.[22]

But back to chapter 2. Notice that in the account of the Cana wedding, the only named character is Jesus. In this way, he is identified as the main character. Jesus' mother, his disciples, the groom and bride, the master of the banquet, and the servants all remain unnamed. The scene becomes the occasion at which a facet of Jesus' messianic mission is revealed, namely, that he is the bringer of great eschatological joy which is symbolized by the abundance of wine; and yet, his time has not yet come (v. 4). This, Jesus' mother fails to understand, which is why Jesus' reply to her request is rather firm: "Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come" (v. 4). As far as I know, this is the only ancient literary evidence we have where a man calls his mother "woman."

Interestingly, Jesus' mother is undaunted and simply tells the servants, "Do whatever he tells you," which echoes Pharaoh's words regarding Joseph in Genesis 41:55. Thus, John wants us to draw a salvation-historical connection between Joseph's help in times of famine and Jesus' help in times of spiritual famine in Israel. In this way, it's almost as if running out of wine serves as a parable for the spiritual barrenness of Judaism, along with the reference to the six stone water jars for the Jewish rites of purification in verse 6.

After this, Jesus goes about his task discreetly so as not to disturb the wedding or steal the spotlight, and more importantly so as not to reveal his messianic identity before his time. At the end of his account, John makes clear that Jesus' primary purpose was to reveal himself as the Messiah to his inner circle of disciples: "This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him" (2:11). This, as mentioned, echoes the statement in the prologue that John and his fellow apostles "perceived [Jesus'] glory" (1:14).

I said earlier that John wasn't so much concerned with the powerful works of Jesus (the *dynamis*) as he was concerned with the messianic

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[22] To pursue this further, see my article, "The Seventh Johannine Sign: A Study in John's Christology," *BBR* 5 (1995): 87–105, where I defend this view in some detail. On the connection between signs in John and Isaiah, see my essay, "John's Appropriation of Isaiah's Signs Theology: Implications for the Structure of John's Gospel," *Themelios* 43 (2018): 376–87.

signs (*sēmeia*) of Jesus. Notice how he doesn't even record the actual miracle. He refers to the master of the feast tasting "the water now become wine" in verse 9 almost in passing! In this way, John gets the ball rolling as far as Jesus' signs is concerned. In fact, the "first" of Jesus' signs is literally, in the Greek, the "head" sign (*archē*), the same word used in the phrase "in the beginning" in the first verse of the Gospel. So, then, this is the "beginning" of the perfect, sevenfold revelation of Jesus' messianic signs.

The Temple Clearing in Jerusalem: Jesus' Second Messianic Sign (2:13–22)

Moving right along, John weds (pun intended) the first sign in Galilee with the temple cleansing in Jerusalem at the occasion of the Jewish Passover. Again, Jesus acts the part of the Messiah. He drives out the merchants from the temple area with messianic authority because he is zealous for the worship of God. The backstory here is that the temple courts outside the actual temple building were the place where Gentiles could worship, but this was rendered impossible by the presence of merchants who had a currency exchange business going as well as selling sacrificial animals. Gentile worship, therefore, was supplanted by greedy profiteering and religious hucksterism.

Like David when facing Goliath, Jesus shows holy zeal and righteous indignation, saying, "Take those things away, do not make my Father's house a house of trade" (2:16). Similarly, he says in Luke's Gospel that his parents should have known he would be in his "Father's house," even as a 12-year-old (Luke 2:49). At this display of spiritual zeal for the worship of God and the sacredness of the temple, the Jewish authorities—who were in charge of the temple—challenge Jesus and ask for a sign of his authority: "What sign do you show us for doing these things?" (2:18).

I believe this is an example of fine Johannine irony where John uses the word "sign" with a double meaning. On the one hand, "sign" simply means proof of Jesus' authority. On the other hand, it means "messianic sign of Jesus," like the one he has just performed at the Cana wedding. This can be seen in Jesus' response. Rather than offer them another sign, he proceeds to explain the significance of the temple clearing he has just performed. He says, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." The double meaning related to the word "temple" here sets up

another misunderstanding. Jesus knew his opponents would think that by "this temple" he was referring to the literal temple while he was in fact speaking about the "temple" of his body. That is exactly the point the evangelist makes in verse 21.

Sure enough, the Jewish authorities take the bait and swallow it hook, line, and sinker when they respond, "It has taken 46 years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?" (2:20). No answer on Jesus' part is recorded, nor does there need to be. The reader understands that Jesus has just explained that the temple clearing was a sign of Jesus' messianic authority which symbolized the resurrection of his body after three days in the grave.

Incidentally, the reference to a 46-year period of building this temple, as most translations render it, is probably mistaken. We know from historical sources that the actual restoration of the temple *building* was accomplished in 17 BC during the reign of Herod the Great. The restoration of the remaining temple *area*, however, was not completed, ironically, until shortly before the temple was destroyed by the Romans in the year 70 AD. So, I believe what the Jewish leaders are referring to here is not the *duration* of 46 years of renovating the temple or temple area but the point in time—46 years *ago*—at which the renovation of the temple building had been completed:

- First of all, the word for "temple" here is *naos*, which refers to the temple *building*, not the temple area, which would be *hieron*.
- Also, "46 years" is in the dative, not accusative. The dative usually denotes a point in time, not duration of time, so the phrase is better rendered as a point of time "46 years ago" rather than as indicating a 46 year-long period of restoring the temple.
- Finally, the tense-form for "building" the temple is aorist, which normally refers globally to an act being performed; the progressive nature of an action is typically conveyed by the present or imperfect tense-form, neither of which is used.
- This, by the way, helps us determine the year in which Jesus began his ministry. With the temple's renovation having been completed in 17 BC, add 46 years and you arrive at 29 AD,

> which yields a date of AD 33 for Jesus' crucifixion assuming a 3 ½-year ministry.[23]

So, I would suggest giving the sense of verse 20 as: "The renovation of the temple building was completed 46 years ago, and you will raise it up in three days?" If so, the contrast here is between the long time that has passed since the renovation of the temple building was completed and the incredibly short time in which Jesus is proposing to rebuild a destroyed temple—a mere three days.

What is even more important theologically is that Jesus here presents his own crucified and resurrected body as the replacement of the Jewish temple! This is especially significant in light of the fact that when John writes his Gospel, almost certainly after the destruction of the physical temple in the year 70 AD, he knows that the temple has already been destroyed![24] So, what John is suggesting here is that those Jews, and any others, who were mourning the loss of the temple as a place for worship need no longer mourn. They can and should worship the risen Jesus instead!

You see this theme resurface in Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman where Jesus says that true worshippers worship God in spirit and truth, regardless of the sanctuary's physical location (4:24).[25]

Conclusion

With this, we've arrived at the end of this section of my study. We've explored the opening salvos of the Cana Cycle, the first sign at the

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[23] For more on the date of Jesus' crucifixion, see my article, "April 3, AD 33: Why We Believe We Can Know the Exact Date Jesus Died," *First Things* (April 3, 2014), https://www.firstthings.com/web-exclusives/2014/04/april-3-ad-33.

[24] On the date and occasion of John's Gospel, see *Theology of John's Gospel and Letters*, 93–97. See also *The Cradle, the Cross, and the Crown*, 355–61.

[25] To pursue this further, see the article I have written, in which I relate the composition of John's Gospel to the destruction of the temple and argue that John's Gospel was written, at least in part, to commend faith in Jesus in the aftermath of the destruction of the temple: "The Destruction of the Second Temple and the Composition of the Fourth Gospel," in *Challenging Perspectives on the Gospel of John* (WUNT 2/219; ed. John Lierman; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2006), 69–108.

wedding at Cana and the second sign at the Jerusalem Passover. I should add that John's concept of "sign" is broader than our concept of "miracle." So even though the temple clearing is not, technically speaking, miraculous in that it does not show Jesus overcoming any natural laws, it still qualifies as a Johannine sign, because John's concept of "sign" encompasses both the miraculous and the prophetic.

I've shown this in my article on Johannine signs where I survey the Old Testament concept of "sign" (Greek *sēmeion*). There I show that on the one hand, there are the "signs and wonders" Moses performed at the exodus which are miraculous, and on the other, the term *sēmeion* is applied in the Old Testament to prophetic symbolism, such as when the prophet Isaiah walks around stripped down to his undergarments for three years to signify the upcoming Babylonian exile (Isa 20:3).

While there is nothing intrinsically miraculous about the sight of a near-naked prophet, the Septuagint still calls this a "sign" because Isaiah's act prophetically visualizes God's future judgment on his people. I believe this is exactly the sense in which John here uses the word "sign" with regard to Jesus' clearing of the temple. In prophetic style, Jesus here provides a visual demonstration of the coming judgment of God on the people of Israel. The physical temple would be destroyed because God condemned Israel's corrupt worship. Instead, people must repent and believe in Jesus, the temple's replacement, in order to receive eternal life.

The Cana Cycle (Part 2): Jesus' Conversations with Nicodemus and the Samaritan Woman (chaps. 3–4)

In my first two lectures, I've tried to make a case for the apostle John being the author of John's Gospel. We've also spent some time studying John's prologue as it sets the stage for the entire rest of the Gospel. I've covered the first portion of the "Cana Cycle," chapter 2, where John narrates Jesus' first sign, the turning of water into wine at the wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the cleansing of the temple in Jerusalem, which, I've argued, constitutes the second sign in John's Gospel, one of Jesus' Jerusalem signs.

Now, I want to examine the remainder of the "Cana Cycle," chapters 3 and 4, where John features two parallel characters, Nicodemus and the Samaritan woman, and then concludes the cycle with the healing of the Gentile centurion's son. In this way, John shows Jesus' mission from Jerusalem (Nicodemus) to Samaria (the Samaritan woman) to Gentiles

(the ends of the earth). This shows that the early church's mission, as narrated in the book of Acts (see esp. 1:8), is grounded in the mission of none other than the earthly Jesus himself.

I believe this is one of several clues that John may have read Acts (or at least have been aware of its existence and basic narrative layout). Another clue, by the way, is the very fact that John structures his Gospel in two parts, as I've mentioned earlier, the "Book of Signs" and the "Book of Exaltation." In the first part, John narrates Jesus' ministry to the Jewish people, especially his seven messianic signs (all in part 1). In the second part, John narrates Jesus' ministry to the Twelve, the Jewish believing remnant, the new messianic community. This is where he anticipates Jesus' exaltation with the Father and the church's mission once he has been crucified, buried, and risen. So, you see, John sets out to accomplish in two halves of his one Gospel what Luke accomplishes in two separate but related volumes, the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts, which is yet another possible way in which John's structure and overall approach may reflect his awareness of other New Testament writings such as Luke-Acts.

Introduction: Jesus' Knowledge of People's Heart (2:23–25)

As we begin to study John's parallel accounts of Nicodemus and the Samaritan woman in chapters 3 and 4, we notice that they start, not with 3:1, but with 2:23, whereby 2:23–25 serves both as a conclusion to the temple cleansing and at the same time as an introduction to the Nicodemus narrative. If you're preaching or teaching on this portion of John, I would therefore recommend to start in 2:23 and go until 3:15 or 3:21. You could either preach two sermons, one each on John 3 and John 4, or do what I'm doing here and preach both together as a study of contrasts.

As mentioned, there are several links between 2:23–25 and 3:1ff that suggest that John wants us to read 2:23–25 as an introduction to the Nicodemus narrative.

- In 2:23, John writes that "many believed" in Jesus "when they saw the *signs* that he was doing." Then, in 3:2, Nicodemus says, "no one can do these *signs* that you do unless God is with him."
- Also, in 2:24–25, John writes that Jesus "did not entrust himself to them," that is, the people who believe in him, a play

> on words in the original: they "trusted" in him, but he did not "trust" in them. The reason why Jesus trusted no one is that he knew what was in people's hearts and therefore needed no one to bear witness about "man" (*anthrōpos*); he already knew what was in "man" (*anthrōpos*). Then, chapter 3, verse 1 opens like this: "Now there was a *man* (*anthrōpos*) of the Pharisees named Nicodemus … This man came to Jesus by night …."

When we reconnect what is severed by the English chapter division, it becomes clear that Nicodemus is one of the "men" (or "people") to whom Jesus did not entrust himself, because he knew what was in their hearts, and, despite their external expressions of faith, or even flattery, they didn't truly understand who he was.

In this way, we can see Nicodemus as representative character of people who profess to be open to Jesus but who lack true spiritual insight and understanding and therefore spiritual regeneration. Not only this, Nicodemus becomes a representative of all of Judaism, which, despite all their external religious rituals and temple worship, lacked true spiritual vitality.

This is reminiscent of Jeremiah's prophecy regarding a new covenant in which God would write his law onto people's hearts (Jer 31:31–34), as well as Ezekiel's vision of the Valley of Dry Bones (chap. 37) and his repeated predictions of future divine cleansing and renewal for God's people (e.g. Ezek 36:25–26).

The Nicodemus Narrative (chap. 3)

So, for those readers who understand the connection between 2:23–25 and the Nicodemus narrative in chapter 3, they will read chapter 3 with a hefty grain of salt. Scholars debate whether Nicodemus' coming to Jesus by night is symbolic of him being in spiritual darkness (personally, I tend to think that's just when he came, but it's possible that there are negative spiritual overtones as well; that's certainly the case with the reference to Judas stepping into the night at 13:30).

Opening Pleasantries

In any case, when Nicodemus calls Jesus "rabbi" and tells him that "we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him" (3:2), we are not quite ready to take

these compliments at face value, especially in a culture where opening pleasantries were commonly expected and extended before getting to the point of one's visit.[26] So, we're not surprised when we find that Jesus doesn't fall for the flattery either but instead immediately cuts to the chase. He completely changes the topic and gets to the heart of the matter—no small talk here—and says, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (v. 3).

This, incidentally, is the only time the kingdom of God is mentioned in all of John's Gospel (though Jesus speaks of his "kingdom" at his Roman trial before Pilate, 18:36), which normally eschews "kingdom of God" language and replaces it with speaking of "eternal life." For first-century Palestinian Jews, how one enters God's kingdom was a vital question, and Jesus asserts that one does so only if one has been "born again" or "born from above." The Greek word (*anōthen*), and, one presumes, also the Aramaic one, has the potential of double meaning, that is, it can mean both "again" and "from above" (e.g., the same word is used in the other Gospels when speaking of the temple veil tearing "from top to bottom," that is, literally, "from above," at the crucifixion; cf. Matt 27:51).

Nicodemus, lacking spiritual insight, promptly misunderstands and thinks Jesus spoke literally of being born "again," that is, a second time, when the readers knows Jesus was speaking about a birth "from above," that is, a spiritual birth, especially since John already talked about this matter in the prologue when saying, "But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God" (1:12–13).

The New Birth

So, Jesus clarifies in verse 5 that what he meant was that, "unless one is born *of water and spirit*, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." "Born of water" could refer to natural birth, or possibly water baptism, but more likely echoes Ezekiel's prophecy, as mentioned, where God says, "I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. And I will give

[26] Peter Cotterell and Max Turner have a great study of this in their book *Linguistics and Biblical Interpretation* (Downers Grove: IVP, 1989).

you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules" (36:25–27).

"Water," therefore, is an emblem, a metaphor, for spiritual cleansing, accompanied by God giving people "a new heart, and a new spirit." Many translations, incidentally, capitalize "Spirit" in verse 5, indicating that they think Jesus spoke to Nicodemus about a new birth by the Holy Spirit. Personally, I think it is more likely that Jesus was merely talking about a spiritual birth with a small "s" here. Look at the next few verses where he says, "That which is born of flesh is flesh, and that which is born of spirit is spirit. … The wind (Greek *pneuma*, the same word as for "spirit") blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of spirit" (vv. 6–8).

Again, most translations capitalize "Spirit" here, but I believe Jesus is merely contrasting a natural and a spiritual birth by way of the "flesh/spirit" (*sarx/pneuma*) contrast rather than specifying the agent of the new birth as the Holy Spirit, which would in any case have been all but unintelligible for Jesus' original conversation partner, Nicodemus, who simply replies, incredulously, "How can these things be?" (v. 9). Notice, how, unlike the Samaritan woman in the next chapter, who gets more and more into the conversation, Nicodemus' comments get shorter and shorter (cf. vv. 2, 4, 9).

In fact, this is the last we hear of Nicodemus in this story (though the fourth evangelist refers to him at two more later occasions, a Sanhedrin trial and Jesus' burial; 7:50–51; 19:39). First Jesus, and then the fourth evangelist, take it from there. Jesus, for his part, chides Nicodemus for his lack of spiritual understanding, saying, "Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things?" (v. 10). In other words, he should have known about spiritual birth from passages in Ezekiel or Jeremiah. And if the "teacher of Israel" doesn't know such vital matters, what does that tell us about the rest of Judaism?

In what follows, Jesus broadens the scope and shifts from the singular to the plural, mimicking Nicodemus' own language at the beginning when he told Jesus, "We know that you are a teacher come from God" (v. 2). Repeating Nicodemus' diction, Jesus therefore says, "Truly, truly, I say to you, *we* speak of what *we* know, and bear witness to what *we* have

seen, but you [people, in the plural] do not receive our testimony" (v. 11). Most likely, his reference to "we" in the plural includes previous witnesses such as the prophets or perhaps also current witnesses such as his disciples.

The Gospel of the Cross

Jesus goes on to say, "If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things?" (v. 12). The teaching about a new birth is not only elementary but earthly, while the teaching about Jesus' true heavenly origin and his upcoming cross-work is more advanced and heavenly. At this, Jesus identifies himself as the Son of Man who descended *from* heaven and will return *to* heaven and speaks of his future "lifting up" (echoing the third Servant song in Isaiah, cf. Isa 52:13) just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness (vv. 13–14).

You're likely familiar with the story in Numbers 21:4–9 during Israel's wilderness wanderings during the exodus. When the people complain that God brought them up from Egypt to die in the wilderness, God sent fiery serpents, so that many died. When the people repented and Moses interceded for them, God provided a rather peculiar means of deliverance. He told Moses to lift up a bronze serpent, and the life of every Israelite who looked at it and believed was spared. In the same way, Jesus says, God would lift him up, so that everyone who would look at him in faith would receive eternal, spiritual life (see the two later "lifted up sayings" in 8:28 and 12:32 – 34, esp. v. 33: "He said this to show by what kind of death he was going to die" which gradually reveal that by "lifting up" the evangelist is referring to Jesus' death on the cross).

Jesus was preaching the gospel to Nicodemus! In this way, the entire conversation with the Teacher of Israel becomes a penetrating and highly instructive case study of how to share the gospel with a nominal Christian, a religious person who thinks they are already saved when they're really not. You ask them if they know about their need for spiritual rebirth and proclaim to them that they can be born again if they believe in the crucified and risen Jesus. I've had conversations like this with my own mother, father, and sister, all of whom come from a Roman Catholic background where traditions often obstruct a true spiritual understanding and the central place of the gospel, just like they did in Nicodemus' day.

Jesus' Use of Typology

The device Jesus used to preach the gospel—from the Old Testament, I might add—to Nicodemus is that of typology. Typology is a device by which one establishes a historical, "typical" connection between God's acts in earlier times (the "type") and his later acts in salvation history (the "antitype"). Notice I said "historical." In the present case, the original instance (the "type") took place in the days of the exodus, while the corresponding event (the "antitype") was to take place in the near future, at the crucifixion. The pattern of correspondence was between an original "lifting up" of an object (the bronze serpent) and people's looking at it in faith and a later "lifting up" of another object (Jesus) and people's looking at him in faith.

So, there is a historical pattern of correspondence, based on the dual notion that history unfolds progressively along certain lines and that God acts consistently in history. What is more, not only is there a typical, historical pattern, the pattern is shown to be of an escalating nature. In other words, the pattern does not merely repeat itself, but there is a further development from type to antitype. In the present case, it's clear to see that the development is from the preservation of physical life to the reception of spiritual, eternal life. And there is also a massive further escalation from Moses lifting up the bronze serpent to God giving his one and only Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, and him being lifted up on a Roman cross as God's "lamb" who gave his life for the sins of the world (cf. 1:29, 36).

So, Jesus here provides us with a textbook example of typology in grounding his future cross-death in a scriptural antecedent of which Nicodemus would have been well aware. What is more, Jesus didn't merely show off his ability to unearth typology, he genuinely sought to illustrate the spiritual dynamic underlying the crucifixion with a biblical example to enhance its plausibility and scriptural undergirding, just as he tried to explain the nature of the spiritual birth by an illustration from nature, the mysterious character of the wind.

Transition to Evangelist's Commentary

Verse 15 seems to be transitional, moving from Jesus' words to the evangelist's commentary, as here we find Johannine language: "that whoever believes in him may have eternal life" (cf. v. 16: "that whoever believes in him should … have eternal life"). Verses 16–21, then, I believe,

should not be put in red letters in those red-letter editions, as they are almost certainly commentary by the evangelist. That, by the way, in no way detracts from the incredible affirmation of the beloved verse John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."

I've heard entire sermons preached commenting on this verse word by word, so we don't have time here to unpack it completely. I've written an entire article myself on an aspect of John 3:16 that I hadn't noticed until recently, namely that for Nicodemus, the notion that God loves the entire world would have been anything but self-evident, as first-century Jews commonly believed that God only loved Israel while reserving the Gentiles for judgment (see, e.g., the War Scroll at Qumran or, closer to home, Jesus' statement in the Sermon on the Mount, "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you"; Matt 5:43–44).[27]

So, this, then, is another aspect of escalation in Jesus' typology. While in the first instance, it was *Israelites* whose lives were preserved during the exodus, Jesus' cross-death would be an expression of God's love for the *entire world*, and as a result *whoever* believed in Jesus would receive eternal life. The reference to Jesus as God's "one and only Son" echoes the dual reference to Jesus as the "one and only Son" in John's prologue (1:14, 18; Greek *monogenēs*), another important indication that here we have moved from Jesus (who just called himself, twice, the "Son of Man," vv. 13, 14) to the evangelist.

Both references to Jesus as God's "one and only Son" and to God "giving" (rather than "sending") his Son also connect John's statement with the Abraham narrative in Genesis 22, the famous near-sacrifice of Isaac, who in the Septuagint is called Abraham's "one and only son" on account of the fact that he, not Ishmael, was the son God had promised to Abraham (Gen 22:2: "Take your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love"). So we see in the entire passage several vital connections between Jesus and the cross on the one hand and the Old Testament on the other:

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[27] "Lifting Up the Son of Man and God's Love for the World: John 3:16 in Its Historical, Literary, and Theological Contexts," in *Understanding the Times: New Testament Studies in the 21st Century: Essays in Honor of D. A. Carson on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday* (ed. Andreas J. Köstenberger and Robert W. Yarbrough; Wheaton: Crossway, 2011), 141–59.

references to Abraham and Isaac, Moses and the exodus, an important allusion to Isaiah (the Servant being "lifted up"), and another allusion to Ezekiel's prophecy of the new birth.

So much for "unhitching" the New Testament from the Old! We can see that Jesus and John here do the exact opposite. They show the grounding of the gospel in Old Testament narrative, typology, and prophecy and thus render the gospel more intelligible and skillfully illumine its deeper meaning.

The Rest of Chapter 3

We don't have time to continue our study in quite as thorough a fashion with the verses that follow. Following John's commentary in verses 16–21, he again shines the spotlight on John the Baptist (cf. 1:6–8, 15, 19–37) and presents him as the "friend of the bridegroom" who happily facilitates the wedding of bride and groom (v. 29). Just like the best man in a wedding, therefore, he must fade into the background so as not to steal the spotlight from the happy couple.

Jesus and the Samaritan Woman (chap. 4)

This, then, becomes the subject of the transitional statement in 4:1 ("Now when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John …"). So Jesus leaves Judea (cf. 3:22) and travels to Galilee by way of Samaria (vv. 3-4).

Verse 4 is interesting, because it asserts that Jesus "had to" pass through Samaria. The truth is, he didn't *have* to pass through Samaria. In fact, many Jews in that day took a longer route in order to *avoid* passing through Samaria, but apparently here the evangelist stresses divine necessity, that is, that Jesus "had to" pass through Samaria because this was part of God's plan. Again, there are interesting salvation-historical connections, this time with Jacob and Joseph, in verses 5 and 6 (Joseph's field and Jacob's well).

A Study in Contrasts

While the story of Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman is unique in and of itself, I believe it is clear that John deliberately juxtaposes this account with the previous one (Jesus' interchange with Nicodemus), in order to compare and contrast their respective responses. Consider the contrasts:

- Nicodemus was a man, she was a woman;
- Nicodemus was a Jew, the woman was a Samaritan, a hated, hybrid race;
- Nicodemus was the "Teacher of Israel," the Samaritan woman remains unnamed;
- he was a member of the Jewish highest court, the Sanhedrin, she was a nobody;
- he knew the Scriptures, she was mired in folklore and tradition;
- he was the epitome of morality, she was an immoral woman, who had engaged in a series of immoral relationships;
- he comes by night, she comes at noon; the list goes on and on.

Humanly speaking, Nicodemus towers over the Samaritan in every conceivable respect. And yet, John shows a dramatic reversal when it comes to spiritual understanding. We don't have time to go through the story in great detail, but we see a remarkable progression of the woman's understanding of Jesus. She first calls him "a Jew" (v. 9). When he tells her about her previous relationships in a striking display of supernatural knowledge, she calls him "a prophet" (v. 19). Then, when he identifies himself to her plainly as the Messiah (which, by the way, Jesus hardly ever did in any of the other Gospels; cf. the "messianic secret" motif), she concludes that he likely is "the Christ" (v. 29).

What is more, while Nicodemus fades silently into the night, the woman bears eloquent witness to her fellow Samaritans in broad daylight, inviting them to come to meet Jesus and see for themselves. The teacher of Israel is reduced to silence and exposed for his lack of spiritual understanding while the Samaritan woman turns into an evangelist! Quite a contrast.

This, incidentally, is in keeping with Jesus' pattern of reversal elsewhere, including instances where Samaritans emerge as the heroes of the story, such as the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25–37) or the story of the ten healed lepers (Luke 17:11–19). John's message for his original readers, and for all of us today, could not be more convicting: spiritual receptivity will often be found in those who lack status, power, and prestige in this world. You see this also in Paul's ministry in Athens where he is debating the philosophers and only a handful of people believe (Acts 17), in contrast to some of the less high-brow places he

visits where there is a much larger response and churches are established. As Paul wrote to the Corinthians,

> For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. (1 Cor 1:26–29)

In the case of the Samaritans, John tells us that "many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony" (v. 39); and then, "many more believed because of his word" (v. 40).

Along the way, we see Jesus breaking just about every social taboo upheld by first-century Jewish rabbis and scripture-literate males. He talks to a woman alone in public, and not just any woman but an immoral one from a hated, hybrid, impure race.

And he doesn't just talk to her briefly but engages her in extended conversation! He is even willing to take a cup of water from her when Jews "had no dealings" with Samaritans and didn't associate with them, which included not touching any of their vessels or belongings. He even accepts the Samaritans' invitation to stay with them for two days (v. 40). No wonder his disciples "marveled that he was talking with a woman" (v. 27)! This is another great example how knowing historical-cultural background can be really helpful in getting the full sense of a passage, as I've mentioned in my first lecture when I talked about the "hermeneutical triad" of history, literature, and theology.

The Healing of the Centurion's Son (4:46–54)

The "Cana Cycle" concludes with another of Jesus' signs, the healing of the Gentile centurion's son, which is narrated in verses 46–54. Like most of the other signs, startling numbers are involved (cf. the large amount of wine Jesus produces at the Cana wedding, the forty-six years vs. three days at the temple cleansing, or later the healing of the man who had been lame for thirty-eight years, the feeding of the five thousand, or the raising of Lazarus four days after he died). Here the story revolves

around the exact time—one o'clock in the afternoon—when Jesus healed the centurion's son long-distance.

As we conclude our study of the "Cana Cycle," chapters 2–4 of John's Gospel, we've seen that this portion of Scripture provides a fascinating case study both in *Johannine* theology and in *mission* theology.[28] With regard to *Johannine* theology, we see here three of Jesus' seven messianic signs selected for inclusion in this Gospel. All of these are public acts of Jesus designed to lead people to faith in him as Messiah and Son of God.

With regard to *mission* theology, we see Jesus provide textbook examples of engaging people from various backgrounds, religious and non-religious, moral and immoral, powerful and powerless. They are male and female, Jew and Gentile, those of high status and those whose status is low. In this way, the "Cana Cycle" serves as a powerful narrative demonstration of Paul's words in Galatians 3:28: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male or female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

Conclusion

With this, I've come to the end of our FTC workshop. I hope you've benefited from our brief exposition of John's prologue and the "Cana Cycle" in John chapters 2–4. Hopefully, this has given you a blueprint to follow as you study the rest of the Gospel. May God bless you as you serve him and as you faithfully proclaim God's word.

[28] I wrote my doctoral dissertation on the mission theme in John's Gospel, on John 20:21, "As the Father sent me, so I am sending you": *The Missions of Jesus and the Disciples according to the Fourth Gospel* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998). See also the chapter on John's trinitarian mission theology in *Father, Son and Spirit: The Trinity and John's Gospel* (NSBT 24; Downers Grove: IVP, 2008).

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What's Missing from #MeToo: How the Christian Worldview Defends a Woman's Worth

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When a Christian defends a woman's worth, she has a lot in common with the #MeToo movement. The basic aim of the movement was straightforward: a society where a woman might live and work without fear of being degraded, objectified, or harassed because of her sex; where a woman would be valued for who she is and what she contributes; where a woman's experience might align with the equality she ostensibly enjoys. In the fall of 2017, #MeToo started with the stories of a few female celebrities, women who were sexually harassed and assaulted by a media mogul in the entertainment industry. Those initial headlines proved to be the first breaks in a crumbling dam.

Then came the flood. Gymnasts, journalists, congressional aides, college students, Army cadets, Uber drivers, women – regardless of ethnicity and economic status – brought past experiences to the surface after years, decades, of silence. Then the reckoning came to evangelical churches, the floodwaters filling the divide between denominational traditions and doctrinal statements.[1]

[1] Robert Dowden, Lise Olsen, and John Tedesco, "Abuse of Faith," *Houston Chronicle,* February 10, 2019; accessed March 31, 2019; available from https://www.houstonchronicle.com/news/investigations/article/Southern-Baptist-sexual-abuse-spreads-as-leaders-13588038.php. Russell Moore, "Southern Baptists Face Their #MeToo Moment," New York Times, February 13, 2019; accessed March 31, 2019; available from

The #MeToo movement spotlighted the sinister problem behind harassment and assault: men abusing their power. The physical crimes committed against women were egregious, but compounded by the social, financial, and occupational leveraging that allowed these men to hide their corruption behind closed, and mechanically locked, doors.

Generations after the cultural revolution of second-wave feminism, women have become fully equal members of society. No profession and no office bars their entry. As of 2010, women comprised 47% of the American workforce.[2] As of 2014, they made up a majority of college graduates.[3] Despite these transformations, one wonders if much has really changed. Men still treat women as sexual objects. Even among the most ideologically progressive spheres, men sexually harass and assault women. Worse, as shocking as the accounts are, they hardly surprise. Women have experienced some form of sexual harassment in offices, campuses, and parking lots for generations. Eighty percent of us could describe it as "part of life."[4] How is it that women have achieved such

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https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/13/opinion/southern-baptists-sexual-abuse.html. Bob Smietana, "Bill Hybels Resigns from Willow Creek," Christianity Today, accessed March 31, 2019; available from https://www.christianitytoday.com/news/2018/april/bill-hybels-resigns-willow-creek-misconduct-allegations.html.

[2] Women in the Labor Force in 2010," *Department of Labor,* available from https://www.dol.gov/wb/factsheets/qf-laborforce-10.htm; accessed March 31, 2019.

[3] Jeff Guo, "Women Are Dominating Men At College. Blame Sexism," *Washington Post*, December 11, 2014, available at https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/storyline/wp/2014/12/11/women-are-dominating-men-at-college-blame-sexism/?utm_term=.56d500b221c2; accessed March 31, 2019.

[4] "The Facts Behind the #MeToo Movement: A National Study on Sexual Harassment and Assault," *Stop Street Harassment*, Reston, VA, February 2018, 7-8. Available online at http://www.stopstreetharassment.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Full-Report-2018-National-Study-on-Sexual-Harassment-and-Assault.pdf. Accessed March 31, 2018. The report found that 81% of women had experienced some form of sexual harassment and/or assault. Additionally, the report also found that 66% of women identified public spaces to be the most frequent location for sexual harassment. Harassment in a public space, known as street harassment, is any unwelcome communication that is sexual in nature. "Street harassment

advancements yet still contend for basic safety? What's missing from #MeToo?

From the beginning, the Christian faith fought for the dignity of the powerless, a category into which, at that time, most women fell. The cultural mores of the Greco-Roman world supported immoral and exploitative acts: rape, public sex acts, sexually perverse images, and pederasty were among the ancient civilization's common practices.[5] A free Roman citizen could rape and abuse his male or female slaves with impunity.[6] Prostitution, including forced prostitution, was also common and largely ignored. [7] Like a backed-up sewer system, the stench of the sexual slave trade was oppressive, yet few acknowledged it. Except the Church.

Patristic Fathers like Basil of Caesarea confronted the practice of forced prostitution, denouncing its wickedness and defending the innocence of the woman who was coerced into sexual sin.[8] The Early Church's influence helped lead subsequent emperors to criminalize sexual slavery. One historian claims the condemnation of forced prostitution to be an exclusive indicator of Christianity's effect on a culture.[9] To the extent that the Church influenced a civilization morally, that civilization acknowledged the dignity of human beings socially. By

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occurs when one or more strange men accost one or more women... in a public place which is not the women's worksite" explains Micaela di Leonardo, author of "Political Economy of Street Harassment" [*Aegis: Magazine on Ending Violence Against Women* (Summer 1981): 51-56]. "Through looks, words, or gestures, the man asserts his right to intrude on the women's attention, defining her as a sexual object, and forcing her to interact with him."

[5] Alvin J. Schmidt, *How Christianity Changed the World,* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004), 81. Angus, S. *The Environment of Early Christianity* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1931), 51.

[6] Harper, *From Shame to Sin,* `26. Draper, Jonathan A. and Jefford, Clayton N., eds., *The Didache: A Missing Piece of the Puzzle in Early Christianity* (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2015), 100.

[7] Schmidt, *How Christianity Changed the World,* 92. According to Schmidt, neither female nor male prostitution incurred religious, moral, or cultural shame. Kyle Harper, *From Shame to Sin: The Christian Transformation of Sexual Morality in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013), 15-16, 26.

[8] Ibid., 181.

[9] Ibid., 15-16.

the 4th century, the Christian sexual ethic had become the dominant influence over the Ancient World.

We need not veer into arguments of moral equivalence to see how this correlates to current culture. This society had once ignored systemic structures of exploitation wherein the physically, socially, and economically powerful objectified the physically, socially, and economically vulnerable for the purpose of sexual gratification. Christians transformed that culture through their public witness and moral influence in society. Today's Christians possess the same spiritual power by God's grace: the same gospel, the same Risen Lord, the same indwelling Holy Spirit, the same living and active Word. What is preventing us from having such influence again?

Excuses, perhaps? That our culture has drifted too far; that our hypersexualized, relativistic world is past the point of no return? Surely, we are not more debauched than Ancient Rome.[10] If we were, our collective conscience would be unmoved by the moral issues #MeToo revealed. That our culture has so entirely rejected the tenants of Christianity that it once commonly acknowledged, so that concepts like sin and salvation are too foreign to be accepted? Surely, we are not any more pluralistic or pagan than first century polytheism. That the Church in America has lost its cultural influence and is now socially marginalized and culturally persecuted? Few would be bold enough to say that we experience a fraction of terror inflicted upon our brothers and sisters of the Early Church.

It is unfortunate we have clichéd some of the richest concepts in the Christian faith, referencing them so frequently that we gloss over their meaning. The *imago Dei* is one such concept. Reasserting this doctrine requires proclaiming the value and status of an individual as an image bearer of the Divine, that one's personhood – and consequent dignity – is grounded and measured not in one's functional value in relationship to another person, but in one's essential identity in relationship to God.

The Christian worldview neither denigrates women not deifies women; rather, it dignifies women as individual persons. Valuing women as ontologically equal persons is among the distinctions of Christianity.

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[10] Charles Schmidt summarizes the degree of immorality when he says, "There was nothing in which they [the Romans] did not indulge or which they thought a disgrace." [Schmidt, Charles, *Social Results of Early Christianity*, (London: Wm. Isbister, 1889), 82.]

In fact, political philosopher Larry Siedentop states the West owes the regard for an individual as a moral being to the Christian conception of God as personal Creator of every person. A woman's social identity is thus subordinate to her God-given human identity.[11] Sister Prudence Allen notes that Christian philosophers were the first to articulate the theory of sex complementarity, the belief that men and women are equal yet significantly different. This theory contrasts other philosophies that either ignore the differences between male and female or claim one gender to be superior to the other.[12]

God created woman as man's corresponding equal. The essential equality of a woman is built into the Creation Narrative of the Christian faith. When God commanded male and female to rule the earth as His vice-regents, male and female received the same command, the same mission, and the same blessing (Gen 1:26-30). In Genesis 2, a retelling of humanity's creation, the Lord builds the woman from the man; ontologically, she is his equal, made of the same "stuff" as he is.[13] He is human, so is she. He is capable of intellectual reason and volitional action, so is she. His whole being reflects the image of God, as hers does. This is the human equality God created and Christ died to restore.[14] And it is worth defending.

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[11] Larry Siedentop, *Inventing the Individual: The Origins of Western Liberalism* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2014), 352. "Christian moral institutions played a pivotal role in shaping the discourse that gave rise to modern liberalism and secularism....The sequences began with insistence on equality of status, moved on to the assertion of a range of basic human rights, and concluded with the case for self-government" (359).

[12] Sister Prudence Allen, *The Concept of Woman: the Aristotelian Revolution 750BC – AD 1250* (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans Publishing Co, 1985), 5.

[13] Genesis 2 also describes the relationship between the man and the woman, namely that the Lord created the woman to be the helper corresponding to the man and that the Lord gave the man authority over and responsibility for the woman. For this purpose of this article, I limit my discussion to principle of human equality that the Creation Narrative establish prior to explaining the complementary nature of the male-female dynamic. For a biblical exegesis of Genesis 1-3 and its relevance to gender roles, see Raymond C. Ortlund, Jr., "Male-Female Equality and Male Headship: Genesis 1-3" in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2004).

[14] That the Lord Jesus restores and reconciles humanity to other humans is a result of His substitutionary death to reconcile and restore humanity to God.

The events of #MeToo are recent, but the problems are old, as is the list of tired, proposed solutions that fail to fix them. Among the efforts to prevent and correct the exploitation of women, two categories come to mind: educational and sociopolitical. Both of these approaches reflect an underlying belief concerning the root of problem.

There is an attempt to preempt the bad behavior by men through educating them of their biological makeup and its dangers. According to this approach, if a man exploits a woman's comparative physical weakness and commits a sexual crime against her, he likely did not know all the facts about his inherited neurobiology. Had he only known, he might not have perpetrated the act. Rape, after all, is just another evolutionary holdover. Randy Thornhill and Craig Palmer, two evolutionary socio-biologists, claim that rape has an evolutionary basis. It expresses a biological imperative to secure a mate and ensure reproduction.[15] But this adaptation is no longer necessary for human survival, so society must intervene and educate to prevent men from acting upon it.[16] Provided an educational system can inform men of their natural impulses during adolescence, *then* society can educate the behavior out of its male citizens.[17] In other words, convince a man that he is merely an animal and he will behave like a rational man. Even if we

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The primary reason for the atonement was for the forgiveness of sins. Consequently, one's union with Christ through faith brings restoration in every area of life affected by sin, including male-female relationships. See Articles 18 of the Baptist Faith and Message, 2000 as well as the Southern Baptist Convention Resolutions "On Reaffirming the Full Dignity Of Every Human Being" (2018), and "On the Dignity and Worth of Women on the Occasion of the One Hundredth Anniversary of Women as Messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention" (2018).

[15] Randy Thornhill, "Controversial New Theory in Terms of Evolution and Nature," *National Public Radio*, January 26, 2000. Randy Thornhill and Craig Palmer, "Why Men Rape," *Sciences*, Jan/Feb2000 (40/1): 33.

[16] Carl F.H. Henry notes that an evolutionary belief of human origins cannot give a foundation for universal and enduring human rights. [See Carl F.H. Henry, *A Plea for an Evangelical Demonstration* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1971.] The theory posited by Thornhill and Palmer demonstrates this.

[17] Thornhill and Palmer, "Why Men Rape," 35. "Most of all, the program should stress that a man's evolved sexual desires offer him no excuse whatsoever for raping a woman, and that if he understands and resists those desires, he may be able to prevent their manifestation in sexually coercive behavior."

were to affirm the absurd propositions of Thornhill and Palmer, their solution is insufficient. As any middle school teacher can attest: Despite heroic efforts, knowledge does not necessarily correct action. The Apostle James had something to say about knowing what is right, but failing to do it (Jas 4:17); education cannot reach the depth of this human problem.

Another proposed solution attempts to eradicate the socio-political influences that have mistreated or marginalized women. Any sphere of life that has normalized the exploitation of a woman must be eradicated or reformed in the social consciousness. According to this approach, organized religion often poses a threat to a woman's personhood. The external expectations of religious belief and tradition require women to adhere to socialized, gendered demands – particularly in the realms of sexuality, marriage, maternity.[18] Society, then, must remove religion and its influence on a woman's identity. Consequently, the only ideological safe-haven is secular humanism, a naturalistic worldview that rejects all forms of religious belief. Within secular humanism, a woman's identity, sexuality, and relationships are hers to define, unfettered by religions or relationships. One woman described secular humanism as essential to her freedom, claiming no woman can champion the rights of women without being an atheist.[19] But this absence of religious identity creates a vacuum. And that vacuum cannot remain empty. The socio-political solution tries to ensure a woman's equal value by tearing down the power structures and reconstructing her political place in society.

This view finds its roots in pre-feminist, French philosopher, Simone de Beauvoir, who placed the inequality of women in her socioeconomic and political status. As an ideological Marxist, de Beauvoir believed the only reason a woman married and bore children was because of her economic dependence; since she was isolated from the society's means of

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[18] Jessica Valenti, *The Purity Myth: How America's Obsession With Virginity Is Hurting Young Women* (Seal Press, Berkeley: 2009). Susan Douglas and Meredith Michaels, *The Mommy Myth: The Idealization of Motherhood and How It Has Undermined All Women* (New York: Free Press, 2005).

[19] Nasrin Taslima, "Why Secularism Is Necessary for Women," Free Inquiry, 35(2), 14-19, accessed May 1, 2018; available from https://secularhumanism.org/index.php/articles/6799.

production, marriage and maternity became social slavery.[20] Her financial dependence created a culturally acceptable form of prostitution.[21] However, if a woman could become an equal participant in the labor market, she would become the man's economic and, consequently, social equal. For de Beauvoir, a woman's equality depends on a State that frees her to fulfill her productive potential, without the restriction of familial ties or religious obligations.[22] While the solutions of secular humanism and de Beauvoir's Marxism sound compelling, they betray themselves. Their views do not eradicate religion; rather, they replace religion with politics.[23] The State becomes the new god, the ground and guarantee of a woman's identity that is unencumbered by the constraints of faith and family. We only need to recall Marxism's track record to remember that political secularism has never fulfilled its promise of freedom; an atheist utopia might sound like nice place to visit, but those who live there are always trying to leave.[24] The sociopolitical approach promises to create a perfect, just, and more righteous society, but instead it simply shifts and shuffles power.

Both of these approaches have the potential to bring about a modicum of cultural change. Education, society, and politics are pivotal to expressing our collective conscience. They might appear to offer a solution because each one presumes a moral code. The concepts of right and wrong undergird these arguments for cultural change. Curiously, however, few explain why we ought to follow *their* moral code.

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[20] Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex,* translated and edited by H.M. Parshley (New York: Vintage Books, 1989), 34-35, 137.

[21] Diana H. Coole, *Women in Political Theory: From Ancient Misogyny to Contemporary Feminism* (Sussex: Wheatsheaf Books, 1988), 155.

[22] de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex,* 121. According to de Beauvoir, a woman's improved status would come from her participation in productive labor, and her freedom from "the slavery of reproduction."

[23] Robert H. Bork, *Slouching Towards Gomorrah: Modern Liberalism and the American Decline* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2003), 24. Bork described radical politics as a substitution for religious identity, "a way to seek meaning in life."

[24] Ilya Somin, "Lessons from a Century of Communism," *The Washington Post,* November 7, 2017; accessed March 31, 2019; available from https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/volokh-conspiracy/wp/2017/11/07/lessons-from-a-century-of-communism/?utm_term=.c428df659dc1.

When the headlines filled with stories of men who exploited and objectified women with impunity, they outraged us. Across political, socio-economic, ethnic, and gendered lines, we experienced a righteous anger. Why? How could so many individuals of diverse backgrounds, lifestyles, and creeds know that such behavior is wrong, immoral, and punishable?

Morality presumes value judgements and value judgements presume objectivity. When we acknowledge objectivity, consciously or not, we acknowledge that some actions are right and others are wrong. This objectivity implies an appeal to an authority above such actions. Someone's implied authority, someone's moral code, will hold sway over our cultural value judgments. When we as Christians engage in the #MeToo movement, we have an opportunity to appeal to an Authority higher than *Huffington Post*.

A society's laws reflect its moral code, and implicitly, the authority on which it forms that moral code. If you want to get an idea of a culture's moral character, just look what how it punishes acts that it considers morally wrong. Since laws express values, then the values expressed in God's Law are worth considering. What does He protect? What does He condemn? For what acts does someone pay with a fine? For what acts does someone pay with his life?

The Law describes God's moral code. Of the books of the Law, Deuteronomy defines an ideal society that is both humanistic and progressive compared to other legal codes of its day – especially for women.[25] One Old Testament scholar calls Deuteronomy "the cradle for the modern world [and] for the humanism of human rights, including equal rights of men and women."[26] God's laws display both His justice and His righteousness. But they also delineate how as Israelite would fulfill the "Great Commandment": to love the Lord with all your heart,

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[25] This use of the term "progressive," should not be confused with the modern political ideology; rather, biblical law was progressive in its treatment of women compared to other Ancient Near Eastern legal codes.

[26] Eckart Otto, "False Weights in the Scales of Biblical Justice? Different Views of Women from Patriarchal Hierarchy to Religious Equality in the Book of Deuteronomy," in *Gender and Law in the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East*, ed. Victor H., Matthews, Bernard M. Levinson, and Tikva Frymer-Kensky, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 262 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 145-46.

soul, mind, and strength, and [the second] to love your neighbor as yourself (Matt 22:36-40).

Two laws in Deuteronomy protect a vulnerable woman from being exploited, either by a man or by a community. Deuteronomy 25:10-14 prohibits sexual slavery. A common practice in times of war included a man from the conquering tribe to capture a conquered woman and retain her as an object of pleasure. Hebrew law prohibited a sexual relationship apart from marriage and demanded that the Israelite man marry the captive woman. To our modern ears, this hardly sounds better – except that the Lord protected her legal rights. She was not plunder; she was a person.[27] The woman was not a slave; she was an Israelite wife, with all the rights and privileges Israelite wives could expect.[28] Should the man tire of her, he could not revert her to the status of a slave. This law sheltered a marginalized, foreign, pagan woman from the unrestrained power of socially powerful man. Old Testament scholar, Eckert Otto, describes this biblical provision as an unparalleled affirmation of women's dignity, "a moral revolution on the long road towards equal dignity and rights of men and women."[29] When Eta Linnemann, the former acclaimed student of liberal theologian, Rudolph Bultmann, discovered this Old Testament law, it changed her view of God and His Word, so much so that she converted to Christ. In Linnemann's view, any God who expended such concern for society's most expendable women is a God who values women as equal persons to men.[30]

Deuteronomy 22:25-27 defends a rape victim from being unjustly blamed for her assault. It assumes that her attacker overpowered her[31]

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[27] Rebekah Josberger, "For Your Good Always: Restraining the Rights of the Victor for the Well-Being of the Vulnerable (Deut 21:10-14)," in *For Our Good Always: Studies on the Message and Influence of Deuteronomy in Honor of Daniel I. Block*, ed. Jason S. DeRouchie, Jason Gile, and Kenneth J. Turner (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2013), 177.

[28] Jeffrey H. Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, JPS Torah Commentary, vol. 5. (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1996), 194.

[29] Otto, "False Weights in the Scales of Biblical Justice?" 145.

[30] Eta Linnemann, "God Cares for Women," in *The Woman's Study Bible NIV*, ed. Dorothy Kelley Patterson and Rhonda Harrington Kelley (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2012), xii.

[31] חזק in the Hiphil stem can mean "seize" or "grasp," an action that is amplified by the verb's root meaning (i.e., seize or grasp with strength, or make/become

and that she did not consent.[32] Biblical law acknowledged rape as a crime of violence.[33] In fact, this law compares the rape victim to the murder victim: neither of them wanted the act to occur and neither of them had the physical power to fight back. Our culture could learn something from this law – the community believed her and regarded her claim as credible.[34] The woman's testimony was enough to charge the assailant

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strong [against]). [Koehler and Baumgartner, *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, vol. 1, ed. and trans. M.E.J. Richardson (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994), s.v., "חזק."] *BDB* is less nuanced in its connotation, claiming the term means "take hold of," "seize," or "catch with violence." [Francis Brown, Samuel R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, ed., *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* [*BDB*] (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907), s.v. "חזק."] Other appearances of חזק in the Hiphil stem also signify violent force (1 Sam 17:35; 2 Sam 2:16; 2 Sam 13:11, 23-24). חזק can refer to the violent overpowering of another and, in the context of Deuteronomy 22:23-29, clearly denotes rape. Its only occurrence in this passage is the attack of the betrothed virgin in the field. According to Eugene Merrill, the differences in verbiage between the two scenarios depicted in verses 23-24 and verses 25-27 indicate the nature of the sexual act: the man "did not merely lie with her (as שכב suggests in v. 23, language that leaves open the possibility of her cooperation), but he seized her (חזק) and raped her."[31] [Eugene H. Merrill, *Deuteronomy,* New American Commentary, vol. 4 (Nashville: B & H Publishing Group, 1994), 305.] Merrill's explanation underscores the connotation of using force that חזק can have when it appears in the Hiphil stem.

[32] God's Law comes to their defense and expels this false shame. The issue was not *how* she expressed her lack of consent. The issue is that she did not consent. And therefore, God declared she was innocent.

[33] In her discussion of Jewish law and women, Rachel Biale explains this significant change in perception. Whereas rape had often been considered a crime of passion and uncontrollable sexual urges, today it is acknowledged as primarily a violent crime: "It is an act of violence between a man and a woman who are cast in traditional social and familial roles as strong and weak, dominating and subservient, aggressor and victim....The Bible includes a number of accounts of rape where the primary motivation is violence, not sexual gratification."[33] Thus, biblical law depicts sexual assault as an act of violence against a woman's person, a recognition not made in Western society until millennia later. [Rachel Biale, *Women and Jewish Law: The Essential Texts, Their History, and Their Relevance for Today* (New York: Schocken Books, 2004), 239.]

[34] Christopher Wright identifies the passage as an example of "paradigmatic" law, meaning that the text provided guidelines, or perhaps legal precedent, for

with the crime. Even more, God's law never shames the survivor or presumes that she must have said or done something to cause the rape. Instead, it lays blame with the man who raped her. In other words, no one asked her what she was wearing.

God's laws reflect His values. His people were responsible to protect a vulnerable woman and to ensure justice on her behalf. These laws also illustrate a principle taught throughout the New Testament: No one has unchecked power. Even more, one's power is to be used to serve those less powerful. Followers of Christ were not to emulate the religious and social elite who lorded their position over others. Instead, he who would become great must become a servant (Matt 20:26); he who would be called a leader must call himself a slave (Matt 10:44). The restraint of one's power, the use of one's position to serve the needs of others, characterizes the Christian.[35] All of this, of course, illustrates the fulfillment of the Law: love for God and neighbor (Matt 22:36-40).

There is common refrain in our political discourse: We cannot legislate morality. True, laws cannot make one moral and they certainly

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future cases. As Wright defines, this type of law consists of "the detailing of specific circumstances with a view to giving judges basic principles and precedents on which to evaluate the great variety of individual cases that might come before them." [Christopher Wright, *Deuteronomy*, New International Biblical Commentary, vol. 4 (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1996), 244.] Thus, rather than being absolute rulings, this text may have been a general model that underscored the severity of sexual sin and its impact on the family and community. Christopher Ansberry explains: "These regulations were not literal, hard-and-fast rulings; they were models or extreme paradigms designed to express the gravitas of sexual offenses and their socio-religious implications for the family as well as the Israelite community." [Christopher B. Ansberry, "Response to Reeder," *Ex Auditu* 28 (2012): 145.] Given this definition of paradigmatic law, Deut 22:25-27 would have informed legislative conclusions on situations not explicitly described in the text. For example, concerning the sexual assault of a married woman, consent would be considered and applied in accordance with the case of the rape of the betrothed virgin in verses 23-27.

[35] Incidentally, this is answers the question of whether biblical submission in marriage leads to abuse. See Russell D. Moore, "Guest Editorial: O. J. Simpson is Not a Complementarian: Male Headship and Violence against Women," *Journal For Biblical Manhood And Womanhood* 12, no. 1 (2007): 4, accessed April 21, 2016, http://cbmw.wpengine.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/12-1.pdf.

cannot make one love his neighbor. Still, our nation legislates morality with every law it passes. Today's greatest debates in the public square – abortion, healthcare, climate change, taxation, immigration, prison reform – are competing moral arguments. In his book, *Strength to Love,* Martin Luther King, Jr. described both the necessity and limits of laws. Legal measures could ensure "enforceable obligations," but could not create a heart that would willingly obey the unenforceable law of love.[36] The #MeToo movement is not the same as the Civil Rights movement; the systematic discrimination against black Americans is its own category of injustice. But we can learn from what King says about the relationship between laws and morals. While legislation cannot produce the higher law of love, they are indispensable to solving social injustice. "Judicial decrees may not change the heart," he explains, "but they can restrain the heartless."[37] Thus, we cannot achieve a society that values a woman's dignity without righteous laws that proportionately punish offenders who violate that dignity.[38]

In 2016, a Stanford University student was convicted of raping a female college student while she was unconscious. He was sentenced six months in jail. He got out after three months. The reasons for his light sentencing included that he was a competitive swimmer, and that the assault was his first offense.[39] In 2018, a University of Wisconsin-

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[36] Martin Luther King, Jr. *Strength to Love* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010), 28-29.

[37] Ibid., 29.

[38] Women often do not report sexual violence for several reasons, including the fear of being blamed or disbelieved. But even after women do report a sexual crime, their attacker can receive a light sentence upon conviction. See Meghan Keneally, "Inappropriately Light Sentences' in Sexual Assault Cases Can Hurt Reporting Of Future Crimes: Experts," *ABC News,* December 20, 2018; accessed March 31, 2019; available from https://abcnews.go.com/US/inappropriately-light-sentences-sexual-assault-cases-hurt-reporting/story?id=59748226.

[39] Emanuella Grinberg and Catherine E. Shoichet, "Brock Turner Released From Jail After Serving 3 Months For Sexual Assault," *CNN* September 2, 1016; accessed April 1, 2019; available from https://www.cnn.com/2016/09/02/us/brock-turner-release-jail/index.html. Liam Stack, "Light Sentence for Brock Turner in Stanford Rape Case Draws Outrage," *The New York Times,* June 6, 2016, accessed April 1, 2019; available

Madison student admitted to stalking, choking, and raping multiple women on campus. He received three years in prison.[40] A Massachusetts judge gave 2-years' probation to a high school student who assault two women while they were unconscious.[41] A Texas judge sentenced a man who pleaded guilty to rape to a deferred probation and ordered him to pay for the woman's counseling fees.[42] A 47-year-old business teacher was sentenced to 30 days in jail after he pleaded guilty to raping a 14-year-old student. She committed suicide while the case was pending trial.[43] We see what our laws value.

When the Church defends a woman's worth, she has a lot in common with the #MeToo movement. For the Church, injustice against a human being is not only anti-human, but anti-God.[44] Thus, she establishes her moral judgments on the objective authority of God revealed through His Word. She condemns the abuse of women as a violation of their created worth and equality. And she champions righteous laws inasmuch as they reflect the ethical patterns of justice established in God's Law. For the Church, fighting for the dignity of women is part of her mission (Matt

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from https://www.nytimes.com/2016/06/07/us/outrage-in-stanford-rape-case-over-dueling-statements-of-victim-and-attackers-father.html.

[40] Rebecca Klopf, "Light Sentence for Man Convicted of Sexual Assaults, Stalking While At Wisconsin College Draws Ire," *ABC 15,* June 22, 2018; accessed March 31, 2019; available from https://www.abc15.com/news/national/light-sentence-for-man-convicted-of-sexual-assaults-stalking-while-at-wisconsin-college-draws-ire.

[41] Christine Hauser, "Judge's Sentencing in Massachusetts Sexual Assault Case Reignites Debate on Privilege," *The New York Times,* August 24, 2016; accessed March 31 2019, available from https://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/25/us/david-becker-massachusetts-sexual-assault.html?_r=0

[42] Kristen Hoppa, "Man Receives Probation For 2013 Sex Assault Of Baylor Student," October 23, 2017; *Waco Tribune-Herald,* accessed March 31, 2019; available from https://www.wacotrib.com/news/courts_and_trials/man-receives-probation-for-sex-assault-of-baylor-student/article_cd001f25-9ef6-5a2a-8b02-ecad2c4c917e.html.

[43] M. Alex Johnson, "Montana Judge Defends Decision To Sentence Teacher To Just 30 Days For Sex With 14-Year-Old," August 29, 2013; accessed March 31, 2019; available from https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/montana-judge-defends-decision-sentence-teacher-just-30-days-sex-flna8C11028610.

[44] Henry, *A Plea for Evangelical Demonstration,* 14.

5:13-16). Those who bear His name must defend the worth those who bear His image.

When John Stott described the relationship between the Great Commission and social action over 40 years ago, he addressed two misunderstandings, both of which are instructive for the Church today. The first is the idea that social action is a means to evangelism, a preliminary tool make the gospel credible. For Stott, this tactic emits the "smell of hypocrisy," a humanitarian act with an ulterior motive. The second method views social action as a manifestation of our evangelism, that our altruistic acts *become* our proclamation of the gospel. Stott finds this view untenable as well, since good works become a means to an end. Instead, Stott offers a third perspective: that social action is the partner of evangelism. Here, the two ministries belong to each yet remain distinct; neither evangelism nor service is a means to an end since both express unfeigned love. The Great Commission ("go and make disciples") and the Great Commandment ("love your neighbor") equally fulfill the Christian's mission: to love and serve the world in which God sent us, just as the Lord Jesus did.[45]

As we survey the aftermath of the flood, the Church in the #MeToo era has come to a crucial point. We can refuse our responsibility and isolate ourselves in the safety of our religious silos. We can rebuke immorality from a "safe" distance, rather than involve ourselves lives and pains of others. Or, we can run to wreckage and face the devastation in our culture, and in our churches, with unflinching resolve and unrelenting hope.

What's missing from #MeToo is the influence of the redeemed, ministers of reconciliation who have first been reconciled to God, ambassadors of Christ who are constrained by His unenforceable law of love (2 Cor 5:14-21).

What's missing from #MeToo is us.

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[45] John Stott, *Christian Mission in the Modern World* (IVP Books, 2015), 15-33.

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C. S. Lewis and T. S. Eliot: Unlikely Partners in Mythopoeic Pilgrimage

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An author should never conceive himself as bringing into existence beauty or wisdom which did not exist before, but simply and solely as trying to embody in terms of his own art some reflection of eternal Beauty and Wisdom.
— C.S. Lewis, "Christianity and Literature"

C.S. Lewis despised the British Modernist innovations from the start. Thinking them unnecessarily rebellious, and even nonsensical, he argued against them in many forums. In letters to friends he criticized the "New Criticism," sometimes mentioning T. S. Eliot specifically, for whom he reserved special professional ire. His disdain for perhaps Eliot's most famous poem, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," is most obvious. In *A Preface to Paradise Lost*, for instance, Lewis takes Eliot to task as an example of the new poetic excesses. He draws his views from I. A. Richards's *Practical Criticism: A Study of Literary Judgement*, and views Eliot's "Prufrock" as an example of a poet using the wrong "stock responses," seeing this practice arising from "a decay in Logic" and a "Romantic Primitivism."[1] For Lewis, the New Criticism represented a fake front, preventing both poet and reader from being completely honest. He specifically criticizes Eliot's opening lines in "Prufrock":

> Let us go then, you and I,
> the evening is spread out against the sky
> Like a patient etherised upon a table[.][2]

[1] C.S. Lewis, *A Preface to Paradise Lost* (London: Oxford, 1961), 55.
[2] Eliot, T.S. "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," in *"The Waste Land" and Other Poems* (San Diego: Harcourt Brace, 1962), ll. 1-3.

Lewis comments:

> I have heard Mr. Eliot's comparison of evening to a patient on an operating table praised, Nay gloated over, not as a striking picture of sensibility in decay, but because it was so 'pleasantly unpleasant.' ... When poisons become fashionable they do not cease to kill.[3]

Lewis even responds in a poem of his own, "A Confession":

> For twenty years I've stared my level best
> To see if evening—any evening—would suggest
> A patient etherized upon a table;
> In vain. I simply wasn't able.[4]

It is obvious that Lewis detested the poetic liberties Eliot embraced. The New Criticism, for Lewis, constituted a rejection of the goodness of all poetry before the Modern Era; thus, Eliot could not escape Lewis's wide net of critique. Lewis argued against Eliot's techniques in "Shelley, Dryden, and Mr. Eliot," a rejoinder to Eliot's own "John Dryden." Lewis was upset by Eliot's apparent rejection of Romanticism. Because Lewis himself recalled his early love for Romanticism as the germinations of the *Sehnsucht* that led him to his religious faith, he stood opposed to Counter-Romantics like Eliot who seemed to criticize Shelley and others, and who attacked the "religion" they thought Romanticism unnecessarily introduced.

Lewis's dislike for Eliot's style and ideas finds its way into his fiction as well. The first fictional piece Lewis published after his conversion to Christianity, of course, was *The Pilgrim's Regress*, an allegorical tale of his journey to faith (and a twist on Bunyan's classic allegory). In *Regress*, Lewis allegorizes Eliot(!) as the Neo-Angular, a man who talks as though he sees things invisible.

The 19th-century literary traditions form much of Lewis's style, and he was a writer philosophically grounded in and spiritually committed to

[3] C.S. Lewis, *A Preface to Paradise Lost*, 56-57.
[4] C.S Lewis, *Poems* (San Diego: Harcourt Brace, 1992), (ll. 13-16).

the past. And, as Patrick Adcock once put it, Lewis believed "20th-century critics have overreacted in their rejection of 19th-century conventions."[5]

Despite apparent differences, however, Lewis's and Eliot's work shares many commonalities, more than perhaps either would admit and more than they are typically given credit for. For all of Lewis's post-conversion sniping at Eliot's poetry, the pre-conversion work of both men (Eliot's conversion to orthodox Christianity was made public in 1927) represent similar concerns. In retrospect, Lewis's view of myth and "literary religiousness" apply to Eliot's work. Both poets' early verse share common concerns, also. As Eliot's early poetry seeks to recover the "lost story" by creating a verbal collage of divergent philosophies, religions, and folklores, Lewis's early poetry evidenced his desire to integrate his Modernist atheism with classical mythologies. The two writers appear to echo each other's concerns.

The controlling metaphor in Eliot's "The Waste Land," and most of his other poetry, is that of "broken images." He writes:

> . . . Son of man,
> You cannot say, or guess, for you know only
> A heap of broken images, where the sun beats . . .[6]

Eliot's poetic style resembles this "broken image" idea as it runs stream-of-consciousness through fragments of thoughts and pictures, becoming a type of literary Cubism — abstract on purpose. This metaphor actually resembles one of Lewis's own. In the second installment of his Space Trilogy, *Perelandra*, Lewis's protagonist Ransom reflects:

> Our mythology is based on a solider reality than we dream: but it is also at an almost infinite distance from that base. . . . Ransom at last understood why mythology was what it was—gleams of celestial strength and beauty falling on a jungle of filth and imbecility.[7]

For Eliot, the variant world mythologies reflected a universal mythos. Each strand of tradition was a broken image. Piled in a heap, though, with

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[5] Patrick Adcock, "C.S. Lewis," in *Critical Survey of Literary Theory*, Vol. 2. Ed. Frank N. Magill (Pasadena: Salem, 1987), 893.

[6] T.S. Eliot, "The Waste Land," in *"The Waste Land" and Other Poems* (San Diego: Harcourt Brace, 1962), ll. 20-22.

[7] C.S. Lewis, *Perelandra* (New York: Macmillan, 1965), 201.

the sun (the Son?) illuminating them, a brighter reality shines through. Lewis's view concurs: the variant mythologies are individual "gleams" illuminating the "jungle of filth." The "heap of broken images" and "gleams of strength and beauty" are parallel ideas.

The way these metaphors function in their works carries the idea even further. Their philosophies of myth and literature are not widely divergent. For Eliot, "the living of a myth consists of viewing reality in light of the imagination" (William Skaff, *The Philosophy of T. S. Eliot*). For Lewis, as Gilbert Meilaender wrote in an 1999 issue of *First Things*, "imagination was the organ of meaning."[8] The literature of Eliot and Lewis synthesizes their imaginations with their ideologies. Viewing myth similarly as they do, the prevalence and purpose of allusions to myth, religion, folklore, and literature appear synonymous in their writing.

Eliot's "The Waste Land" employs the mythic quest as its structural theme. The poem in fact embodies the "form of myth."[9] The crossing of water, the acceptance of journey—these are conventions evident in the fragments of descriptions. Eliot apparently believes the universal concept of the quest hints at a true pilgrimage. "The Waste Land" embarks on this pilgrimage, reading the sign posts on the way, watching the heavens and ruminating on the ruins around. Each experience in the poem—love, frustration, adventure, prognostication—are meant as clues to an over-arching story. It is unfortunate that Lewis did not realize the similarity between this approach and his own. Of *The Pilgrim's Regress*, Andrew Wheat writes, "Lewis's pilgrim maps a path between relativist ideology and superstition. Lewis treats the Christian life as a quest and a dialectic rather than a series of questions."[10]

Implicit in Lewis's allegorical pilgrimage is the salvation-as-process idea. Given this idea, one would assume Lewis might appreciate Eliot's processional in "The Waste Land." And given Eliot's own conversion, the view of his poetry as processional in the Lewisian sense is not too far off base.

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[8] Gilbert Meilaender, "Lewis Remembered," in *First Things*, Vol. 95 (August / September 1999), 61.

[9] Lee Oser, "Eliot, Frazer, and the Mythology of Modernism, in *The Southern Review* Vol. 32.1. (Winter 1996), 183.

[10] Andrew Wheat, "The Road Before Him: Allegory, Reason, and Romanticism in C.S. Lewis' *The Pilgrim's Regress*," in *Renascence: Essays on Values in* Literature, Vol. 51.1. (Fall 1998), 21.

Had Lewis purposefully compared his first published poetry to Eliot's "The Waste Land," he would have discovered more similarities than differences. Lewis's long-form verse *Spirits in Bondage*, with its subtitle "A Cycle of Lyrics," represents his immature atheism. At that time in his life, Lewis perceived Beauty as the only true spirituality. Influenced by his experiences in the first World War, Lewis expresses his conviction that nature is malevolent. This is a far cry from his post-conversion views, of course, but the "gleam of celestial beauty" is there—the seed, if you will, of what is filled in later by full Christian theism. The concept behind *Spirits in Bondage*, differing metrical forms revolving around a central idea, is reminiscent of Eliot's masterpiece. The cyclical approach suits both poets' efforts, though Lewis's work is a collection of poems and Eliot's is one. Lewis considered his poems in this volume as parts of a whole, however, and this approach is comparable to "The Waste Land's" episodes.

From the start, Lewis's *Spirits in Bondage* alludes to a figure with a key part in Eliot's "The Waste Land." In the first poem, "Prologue," Lewis writes:

> As of old Phoenician men, to the Tin Isles sailing
> Straight against the sunset and the edges of the earth,
> Chanted loud above the storm and strange sea's wailing . . .[11]

Here, in the first three lines of Lewis's work, one finds the Phoenician sailor, a critical element to Eliot's poem. Lewis begins his Cycle with the quest motif, integrating classical archetypes into his presentation of a journey. Eliot's protagonist in "The Waste Land" is the Phoenician sailor who steers through the ruins and whirlpools of time in search of a turning point in life.

The similarities between the two writers' mythopoeic sensibilities don't end there. In *Spirits in Bondage*, Lewis's poem "Spooks" follows a man who feels dead inside and thinks himself a ghost to the outside world. In the last stanza he recalls:

> So thus I found my true love's house again
> And stood unseen amid the winter night

[11] C.S. Lewis, *Spirits in Bondage: A Cycle of Lyrics* (San Diego: Harcourt Brace, 1984), ll. 1-3.

And the lamp burned within, a rosy light,
And the wet street was shining in the rain.[12]

These lines are eerily similar to Eliot's "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock." Prufrock, whether actually inside the room or not, views the party as apart from himself. Both poems feature this sense of detachment, this burning of unrequited love or internal emptiness. The voices in "Prufrock" and "Spooks" are disenchanted, disillusioned, and distanced from life. Even the environmental descriptions in the two poems share images: Eliot has "pools that stand in drains" (l. 18), and Lewis has "wet street shining in the rain" (l. 16). The speakers in each poem echo distance from "the light."

Returning to Eliot's "The Waste Land" as a primary indicator of the poet's mission, more similarities to Lewisian poetry are found. The description of a "turning of the tide" appears in "The Waste Land" both explicitly and implicitly. Eliot writes:

The river sweats
Oil and tar
The barges drift
With the turning tide . . . [13]

This "turning" is a recurring theme in the poem, elucidated most clearly through the Wheel tarot card and illustrating Eliot's notions of time and history as cyclical. The turning motion is an exquisite companion for the poem's entire lyrical movement as well. In *Poems*, Lewis includes a piece called "The Turn of the Tide" about the birth of Jesus. The poem singles out the moment of the birth of the Word Incarnate as the turning point in time and space:

The vibrant dithyramb shook Libra and the Ram,
The brains of Aquarius spun round . . . [14]

For Lewis, the turning tide is the birth of Christ. For Eliot it is the attempt by man to resist the degenerative flow of "modern" ideas. Eliot's view emerges from his ideas of culture and history. Lewis's view is similar

[12] Ibid., ll. 113-116.
[13] Ibid., ll. 266-69.
[14] Ibid., ll. 113-116.

to that of Albert Schweitzer, who thought that Christ meant to turn the wheel of history through revolution. Christ failed (according to Schweitzer), was murdered, and then it was his broken body thrust upon the wheel of time that began its turning. (Lewis's view is not as cynical, but it is still Christocentric.) At the time, Eliot may not have seen Christian Theism as the wheel turner, but he must have eventually. Eliot's concept of the turning tide can be illustrated as "all paths lead to the same place; we must change directions." Lewis's concept can be illustrated thus:

> And though there seemed to be, and indeed were, a thousand roads by which a man could walk through the world, there was not a single one which did not lead sooner or later either to the Beatific or the Miserific Vision.[15] (*Perelandra*)

The cyclical journeys, the attempts at turning the tide, reflect correlative ideas in both writers' works. Along with the "tide" similarities, there is another lyrical similarity between Eliot and Lewis. In two instances, they appear to view the process of thought in a like manner. In "The Waste Land," Eliot writes:

> What are you thinking of? What thinking? What?
> I never know what you are thinking. Think. (l. 113-14)

In a similar passage, in *Poems*' "Poem for Psychoanalysts and/or Theologians," Lewis writes:

> All this, indeed, I do not remember.
> I remember the remembering . . . (ll. 59-60).

The process of thought, as random and disjointed, appears in both excerpts. Also, emphasis is placed on fallacies of thought. Eliot's speaker admits ignorance ("I never know . . ."), and so does Lewis's ("I do not remember"). Lewis's poem embodies the fragmentary approach of Eliot's.

The many individual allusions in "The Waste Land" are to works and movements Lewis finds influential, also. Eliot alludes to Edmund Spenser's *Prothalamion*—"Sweet Thames, run softly, till I end my song (l. 176)"—and Spenser's shadow towers over nearly all of Lewis's work. Referring to Spenser's *Epithalamion*, Lewis writes:

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[15] *Perelandra*, 111.

> Into this buoyant poem Spenser has worked all the diverse associations of marriage, actual and poetic, Pagan and Christian: summer, landscape, neighbours, pageantry, religion, riotous eating and drinking, sensuality, moonlight—all are harmonized... Those who have attempted to write poetry will know how very much easier it is to express sorrow than joy. That is what makes the Epithalamion matchless.[16]

Like Spenser, both Lewis and Eliot enrich basic allegory with epic ideas.

Another literary figure influential on both men is Dante. In his "Notes on 'The Waste Land'," Eliot cites Dante's influence five times. Of Dante, Lewis writes, "I think [his poetry], on the whole, the greatest of all the poetry I have read,"[17] and, "He has not only no rival, but none second to him."[18] The prevalent theme in Dante's work, the mythic journey as picture of Christian afterlife, appears significantly transported to the works of Eliot and Lewis. Eliot cites Milton and Wagner in his "Notes" also, and these two artists are perhaps the two most influential upon Lewis in his adolescence. Lewis writes of his pre-Christian yearnings as stabs of joy. He believes God used works like those by Wagner and Milton to create within him a longing for "the other." John Bremer writes:

> [Lewis] came across a periodical in the schoolroom containing a review of the recent translation of Siegfried and the Twilight of the Gods by Margaret Armour; the review included illustrations by Arthur Rackham. One of them, accompanying Act III of Siegfried, shows the startled, awestruck Siegfried, gazing in wonder at the bare-breasted Brunhild whose long sleep he is about to terminate with a kiss. She is the first woman he has ever seen. [Lewis] did not know who Siegfried was, but the picture gave him a sense of "northernness" and a rediscovery of Joy. Later, he was able to buy, with Warren Lewis's help, the complete volume . . with all the illustrations, and also to collect recordings of parts of the Ring,

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[16] C.S Lewis, *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 1966), 129-130.
[17] Ibid., 76.
[18] C.S. Lewis, *Selected Literary Essays* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 1969), 204.

> beginning with The Ride of the Valkyrie. The love of Wagner and all things "northern" continued throughout his life.[19]

Lewis mentions Milton many times in his autobiography, *Surprised by Joy*. In one passage, Milton joins a
list of formative influences, giving us another window into how Lewis's conversion informed his mythopoeia:

> All the books were beginning to turn against me. Indeed, I must have been as blind as a bat not to have seen, long before, the ludicrous contradictions between my theory of life and my actual experiences as a reader. George MacDonald had done more to me than any other writer, of course it was a pity he had that bee in his bonnet about Christianity. He was good in spite of it. Chesterton had more sense than all the other moderns put together; bating, of course, his Christianity. Johnson was one of the few authors whom I felt I could trust utterly; curiously enough, he had the same kink. Spenser and Milton by a strange coincidence had it too.[20]

Milton's masterpiece, of course, also inspired Lewis's foremost critical effort, *A Preface to Paradise Lost*. The influence of both Milton and Wagner upon Eliot's poetry is significant in his comparison with Lewis. They share these formative influences.

A more curious allusion, and admittedly only a minor note (though still worth mentioning), is Eliot's allusion to Hinduism. The benediction to "The Waste Land" is extracted from the Upanishads. Eliot writes:

> Datta. Dayadhvam. Damyata.
> Shantih shantih shantih[.] (ll. 433-34)

The repetition and spiritual otherness echoed here induce a trance-like reading. The closing is solemn, even "holy." Interestingly enough, Lewis also had some positive words for Hinduism. While facing which road to formal religion to follow after abandoning atheism, he writes in *Surprised by Joy*, "There were really only two answers possible: either in Hinduism

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[19] John Bremer, "Richard Wagner (1813-1883)," in *The C.S. Lewis Readers' Encyclopedia*, eds. Jeffrey D. Schultz and John G. West, Jr. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998), 421.

[20] C.S. Lewis, *Surprised by Joy: The Shape of My Early Life* (San Diego: Harcourt Brace, 1984), 213.

or in Christianity."[21] Though eventually accepting Christianity, Lewis believed there was something in Hinduism that set it apart from other religions. Apparently, Eliot believed this, too, as he chose a meditative chant as the climax to "The Waste Land's" meta-religious pilgrimage.

The most important similarity between Eliot and Lewis is their view of myth. Mythology, religion, folktale, music, and literature, to them, all hold bits of reality. Between the two of them there is much reliance on classical myths and even the Grail legend. William Skaff writes, "Myths for Eliot, then, give us a glimpse into our unconscious, a sense of Reality as immediate experience."[22] Similarly, Lewis writes, "Myth is . . . like manna; it is to each man a different dish and to each the dish he needs."[23] In myth, Lewis and Eliot see a universal acknowledgment of "the other," of something beyond. Both writers explored myth as a way of finding the truth. In his most focused examination of this concept, the essay "Myth Became Fact," Lewis writes:

> Now as myth transcends thought, Incarnation transcends myth. The heart of Christianity is a myth which is also a fact. The old myth of the Dying God, without ceasing to be myth, comes down from the heaven of legend and imagination to the earth of history. It happens—at a particular date, in a particular place, followed by definable historical consequences. We pass from a Balder or an Osiris, dying nobody knows when or where, to a historical Person crucified (it is all in order) under Pontius Pilate. By becoming fact it does not cease to be myth: that is the miracle.
>
> . . . To be truly Christian we must both assent to the historical fact and also receive the myth (fact though it has become) with the same imaginative embrace which we accord to all myths.
>
> . . . Those who do not know that this great myth became Fact when the Virgin conceived are, indeed, to be pitied. But Christians also need to be reminded—we may thank Corineus for reminding us—that what became Fact was a Myth, that is carries with it into the world of Fact all the properties of a myth. God is more than a god,

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[21] Ibid., 235.

[22] William Skaff, *The Philosophy of T.S. Eliot* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1986), 109.

[23] C.S. Lewis, *Selected Literary Essays* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 1969), 205.

> not less; Christ is more than Balder, not less. We must not be ashamed of the mythical radiance resting on our theology.
> . . . If God chooses to be mythopoeic—and is not the sky itself a myth—shall we refuse to be mythopathic? For this is the marriage of heaven and earth: Perfect Myth and Perfect Fact: claiming not only our love and our obedience, but also our wonder and delight, addressed to the savage, the child, and the poet in each one of us no less than to the moralist, the scholar, and the philosopher.[24]

Lewis and Eliot both imaginatively embraced this Christian "myth" (Lewis in 1931, Eliot officially in 1927). With this in mind, it is a wonder that Lewis could not recognize the pilgrimage in Eliot's early poetry. Lewis halted at his disregard for the Modernist style, neglecting an explanation of the purpose behind it. Some critics, like James Tetreault, have begrudged Lewis his cynicism. In an essay published in *Renascence Journal*, James Tetreault chronicles the two writers' parallel lives and art, focusing on Lewis's "unwavering hostility,"[25] "major assault,"[26] and "major onslaught"[27] against Eliot.

This is probably too much. Critics criticize, and Lewis is no exception. In Eliot, Lewis found the chief spokesman for the Modernist movement he vehemently disagreed with. One can hardly blame him for his aggression. Tetreault appears to credit Lewis's hostility to his own failed attempts at poetry, insinuating envy as the motivation.[28] Anyone at all familiar with the works of Lewis would not arrive at this conclusion so hastily. Lewis was perhaps envious, but there are no other indicators of his jealousy leading to animosity. Lewis had several friends who enjoyed varying degrees of success (Charles Williams, Dorothy Sayers, Owen Barfield), often more than his own. J. R. R. Tolkien is one as well, and Lewis never begrudged "Tollers" his success. Tetreault appears to be grasping at straws here and finally approaches something resembling reasonable when, almost as an afterthought, he reprints Lewis's words to

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[24] C.S. Lewis, "Myth Became Fact," in *God in the Dock: Essays on Theology and Ethics*, ed. Walter Hooper (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 66-67.
[25] James Tetreault, "Parallel Lines: C.S. Lewis and T.S. Eliot," *Renascence: Essays on Values in Literature*, Vol. 38 (Summer 1986), 257.
[26] Ibid., 260.
[27] Ibid., 261.
[28] Ibid., 264.

Walter Hooper, "You know that I never cared for Eliot's poetry and criticism, but when we met I loved him at once."[29]

In later years, Lewis and Eliot became friends when both were asked by the Archbishop of Canterbury to serve on the Commission to Revise the Psalter. In a letter to Eliot, Lewis wrote:

> You need not sympathise too much: if my condition keeps me from doing some things I like, it also excuses me from doing a good many things I don't. There are two sides to everything!
>
> We must have a talk—I wish you'd write an essay on it—about Punishment. The modern view, by excluding the retributive element and concentrating solely on deterrence and cure, is hideously immoral. It is vile tyranny to submit a man to compulsory "cure" or sacrifice him to the deterrence of others, unless he deserves it. On the other view what is there to prevent any of us being handed over to Butler's "Straighteners" at any moment?
>
> I'd have to know more about the Greek of that period to make a real criticism of the N.E.B. (N.T. which is the only part I've seen.) Odd, the way the less the Bible is read the more it is translated.[30]

In this letter, one finds evidence of previous conversation. This correspondence finds Lewis and Eliot interacting as friends (Eliot is concerned about Lewis's health), as literary companions (Lewis apparently thinks highly enough of Eliot's work to suggest he write an essay), and as co-laborers (translation theory is discussed).

What joins Lewis and Eliot together is more important than what makes them different. Lewis later observed, "I agree with him about matters of such moment that all literary questions are, in comparison, trivial."[31] But, with each closer inspection, their literary differences appear less significant. Eliot and Lewis took up a literary and mythic journey that has challenged mankind throughout history. They weathered storms and charted paths. In terms of literary history, they

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[29] Ibid., 269.

[30] C.S. Lewis, *Letters of C.S. Lewis*, eds. W.H. Lewis and Walter Hooper, (San Diego: Harcourt Brace, 1993), 503-504.

[31] Lynn Summer, "T[homas] S[tearns] Eliot (1888-1965)," in *The C.S. Lewis Readers' Encyclopedia*, eds. Jeffrey D. Schultz and John G. West, Jr. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998), 150

have helped turn the tide of mytho-literary thinking. In a recent *New Yorker* essay on religion, John Updike ponders, "What might a faith of the future consist of? . . . Religions are conservative artifacts, made from scraps of others."[32] Compare this to Lewis's words in perhaps his most important apologetic work, *Mere Christianity*: "If you are a Christian, you are free to think that all . . . religions, even the queerest ones, contain at least some hint of truth."[33]

The future of faith, in the Eliotic and Lewisian sense, in one of gathering up the "heap of broken images," of bathing in the "gleams of celestial beauty"—these are the "artifacts," the "scraps." These are the common elements of our universal experience. Stylistically, Eliot and Lewis may be worlds apart, but thematically they journey together.

[32] John Updike, "The Future of Faith," in *The New Yorker* (29 November 1999), 88.
[33] C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (Westwood, New Jersey: Barbour, 1952), 31.

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The Holy Spirit and Christian Worship: The Life-Giving Legacy of the Apostolic Band[1]

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I am going to argue that Baptist ecclesiology and worship is most attuned to the Holy Spirit in Christian worship.

The life-giving power of the Holy Spirit enables people to respond to God, making this aspect of the Spirit's work most vital and significant when considering his role in Christian worship. The Spirit not only gives life, he also mediates God's presence by the word he inspires, the Christ he exalts, and the temple he indwells. In the Bible's symbolic universe, the dwelling place of God constitutes the realm of life. Banishment from God's presence means departure into the unclean realm of the dead. The Spirit imparts the life of the age to come to God's people, enabling them to behold the glory of the Son and render thanks and praise to the Father. The Spirit enables worship and forms the sphere in which it takes place.

In the new covenant the Holy Spirit causes people to be born again, whereby they experience the life of the age to come, are built into a spiritual house, the very temple of the Holy Spirit, and offer spiritual sacrifices to God through Christ. This situation stands in contrast with the old covenant, wherein believing members of the old covenant remnant had circumcised hearts (the Old Testament's way of describing

[1] This project originated as a presentation at the SBTS Theology Conference, October 26–27, 2018, where it was delivered alongside presentations from Matthew Levering, Christopher Holmes, and Graham Cole. I wish to thank Bruce Ware for the invitation to participate in the conference. The paper was then presented at the national meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society in the Invited Session of the Biblical Worship Section. Thanks to Scott Aniol for that invitation, and I am also thankful for the beneficial feedback and interaction on both occasions.

those to whom the Spirit gave spiritual life) and the tabernacle and later the temple were indwelt by God's Spirit.[2]

The worship offered to God by Christian churches, therefore, is impossible apart from the Spirit. No one can worship unless the Spirit gives life. This means that no unbeliever can worship. The Spirit regenerates, and the Spirit indwells, mediating God's presence to God's Spirit-born people through God's Spirit-inspired word. As God's Spirit indwells God's people, he makes them his temple, God's dwelling place.

All this anticipates the consummation of all things, when God's people will experience not the beginnings of spiritual life in regeneration (an already/not yet experience of the life of the age to come) but resurrection from the dead; when the presence of God will not be a seal and down payment of future redemption but direct experience, as God and the Lamb become the temple, with the new Jerusalem the holy of holies and the new heaven and new earth the cosmic temple.

This presentation on the Holy Spirit and Christian worship will unfold in three sections: first, we must acknowledge and maintain that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, the 66 books of the protestant canon, are both source and constraint for our understanding of the Holy Spirit.[3] Through the Scriptures we have access to the truth about the Holy Spirit. Through the Scriptures we verify claims made about the Holy Spirit. And the Scriptures themselves mediate to us the presence and ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Second, I will contend for a biblical-theological relationship between the Holy Spirit, the spiritual life of God's image-bearers, and the presence of God.

The new birth is directly related to the third section of this presentation, which deals with the church's worship as the new temple

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[2] James M. Hamilton, *God's Indwelling Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Old and New Testaments*, NAC Studies in Bible and Theology (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2006).

[3] See esp. Roger T. Beckwith, *The Old Testament Canon of the New Testament Church and Its Background in Early Judaism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985). For my own brief account of the inerrant canon of Scripture, see James M. Hamilton, "Still Sola Scriptura: An Evangelical View of Scripture," in *The Sacred Text: Excavating the Texts, Exploring the Interpretations, and Engaging the Theologies of the Christian Scriptures*, ed. Michael Bird and Michael W. Pahl (Piscataway: Gorgias, 2010), 215–40.

of the Spirit. These second and third topics are related realities: the life giving Spirit makes people able to enter, experience, and become the dwelling place of God's presence. By faith believers are united to Christ, who is himself the fulfillment of the temple, even as the indwelling Spirit makes God's people the Father's new temple.

The Scriptures: Access, Verification, Mediation

The Canon of Scripture being closed, the revelation God has given to his people in the Scriptures being inerrant, perspicuous, and sufficient, believers have access to true, though by no means exhaustive, knowledge of God. If God had not revealed himself in his word, we would have no ability to conjure him, no means of extracting information from him about himself, and no certain knowledge of his Spirit. The creature can only know the creator if the creator chooses to reveal himself. The Scriptures provide us with access to knowledge of the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Christians believe that God has revealed himself both in creation and in the Scriptures, the Bible. The Scriptures are the only infallible rule of faith and practice. Because I hold that the canon of Scripture is closed, I also hold that the revelatory sign gifts of the Spirit have ceased.[4] Were such gifts to continue, the canon of Scripture would need to remain open, so that ongoing revelation might be included. Even among continuationists, however, claims of new revelation must be measured by the Scriptures. Any claim of new prophetic revelation, any claim of spiritual experience, indeed anything involving the Holy Spirit or worship, must accord with the teaching of Scripture. The Scriptures enable us to verify whether the spiritual activity is from God or somewhere else.

In this section I aim to sketch in the Bible's narrative depiction of the Spirit's activity. From the Scriptures we know that the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters as God spoke the world into being. Through the Word all things were made (John 1:1–3), and the Spirit was there in the making. Psalm 104:30a, "You send your Spirit; they are created," seems to reflect on both the Spirit hovering over the waters at the beginning (Gen 1:2, note the use of ברא in Ps 104:30) and God giving the breath of

[4] Thomas R. Schreiner, *Spiritual Gifts: What They Are and Why They Matter* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2018).

life to man in the beginning (Gen 2:7).[5] By his Spirit God gave life to his creation.

The book of Genesis does not spell out the implications of its own narrative with the kinds of theological assertions I am making here. The account depicts, however, a marked turn after the man and woman have rebelled against the Lord (Gen 3:1–7). The fact that they hide themselves from God (3:8) reveals that they have been alienated from him. Their banishment from the Garden (3:23–24) further signifies the end of their enjoyment of the realm of life. Where God is life is. God's dwelling place is the realm of life. To be sent out of the Garden is to be banished from God's presence, where life is, into the unclean realm of the dead. Even before being driven from the Garden, by hiding from God the man and woman showed themselves to be spiritually dead.

The man's response of faith to the word of God, however, seen in the naming of the woman (Gen 3:20), indicates that the Spirit caused life to come when faith came by hearing, and hearing by the promise about the seed of the woman (cf. Rom 10:17). In terminology to be used later in the OT, when God promised that the seed of the woman would bruise the head of the serpent, the Spirit circumcised the hearts of the man and the woman (cf. Lev 26:41; Deut 10:16; 30:6; Jer 6:10), and they believed the word of the Lord. Though banished from God's presence, by Spirit-empowered faith they hoped for a return from exile (cf. Gen 5:29).

God continued to reveal himself to the line of descent that goes down through Abraham to Judah, and though the narrative does not state it, the fact that God's people believed God's word and did what he said to do indicates that the Spirit had circumcised their hearts (cf. Deut 10:16; 30:6; Jer 6:10).

The Spirit then seems to be visibly present in the pillar of fire and cloud that led Israel out of Egypt (Neh 9:19–20, 30). Having led his people by the Spirit to Sinai, the builders of the tabernacle were empowered by the Spirit (Exod 31:2–3), and the ministry of the Spirit in and through Moses was extended to the seventy elders (see Num 11:25). When the pillar of fire and cloud inhabited the tabernacle (Exod 40:34–38), it seems that God by his Spirit took up residence there.

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[5] For the way Psalm 104:30 reflects on creation to point to the new creation, see James M. Hamilton, *Psalms*, 2 vols., BTCP (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, forthcoming) ad loc.

God's presence in tabernacle and later temple explains the people's sinful confidence that as long as they have the temple, judgment will not fall upon them (Jer 7:4). It also explains Ezekiel's vision of the departure of the glory cloud from the temple prior to its destruction (Ezek 8–11).

As a result of the sin of the man and woman in the Garden, God banished them from his presence. As a result of Israel's sin in the land, God withdrew from the temple, allowing it to be destroyed, and banished his people from the realm of life to the unclean realm of the dead.

When God brought his people back to the land for rebuilding the temple, his Spirit once again pillared among them as he had at the exodus (Hag 2:5). The Spirit empowered Haggai, Zechariah, and others (e.g., Ezra, Nehemiah, Malachi), and through them pointed forward to the one to come, the one who would be anointed by the Spirit and preceded by a new Elijah.

Then came the one the Baptist said would baptize in the Spirit and in fire, and he announced the coming of a time when God's people would worship no longer on a mountain but in spirit and truth (John 4:21–24). Jesus taught that God's Spirit would give life to God's people through his word (6:63). His words indicate that God's Spirit would be the sphere in which they would worship (4:23–24). Moreover, as the Spirit indwelt tabernacle and temple, the Spirit would indwell God's people (14:17), but only after Jesus went to the cross (7:39; 16:7).

Once Jesus put an end to sacrifice on the cross, the Spirit took up residence in a temple in which no sacrifices for atonement would be made: the temple of the Holy Spirit (John 20:22).

As the indwelt temple of the Spirit, God's people become sanctifying sacred space in the world (1 Cor 7:12–16). The Holy Spirit indwells God's people corporately and individually (1 Cor 3:16; 6:19). They are thus corporately and individually the temple of the Holy Spirit. Worship happens in both their individual lives, in which they are to live as priests, offering up their own bodies as living sacrifices (Rom 12:1–2), and when God's people gather, assembling themselves together to offer the sacrifice of praise on the Lord's day.

As God's people make disciples (Matt 28:18–20), those new believers likewise become temples of the Holy Spirit, even as they also extend the area of the temple comprised of God's corporate people. In this way, the church carries forward Adam's mandate to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth (Gen 1:28; cf. Col 1:6). As God's temple expands to fill the

earth through this fruitful multiplication, God's people fulfill God's purpose by the power of God's Spirit, and from the rising of the sun to the place of its setting, the name of the Lord is praised.

When all the elect have heard, Christ will return and bring all God's purposes to full consummation. The believing dead will be raised. Jesus will reign for a thousand years, and then after Satan's final defeat all will be raised from the dead for the final judgment. At that point the new Jerusalem will come down from God out of heaven as a new holy of holies, and God will dwell with his people.

The New Birth: Life of the Age to Come

In John 3 the evangelist presents Jesus telling Nicodemus of the way only those who experience the fulfillment of Ezekiel 36 will be able to see and enter God's Kingdom, the realm of life. When Jesus speaks to Nicodemus of the need to be "born of water and spirit," he speaks of the cleansing Ezekiel prophesied, when God's exiled people would be sprinkled with clean water (Ezek 36:25).

I will take you from the nations and gather you from all the countries and bring you into your own land. I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses and from all your idols I will cleanse you. And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules (Ezek 36:24–27).

Through Ezekiel the Lord makes a number of promises here: restoration to the land of promise; cleansing from defilement and idolatry; a new heart and spirit; removal of a dead heart of stone to be replaced by a living heart of flesh; his own Spirit in their midst; and divine power to fulfill the law.

The people's exile to the unclean realm of the dead made this eschatological cleansing necessary. With the cleansing comes a new heart and new spirit (36:26), and God promises moreover to put his own Spirit in the midst of his people that they might obey him (36:27).

To be restored to the land of promise spells restoration to God's presence, and to be in God's presence the people must be clean.[6] To stay in God's presence they must fulfill the terms of the covenant by living out fulfillment of the law.[7] To fulfill the law they need a heart change whereby they desire to obey. The best part of all this, of course, is God's own presence in their midst by means of the Spirit. To live in God's place under God's rule as God's people is to participate in God's kingdom.

"Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God . . . . Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God" (John 3:3, 5).

Jesus told Nicodemus that in order to see and enter God's kingdom, the realm of life, one must be born again, born of water and spirit. Jesus presents this new birth as the fulfillment of Ezekiel's chapter 36 prophecy concerning the return from exile (Ezek 36:24–27).

Elaborating upon these realities, Jesus continues into Ezekiel's chapter 37 prophecy concerning the resurrection of the dry bones from the dead by the power of the Spirit. Jesus speaks of this new birth that the Spirit accomplishes in terms of the Spirit blowing where he pleases, just as he blew upon the dry bones in Ezekiel 37.

. . . he brought me out in the Spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of the valley; it was full of bones. . . there were very many on the surface of the valley, and behold, they were very dry. And he said to me, 'Son of man, can these bones live?' . . . . Then he said to me, 'Prophesy over these bones, and say to them, O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. . . . So I prophesied as I was commanded. And as I prophesied, there was a sound, and behold, a rattling, and the bones came together . . . Then he said to me, 'Prophesy to the breath; prophesy, son of man, and say to the breath, Thus says the Lord GOD: come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they may live . . . . And I will put my Spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land (Ezek 37:1–4, 7, 9, 14).

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[6] See 1 Corinthians 6:11, "And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God." Unless otherwise noted, all quotations of Scripture are drawn from the ESV.

[7] Romans 8:4, "in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit."

Having spoken of the fulfillment of Ezekiel 36:24–27 in John 3:3–5, Jesus speaks in terms of Ezekiel 37 in John 3:8, The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.

The Lord addressed Ezekiel as "son of man" in Ezekiel 37, and Jesus references himself as the Son of Man in John 3:13–14. Jesus seems to be presenting himself to Nicodemus as the Son of Man who will bring to fulfillment what Ezekiel prophesied concerning new life, resurrection, and return from exile. When Jesus speaks of the new birth, he presents it in terms of Ezekiel 36 and 37, chapters that deal with not only new inner life, a living heart of flesh, but also with resurrection from the dead. The reason for this seems to stem from the fact that when someone experiences the new birth, they enjoy the beginnings of resurrection life. The Spirit causes the life of the age to come to begin already, though it will not yet take full hold until Christ returns and dead believers rise in glorified bodies.

This dynamic also explains the New Testament's twofold use of the term "regeneration." The term *palingenesia* occurs exactly twice in the New Testament: first in Matthew 19:28, where it is translated "the new world" (ESV) or "the renewal of all things" (NIV), and again in Titus 3:5, where it refers to the regeneration of individual believers, those who have been born again, made alive, regenerated. The most natural explanation of the use of the term in these two ways holds that the regeneration of an individual believer causes him or her to partake of the life of "the new world." This understanding explains other statements Paul makes in 2 Corinthians and Romans.

In 2 Corinthians 5:17 Paul writes, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, new creation! The old has passed away; behold, the new has come" (my translation). This indicates that those who are in Christ partake of the new creation that God will accomplish at the end of all things. In fact, so fully has the new life taken hold in them that the old can be described as gone, with the new having come. Those who are in Christ are new creations.

Paul's words in Romans 8 complement the picture sketched in to this point. In Romans 8:15 Paul says that believers have received the Spirit of adoption. Then in Romans 8:23 he speaks of the way that believers groan inwardly, waiting eagerly for adoption as sons, this adoption being defined as the redemption of our bodies. The redemption of the body

would appear to be the resurrection of the body. To be adopted, then, is to be raised from the dead to full participation in the Father's family by the Spirit's power, heirs with the firstborn Son. To have received the Spirit of adoption is to receive a down payment, a first installment, an initial experience of the resurrection life that will become reality in the age to come, when the dead are raised and their bodies redeemed. As Paul puts it in Romans 8:11, "If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you."

Synthesizing the concepts we have seen to this point, we can say that those who have experienced the new birth have the Spirit blow through them the way the resurrecting Spirit does in Ezekiel 37, giving life to the dead. As they experience the new birth, they are made alive by the Spirit and cleansed by the new covenant sprinkling, which enables them to enter God's kingdom, the clean realm, the realm of life. The resurrection quality of regeneration can also be seen in the way that those who are regenerated are described with the same term, *palingenesia*, used to speak of the regeneration of all things. And those to whom the Spirit has given the new birth, whom the Spirit has regenerated, are united to Christ by faith. They are united to, indeed, *in* Christ, who is himself the fulfillment of the temple, and the Spirit indwells them, making them the new temple. This indwelling Spirit is the Spirit of adoption as sons, and when the adoption is finalized, the dead will be raised, bodies redeemed, and all will be made new.

Flowing out of the old covenant, then, are a number of significant concepts for our understanding of the Holy Spirit and Christian worship. These include: death and life—life in God's presence, death outside it; clean and unclean—what is clean goes with life, while death is unclean; the defining principle in all this is the presence of God—God is holy and dwells only in a clean realm of life, while sin defiles, results in death, and separates from God.

The old covenant introduces these concepts, providing the framework within which promises of the new covenant will be made and fulfilled.

The Church's Worship: The Temple of the Holy Spirit Exalts the Son

Everything that I have said to this point will hopefully put the building blocks in place for a biblical theological understanding of the

Holy Spirit and Christian worship that is distinctively Baptist, Baptist precisely because biblical.

This biblical and Baptist biblical theology of the Holy Spirit and Christian worship affirms historic, classical Trinitarian confessions. We can see the inseparable operations of the members of the godhead regarding worship in, for instance, Ephesians 2:18, "For through him [Jesus] we both have access in one Spirit to the Father."

Because only those who have been born again can see and enter the kingdom of God (John 3:3, 5), only those who have experienced this washing of regeneration (Tit 3:5) have been cleansed from defilement so that they can enter the realm of the Spirit. This means that only those who have experienced the new birth can worship the Father in spirit and truth (John 4:24).

Thus we can say that worship takes place in the sphere of the Spirit, that only those who have experienced the new birth the Spirit brings can see and enter God's kingdom, and therefore only those who have been made alive by the Spirit can worship. In God's mercy, he continues to draw people by the Spirit to trust in Christ that they might worship the Father.

The *location* of worship in the new covenant is the sphere of the Spirit. The *state* of the worshipers is that they are born again. The *content* of worship, it seems to me, is informed by the regulative principle (loosely applied, on which see below).

Location of worship:	in the Spirit
State/Manner of Worship:	only those born again
Content of Worship:	loose regulative principle

As John presents Jesus explaining, the Spirit's role is to lead the followers of Jesus to glorify Jesus: When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you (Joh 16:13–14).

Under the old covenant, God by his Spirit indwelt Israel's tabernacle and later the temple.[8] In the new covenant, God's people are his temple. This reality informs Paul's statement in 1 Corinthians 3:16, "Do you not know that you are God's temple, and the Spirit of God dwells in you?"

Under the old covenant rites of cleansing and sacrifices for atonement were administered by the priests, while the Levites worked and served at tabernacle and temple (Num 3:8). In the new covenant the death of Christ has fulfilled sacrifices for atonement, people experience the washing of the word (Eph 5:26), the washing of regeneration (Tit 3:5), being born of water and spirit (John 3:5), and believers are priests (1 Pet 2:9),[9] offering their bodies as living sacrifices (Rom 12:1), themselves a spiritual temple built of the living stones (1 Pet 2:5), offering the sacrifice of praise (Heb 13:15).

Jesus himself pointed things in this direction. The Gospel of John presents Jesus saying to the Samaritan woman,

> the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. . . . the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in must worship in spirit and truth (4:21, 23–24).

With these words Jesus points to a day that has dawned when local worship in the temple in Jerusalem will be replaced by worship in spirit. I understand these references to worship in spirit and truth to refer to worship that will not be limited to a particular place but that will take place in the domain, or the sphere of the Spirit.

Consider these statements in John's Gospel:

- "what has been born of the Spirit is spirit" (3:6);
- They will worship the Father in spirit and truth" (4:23);
- "God is spirit" (4:24);

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[8] For descriptions of God's presence prior to the construction of the tabernacle, see James M. Hamilton, "God with Men in the Torah," *Westminster Theological Journal* 65 (2003): 113–33.

[9] See also Romans 15:16, "to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the priestly service of the gospel of God, so that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit."

- "the words I have spoken to you are spirit and life" (6:63);
- "for it was not yet spirit" (7:39).

These phrases seem to describe God's existence and realm.[10] God is spirit, and those who are born of the Holy Spirit enter that realm and partake of that existence. The words of Jesus partake of that realm and impart that life. After Jesus goes to the cross to be glorified, he gives the Spirit to his disciples and brings them into the new state of affairs where worship takes place "in spirit and truth." Peter seems to describe the same reality:

For this is why the gospel was preached even to those who are dead, that though judged in the flesh the way people are, they might live in the spirit the way God does. (1Pet 4:6). [cf. CSB: "live by God in the spiritual realm"].

Faith in Christ unites to Christ, and those united to Christ have experienced the life giving power of the Spirit, the cleansing and renewal and induction into kingdom of God. As a branch must be connected to the vine to bear fruit, followers of Jesus must abide in his words, maintaining a vital connection to him, to bear the fruit of the Spirit. As John puts it, "Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God, and God in him. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us" (1John 3:24).

This abiding in Christ by the Spirit-inspired words of Scripture enables the participation in the Spirit, the "worship in spirit," described by the following phrases:[11]

- Romans 8:9, "You, however, are not in the flesh but **in the Spirit**, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him."

[10] See also 1 Peter 3:18, "For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit." Not the rendering of this last phrase by the CSB, "made alive in the spiritual realm." Paul seems to refer to those who participate in the realm of the Spirit as the "spiritual" in 1 Corinthians 2:13, "And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual."

[11] Admittedly, some of these phrases may pertain more to *manner* than *sphere*.

- Romans 14:17, "For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy **in the Holy Spirit**."
- 1 Corinthians 12:3, "Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says 'Jesus is accursed!' and no one can say 'Jesus is Lord' except **in the Holy Spirit**."
- 1 Corinthians 14:2, "For one who speaks in a tongue speaks not to men but to God; for no one understands him, but he utters mysteries **in the Spirit**."
- Ephesians 6:18, "praying at all times **in the Spirit**, with all prayer and supplication."
- Jude 1:20, "But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying **in the Holy Spirit**."

The indwelling Holy Spirit has given life by means of regeneration and has ushered the made alive and cleansed believer into the kingdom of God, the Spirit's sphere. As the new temple of the Holy Spirit, believers are simultaneously those who partake of the new creation—the new heavens and new earth being itself the realization of God's cosmic temple.

As the Lord Jesus builds the church, he builds the temple of the Holy Spirit, the new creation, and this would appear to explain the imagery that informs 1 Peter 2:4–9,

> As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in Scripture: "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame." So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe, "The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone," and "A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense." They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do. But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

Similar temple imagery seems to inform Paul's words in Ephesians 2:19–22,

> So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, [20] built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, [21] in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. [22] In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

The author of Hebrews assumes such concepts and speaks of how the sacrifices of praise from the new temple in Hebrews 13:15, "Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name."

The Spirit centers the worship of those who whom he gives life on the word and Christ, which leads to a loose application of the regulative principle. God's people respond to his revelation of himself by singing the Bible, reading the Bible, praying the Bible, preaching the Bible, and enacting the Bible (by observing the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper). Each of these is commanded in the Scriptures.

Paul urges believers to sing the Bible in statements such as Ephesians 5:19, "addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart." Paul also calls for the reading of the bible when he writes in 1 Timothy 4:13, "Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching." We see apostolic examples of praying the Bible in passages such as Acts 4:23–31, and the James 5:16 and other texts call God's people to pray for one another. Paul enjoins the preaching of the word in 2 Timothy 4:2, "preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching." As for baptism and the Lord's Supper, both were instituted by the Lord Jesus and passed on to the churches by example in Acts and instruction in the epistles.

All of this leads me to contend that Baptist ecclesiology and worship (Baptist because biblical, being centered on the Spirit-inspired word, which reveals the Spirit-exalted Christ, known by those made alive and

indwelled by the Spirit of the Father who raised Jesus from the dead) is most attuned to the Holy Spirit in Christian Worship.

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The Holy Spirit as the Giver of Wisdom in Biblical Theology

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Perhaps the chief contribution of evangelical approaches to biblical theology has been the study of the Bible's structure and unity, with special attention to the major themes that run through the biblical books and tie their diverse messages together.[1] Thus, these approaches to biblical theology have recognized that the various biblical books are a part of a larger Book with a single Author.[2] This suggests that any passage or biblical book should not be interpreted in a vacuum, but rather it should be read in relationship to the larger Book—the whole canon of Scripture.[3]

The significance of this approach to biblical theology can be readily seen when one considers the question of wisdom's place within biblical theology. Budge's publication of the *Wisdom of Amenemope*, encouraged biblical scholars to study parallels between the biblical wisdom literature and wisdom texts from surrounding ancient Near Eastern cultures.[4]

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[1] See Brian S. Rosner, "Biblical Theology," in *The New Dictionary of Biblical Theology* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2000), 8-11; Gerhard F. Hasel, *Old Testament Theology: Basic Issues in the Current Debate*, 4th ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1991), 112–14.

[2] See Stephen G. Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty: A Biblical Theology of the Hebrew Bible*, New Studies in Biblical Theology 15 (Leicester: Apollos, 2003), 30–41.

[3] Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty*, 20–24.

[4] On the impact of the discovery of *The Wisdom of Amenemope* for wisdom literature studies, especially Prov, see Bruce K. Waltke and David Diewert, "Wisdom Literature," in *The Face of Old Testament Studies: A Survey of Contemporary Approaches*, ed. David W. Baker and Bill T. Arnold (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1999), 297, 302–4; Tremper Longman III, *The Fear of the*

While the study of near Eastern parallels has been certainly helpful in the scholarship of the biblical wisdom literature, these parallels have led some to question whether there is much unique in the biblical wisdom literature, and to conclude that the wisdom literature has little in common theologically with the rest of the OT. The perceived absence of major redemptive-historical themes and concerns from the wisdom literature only corroborated this conclusion; thus, in the minds of many, the wisdom literature, with its emphasis on creation theology instead of history, is the product of a certain school of scribes—or sages—with a different worldview than that espoused by the rest of the biblical authors.[5]

A number of OT scholars have pointed to the problems with this approach to the wisdom literature. Creation theology may receive greater emphasis in the wisdom literature than in other OT books, but to say that this literature is non-historical is an overstatement.[6] Moreover, the distinctive emphases of the wisdom literature are likely a feature of its genre and need not suggest a different *worldview* held by its writers.[7] In fact, when the notion of wisdom is taken up as a concern in historical narrative OT texts, the concept itself is often presented in a way that is quite similar to the way in which it is presented in the wisdom literature. Lindsay Wilson has shown that wisdom in the Joseph narrative bears great similarity to wisdom as portrayed in Proverbs and that in the

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Lord Is Wisdom: A Theological Introduction to Wisdom in Israel (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2017), 147.

[5] James L. Crenshaw, *Old Testament Wisdom: An Introduction*, 3rd ed. (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1998), 21. For similar observations about the theology of the wisdom literature, see John Coert Rylaarsdam, *Revelation in Jewish Wisdom Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1946), 44; Walther Zimmerli, "Place and Limit of the Wisdom in the Framework of the Old Testament Theology," *SJT* 17 (1964): 147.

[6] See Richard L. Schultz, "Unity or Diversity in Wisdom Theology? A Canonical and Covenantal Perspective," *TynBul* 48 (1997): 300; Ryan P. O'Dowd, "A Chord of Three Strands: Epistemology in Job, Proverbs and Ecclesiastes," in *The Bible and Epistemology: Biblical Soundings on the Knowledge of God* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2007), 68.

[7] Mark Sneed, "Is the 'Wisdom Tradition' a Tradition?," *CBQ* 73 (2011): 59–60; O'Dowd, "Chord," 68.

former case, wisdom is carefully integrated into the covenant and redemptive-historical plot of Gen 37-50.[8]

Additionally, while the way in which wisdom is presented in the Bible may have certain parallels in other ancient Near Eastern literature, this does not mean that there is *nothing at all* distinctive about the way in which wisdom is portrayed in the Bible. Longman has argued that while the OT recognizes that non-Israelite peoples and cultures possess a measure of wisdom and understanding about the world, the OT consistently affirms that Israel's wisdom is unique and superior to that of other nations.[9] Israel has received special revelation about God himself and *true* wisdom arises not merely from understanding order and patterns in the world, but from *knowing God* and walking in fearful submission to his ways (Prov 1:7; 9:10).

These scholars have thus shown that the wisdom literature is very much at home within the broader OT and their studies have reopened the door, in many respects, for wisdom to be studied in relationship to the rest of the canon. Moreover, it is apparent that the Bible treats wisdom as a gift from God that is tied to the revelation of himself and closely weds it to his work with his covenant people.

Wisdom's place within the larger theological context of Scripture comes into even clearer focus when one considers the relationship between wisdom and the work of the Holy Spirit among God's people in the OT and NT. This paper will show that the giving of wisdom to God's people is among the Spirit's work as highlighted throughout the biblical canon. Through bestowing wisdom upon God's people, the Holy Spirit equips them for participation in his redemptive mission.

Wisdom and the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament

While the place of wisdom in the OT serves as a topic of considerable discussion, the role of the Holy Spirit, or "the Spirit of God," in the OT raises questions of its own, especially for Christian interpreters, who appropriately explore how the Spirit's treatment in the OT is in line with its treatment in the NT. There have been various proposals regarding the role of the Spirit in both testaments, and the differences in these

[8] Lindsay Wilson, *Joseph Wise and Otherwise: The Intersection of Wisdom and Covenant in Genesis 37–50*, PBM (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2004), 281–85, 301–3.
[9] Longman III, *The Fear of the Lord Is Wisdom*, 160–62.

approaches are significant. In spite of these differences, a general point of agreement is that the OT highlights the purpose of the Spirit in advancing God's redemptive-historical mission by equipping God's people to execute various works on his behalf.[10] As lexical studies have shown, this is consistent with the broader meaning of רוּחַ ("wind, breath, spirit"). The wind, a person's breath and a person's spirit, are all invisible entities, yet they all exhibit *visible* effects on objects in the world, typically through some kind of movement.[11] Similarly, God's Spirit in the OT cannot be seen, yet his Spirit is visibly at work, moving to fulfill his mission. Genesis 1:2 reminds us that the very existence of creation is a visible demonstration of the Spirit's presence at creation, "hovering over the surface of the deep." Additionally, a number of OT passages highlight the Spirit's work through specific people to carry out significant acts of God. For example, many of the Judges are described as being equipped with God's Spirit (Jdg 3:10, 6:34, 13:29, 14:6, 14:29, 15:14), the Spirit equips the people to rebuild the temple after the exile (Zech 4:6) and the pouring out of the Spirit in Joel results in widespread prophecy (2:28–29).

While Gen 1:2 references the presence and work of the Spirit of God at creation, it is quite possible that God's wisdom is alluded to as it describes God's creative work. Many scholars have observed that the literary shape of Genesis 1 points to the *order* of the cosmos, with God

[10] Walther Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament*, trans. J. A. Baker, vol. 2 of *OTL* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961), 50–51; William J. Dumbrell, "Spirit and Kingdom of God in the Old Testament," *RTR* 33 (1974): 1; Daniel I. Block, "The View from the Top: The Holy Spirit in the Prophets," in *Presence, Power and Promise: The Role of the Spirit of God in the Old Testament*, ed. David G. Firth and Paul D. Wegner (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2011), 187–90; Gary Fredricks, "Rethinking the Role of the Holy Spirit in the Lives of Old Testament Believers," *TJ* 9 NS (1988): 85–88; Leon J. Wood, *The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament*, CEP (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1976), 41–52; Wilf Hildebrandt, *An Old Testament Theology of the Spirit of God* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995), 104; James M. Hamilton, *God's Indwelling Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Old and New Testaments*, NACSBT (Nashville: B&H, 2006), 27–34.

[11] Miles Van Pelt, Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., Daniel I. Block, "רוּחַ," *NIDOTTE,* 3:1073; Richard E. Averbeck, "Breath, Wind, Spirit and the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament," in *Presence, Power and Promise: The Role of the Spirit of God in the Old Testament*, ed. David G. Firth and Paul D. Wegner (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2011), 35–37.

creating domains (night/day, sea and land) on days 1-3, and the entities that fill those domains (sun/moon, water creatures and land creatures) on days 4-6.[12] Moreover, the well-ordered creation with its ability to sustain life is declared repeatedly by God to be "good." Ps 104 reflects upon the life-sustaining order and goodness of creation (see vv. 1–23) and ascribes it to the "wisdom" (חָכְמָה) with which God made it (see v. 24). Averbeck has noted Ps 104's description of God's work of creation mirrors the sequence of the creation days in Gen 1, suggesting an intertextual relationship between the two passages.[13] This may suggest that Ps 104 is making explicit what is implicit in Gen 1—that God, by his Spirit, made the world with wisdom.

Additionally, the Spirit's work of equipping God's people to advance his redemptive mission often entails bestowing wisdom on them. This connection between God's Spirit and the gift of wisdom is forged first in the Pentateuch. This connection appears first in the Joseph Narrative; the turning point of the story occurs in Gen 41—there Joseph's transformation from a slave, to a prisoner, to an official in Pharaoh's kingdom is completed, and he is now in a position to secure the survival of God's people during the famine in Canaan. Central to Joseph's ascent in this chapter, and thus to the whole narrative in Gen 37-50, is Joseph's wisdom, which he has received from God. What prompts Pharaoh to install Joseph in such a strategic position is Joseph's ability to interpret Pharaoh's obscure dreams. Joseph is transparent with Pharaoh in explaining that his interpretive work arises not from his own ability, but from God himself. This is why, when Joseph is able to offer an interpretation, Pharaoh states that indeed "the Spirit of God is with him" (רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים בּוֹ) and consequently there is none as "wise" (חכם) as Joseph in all the land (41:38-39). Joseph has successfully done something Egypt's

[12] See, for example, William J. Dumbrell, *The Faith of Israel: A Theological Survey of the Old Testament*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002), 15; Bruce K. Waltke, *Genesis: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001), 57–58; Richard E. Averbeck, "A Literary Day, Inter-Textual, and Contextual Reading of Genesis 1–2," in *Reading Genesis 1–2: An Evangelical Conversation*, ed. J. Daryl Charles (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2013), 7. See also the similar approach taken by Victor P. Hamilton (*The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1–17*, NICOT [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990], 118–43).

[13] Averbeck, "Literary Day," 17–18.

"wise men" (חֲכָמָיו) could not do (see 41:8),[14] and this confirms, in Pharaoh's eyes, the supernatural origins of Joseph's understanding.

In interpreting the dreams, Joseph encouraged Pharaoh to appoint someone with wisdom to oversee the coming seven years of famine (41:33-36). Apparently, Joseph's interpretive work convinces Pharaoh that there is no better candidate for this task than Joseph himself (41:40-41). [15] Thus, God's work with Joseph—through his Spirit and wisdom—extends beyond interpreting the dreams to implementing a plan to navigate Egypt through the coming years of famine. More importantly, however, it is God's wisdom, given to Joseph by his Spirit, that serves as the means through which God preserves the life of his covenant people, Israel.[16]

Other connections between wisdom and God's Spirit are found in the Pentateuch. It is the gift of "the Spirit of God" (רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים), for example, that equips Bezalel, Oholiab and other Israelites with "the wisdom, understanding and knowledge" (בְּחָכְמָה וּבִתְבוּנָה וּבְדַעַת) necessary for constructing the tabernacle in accordance with God's expectations (Exod 31:3, 11b; cf. 35:31, 36:1). The tabernacle's role within God's covenant bond with Israel is made evident from the discourse structure of Exod 25-40, where the building instructions end with the reminder to keep the Sabbath (31:12-17), and where the same reminder begins the story of the

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[14] Waltke, *Genesis*, 533. Cf. Hermann Gunkel, *Genesis*, trans. Mark E. Biddle, MLBS (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1997), 417–18.

[15] Wilson believes that Pharaoh's assessment of Joseph arises from the counsel Joseph gives, rather than Joseph's interpretation of the dreams (*Joseph*, 132, 242–45; cf. Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 18–50*, NICOT [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995], 503). However, Waltke rightly notes that Pharaoh has Joseph's interpretation, together with his related counsel, in view (*Genesis*, 533). This latter interpretation is more preferable, since Joseph's counsel is grounded in, and thus inseparable from, his interpretive work (see Donald B. Redford, *A Study of the Biblical Story of Joseph (Genesis 37–50)*, VTSup 20 [Leiden: Brill, 1970], 103). Additionally, as discussed above, the narrative appears to juxtapose Joseph's wisdom, reflected in his ability to interpret the dreams, with the wisdom of Pharaoh's wise men, who could not interpret the dreams.

[16] Wilson, *Joseph*, 241–42. Wilson notes that the connection between Joseph's wisdom and the survival of Egypt and Israel accords with the connection drawn repeatedly in Prov between wisdom and life.

actual construction (35:1-3).[17] Additionally, when the covenant tablets are broken following the sin with the Golden Calf, the tabernacle construction is jeopardized. The plans to build the sanctuary are resumed with the renewal of the covenant and creation of the new covenant tablets. Leviticus 26:9-12, moreover, underscores the centrality of God's presence with the people to Israel's life under their covenant with God.

According to Exod 25–40, the tabernacle's covenantal function is intertwined with its physical structure, makeup and appearance. Whereas God reveals the blueprint or "plan" (תַּבְנִית) for the tabernacle to Moses on Mt. Sinai (25:9), God's gift of "wisdom" (חָכְמָה) is needed for Bezalel and his associates *to execute* God's plan for the tabernacle with precision. As a result of this competent handiwork, the tabernacle exhibits the requisite beauty for it to be a holy space for God's presence,[18] it possesses the order and boundaries needed for providing separation

[17] Brevard S. Childs, *The Book of Exodus: A Critical, Theological Commentary*, OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1974), 541; William P. Brown, *Character in Crisis: A Fresh Approach to the Wisdom Literature of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996), 86–88; Daniel C. Timmer, *Creation, Tabernacle, and Sabbath: The Sabbath Frame of Exodus 31:12-17; 35:1-3 in Exegetical and Theological Perspective*, FRLANT 227 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2008), 56–57, 140–45; Ralph E. Hendrix, "A Literary Structural Overview of Exod 25-40," *AUSS* 30 (1992): 132; Barry G. Webb, "Heaven on Earth: The Significance of the Tabernacle and Its Literary and Theological Contexts," in *Exploring Exodus: Literary, Theological and Contemporary Approaches*, ed. Brian S. Rosner and Paul R. Williamson (Nottingham: Apollos, 2008), 158; Douglas K. Stuart, *Exodus*, NAC 2 (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2006), 748.

[18]The connection between beauty and holiness with respect to the tabernacle and its accessories is evident in Exod 28:1–3, which indicates a connection between the beauty of the priests' garments and the garment's function of setting the priests apart as holy. Additionally, this connection is evident in the correlation between the metals and cloths used in the tabernacle and the zones in the complex (i.e., the courtyard, holy place, most holy place). More precious, beautiful materials predominate in the most holy place than in the holy place, and in the holy place than in the courtyard. See Menahem Haran, *Temples and Temple-Service in Ancient Israel: An Inquiry into the Character of Cult Phenomena and the Historical Setting of the Priestly School* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1978), 158–65; Philip Peter Jenson, *Graded Holiness: A Key to the Priestly Conception of the World*, JSOTSup 106 (Sheffield: JSOT, 1992), 101–5.

between God and the people[19] and, finally, it contains the accessories and instruments that visibly signify God's presence in the tent (see 25:10–40), as well as those that are needed for the people to approach God in worship (see 27:1–8; 28:1–39; 30:1–10, 17–38).[20] Because of the wisdom

[19] Numerous scholars have noted the parallels between Mt. Sinai as depicted in Exod 19–24 and the tabernacle (see Childs, *Exodus*, 539–40; Terence E. Fretheim, *Exodus*, IBC [Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 1991], 274; Donald E. Gowan, *Theology in Exodus: Biblical Theology in the Form of a Commentary*, 1st ed. [Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1994], 183; William P. Brown, *The Ethos of the Cosmos: The Genesis of Moral Imagination in the Bible* [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999], 80; Richard E. Averbeck, "Pentateuchal Criticism and the Priestly Torah," in *Do Historical Matters Matter to Faith? A Critical Appraisal of Modern and Postmodern Approaches to Scripture*, ed. James K. Hoffmeier and Dennis R. Magary [Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012], 174–75; Craig G. Bartholomew, *Where Mortals Dwell: A Christian View of Place for Today* [Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011], 68; W. Ross Blackburn, *The God Who Makes Himself Known: The Missionary Heart of the Book of Exodus*, New Studies in Biblical Theology 28 [Downers Grove, IL: Apollos, 2012], 131–35). Just as the placing of a boundary around Mt. Sinai consecrated it (19:23), the tabernacle's boundaries designate zones of holiness (26:33). The holiness of the tabernacle's zones arises from one of the tabernacle's most essential functions: to be "a sanctuary" (מִקְדָּשׁ) for God and in its very design to reflect God's holiness (25:8). As is the case on Mt. Sinai, the holiness of the tabernacle's zones results in restricted access to certain members of the Israelite community (Num 3:9–10, 38; Lev 16:1–2). Furthermore, various passages indicate that unauthorized penetration into any of the tabernacle's zones carries deadly consequences for the people (Exod 28:35, 43; 30:20–21; Lev 10:1–2; 16:1–2; Num 3:10, 38; 18:7), just as unauthorized access to Mt. Sinai resulted in death (Exod 19:20–24).

[20] The notion of approaching God's presence is one that is central to OT worship (Nobuyoshi Kiuchi, *Leviticus*, ApOTC 3 [Nottingham: Apollos, 2007], 54). This is underscored by the fact that God's first instructions to the people after the tabernacle is set up (Exod 40:16–35) concern how they should present offerings before him in worship (see Lev 1–7). Additionally, the term קָרְבָּן, often translated "offering," literally refers to something "brought near." On these points, see Gordon J. Wenham, *The Book of Leviticus*, NICOT (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1979), 49; Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 3 (New York: Doubleday, 1991), 134; John E. Hartley, *Leviticus*, Word Biblical Commentary 4 (Dallas: Word Books, 1992), lxix; Mark F. Rooker, *Leviticus*, NAC 3A (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2000), 80, 83–84; L. Michael

given to the builders by virtue of their being filled with God's Spirit, the tabernacle is thus well suited in its structure and beauty to serve as God's sanctuary home, where he will reside in the midst of his people and where he will receive their worship.

Additionally, upon the death of Moses, Joshua is said to receive "the Spirit of wisdom" (רוּחַ חָכְמָה; Deut 34:9). There is some question as to whether this is synonymous with "the Spirit of God." Given the use of the same expression to describe the Sprit's work through Bezalel and the tabernacle craftsmen in Exod 28:3, it is likely that the expressions are either synonymous, or that "the Spirit of wisdom" is the transformed, wise human spirit, resulting from the work and presence of God's Spirit. Whatever the precise meaning, Joshua's filling with this Spirit of wisdom comes in response to Moses' plea in Num 27:16–17 that God provide someone to shepherd and care for the Israelites after his death. Shepherding God's people is not an easy task as Numbers makes clear, yet God has equipped a wise leader to guide his people to obey Law as they move into Canaan in fulfillment of God's covenant promises.

Two other connections between the Spirit and wisdom in the OT are worth noting here. In a manner similar to the way that the Pentateuch describes Joseph, Daniel is described as having "an exceptional Spirit" (רוּחַ יַתִּירָה; 5:12, 6:3[4]). While this may be a reference to Daniel's virtue and noble character, it is more likely, in light of the uses of רוּחַ throughout the book, that this is a reference to God's Spirit (see 4:8–9, 18; 5:11, 14), who has equipped Daniel with wisdom.[21] Like Joseph, Daniel's wisdom

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Morales, Who Shall Ascend the Mountain of the Lord?: A Biblical Theology of the Book of Leviticus, NSBT 37 (Nottingham: Apollos, 2015), 112–24; Bruce K. Waltke, An Old Testament Theology: An Exegetical, Canonical, and Thematic Approach (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007), 452; Christian Eberhart, "Sacrifice? Holy Smokes: Reflections on Cult Terminology for Understanding Sacrifice in the Hebrew Bible," in Ritual and Metaphor: Sacrifice in the Bible, RBS 68 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011), 23. See also Richard E. Averbeck, "קָרְבָּן," NIDOTTE, 3:979–80; "קָרְבָּן," HALOT, 1136–7.

[21] Daniel 6:3[4] seems to affirm that Daniel possesses the extraordinary Spirit referred to in 5:12 (Collins, *Daniel*, 265; Lucas, *Daniel*, 148). It is true that, in 4:8–9, 18 and 5:11, 14, the phrase רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים occurs within discourse spoken by Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar, respectively; when these kings spoke, they were likely referring to the "spirit of the gods" (i.e., the Babylonian gods), rather than the Spirit of the one God of Israel (note the treatment of 4:5 by John J.

enables him to interpret visions and dreams which underscore *God's* complete power over human history, over and against the power of human empires (see 1:17; 2:20–23; 5:13–29). Daniel's wisdom thus unveils a prophetic reminder to all peoples, especially the Israelites living in exile, to trust in the Lord, that "he does as he wishes with the earth's inhabitants" and that it is *his* kingdom that will have no end (4:34-35; cf. 6:26-27). And, finally, this connection between the Spirit and wisdom appears in Isa 11:2, which describes the rule of the Messiah over all the earth. His rule will usher in a period of total peace and justice, providing rest for the world (11:10). Isaiah 11:2 further describes the work of God through the Messiah and how he will usher in such an era in history: "the Spirit of the Lord (רוּחַ יְהוָה) will rest on him, a Spirit of wisdom and understanding (רוּחַ חָכְמָה וּבִינָה), a Spirit of counsel and strength, a Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord."

Thus, in multiple places where the OT speaks of wisdom, it closely links it to the work of God's Spirit through his people. It is by the Spirit and the accompanying gift of wisdom that the Israelites are saved from famine, that God's place of worship and communion with his people is built, that the Israelites are guided into the land of Canaan, that Israel is assured of God's control of history in the exile and that the Messiah will one day usher in an era of total justice and peace. The Holy Spirit is the giver of wisdom in the OT, and this characterization of the Spirit is picked up and further developed in the NT.

Wisdom and the Holy Spirit in the New Testament

In 1 Cor 12:8, Paul identifies "a word of wisdom" (λογός σοφίας) as one of the various spiritual gifts given to Christians. Fee proposes that this "word of wisdom" is the common confession shared by all Christians,

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Collins, *Daniel*, Hermeneia [Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1993], 222; see also Ernest C. Lucas, *Daniel*, ApOTC 20 [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2002], 109). Yet, the singular sense of the noun אֱלֹהִים (which is plural in its form, but can refer to a single deity) is clearly and frequently attested in the OT. Thus, the term may carry a double meaning in Dan 4–6, so that the readers are to infer the work and presence of the one true God of Israel with Daniel. Regarding this point, see the discussions of the possible singular understanding of the phrase אֱלָהִין קַדִּישִׁין ("the holy God/gods"), and its cognate in Josh 24:19, by Collins, *Daniel*, 222, as well as the hermeneutical implications for the reader by Lucas, *Daniel*, 109.

that the death and resurrection of Christ has brought salvation for God's people (cf. 1:21–25).[22] This confession arises from the presence of the Holy Spirit, who indwells all Christians and has disclosed to them the outworking of God's wise plan in Christ (see 2:10–13).[23] It is certainly legitimate to understand the "word of wisdom," mentioned in 1 Cor 12:8, in light of the Christological orientation of wisdom, established in 1 Cor 1–2. However, the context suggests that this wisdom is distinct from a mere articulation of God's redemptive work through the death of Jesus, which is something that *all* Christians should profess. Rather, each spiritual gift that Paul describes is given to *some* Christians, not all (see esp. 12:4–7, 11). Thiselton's suggestion, that this "word of wisdom" consists of the unique ability to speak a sound "*evaluation of realities* in the light of God's grace and the cross of Christ" is thus more precise.[24] The giftedness of some to articulate with exceptional clarity and timeliness the implications of the Gospel would edify and equip the Church for faithful living (see 12:7, 12–27).[25]

A further association between wisdom and the Holy Spirit occurs in Eph 1:17. There, Paul prays that Christians will receive from God "[the] Spirit of wisdom and revelation" (πνεῦμα σοφίας καὶ ἀποκαλύψεως). While it is true that πνεῦμα can refer to the human disposition instead of the Holy Spirit,[26] commentators generally agree that it refers to the latter in Eph 1:17, since "a disposition of … revelation" would make little

[22] Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, NICNT (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1987), 656–57.

[23] Fee, *1 Corinthians*, 121–23; see also Siegfried S. Schatzmann, *A Pauline Theology of Charismata* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1987), 36.

[24] Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000), 939–40. Italics added for emphasis. The
evaluative dimension of wisdom finds support in the OT; see, for instance, 1 Kgs 3:7–28 and Prov 26:4–5. See also the discussion of NT wisdom Christology, and its implications for interpreting the created order, by O'Dowd ("Wisdom as Canonical Imagination: Pleasant Words for Tremper Longman," in *Canon and Biblical Interpretation*, ed. Craig G. Bartholomew et al., SHS 7 [Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2006], 386–90).

[25] Thiselton, *First Epistle*, 440. See also Schatzmann, *Pauline*, 46–47.

[26] For the view that Paul refers in 1:17 to the gift of a new human disposition, see Markus Barth, *Ephesians: Introduction, Translation and Commentary on Chapters 1-3*, ABC (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1974), 148.

sense.[27] The absence of the definite article, moreover, does not necessarily suggest that the term refers to a disposition (as opposed to *the* Spirit); it is probable that Isa 11:2, which refers to God's Spirit as "*a* Spirit of wisdom," serves as the background to this verse.[28]

Paul's assertion in 1:13 that the Holy Spirit has already been given to those who believe raises a question regarding the meaning of his prayer as expressed in 1:17. If the Christians already have the Holy Spirit, why would Paul pray that God "might give" them the Spirit and his accompanying wisdom? Is Paul referring to some giving of the Spirit that is subsequent to that which the Christians have already received at their conversion? It is likely that, in 1:17, Paul is asking that God might grant the Christians "a specific *manifestation* of the Spirit, so that the believers will have insight and know something of God's mysteries as a result of God's revelation."[29]

The wisdom and revelation that Paul prays for consist "in the full knowledge of him [God]" (ἐν ἐπιγνώσει αὐτοῦ); that is to say, Paul prays that the people will have a heightened understanding of God, his work and his purposes for his people.[30] As Ladd comments, "The first work of the Spirit is to enable people to understand the divine work of redemption."[31] The significance of this understanding for the Church is described in 1:18–20.[32]

First, the Christians will understand the nature of their "hope" (ἐλπὶς), grounded in the Gospel (1:18a). Comparing this verse with Col

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[27] Gordon D. Fee, *God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994), 676; Andrew T. Lincoln, *Ephesians*, WBC 42 (Dallas: Word, 1990), 57; Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002), 256–58; Clinton E. Arnold, *Ephesians*, ZECNT 10 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 104.

[28] Arnold, *Ephesians*, 104. See also Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 56.

[29] Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 258. Italics are added. See also Fee, *God's Empowering*, 676, f.n. 55; Frank Thielman, *Ephesians*, BECNT (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010), 96; George Eldon Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1993), 533.

[30] Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 57–58, 78; Fee, *God's Empowering*, 676. See also Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 258; Thielman, *Ephesians*, 97–98.

[31] Ladd, *Theology*, 533.

[32] Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 58; Fee, *God's Empowering*, 676; Thielman, *Ephesians*, 99–100.

1:5, Barth notes, rightly, that the emphasis here is on the object of the Christians' hope (their eschatological destiny), not on their feelings or emotions of hope.[33] Second, they will become attuned to their identity as God's "inheritance" (κληρονομίας), or special possession (1:18b). As Thielman notes, it is not just the Church that has an inheritance (see 1:14), but God as well, in the form of his people.[34] As it strives to fulfill its mission, the Church must understand its prized status before God.[35] Finally, the Christians will see that they are the beneficiaries of "the surpassing greatness of his [God's] power" (τὸ ὑπερβάλλον μέγεθος τῆς δυνάμεως ἀυτοῦ) that he put on display in raising Jesus from the dead (1:19–20). Thus, as Lincoln summarizes, the wisdom that the Spirit supplies will result in the Church's attaining "knowledge and appropriation of the salvation God has provided," to an even greater degree than that which they experienced at their initial state of belief.[36]

It is noteworthy that Paul's prayer concerns *all* believers, not simply certain members of the Church.[37] Thus, the gift of wisdom Paul describes in 1:17 is not synonymous with the "word of wisdom" described in 1 Cor 12:8. In 1 Cor 12:8, it is evident that Paul has in mind a unique gift bestowed upon select individuals, enabling them to verbally appraise what takes place in the world in light of the death and resurrection of Jesus.[38] This unique ability to *speak* wisdom is not the concern of Eph 1:17 (note that the verse does not refer to a "*word* of wisdom"). The concern, rather, is that the Church would arrive at a robust *understanding* of the ramifications of Jesus' death and resurrection both for human history and, especially, for God's people.[39]

A similar link between the Spirit and wisdom appears later in the letter, in Eph 5:15–20. There, Paul exhorts his audience to live "as wise ones" (σοφοί) rejecting folly and its accompanying vices (5:15–16). The age in which the Church lives is one characterized by evil (5:16); "redeeming the time" (ἐξαγοραζόμενοι τὸν καιρόν), that is to say, using

[33] Barth, *Ephesians 1-3*, 150–51.
[34] Thielman, *Ephesians*, 99.
[35] Ibid., 100.
[36] Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 78.
[37] Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 259.
[38] See the discussion above, 258–59, and the sources cited there.
[39] Cf. Ladd, *Theology*, 533.

time in a way that liberates it from the evil that dominates this age,[40] requires wisdom that begins with discerning "what is the will of God" (τί τὸ θέλημα τοῦ κυρίου) (5:16–17; cf. Prov 1:7, 9:10).[41]

Attaining such wisdom—and the accompanying way of life that conforms to God's will—itself necessitates a deliberate surrender to the governance of the Holy Spirit.[42] Thus, Paul instructs his audience: "Do not be drunk with wine, in which comes reckless living, but be filled in the Spirit (πληροῦσθε ἐν πνεύματι) (5:18)."[43] Paul thereby contrasts two powerful influences that may completely govern one's behavior—wine (in excess) and the Holy Spirit.[44]

Elsewhere in Paul's letters, an absence of understanding, related to drunkenness, serves as a descriptor of those lacking spiritual alertness (1 Thess 5:1-11) and Christian virtue (Rom 13:11-14).[45] Moreover, the link between folly, sin and drunkenness recurs throughout the biblical canon. The connection between reckless, unwise behavior and drunkenness appears in Proverbs (20:1; 23:20–21, 30–35; 31:4–5), which almost certainly figures into the backdrop to Paul's comparison.[46] Similarly, as Lincoln notes, the NT elsewhere associates drunkenness with folly and sin (Matt 24:49; Luke 12:45; Rom 13:12, 13; 1 Cor 5:11, 6:10; 1 Thess 5:6-8; 1 Tim 3:8; Titus 2:3; 1 Pt 4:3).[47] The logic behind all these

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[40] The verb ἐξαγοράζω (from which the participle ἐξαγοραζόμενοι is derived) means to "buy up," "redeem," or "deliver" (see *BAGD*, 270). The sense of the verb in this context seems to be
that by living wisely and virtuously, Christians "buy the present time out of its slavery to evil" (Thielman, *Ephesians*, 356). See also Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 692–95.

[41] Thielman, *Ephesians*, 356–57.

[42] See Stephen E. Fowl, *Ephesians: A Commentary*, NTL (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2012), 176–77.

[43] On the translation of the latter half of this verse, see below.

[44] See Best, who argues that the contrast "is not made between two entities, wine and the Spirit, but between two conditions, drunkenness and Spirit possession" (*Ephesians: A Shorter Commentary* [London: T&T Clark, 2003], 266). Best's point that it is "two conditions" that are juxtaposed is true in a sense, but he has perhaps overstated his case; Paul states "Do not get drunk *with wine*," which seems to contrast wine's power over one's behavior (at least, when wine is consumed in excess) with that of the Spirit.

[45] See Fee, *God's Empowering*, 720.

[46] See Arnold, *Ephesians*, 349; Fowl, *Ephesians*, 177.

[47] Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 344.

connections is readily evident: drunkenness impairs one's sense of judgment, inevitably yielding foolish, aberrant behavior.

It is in sharp contrast with drunkenness that Paul calls his audience to "be filled in the Spirit." While the translation of the prepositional phrase ἐν πνεύματι ("in/with/by the Spirit") is debated, that the Spirit is the *content* of the filling is unlikely grammatically.[48] More likely, the Spirit is the *means* by which the filling takes place,[49] or, even more likely, that the Spirit is the sphere in which the filling takes place.[50]

It is probable that the content of the filling is the "fullness of God" (3:19), or "the fullness of Christ" (4:13), which yields Christian maturity and a life that reflects the character of God himself (see 2:10 and 4:13; cf. 5:19–21).[51] Both wine and the Spirit are powerful external influences that may radically govern one's behavior.[52] While excessive wine impairs one's sensibilities, resulting in "reckless living," the Spirit—the one in whom the people of God are being fashioned into "a *holy* sanctuary" (see

[48] Some translations (KJV, NIV, HCSB) translate the phrase "with the Spirit," perhaps suggesting that the Spirit is the content of the filling. This also is the translation adopted by Fowl (*Ephesians*, 176–77). The problem with this translation is that the verb πληρόω typically takes its object in the genitive when the object is the content of the filling (see the observations by Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 703; Thielman, *Ephesians*, 359).

[49] Thus, Hoehner translates ἐν πνεύματι as "by the Spirit," proposing that the Spirit is the *means* of the filling (*Ephesians*, 702–4). This interpretation is quite possible, as the Greek preposition ἐν can be used to indicate instrumentality or means (see Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament with Scripture, Subject, and Greek Word Indexes* [Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996], 372, 375 for the possible syntactical uses of this preposition and a discussion of its use in Eph 5:18).

[50] See the discussion by Heil, who, appealing to the phrase ἐν ᾧ ἐστιν ασωτία ("in which is reckless behavior") in the same verse, interprets ἐν πνεύματι as a dative of sphere ("Ephesians 5:18b: 'But Be Filled in the Spirit,'" *CBQ* 69 [2007]: 514–15). Moreover, Heil notes that the phrase ἐν πνεύματι, throughout Ephesians, commonly refers to the sphere in which Christians receive (or, are "filled" with) spiritual blessings from God through Christ ("Ephesians," 511–4). Heil's approach is largely adopted by Thielman (*Ephesians*, 360).

[51] Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 704; Thielman, *Ephesians*, 360.

[52] Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 344; Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 704.

2:19–21)[53]—produces virtuous Christian behavior, reflecting praise and gratitude to God (5:19–20).[54]

Significantly, the larger context in which Paul exhorts his readers to "be filled with the Spirit" is his call for them to walk in wisdom rather than foolishness (5:15). The connection between wisdom and righteous, virtuous living that pleases God is one forged in the OT wisdom literature, particularly Proverbs (see, for example, 1:1–3, 2:1–22). Moreover, Fredericks demonstrates that many of the virtues of the Christian life described in the NT accord with those described in OT wisdom texts.[55] According to Paul, the source of wise living—as opposed to foolish living—is the Holy Spirit himself. Christians have the responsibility to "be filled" continually[56] with the fullness of God, taking full advantage of their position "in the Spirit," so that he supplies them with wisdom, which is essential for Christian maturity and virtuous living.

Colossians 3:16 takes up similar concerns to those found in Eph 5:15–20. In the latter verse, Paul instructs his readers to "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly," the results of which are "teaching and admonishing each other in all wisdom, with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thanksgiving in your hearts to God." Though the initial commands are different ("Let the word of Christ dwell in you" vs. "Be filled in the Spirit"), the intended results in both passages are songs

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[53] See Heil, who notes that being shaped into a temple for God is among the "gifts of love" that Christ bestows upon the Church in the Spirit ("Ephesians," 511–12).

[54] Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 344. See also Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 705; Arnold, *Ephesians*, 347–48.

[55] Daniel C. Fredericks, *Shepherds: The Believer's Outline of Theology* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2017), 290–325. Among the many parallels that Fredericks observes between the OT wisdom literature and the NT are teachings regarding just rule/leadership (Prov 29:13; Eph 6:9; Col 4:1), diligence (Eccl 9:10; Prov 24:27; 2 Pet 1:5–7; Matt 25:3–4), humility (Prov 16:5, 29:23, 30:3–4; Job 42:2–3; Phil 2:3–8; James 4:10), kindness (Prov 3:3, 11:17; Matt 5:45; Luke 6:35; 2 Tim 2:24) and mercy (Prov 24:17, 25:21; Matt 5:43–44; Luke 6:36; James 3:17).

[56] See Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 704; Heil, "Ephesians," 516; Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1998), 896. The imperative πληροῦσθε is present tense and thus likely signals continual action (contra Thielman, *Ephesians*, 359). On the significance of the Greek present imperative, see Wallace, *Greek*, 721–22.

of praise and thanksgiving to God. Moreover, the same vocabulary (ψαλμοῖς, ὕμνοις, and ᾠδαῖς πνευματικαῖς) appears in both letters to refer to the resulting songs.

In light of these verbal parallels between the two passages, it is possible that being "filled in the Spirit" and letting "the word of Christ (Ὁ λογός τοῦ Χριστοῦ) dwell richly" in oneself refer to complementary aspects of the same reality, with differing emphases accounting for the different commands.[57] Many have proposed that the "word of Christ" refers to the proclaimed message about Christ's Lordship, that is, the Gospel message.[58] In support of this view, Pao notes that "the word of Christ" in 3:16 resembles "the word" mentioned in 1:5–6, which Paul equates with the Gospel; in both passages, the "word" being discussed is "as an active agent of God," yielding fruitful Christian lives in the first text and taking up residence among God's people in the second.[59] The Church's robust submission to the Gospel, which is founded upon Christ's lordship over all things (see Col 1:15–16), is perhaps the means by which the Spirit fills it with "the fullness of God" (Eph 3:19), molding it into a mature community.[60]

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[57]C f. David W. Pao, *Colossians and Philemon*, ZECNT 12 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), 248.

[58] James D. G. Dunn, *The Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996), 236; Douglas J. Moo, *The Letters to the Colossians and to Philemon*, PiNTC (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008), 286; Pao, *Colossians and Philemon*, 247–48. Cf. Markus Barth and Helmut Blanke, *Colossians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, trans. Astrid B. Beck, ABC 34b (New York: Doubleday, 1994), 426; Christopher R. Seitz, *Colossians*, BTCB (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos, 2014), 164. The genitive τοῦ Χριστοῦ ("of Christ") is thus likely an objective genitive (see Moo, *Colossians and Philemon*, 285–6; Pao, *Colossians and Philemon*, 247–8), referring to a word *concerning* Christ, rather than a word spoken by him, though Dunn cautions that these alternatives may not be mutually exclusive (*Colossians and Philemon*, 236). Pao notes that, if the genitive were, in fact, subjective (a word spoken *by* Christ), one would likely expect the plural form ὁι λόγοι ("words") instead of the singular, or perhaps ῥῆμα instead of λόγος, as is the case in Acts 11:16 (*Colossians and Philemon*, 247).

[59] Pao, *Colossians and Philemon*, 248.

[60] See the proposal, above, that the content of the filling described in Eph 5:18 is Christian maturity.

It is also possible that the connection between the Spirit and wisdom—predominant in Eph 5:15–20—comes to the surface in Col 3:16. The primary concern of the Ephesians passage is to call Christians to walk in wisdom and avoid folly (see 5:15, 17) and it is for the purposes of wisdom that Paul exhorts his audience to "be filled in the Spirit" (5:18). Similarly, in Col 3:16, Paul indicates that allowing "the word of Christ to dwell in you richly" results in "teaching and admonishing each other in all wisdom (ἐν πάσῃ σοφίᾳ)." Though in a less overt way than in Eph 5:18, the evidence suggests that an allusion to the work of the Spirit appears in Col 3:16. "Spiritual songs" (ᾠδαῖς πνευματικαῖς) probably refers to songs that arise from the Spirit's work, as the use of the same expression in Eph 5:19 reflects.[61]

If this expression alludes to the Spirit's work, then it is probable that the act of "teaching and admonishing each other in all wisdom" is the product of the Spirit's work. Moo and Pao conclude that ᾠδαῖς πνευματικαῖς are instrumental datives; hence, the "spiritual songs" serve as the stated means through which the wisdom teaching takes place.[62] Thus, if the Spirit's work produces the songs of praise, and the songs of praise serve as the means of teaching wisdom to one another, then the wisdom teaching arises from the Spirit's work.

Thus, the NT, as does the OT, highlights wisdom as one of the principal gifts of God's Spirit so that his people may be equipped to share in his mission. As God created heaven and earth by his Spirit and through his wisdom, in much the same way he has, by his Spirit and wisdom, created a community bound together by a common understanding of himself, his ultimate plans for them, their mission and purpose and how they must interface with those around them. Hence, by virtue of the Spirit's work, God's people are fundamentally a people of wisdom. This wisdom is counterintuitive,[63] as it is immersed in the story of God becoming man in order to secure through suffering his people's redemption. "The message of the cross is foolishness to those who are

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[61] Dunn, *Colossians and Philemon*, 239; Pao, *Colossians and Philemon*, 248; Cf. Moo, *Colossians and Philemon*, 290.

[62] Moo, *Colossians and Philemon*, 288; Pao, *Colossians and Philemon*, 248. The evidence from Eph 5:19, which Pao appeals to, is decisive; there, the reference to songs as the means of "speaking to each other" is beyond dispute.

[63] See O'Dowd, "Wisdom as Canonical," 388–89.

perishing, but to those who are being saved, it is the power of God" (1 Cor 1:18). The result of the Spirit's work is a new humanity that shares a unique orientation toward the world—a common faith and way of life that rejects folly and exhibits the wisdom of God to the rest of the earth (Matt 5:16).

Conclusion

The place of the OT wisdom literature in OT and biblical theology has often puzzled interpreters, because of the perceived absence of certain theological themes and concepts from this corpus. As noted in the introduction to this paper, a growing number of scholars have argued persuasively that the wisdom literature is not a foreign body in the canon, that its contrast with the rest of the canon has at times been overdrawn and that its unique theological emphasis may be a feature of its genre rather than a reflection of a variant worldview. Moreover, Tremper Longman has issued a call to further consider the implications of the OT's claim that wisdom is grounded in the fear of the Lord and suggests that this claim points to the uniqueness of Israel's wisdom. Thus, recent studies have not only opened up new, fruitful avenues for studying the wisdom literature itself, but for tracing the theme of wisdom, in all its diversity throughout the canon.[64] After all, the wisdom literature is one part of a larger book; the larger context of Scripture, and how wisdom is treated throughout it, should inform the way in which this smaller collection of books is read.

The passages studied here are a part of that context and they clearly indicate that the gift of wisdom is integrated into God's unique work with and through his people. The OT Scriptures themselves bear witness to the use of wisdom by the Spirit of God in both his act of creation and his redemptive mission of *re-creation* through Abraham's offspring. By wisdom God's Spirit preserves Israel's existence, creates the site of covenant worship, shepherds the people into the land of promise, assures his exiled people of his sovereignty over history and will usher in an era of peace for God's people in the last days. The NT develops this theme of the Holy Spirit's role in redemptive history as the giver of wisdom. In granting wisdom from God to the Church, the Spirit ensures that Christians know their hope, understand the implications of the

[64] See the approach to OT Theology advocated by Hasel (*Old Testament*, 113).

resurrection of the Son of God for the world today, know how to walk in holy virtue and are equipped to encourage one another with Christian teaching. Thus in the NT, the Spirit employs wisdom to create a people that is sanctified, spiritually mature and equipped to participate in God's mission. As a result, the Church is "a foretaste of life in the Kingdom of God" and is thereby able "to reflect in the world something of what the eschatological reality will be."[65]

[65] Ladd, *Theology*, 586.

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Charles Spurgeon: The Quintessential Evangelical

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The Evangelicals of Britain have been neglected.[1]

When David Bebbington penned those words in the introduction to his work, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s*, they rang true. In Bebbington's context, choice figures such as William Wilberforce or Lord Shaftesbury were remembered for their social reforms, while evangelicals as a whole seemed to have vanished in the mists of time.[2] Accordingly, Bebbington sought to "fill the gap by providing an overall survey of the movement."[3]

However, he quickly realized the daunting scale of his task. In surveying the *movement* rather than *individuals* he discovered that Evangelicalism was both "self-consciously distinctive," and yet "unitary."[4] Indeed, the grand movement could "not be equated with any single Christian denomination."[5]

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[1] D. W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (Unwin Hyman Ltd, 1989: London and New York: Routledge, 2005), 8.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid., 9.
[5] Ibid., 13.

But, how could a "self-consciously distinctive" movement be united? What common cause could unify the Nonconformists? What could bring the Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Methodists, Baptists, and the like together again? For David Bebbington the answer lay in key shared *doctrines* and *convictions*.[6]

Doctrinally, Bebbington discovered that evangelicals united around cornerstone truths like "Original Sin, Justification by Faith, and the New Birth."[7] Furthermore, this theological truth-cluster had historical roots. Year prior, Matthew Henry expressed the same view with his "3 R's," "ruin, redemption, and regeneration."[8]

What made Bebbington's work an essential piece of evangelical historiography was his identification of four key evangelical *convictions*: conversionism, activism, Biblicism, and crucicentrism. Since his work's publication in 1989, these convictions, the "Bebbington Quadrilateral," have become the textbook rubric for studying and identifying evangelicals.

When Bebbington surveyed his context he was right to assert that Britain had forgotten her evangelical heritage, but America has not, at least not yet. Indeed, America has certainly not forgotten Charles Haddon Spurgeon.

Even to this day, Spurgeon's writings continue to circulate en masse while blog after blog proliferate on the internet. The "Prince of Preachers" once famously said "I would fling shadow through eternal ages if I could,"[9] and it appears that his shadow remains today. Indeed, it was because of his *legacy* that Carl F. H. Henry, once called Spurgeon "one of evangelical Christianity's immortals."[10]

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[6] Ibid., 15.

[7] Ibid., 16. See also, *Life of Ann Okely*, quoted by J. Walsh, "The Cambridge Methodists," in P. Brooks, ed., *Christian Spirituality: Essays in Honour of Gordon Rupp* (London: S. C. M. Press, 1975), 258.

[8] R. W. Dale, *The Old Evangelicalism and the New* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1889), 13.

[9] W. A. Fullerton, *C. H. Spurgeon: A Biography* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1920), 181.

[10] Carl F. H. Henry in the foreword to Lewis Drummond, *Spurgeon Prince of Preachers* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1992).

This "boy preacher of the fens" who was once reckoned a "nine-days wonder,"[11] not only became "immortal" in Henry's words, but also the *exemplar par excellence* of Evangelicalism. In what follows, we contend that Charles Haddon Spurgeon focused the varied rays of evangelical conviction into a white-hot beam which shines even to this day.

The following articles will demonstrate Charles Spurgeon to be the quintessential evangelical through an examination of Evangelicalism's four key convictions. The first conviction to be examined will be *Conversionism*, or as Bebbington stated "the belief that lives need to be changed." The second will be *Activism*, or "the expression of the gospel in effort." The third will be *Biblicism*, or having "a particular regard for the Bible." The fourth, and final conviction, will be *Crucicentrism*, or "a stress on the sacrifice of Christ on the cross."[12] Indeed, while Bebbington stated his points modestly, this examination will show that Charles Spurgeon was the embodiment of evangelical virtue.

Spurgeon's Evangelical Conversionism

> You must believe in Jesus; you must be born again, and receive the new life.[13]

When Charles Haddon Spurgeon preached these words on February 13, 1876, such impassioned pleas for sinners to come to Christ were part of the grand tradition of evangelical conversionism. Indeed, Spurgeon loved to see unconverted sinners come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. According to David Bebbington, conversionism entailed more than "the belief that lives need to be changed,"[14] specifically, lives needed to be changed by the gospel of Jesus Christ. Bebbington also noted that "The call to conversion" was seen as "the content of the gospel."[15] Accordingly, it was the duty of preachers to urge their hearers to repent of their sins and cling to Christ by faith. So urgent was the call to conversion that

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[11] Autobiography 2:55.
[12] Bebbington, Evangelicalism in Modern Britain, 16.
[13] C. H. Spurgeon, *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit: Sermons Preached and Revised by C.H. Spurgeon*. Vols. 7-63 (Pasadena, TX: Pilgrim Publications, 1970-2006), *MTP* 50:130.
[14] Bebbington, Evangelicalism in Modern Britain, 16.
[15] Ibid., 20.

evangelicals saw a danger in "offering only comfort from the pulpit."[16] Rather, "hearers needed to be aroused to concern for their spiritual welfare."[17] And that is exactly what Spurgeon did.

For Charles Spurgeon, conversion was more than merely walking down a church aisle or repeating the "sinners' prayer." True conversion was a supernatural experience. The "great change"[18] could not be produced by "the fear of imprisonment, the authority of law, the charms of bribery, the clamour of excitement, or the glitter of eloquence," but only by "the mysterious work of the Spirit upon the soul."[19]

However, this urgent attitude towards conversion was not new, but part of a growing evangelical tradition which began in large part with George Whitefield and Jonathan Edwards. Writing on Whitefield's conversion, historian Thomas S. Kidd has noted that "For Whitefield conversion was a titanic spiritual struggle…. [over] who would command your souls allegiance, God or the devil."[20] So intense was his conversion journey that he could say. "Every day God made me willing to renew the combat."[21] Indeed, Whitefield "carried the burden of his unforgiven sin and the separation it created between him and God,"[22] until at last Whitefield could say: "The spirit of mourning was taken from me, and I knew what it was to rejoice in God my Saviour."[23] Simply, "In Whitefield's world, conversion to faith in Christ was no polite, simple affair."[24]

Similarly, when one considers sermons such as Jonathan Edwards' "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," it is not difficult to understand the urgency of conversion. In his sermon, Edwards painted graphic images of helpless sinners before a wrathful God, warning the

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[16] Ibid., 21.
[17] Ibid.
[18] *MTP* 19:703.
[19] Ibid.
[20] Thomas Kidd, *George Whitefield: America's Spiritual Founding Father* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), 20.
[21] Ibid.
[22] Ibid., 21
[23] Ibid.
[24] Ibid., 20.

unconverted that "God. . . abhors you" and that God held unconverted sinners "over the pit of hell" like a spider is held "over the fire."[25]

Indeed, considering the spiritual climate of Edwards' and Whitefield's day, it is not difficult to understand why conversions were dramatic. The common man was spiritually sensitive. Unlike today, death and sin were an ever-present reality. Such was the case that George Whitfield could warn "Though this is Saturday night, and ye are now preparing for the Sabbath, for what you know, you may yet never live to see the Sabbath."[26] Tragically, young children were especially susceptible to death and suffering. The stark reality of death was so pervasive that even schoolbooks took the opportunity to teach about death. For example, in the *New England Primer*, children learned of both the frailty of life and the immanency of death. For instance, the page for the letter "T" featured a woodcut of the grim reaper with the text "Time cuts down all, both great and small,"[27] while the letter "Y" bore the text "Youth forward slips, Death soonest nips"[28] with a woodcut of death holding an arrow to a child's head.[29] Even the knowledge of original sin was inculcated as the text for the letter "A" reminded that "In Adam's fall, we sinned all,"[30] teaching that all children are sinners by birth, not merely by choice. On this, George Marsden has noted that "Much of Puritan upbringing was

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[25] Jonathan Edwards, *Sinners in the Hands of An Angry God: A Sermon Preached at Enfield, July 8th, 1741. At A Time of Great Awakenings; and Attended with Remarkable Impressions on Many of the Hearers* (Boston: Printed by n.p., n.d.; Edinburgh: Reprinted by T. Lumisden and J. Robertson, 1745), 16.

[26] George Whitfield, Sermon XXIII , "Marks of a True Conversion," *The Works of the Reverend George Whitefield, M. A. Late of Pembroke College, Oxford, and Chaplain to the Rt. The Countess of Huntington. Containing All His Sermons and Tracts Which Have Been Already Published: with a Select Collection of Letters, Written to His Most Intimate Friends, and Persons of Distinction, in England, Scotland, Ireland, and America, from the Year 1734, to 1770, Including the Whole Period of His Ministry. Also Some Other Pieces on Important Subjects, Never Before Printed; Prepared by Himself for the Press. To which is Prefixed, An Account of His Life, Compiled from His Original Papers and Letters* (London: Printed for Edward and Charles Dilly, 1772), 346.

[27] George Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards: A Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 27.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Ibid.

designed to teach children to recognize how insecure their lives were. Every child knew of brothers, sisters, cousins, or friends who had suddenly died."[31]

Similarly, the Victorian England in which Spurgeon lived was well acquainted with the grim specter of death. Furthermore, evangelicals also "accepted without question that heaven and a hell existed and that this earth was a testing ground."[32] Disease was common, and influenza, typhus, typhoid, and cholera ravaged the land. Spurgeon remarked that "churches have been crammed with hearers, who, because so many funerals have passed their doors, or so many have died in the street, could not refrain from going up to God's house to confess their sins."[33]

Furthermore, ever since John Bunyan's allegory *The Holy War* the evangelical imagination has been engaged in the trenches of gracious gospel ministry. In T*he Holy War*, the city of Mansoul, once loyal to El Shaddai, is taken over by the evil Diabolus. A great battle then ensued which culminated in Emmanuel gaining the victory for the city of Mansoul. Indeed, as one reads the work the urgency of conversion is magnified through the use of militaristic language. Ever mindful of Bunyan, Spurgeon's own ministry mirrored such urgency as he preached because he knew that he was in a holy war for souls. Eternity hung in the balance for lost souls, and so every sermon issued an assault on spiritual darkness. For Spurgeon, the horrors of hell were too terrible to be trifled with. Indeed, Spurgeon lamented, "Oh! what would the damned in hell give for a sermon could they but listen once more to the church-going bell and go up to the sanctuary!"[34]

Spurgeon's language concerning conversion was direct, using terms such as 'soul-winning.' For Spurgeon, to go soul-winning was to enter war. In his view, "You must throw your soul into your work just as a

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[31] Ibid., 26.

[32] Christopher Hibbert, "Flesh and the Spirit," *Life in Victorian England* (E-Book; Newbury: New Word City, 2016), http://proxy01.mbts.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,url,cpid&custid=s8385080&db=nlebk&AN=1370499&site=eds-live., accessed 12/17/2018.

[33] C. H. Spurgeon, *The New Park Street Pulpit: Containing Sermons Preached and Revised by the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon*, 6 Vols. (Pasadena, TX: Pilgrim Publications, 1970-2006), NPSP 3:50.

[34] *NPSP* 6:488.

warrior must throw his soul into a battle."[35] The Prince of Preachers believed that all Christians ought to possess a burning desire to see other sinners saved from God's fiery wrath, and for Spurgeon it was "a happy thing"[36] to "win souls for Jesus."[37]

However, the conflict for souls was not a game of mere numbers, indeed, Spurgeon warned against false conversions saying that "A false profession is one of the worst of lies."[33] His strong words to false converts leave no doubt concerning the serious nature of living hypocritically: "The man that says, 'I know Christ,' and does not keep his commandments, is making his own damnation sure."[39] Spurgeon was convinced that true conversion necessarily changed a person's life, so much so, in fact, that Spurgeon declared that false converts preached a "devil's gospel"[40] with their "hands, feet, and hearts."[41] While this is indeed strong language it is true language nonetheless.

But amidst the clamor of war Spurgeon rested in the knowledge that "There is a power in God's gospel beyond all description."[42] In Spurgeon's view, conversion required that "Our condition before God, our moral tone, our nature, our state of mind, are. . . totally different from what they were before."[43] Simply, true conversion must bring lasting change.

Furthermore, Spurgeon believed that conversion was deeply personal. On this point, he emphatically declared that a sinner must "personally repent of sin, personally believe in Jesus Christ, personally be converted, and personally live to the service and glory of God."[44] Spurgeon believed that it was the duty of the sinner to believe in Christ alone and vicarious Christianity was not an option. However, it is equally true that the Holy Spirit must open a sinner's heart to believe the gospel message. When asked about this apparent tension in the Scriptures Spurgeon stated that

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[35] *MTP* 22:260.
[36] Ibid., 261.
[37] Ibid.
[38] Ibid., 257.
[39] *MTP* 16:178.
[40] Ibid., 22:255
[41] Ibid.
[42] *NPSP* 1:57.
[43] *MTP* 20:402.
[44] Ibid., 24:99.

he had "long ago given up trying to reconcile friends who never fell out."[45] For Spurgeon, there was no issue because the Word of God teaches both realities. God is sovereign in the salvation of sinners, and man has the divine duty to repent and believe. For example, while Spurgeon pleaded with sinners to "trust thy soul with him,"[46] he also petitioned God "to grant, poor soul, that thou mayest lay hold on Christ this morning."[47] Spurgeon lived happily with what he saw to be a God-ordained tension in the Scriptures.

Spurgeon believed lives needed to be changed, eternally changed. Throughout his ministry his passion to see souls saved was never quenched. He pleaded with Christians not to "go to heaven childless" and lamented the lost myriads "going down to hell by thousands."[48] Indeed, as the exemplar of evangelical conversionism Spurgeon offered one final charge: "Young men, and old men, and sisters of all ages, if you love the Lord get a passion for souls."[49]

Spurgeon's Evangelical Activism

> Christian people are never so happy as when they are busy for Jesus. When you do most for Christ you shall feel most of His love in your hearts.[50]

According to historian David Bebbington, "activism" continues to be a defining characteristic of Modern Evangelicalism. Citing Jonathan Edwards, Bebbington explained, "Persons, after their own conversion, have commonly expressed an exceeding great desire for the conversion of others."[51] Historically, this longing for conversions has compelled men and women on to Christian service; to venture out into the world with a passion marked by a post-redemption rise of activity. The early Methodist preachers served as fitting examples as "a typical one attended

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[45] Ibid., 46:422.
[46] Ibid., 9:504.
[47] Ibid., 15:336.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Ibid.
[50] *MTP* 17:623.
[51] Cited in Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 29. Originally found in Jonathan Edwards, "A Narrative of Surprising Conversions," *Select Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Vol. 1, 2nd ed. (London: Banner of Truth Trust, 1965), 40.

class and band meetings, visited the sick and preached five or six times a week."[52] These men rode "a circuit of 300 miles every six weeks, visiting some sixty societies," and they "frequently managed no more than eight hours a sleep a week."[53] This was not unusual as, according to Bebbington, "A working week of between 90 and 100 hours was expected of men in the nineteenth-century Wesleyan ministry."[54]

This activity, however, did not arise from a desire to fill one's schedule to the brink or a veiled attempt to earn personal salvation, but a passion to fulfill biblical commands and preach the gospel. This corporate vision led R.W. Dale to describe an evangelical saint as "a man who is a zealous Sunday-school teacher, holds mission services among the poor, and attends innumerable committee meetings."[55] Indeed, Dale went so far as to say, "'Work' has taken its place side by side with prayer."[56] In essence, to be Evangelical required full dedication to one's Lord as demonstrated through personal action.

One of the chief evangelical leaders to ever incarnate this activist mentality was Charles Haddon Spurgeon. From the moment of his conversion Spurgeon's life was defined by an unyielding service to Christ. As his wife Susannah once wrote, "Surely, there never was a busier life than his; not an atom more of sacred service could have been crowded into it."[57] For Spurgeon, faith and deed were so connected that he could proclaim, "A believing man becomes an active man."[58] A lazy believer was simply an oxymoron. Fueled by such conviction, Spurgeon dedicated each moment of his schedule to the work of his Master by preaching, writing, serving, and evangelizing without pause. A typical week could include twelve sermons, hundreds of miles traveled, dozens of written letters, hours of editorial work, an afternoon of college lectures, or late-night

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[52] Ibid., 29.
[53] Ibid.
[54] Ibid., 31.
[55] R.W. Dale, *The Evangelical Revival and Other Sermons: With an Address on the Work of the Christian Ministry in a Period of Theological Decay and Transition*, (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1880), 35-36.
[56] Ibid., 36.
[57] C.H. Spurgeon, *C.H. Spurgeon's Autobiography. Compiled from His Diary, Letters, and Records, by His Wife, and Private Secretary*. 4 Vols. (London: Passmore and Alabaster, 1897-1900), *Autobiography* 4:89.
[58] *MTP* 26:282.

prayer meetings. In fact, Susannah believed that Spurgeon accomplished more during his vacation than most men did while working full-time!

This prodigious work ethic led to a notable change in London's skyline. According to Mike Nicholls, fifty-three of the sixty-two London Baptist churches established between 1865 and 1876 could be attributed to the work of the Pastor's College which Spurgeon founded and presided over as president.[59] Moreover, Spurgeon created sixty-six parachurch ministries to care for London's social ills including orphanages, shelters for victims of domestic abuse, and ministries to care for London's police force. Evangelical activism, however, was more than a social program. It was a transformative force that created a physical difference on the city in which it sparked.

A cornucopia of case studies for Spurgeon's transformative activism can be found within the parachurch ministries he established. The Stockwell Orphanage, for example, was born out of prayer and a sense of duty. During a prayer meeting in August of 1866, Spurgeon called his church to action by stating, "Dear friends, we are a huge church, and should be doing more for the Lord in this great city."[60] In light of this call, Spurgeon penned an article entitled "The Holy War of the Present Hour" within *The Sword and the Trowel* in which he wrote, "A great effort should be made to multiply our day schools, and to render them distinctly religious by teaching the gospel in them."[61] Providentially, Spurgeon published this article around the same time Anne Hillyard sought to care for the "training and education of a few orphan boys."[62] Soon, the two began a partnership founded on activism. Remarkably, Hillyard did not attend the Metropolitan Tabernacle and only knew of Spurgeon through reputation, but she saw in him a full-fledged commitment to the betterment of London. Seeing Spurgeon's heart for the children promoted Hillyard to donate £20,000 to the formation of the Stockwell Orphanage.[63] Little did they know that this commitment to demonstrate

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[59] M.K. Nicholls, *C.H. Spurgeon: The Pastor Evangelist*, (Didcot: Baptist Historical Society, 1992), 98.

[60] *Autobiography* 3:168.

[61] C.H. Spurgeon, ed., "The Preacher's Power, and the Conditions of Obtaining It," in *Sword and Trowel; A Record of Combat with Sin & Labour for the Lord.* 37 Vols. (London: Passmore and Alabaster, 1865-1902), *ST* August 1866:343.

[62] *Autobiography* 3:169.

[63] Ibid., 167

pure and undefiled religion would flourish to help over 37,000 children and still exists, albeit under the name of *Spurgeon's Children Charity*, to this day.[64]

Hillyard and Spurgeon provide a fitting example of two distinct ecclesiological camps crossing the aisle in the cause of evangelical activism. Spurgeon, a prominent Baptist, and Hillyard, the widow of a Church of England clergyman, found much to agree on in their service to Christ in spite of theological differences. Spurgeon recognized that there were individual evangelicals within different denominations and was willing to work alongside them for the sake of the gospel and the betterment of the community. This was quite common as, according to Kathleen Heasman, as many as three-quarters of all charitable organizations in the second half of the nineteenth century in England were founded or led by evangelicals from different ecclesiological camps.[65] The ecclesiological background of both the leaders of the orphanage and the children admitted into its care reflects such catholicity. The president of the orphanage would be one Mr. Charlesworth, a paedo-baptist, and the children admitted would represent Church of England families, Congregationalists, Wesleyans, and more. This would suggest that Spurgeon was merely one exemplary soldier amidst an evangelical garrison dedicated to Christian service.

It should be noted that Spurgeon's social concern, much like all aspects of Spurgeon's worldview, was Christocentric. To obey Christ is to know Him more, which gave Spurgeon all the motivation he needed. In fact, Spurgeon believed that activism should be defined according to Christ's example. In a sermon entitled *The Blind Man's Eyes Opened: Or, Practical Christianity,* Spurgeon called Christ the "chief worker, the example to all workers."[66] Peter Morden reached a similar conclusion in his analysis, noting that, "Spurgeon regarded active Christian work as a form of communion with Christ. . . Overall, the desire was 'to spend and be spent' in the service of Christ."[67] Indeed, the person of Jesus, and a

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[64] For more information regarding the history and current state of Spurgeon's Children Charity visit https://www.spurgeons.org/.

[65] Kathleen Heasman, *Evangelicals in Action: An Appraisal of Their Social Work* (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1962), 13-14.

[66] *MTP* 29:675.

[67] Peter Morden, "The Spirituality of C.H. Spurgeon: III: The Outworking of Communion: Active Exertion," in *Baptistic Theologies 4.1* (2012): 77-78.

longing to know him with greater intimacy, was the crux of Spurgeon's work.

Yet, even in spite of his exhausting schedule and impressive social impact, Spurgeon was never satisfied with his efforts for Christ. When his poor health limited his work, Spurgeon would attempt to console himself by acknowledging the exertion with which he served as a younger man. Even then, Spurgeon would conclude, "I always felt that I could never do enough for Him who had loved me and given Himself for me."[68] Since Spurgeon's activity hinged on a passion for the commands of Scripture and love for Christ, he could never do enough to express his gratitude and love for Jesus. This passion led him to write, "When I come to render up my account, He might say, 'Well done;' but I should not feel it was so."[69] Humanly speaking, Spurgeon would rather say, "I have not done that which was even my bare duty to do, much less have I done all I would to show the love I owe."[70] This sentiment did not belittle the value of Spurgeon's service, but rather exalted the value of Christ's sacrifice. Since the fountain of Christ's love was unceasing and overflowing, so should Spurgeon's service follow suit.

Spurgeon's Evangelical Biblicism

> If you do not love the Bible, you certainly do not love the God who gave it to us, and if you do love God, I am certain that no other book in all the world will be comparable, in your mind, to God's own Book.[71]

Of the aspects highlighted by David Bebbington's Evangelical Quadrilateral, "Biblicism" comes the closest to serving as Evangelicalism's foundation. It was evangelicals' understanding and interpretation of the Bible that led to their commitment to Activism, Crucicentrism, and Conversionism. Apart from a strong Biblicism, there would be no Evangelicalism. Furthermore, evangelicals demanded a high theology of the Bible be paired with a passion for the Word of God. Thus,

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Morden's thorough research was a rich resource during the writing of this article.

[68] *Autobiography* 2:81.

[69] Ibid.

[70] Ibid.

[71] *MTP* 54:206.

it is important to understand both the intellectual and emotional aspects of Evangelical Biblicism. Whereas some drew hard lines between the theological and devotional aspects of the Bible, evangelicals claimed that the two were inseparably linked and no man should separate what God has joined together. Indeed, the Bible not only captured their heads but captivated their hearts.

These dual aspects of Biblicism defined the life and ministry of Charles Spurgeon. In his view, the Bible held the ultimate answer for every quandary concerning Christian worship and obedience. While he admired the work of great theologians and churchmen he placed their wisdom beneath Scripture for "nothing has any authority but 'Thus saith the Lord of hosts.'"[72] A statement was only authoritative to Spurgeon if "you [could] put your finger upon the passage of Holy Writ which warrants the matter to be of God."[73] Scripture directed the path of Spurgeon's life, both public and private. While his adoration for the Bible is seen clearest in his relentless defense of its authority during the Downgrade Controversy, Spurgeon's Biblicism was consistently displayed throughout his lifelong ministry.

A rich theological understanding of the Bible led Spurgeon to love the book. He treasured each word because he championed verbal plenary inspiration; he trusted Scripture because he believed in its infallibility; he joyfully submitted to its authority because he embraced the Bible for what it claimed to be – God's self-revelation to his people. Spurgeon's theology led to a passion for the Bible and formed a quintessential Biblicist.

To understand Spurgeon, one must understand the cultural contexts which shaped him. This can be accomplished by examining the increasingly narrow views of the Victorians, then evangelicals, and finally the Puritans. First, to live in Victorian England was to be surrounded by a culture which paid homage, at least nominally so, to the Bible. As Timothy Larsen wrote, "The Scriptures were the common cultural currency of the Victorians."[74] Additionally, Larsen noted that most extant Victorian "novels will include biblical allusions that it never

[72] Ibid. 10:535.
[73] Ibid.
[74] Timothy Larsen, *A People of One Book: The Bible and the Victorians*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 2.

occurred to the author would ever need explaining."[75] The Bible was taught in schools, referenced in arts and literature, and was held as the highest standard of personal morality by the culture at large. Even outspoken atheists could not ignore the Bible but instead "gave their best and most sustained labours to wrestling with Scripture," as anything less would fail to impact a culture that recognized the Bible as "*the* book."[76] Thus, Charles Spurgeon, a "representative Victorian" as he was called, would have grown up in a world saturated with a cultural affinity of the Bible.[77]

These Victorians, however, would step away from the Bible in the later years of Spurgeon's life. Bebbington noted a few cultural changes when he wrote, "[A belief in] eternal punishment faded away, the Bible was studied critically, and evolutionary thought led to a stress on immanence."[78] Proponents of higher criticism began to teach that the Bible should be critiqued as any other book. When the culture began to claim authority over Scripture, Spurgeon stood as "the greatest champion of the conservative standpoint during the later nineteenth century."[79] When culture divorced itself from the Bible, Spurgeon held it tighter. This cultural abandonment of Scripture would deeply impact the later years of Spurgeon's life. Yet, Spurgeon never stood alone in his defense of the Bible, as his ministry was marked with evangelical partnerships grounded on a love for God's Word.

If Victorians were Spurgeon's neighbors, then evangelicals were his family. For evangelical leaders "one book – the Bible – was the Alpha and Omega of life and thought – the foundation stone and the unrivalled pinnacle."[80] On this note, Bishop J.C. Ryle, a contemporary of Spurgeon, wrote, "The first leading principle of Evangelical religion is the absolute

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[75] Ibid., 4.
[76] Ibid., 6.
[77] Patricia Stallings Kruppa, *Charles Haddon Spurgeon: A Preacher's Progress,* (New York: Garland, 1982), 6. Cited in Larsen, 251.
[78] David Bebbington, *The Dominance of Evangelicalism: The Age of Spurgeon and Moody,* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2005), 259.
[79] Ibid., 260.
[80] Larsen, 1. Larsen used this phrase to describe the Biblicism of John Wesley. This commitment to the Bible, however, has been evident in a multitude of evangelical Christians throughout Church history.

supremacy it assigns to Holy Scripture."[81] Indeed, this commitment to Biblicism continues to this day. Modern Evangelicals, like John Stott, still claim, "We evangelicals are Bible people."[82] Such is the relation that a dismissal of the Bible continues to be a dismissal of Evangelicalism. As for Spurgeon, he was happy to cross denominational lines, as long as his partners shared his passion for Scripture. Indeed, ministries such as the Stockwell Orphanage and the Pastors' College were directed by men of various denominations who embraced common evangelical convictions. These men, with a shared affection for the Bible, would work alongside Spurgeon to spread its message.

Before Spurgeon spoke as a leading voice for evangelicals, however, he listened to the voices of the Puritans. As a child, Spurgeon cut his theological teeth on the works of the Puritans and was influenced by their love of the Bible. E.W. Bacon, one of Spurgeon's many biographers, wrote, "[Spurgeon] was completely moulded and fashioned by those spiritual giants of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries."[83] Indeed, not only did Spurgeon learn from the Puritans, he continued their legacy. Historically, "[Spurgeon] stood in their noble tradition, in the direct line of their theology and outlook."[84] Thus, he could "without question be called the heir of the Puritans."[85] As Duncan Ferguson explained, the heart of Puritan theology "was the assertion that the Bible was the very voice and message of God to humankind."[86] In Puritan writings, the Bible was not only seen as the authority of doctrine and worship, but also of "daily work, home life, dress, recreation, and duty."[87] As such, Spurgeon saw the Bible's authority extend over every aspect of life, religious or otherwise.

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[81] J.C. Ryle, *Knots Untied: Being Plain Statements on Disputed Points in Religion, from the Standpoint of an Evangelical Churchmen*, (London: William Hunt and Company, 1874), 4. Cited in Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 3.
[82] Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 4.
[83] Ernest W. Bacon, *Spurgeon: Heir of the Puritans,* (Arlington Heights: Christian Liberty Press, 1996), 101.
[84] Ibid.
[85] Ibid.
[86] Duncan Ferguson, "The Bible and Protestant Orthodoxy: The Hermeneutics of Charles Spurgeon," in *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 25:4 (1982), 456.
[87] Ibid.

Spurgeon's understanding of the Bible is marked by three crucial features: inspiration, infallibility, and power. First, the Bible was the result of verbal-plenary inspiration, meaning that every word was exactly as God intended. Spurgeon wrote, "We contend for every word of the Bible, and believe in the verbal plenary inspiration of Holy Scripture, believing indeed that there can be no other inspiration but that."[88] Second, as an extension of Spurgeon's belief in God-breathed Scripture, he believed that the Bible must be infallible and without error. Spurgeon wrote, "These words which we find in the Old and New Testaments are true. Free from error, certain, enduring, infallible."[89] If the Bible was infallible, then it would be foolish for the congregation to leave Spurgeon's sermons untested. Instead of blindly accepting his viewpoints, Spurgeon charged his congregation "to hearken only to [the] Master and yield your faith only to the infallible book."[90] Third, Spurgeon believed that the many conversions which occurred under his ministry was the result of the preached word of God. Spurgeon wrote, "I have marked, that if ever we have a conversion at any time, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, the conversion is rather traceable to the text, or to some Scripture quoted in the sermon, than to any trite or original saying of the preacher."[91] This Bible was not only inspired and infallible, but powerful.

Spurgeon's beliefs about the Bible expressed themselves through acts of devotion. He loved the Bible and provided an example for his people to follow. Spurgeon prioritized private morning devotions as he believed it was a "good rule never to look into the face of a man in the morning till you have looked into the face of God."[92] To Spurgeon, the Bible was beautiful and seemed "as necessary food."[93] Spurgeon went so far as to say, "The Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible, is our

[88] *MTP* 43:430.
[89] C.H. Spurgeon, *My Sermon Notes: A Selection from Outlines of Discourses Delivered at the Metropolitan Tabernacle*, Part IV, (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1891), 395.
[90] *MTP* 22: 247.
[91] *NPSP* 4:60.
[92] *MTP* 19:597.
[93] *Autobiography* 1:117.

religion."[94] Spurgeon's beliefs, however, were put to the test at the onset of the Downgrade Controversy.

Late in his life, Spurgeon saw the Baptist Union, of which he was a part, creep toward theological liberalism. The beliefs which Spurgeon treasured – the Bible's inspiration, infallibility, power, and authority – were brought into question. If the Baptist Union was to jettison the Bible, then it would do so without Charles Spurgeon. As the Union failed to embrace an evangelical statement of faith, Spurgeon officially removed his membership on October 28, 1887. Rather than repairing the Baptist Union, this decision led to a public outcry against Spurgeon. Even a collection of students from the Pastors' College joined the attack against Spurgeon, penning a letter calling him to modernize his archaic beliefs regarding the Bible. To his credit, Spurgeon never changed his views in spite of social pressure from peers, students, and public opinion.

Even in the midst of calls to abandon traditional beliefs regarding the Bible, Spurgeon encouraged others to "be Bible men, go so far as the Bible, but not an inch beyond it."[95] For Spurgeon, the Bible did not need his help. Rather, Spurgeon heralded the power of Scripture as he proclaimed, "The answer to every objection against the Bible is the Bible."[95] This undying commitment to the Bible followed Spurgeon throughout his life and continues to impact Evangelicalism long after his death. Nearing the end of his life Spurgeon prophesied, "I am quite willing to be eaten of dogs for the next fifty years; but the more distant future shall vindicate me."[97] Indeed, the ongoing power of Evangelical Biblicism in the modern day is a continuing testament that Spurgeon has in fact been vindicated.

Spurgeon's Evangelical Crucicentrism

> Jesus Christ and him crucified should be the Alpha and the Omega of every sermon.[98]

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[94] *MTP* 20:698.
[95] Ibid.,707.
[96] C.H. Spurgeon, *Speeches at Home and Abroad,* (London: Passmore and Alabaster, 1878), 17.
[97] C.H. Spurgeon, ed., "The Preacher's Power, and the Conditions of Obtaining It," in *ST* August 1889:420.
[98] *MTP* 21:208.

These words show the conviction of Charles Haddon Spurgeon. For him, the cross was everything. To not preach Christ crucified was to preach a delusion and "a sham."[99] In fact, he considered Christ-less and cross-less sermons a waste of time. He stated boldly, "A sermon without Christ in it is like a loaf of bread without any flour in it. No Christ in your sermon, sir? Then go home, and never preach again until you have something worth preaching."[100] Indeed, the Victorian preacher was so consumed with zealously preaching the cross that he said he had "no medicine to prescribe except 'Christ, Christ, Christ; Jesus Christ and him crucified,'"[101] the sole remedy which "cures all soul sicknesses, while human quackery cures none."[102] For Spurgeon, the cross and all its salvific power was a "great attractive magnet."[103]

According to historian David Bebbington, crucicentrism could be defined as "the doctrine of the cross."[104] In plain terms it is the teaching of "Christ and him crucified."[105] Indeed, the doctrine of the cross was so central that Bebbington called it the "fulcrum"[106] upon which Evangelicalism hinges. This conviction was so prominent that William Gladstone, a prime minister of England, considered Evangelicalism to be "an aggressive movement"[107] especially concerned with "the cross and "all that [it] *essentially implies*."[108] For Spurgeon, Christ crucified was the "most excellent of sciences."[109] Jesus Christ was his "sun"[110] and each "science,"[111] or sphere of knowledge, "[revolved] around Christ like a planet."[112] For Spurgeon, the teaching and preaching of the cross was

[99] Ibid.
[100] *MTP* 50:431.
[101] Ibid., 38:272.
[102] Ibid.
[103] Ibid., 29:237.
[104] Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 36.
[105] Cf. 1 Corinthians 2:2.
[106] Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 38.
[107] William Gladstone, "The Evangelical Movement: its Parentage, Progress, and Issue," *Gleanings from Past Years, 1843-79, Vol. VII. Miscellaneous* (London: John Murray, 1879), 207.
[108] Ibid.
[109] *NPSP* 1:60.
[110] Ibid.
[111] Ibid.
[112] Ibid.

everything because all other knowledge was subservient to the knowledge of Christ. Therefore, he could enthusiastically proclaim "How often have I wished that I could forget many things which once I thought it necessary to know!"[113]

In Spurgeon's mind, the crux of the crucifixion was understanding that Jesus bore sin in his body on the cross. So great was this suffering that Spurgeon said "[we] will never be able to comprehend what Jesus suffered when the great flood of human sin came rushing down upon him."[114] Humanly speaking man may have murdered him, but God was pouring out his righteous justice and wrath owed to man on his own beloved Son. Spurgeon knew that there was "something more in the Saviour's death than Roman cruelty or Jewish malice."[115] Rather, the terrible death of Jesus Christ was "a full atonement to the justice of God for the sins of all believers."[116] Indeed, when Jesus suffered wrath it was the wrath due his people which he took in their place. Spurgeon exclaimed, "There are in the world many theories of atonement: but I cannot see any atonement in any one, except in this doctrine of substitution."[117] He saw along with Luther and Calvin that substitution was "the sum and substance of the gospel."[118]

Spurgeon believed and preached substitution with conviction, declaring that Christ "died as the substitute, in the room, place, and stead of all believers."[119] To evangelicals like Spurgeon, this doctrine was beautiful because "The Lord will never punish twice the same offense."[120] However, not all believed in substitution. Indeed, many in the gilded Victorian Age saw it as barbarism instead of justice. Accordingly, Spurgeon warned those who "cannot endure the doctrine of a substitutionary atonement" to "beware."[121] For, to reject substitutionary atonement would be "casting away the very soul and essence of the

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[113] *MTP* 32:417.
[114] Ibid., 38:47.
[115] *NPSP* 4:66.
[116] *MTP* 17:423.
[117] *NPSP* 4:70.
[118] *MTP* 57:113.
[119] *NPSP* 4:69.
[120] *MTP* 31:499.
[121] Ibid., 41:408.

gospel."[122] As for those who did place their faith in the substitutionary work of Christ Spurgeon exhorted them to "avow"[123] the substitutionary atonement and-to "avow it boldly."[124]

For Spurgeon, the cross was the center of his hope and life. In his view, "The only pillar of your hope must be the cross."[125] To mix good works with the proclamation of the cross was unthinkable. Spurgeon exhorted, "Do not think that you are saved because of anything that you have ever done or can ever do for Christ."[126] His heart longed to exalt Christ crucified even as he exclaimed "The cross is all I ever want for security and joy."[127] Not surprisingly, Spurgeon saw the blood of Christ as precious. Indeed, this blood was especially precious because of its power, as Spurgeon said, "[it] hath such a divine power to save, that nothing but it can ever save the soul."[128] This made Christ's blood "the essence of the preaching of the cross,"[129] since it was through the blood of Jesus that "a full atonement was made."[130]

In light of this Spurgeon was convinced that "Our first aim in life should be to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ."[131] Spurgeon rejoiced in the work of Christ, saying, "he has saved me from despair, from sin, from the power of evil, from death, [and] from hell."[132] For Spurgeon, Christ's salvific sacrifice provided the ultimate ground for gratitude. Accordingly, Spurgeon exhorted his hearers to "contemplate [Christ's] holy life and expiatory death,"[133] with the result that Spurgeon could say, "Jesus is dearer to us than the whole race of men," and so "we bow adoringly at his ever-blessed feet."[134]

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[122] Ibid.
[123] *MTP* 55:523.
[124] Ibid.
[125] *NPSP* 5:30.
[126] Ibid., 6:442.
[127] *MTP* 31:501.
[128] *NPSP* 5:29.
[129] *MTP* 27:425.
[130] Ibid., 20.
[131] Ibid., 20:168.
[132] Ibid., 41:548.
[133] Ibid., 20:669.
[134] Ibid.

But, Spurgeon also knew that Christ bearing his cross meant that believers were to take up their crosses too. Spurgeon exhorted his hearers to follow after Christ "from the tomb to Olivet, and from the mountain's brow to heaven's gate and the right hand of the Father."[135] And although the path would be filled with trials and tribulations, Spurgeon told his hearers that "You have blessed company; your path is marked with footprints of your Lord."[136] Therefore, in the strength of Christ believers had the power to "Take up your cross daily and follow him"[137] knowing that "the Cross of Christ is our honor."[138] And as the Christian life was cruciform, it was imperative for each believer to "not [be] ashamed to take up his cross and follow him."[139]

As a result, evangelicals believed that gratitude flowed naturally from those redeemed by the blood of the cross. Thus, even the thought of the cross caused Spurgeon to shout "Oh love, love, what hast thou done! What hast thou not done!"[140] Indeed, the cross was "the loudest proclamation of divine righteousness and the plainest proof of divine love."[141] It was truly "the greatest wonder of wonders and miracle of miracles which the universe ever saw."[142]

But this gracious gratitude didn't just warm Spurgeon's heart, it also fueled his burning passion for world missions. The majesty of the crucified and risen Christ demanded that "All nations are to glorify the Lord,"[143] but since "this they have not done as yet"[144] missions became the rightful vent of holy zeal and fervor. Even at a young age, Spurgeon could hardly content himself in his zeal for God, as he testified, "I could scarcely content myself even for five minutes without trying to do something for Christ."[145] He carried tracts with him, read his Bible at

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[135] Ibid.
[136] Ibid., 9:127.
[137] Ibid.
[138] Ibid., 128.
[139] Ibid., 25:343.
[140] Ibid., 19:121.
[141] Ibid., 31:142.
[142] Ibid., 48:413.
[143] Ibid., 26:258.
[144] Ibid.
[145] *Autobiography* 1:180.

every opportunity, and sought to turn conversations to Christ.[146] For Spurgeon, it was "a pleasure to do anything to exalt the name of God."[147] Furthermore, as he grew he longed to reach "the nations that are far away!"[148] In his view, the penal, substitutionary nature of the atonement ensured that there were sheep not yet found. When Spurgeon looked to the cross he saw the "conquering crucified One,"[149] who had "secured the victory, for thou hast finished the redemption of myriads, and therefore they must be saved!"[150] In this way, the crucified and risen Christ was not only the "motive for attempting the spread of the gospel throughout the world,"[151] but also "the instrument of our victory."[152]

A life sacrificed to Jesus Christ was the heartbeat of Spurgeon's spiritual life. Undoubtedly, he encouraged others to live for Christ, saying, "Believer, it ought to be your ambition to please Christ in every act you do."[153] The man's main mission was to exalt the cross of Christ, and in so doing, he made much of his resurrected Savior whom he adored. After all, it was Spurgeon who said, "True Christians make much of Christ; indeed, they make all of him."[154]

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[146] Ibid.
[147] *MTP* 31:258.
[148] Ibid., 11:240.
[149] Ibid., 18:238.
[150] Ibid.
[151] Ibid.
[152] Ibid., 239.
[153] Ibid., 22:395.
[154] Ibid., 25:521.

***Introducing Jesus: A Short Guide to the Gospels' History and Message*. By Mark L. Strauss. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018. 185 pp., $16.99, Paperback. ISBN-13: 978-0310528586.**

Mark Strauss is University Professor of New Testament at Bethel Seminary. He earned his PhD at the University of Aberdeen. He has authored numerous books including the commentary *Mark* in the Zondervan Exegetical Commentary, the commentary *Luke* in the Zondervan Illustrated Bible Background Commentary series, and *The Davidic Messiah in Luke-Acts*.

Introducing Jesus is an abridged version of Strauss's textbook *Four Portraits, One Jesus: A Survey of Jesus and the Gospels* published by Zondervan in 2007 (7). As noted by the title, *Introducing Jesus* aims to provide the reader with an introduction to the life and ministry of Jesus. Strauss uses the portraits as a metaphor for the gospels. Each gospel is a portrait of Jesus, and by viewing all four portraits, one can better view Jesus. Each chapter concludes with questions for review and discussion and recommended resources.

Chapter 1, "What Are the Gospels?" provides a survey of the Gospels: genre, number of Gospels, and how to read them. In this chapter, Strauss defines the genre of Gospel, and he discusses the authorial intent of the Gospel authors. Scripture taken from all four Gospels is used to support all the major points presented. Strauss discusses the theological value of having the four Gospels, and the risks and dangers that four Gospels present to the reader. He also discusses "other gospels" that readers may have heard of that are not found in Scripture.

Chapters 2-3 provide an introduction to the historical and theological backgrounds of each Gospel (7). Chapter 2 provides historical context preceding and following the creation of the NT, divided into short sections by date (334 BC – AD 135), historical ruling powers, and influential wars. Chapter 3's focus is on first-century Judaism. It covers Jewish core beliefs, ritual context, synagogue, and different divisions within Judaism.

Chapter 4-11 address the themes and theology portrayed in the Gospels. These eight chapters reflect two chapters per gospel. Each Gospel receives a chapter introducing it and a chapter discussing its theology. The Gospel introduction includes information about the author, purpose, context of the writing, and literary styles. The theology

sections include Strauss's interpretation of which portrait of Jesus the Gospel captures (i.e., Luke's portrait of Jesus as the Savior for All People), key themes, and insight into reading the Gospels in modern time.

Chapters 12-19 address the historical Jesus. To begin with, Strauss addresses the historical reliability of the Gospels in chapter 12. Next, chapter 13 discusses the historicity of the birth and childhood of Jesus. Chapter 14 discusses the historicity of John the Baptist and the baptism and temptation of Jesus. Next, Strauss writes about Jesus as a teacher in chapter 15. Jesus teaches the Kingdom of God, ethics, discipleship, and social justice. Chapter 16 discusses the miracles of Jesus, the philosophical debate over miracles, and the types of miracles Jesus performed. The authority of Jesus is discussed, and His displays of authority are discussed in chapter 17. In chapter 18, Strauss writes about Jesus's historical death, Jesus's foreknowledge of His death, and the significance of His death. The final chapter culminates by discussing Jesus's resurrection. The conclusion of the chapter presents a dichotomy for the reader: believe in Jesus through a historical conclusion or believe in Jesus both historically and through faith confessions, the latter view being held by Christians past and present.

Following the chapters are two appendices. The first appendix discusses how the Gospels were formed. The second appendix discusses the Gospel as the story and the influence of narrative criticism.

How does *Introducing Jesus* compare with Strauss's prior work *Four Portraits*? Where *Four Portraits* was designed to be a textbook with the intentions of providing a survey of Jesus, *Introducing Jesus* is an introduction geared as a supplement to a beginner level course or a book for the lay-reader. There is no doubt that *Four Portraits* will remain the desired text in the college class room. However, Strauss constructed *Introducing Jesus* to suit small group studies, Sunday School classes, and individuals for use as a Bible study. I would recommend this work to be used in small groups or Sunday School settings where leaders have access to *Four Portraits*. For the lay-person, the book is at a desirable length, 160 pages from the preface to finish. Strauss divided the book into several small chapters which were further divided into small digestible chunks. The book contains an adequate subject index for readers to then use the book as reference material or to selectively read the book.

The reader will receive the same conservative convictions found in the larger text book. Strauss affirms the historicity of Scripture, Jesus, and

the resurrection (11). Strauss also affirms the value of Scripture for the Church and the deity of Jesus. Strauss also includes pertinent information about the Bible which lessens the burden of knowledge on the readers. For instance, Strauss explains the heritage of the Levites, so the reader does not need to know they are descendants of Levi (28). Being written with strong conviction and at a desirable length, one can recommend *Introducing Jesus* with confidence to new believers or veteran saints.

Although the target audience is the lay-person or entry level student, Strauss does not avoid difficult concepts such as antinomians (45), the historical impact of anti-Semitism on modern readers interpretation of Scripture (47), Mark's disputed ending (59), or apparent contradictions in the Gospels (95). Alongside these difficult concepts, Strauss presents material on the Qumran and historical philosophers such as David Hume. Strauss presents multiple views, the disagreement amongst scholars, and rebuttals from critics or non-believers, yet he does not leave the reader in anxiety that may come from reading critical responses to the Bible or that may arise from discusses difficult concepts. Strauss always brings resolution such as landing on a single author or specific date of authorship for each Gospel.

The final comment about *Introducing Jesus*: Strauss presents quality resources to the reader at the end of each chapter. Many of the resources presented are accessible to the target audience. While the noted resources may be a bit advanced for the target audience, they are only advanced because they are the best resources available. As a result, these materials will also benefit the reader with a greater degree of academic interest.

Introducing Jesus encapsulates Strauss' textbook, *Four Portraits, One Jesus: A Survey of Jesus and the Gospels*. This summary only makes the material more accessible to the average reader. In addition to the increased accessibility, Strauss presents a conservative Christian view of Scripture and Jesus which makes his work a great resource for members in a church and students in a classroom. With *Introducing Jesus*, Strauss demonstrates an ability to make scholarly works available to many.

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***The Holy Bible, Modern English Version*. By James F. Linzey, Ed. Lake Mary, FL: Charisma Media/Charisma House Book Group, 2014): 640 pp. $2.99, Paperback. ISBN-13: 978-1629986425**

The Modern English Version (MEV) is a contemporary English translation of the Bible. This version is distinct, however, for several reasons. First, and most importantly, it is a translation based on the traditional original language texts of the Christian Scriptures (the Hebrew Masoretic text of the Old Testament and the Greek Textus Receptus of the New Testament), rather than the modern critical texts, which form the basis for most modern vernacular translations. Second, it also aims to be an "updating" of the King James Version (KJV) of the Bible, the venerable English translation that was based on these same traditional original language texts.

The MEV's "Preface to the Reader" notes that the MEV was produced by "The Committee of Bible Translation," under Chief Editor James F. Linzey. The Old Testament Editor-in-Chief was N. Blake Hearson of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and the New Testament Editor-in-Chief, Edward W. Watson of Oral Roberts University. The preface explains that this project began among military chaplains in the United Kingdom and the United States who formed this Bible translation committee, motivated by a desire "to provide an update by military chaplains for the troops so they could understand the King James Version better." As the project progressed, the chaplains recruited qualified academic scholars, and eventually, "The target audience grew from the military to the entire English-speaking world." In the end, forty-seven translators, scholars and chaplains, from a variety of Protestant denominations, participated in the project. The translation work began in 2005. The New Testament was completed in 2011 and the Old Testament in 2014. The MEV represents an evangelical theological perspective. It is published by Charisma House, a firm devoted to a contemporary continuationist, broad-evangelical theological perspective. The preface notes, "The translators are devoted to making a good translation better and ensuring that the Modern English Version is an accurate and responsible update of the King James Version." A publisher's note in the front matter adds:

> Like all translations of the Bible, this translation of the Scriptures is subject to human limitations and imperfections.

> Recognizing these limitations, the publishers sought God's guidance and wisdom throughout the project. Our prayer is that He will use this translation for the benefit of the church and His kingdom.

The MEV also includes a dedication to Queen Elizabeth II as "Defender of the Faith."

The text of the MEV is divided into paragraph units. The editors have included section headings throughout. For example, the opening section at Genesis 1:1 is headed "The Creation" and a new section begins at Genesis 2:4 with the heading "Adam and Eve." There are occasional notes giving headings for larger units. For example, at Matthew 5:1 the heading reads: "The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5—7)," and some chapters have multiple headings, like in Matthew 5 which divides the chapter into no less than ten subunits, from "The Beatitudes" for Matthew 5:2-11, to "Love for Enemies" for Matthew 5:43-48. Many of these headings, especially in the Synoptic Gospels, provide cross-references to parallel material. Though these divisions of the text into these subunits and the provision of editorial headings may well serve to promote ease of reading, such insertions also run the risk of confusing the beginning reader as to what is part of the inspired text and what is not. To the MEV's credit, editorial headings are not used in the Psalms, which include only, when present, the traditional titles found in the Hebrew text.

The MEV also chooses to set apart portions of the text in poetic layout to distinguish it from other portions that are assumed to be prose. This is true not only in clearly poetic portions, like the Psalms, but in numerous other sections throughout the text. So, for example, "The Song of Mary" in Luke 2:46-55 is set out in poetic stanzas. Paul's description of Christ as servant in Philippians 2:5-11 is also set out in poetic stanza format and even includes a footnote explaining, "6-11 A hymn about Jesus' attitude of servanthood." Many such decisions may well be appropriate, but these editorial interpretations also reflect choices with which all may not agree. While many have assumed, for example, that Philippians 2:5-11 is a poetic portion of an early "hymn" that may even pre-date Paul, it remains a hypothesis that has not been definitively proven.

As for Old Testament quotations in the New Testament, the MEV does not use italic but indicates direct quotations by use of quotation

marks and includes footnote references to the sources of the citations. Quotation marks are also used to indicate direct speech in the MEV. So, John 4:26 reads: "Jesus said to her, 'I who speak to you am He.'" In cases like this, the quotation is, indeed, rather obvious, but others are far less clear. For example, in the MEV text of John 3:27-30 a citation from John the Baptist is enclosed in quotation marks, while the verses that follow (vv. 31-36) are not. Is it possible, however, that these verses might also be attributed to John the Baptist? Or, do they reflect, as the MEV apparently assumes by its punctuation, that the final verses are spoken in the voice of John the Apostle? This illustrates the interpretive challenges of punctuation. One might consider it a strength of the KJV that it does not use quotations marks for direct speech and so it leaves the interpretation of where a quotation begins and ends with the reader (as it is in the original text as well, which also does not use quotation marks).

As noted, the MEV is distinct among modern translations in that it follows the original language texts which were the basis of the KJV and not the modern critical texts. With regard to the Old Testament, the MEV generally follows the traditional Hebrew Masoretic text and the Protestant translation tradition based on this text, as reflected in the KJV. Here are some examples of how this commitment shapes the MEV translation:

First, consider the MEV rendering of 1 Samuel 6:19: "Then he struck down the men of Beth Shemesh, because they had looked into the ark of the LORD. He struck fifty thousand and seventy men. And the people lamented, because the LORD had struck the people with a great slaughter." The MEV sticks here with a rendering based on the Hebrew text and does not add an expansion found in the Septuagint, "And the sons of Jechoniah were not pleased with the men of Beth-Shemesh, when they looked at the ark of the Lord," which some modern translations, like the Jerusalem Bible and the New English Bible, have incorporated into their translations. In addition, it follows a more literal understanding of the Hebrew text in saying that the Lord struck down "fifty thousand and seventy men," whereas, some modern translations, like the New International Version (NIV) and English Standard Version (ESV) read that only "seventy" were stuck down.

Next, take Psalm 145:13 in the MEV, which reads: "Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and Your dominion endures throughout all

generations." Contrast this with the ESV, which adds a half verse in brackets: "Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures throughout all generations. [The LORD is faithful in all his words and kind in all his works.]" Whereas the MEV sticks with the traditional Hebrew text, the ESV adds this half verse (v. 13b), which attempts to "correct" a broken acrostic in the Hebrew with a reading which appears in the Septuagint and Syriac but in only one Hebrew manuscript.

It may be noted, however, that the MEV does not always strictly follow the Protestant Old Testament translation tradition as reflected in the KJV. An example of this may be found in the MEV rendering of 1 Samuel 13:1, which reads: Saul was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty-two years over Israel." A footnote in the MEV explains: "Lit.: 'The son of a year was Saul in his ruling and two years he ruled over Israel.' Most translations read in Saul's age and length of reign from external evidence (Josephus) or from the New Testament (Paul, who mentions a forty-year reign for Saul in Ac 13:21)." Though this footnote explains the literal rendering of the Hebrew and the text does place the suggested additional numbers "thirty" and "forty" in italic, the MEV does not follow the KJV, which reads: "Saul reigned one year: and when he had reigned two years over Israel." This is also the reading followed in the Geneva Bible. One wonders why the MEV did not more closely follow the Hebrew text here, as do the older English translations.

With regard to the New Testament, the MEV follows the Greek Textus Receptus (TR). This means, among other things, that it includes many traditional passages which are relegated to the footnotes in most modern translations, including the doxology of the Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6:13b, the angel troubling the water at Bethesda in John 5:3b-4, the confession of the Ethiopian Eunuch in Acts 8:37, and the "three heavenly witnesses" passage (or Comma Johanneum) in 1 John 5:7b-8a. With regard to the Comma, one of the most contested verses in the TR, the MEV adds a footnote: "The earliest Greek manuscripts lack in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit, and the three are one. There are three that testify on earth."

The MEV, likewise, generally follows the distinctive readings taken from the TR and reflected in the KJV. So, in the opening to 1 Timothy 3:16, the MEV reads "God was revealed in the flesh." In Revelation 16:5 it reads, "who is and was and is to be," and in Revelation 22:19 it reads

"Book of Life." In other places, however, the MEV departs from some of the classic KJV renderings of the TR. In John 1:18, for example, whereas the KJV reads "the only begotten Son," the MEV simply reads "the only Son."

With regard to longer disputed passages in the NT, the MEV does not place the traditional ending of Mark (16:9-20) in brackets or insert the so-called "Shorter Ending" of Mark, now included in the footnotes of the ESV and in the main text of the New Living Translation (NLT). No footnotes appear in the MEV to interpret the text of the ending of Mark. It also does not place in brackets the woman taken in adultery passage (the Pericope Adulterae) of John 7:53—8:11, as has become common in most modern translations based on the modern critical text. It does, however, add a footnote at John 7:53, which reads, "The earliest Greek manuscripts lack 7:53—8:11." Defenders of the TR might contest whether the description "earliest" is appropriate here.

How do we evaluate the MEV as a translation? Again, this translation aims to be an "update" of the KJV. This means that it follows most of the familiar readings found in the Tyndale/KJV tradition, while updating various elements of vocabulary and style. So, in the MEV "thee" and "thou" becomes "you", "penny" becomes "denarius" (e.g., Matt 20:2), "twain" become "two" (e.g., Matt 5:41), "prevent" becomes "precede" (e.g., 1 Thess 4:15), "charity" becomes "love" (e.g., 1 Cor 13:1 ff.), etc. Likewise, in the MEV the double amen is rendered "truly, truly" as opposed to the KJV's "verily, verily" (e.g., John 1:51). Other clarifying updates were also made in the MEV to some noteworthy KJV renderings, including the use of "The Skull" for the KJV's "Calvary" (from the Latin Calvaria) at Luke 23:33, "office" for "bishoprick" at Acts 1:20, and "Passover" for "Easter" at Acts 12:4. The MEV does retain, however, the memorable KJV rendering of Paul's stock phrase "God forbid" (e.g., Rom 6:2).

In addition, the MEV uses more discreet terms for some words and phrases in the KJV that contemporary readers might see as "blue" language. So, in the MEV "ass" becomes "donkey" (e.g., Zech 9:9), "he that pisseth against a wall" becomes "all males" (e.g., 1 Kings 14:10; cf. 2 Kings 9:8; though, the KJV is a more literal rendering), "whore" becomes "prostitute" (Rev 17:1), "bastards" becomes "illegitimate children" (Heb 12:8), etc. In this regard one might note that in 1 Corinthians 6:9, the

KJV's "nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind" is rendered in the MEV as, "nor male prostitutes, nor homosexuals."

In general, the reader will find that the MEV translators have provided a translation that attempts to retain the memorable phrasings and grandeur of the venerable KJV. Here are a few examples for comparison:

	KJV	**MEV**
Genesis 1:1	In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.	In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth
Psalm 23:1	The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.	The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.
John 1:1	In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.	In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
John 3:16	For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.	For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.
Romans 8:28	And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose.	We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.
Philippians 4:13	I can do all things through Christ which stengtheneth me.	I can do all things because of Christ who strengthens me.

The renderings of the MEV, therefore, will be comfortable and familiar for readers who know well the KJV.

One more distinctive characteristic of the MEV that should be noted is the decision to render divine pronouns with initial capital letters (see "His" and "Him" in John 3:16 above). In this it follows the practice used in the New King James Version (NKJV) of the Bible. Though one might respect the piety of the sentiment, this is not a practice reflected in the Biblical manuscripts, and it also introduces interpretive decisions that might perhaps be better left to the reader. In this regard, the MEV rendering of 2 Thessalonians 2:7 might be challenged in that it reproduces a notorious usage of the divine pronoun, perhaps tinged with a dispensational outlook, which is also found in the NKJV. The MEV translates, "Only He who is now restraining him will do so until He is taken out of the way," thus assuming that the restrainer ("He") is the deity. This might be so, but it is not explicitly made clear in the text, and so the KJV rendering "only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way" is, in the opinion of the reviewer, superior.

Though the MEV is a contemporary English translation of the Bible, its differences from other modern translations are significant. This is the first widely available modern translation since the New King James Version (completed 1982) which aims to follow the traditional original language texts and emulate the translation style and wording of the KJV. It is, in fact, similar in many ways to the NKJV and thus shares in some of its strengths and weaknesses.

The MEV, no doubt, reflects the ongoing popularity of the KJV in the English-speaking world and the respect it continues to enjoy among evangelical Christians despite decades of the marketing of translations based on the modern critical text. The MEV could easily be read and used in churches that ordinarily use the KJV or NKJV. It might even enhance and further the appreciation of the Tyndale/King James Version tradition. For these reasons it is a distinctive and even refreshing addition to a crowded Bible market.

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***Together on God's Mission: How Southern Baptists Cooperate to Fulfill the Great Commission.* By D. Scott Hildreth. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2018. 94 pp. $14.99, Paperback. ISBN: 978-1433643941.**

Together on God's Mission was written by Scott Hildreth, assistant professor of global studies and director of the Center for Great Commission Studies at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. For almost a decade before this, Hildreth served as a church planter, strategy coordinator, and field administrator for the International Mission Board in both Western Europe and Central Asia. He also has experience as a youth minister and a pastor. Most, if not all, of his experience has taken place in the context of or in cooperation with the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), which proves most pertinent for the work at hand.

Together on God's Mission "tells a story, and describes the work, of Southern Baptist cooperation." Hildreth "shows how the SBC is uniquely positioned to fully engage in God's global mission" (1). The book comes as a revision of his dissertation, "God on Mission: Missio Dei as a Theological Motivation for Ecclesial Cooperation with Special Attention Given to Southern Baptist Cooperative Efforts." It stands as "an attempt to transition [Hildreth's] research and writing from the academy to the church" (4). Hildreth's general purpose is to fight for the continued cooperation of Southern Baptist churches, primarily for the sake of fulfilling the Great Commission mandate to make disciples of all nations.

Hildreth had a few reasons for writing this book. First, he believed a new book on Southern Baptist cooperation was called for, seeing that since the publication of Brand and Hankin's *One Sacred Effort: The Cooperative Program of Southern Baptists* (B&H Publishers, 2005), many things have "changed within the Southern Baptist Convention" (1). He continues, "These changes have created an opportunity for a new book on Southern Baptist cooperation." Second, Hildreth wanted to motivate Southern Baptists—and especially younger Southern Baptists—to "embrace the cooperative efforts of the convention" (3). Third, Hildreth wanted to pen a book "to the convention [he loves]" (4). By no means is *Together on God's Mission* a magnum opus, but it is certainly a work of passion. Fourth, Hildreth sought to "present a positive vision for cooperation," to "be ready to embrace whatever God sends our way" (80). Fifth, and most overarching, Hildreth seeks to give his readers a

comprehensive doctrine of cooperation, developed specifically for Southern Baptists to know, understand, and apply.

In part one of the book, Hildreth writes of how the SBC became a "cooperative convention of churches" (2). Though the SBC started as a "loosely structured mission society," it eventually became a "cooperative denomination" and a "convention with a wide range of ministries" (7, 11, 14). In the first and second chapters, Hildreth notes that the SBC created this cooperative identity mostly in terms of its financial strategies for engaging in the mission of God. He goes through the history of the "failed" Seventy-Five Million Campaign and the eventual establishment of the Cooperative Program (CP). Helpfully, Hildreth explains how the CP works (26ff) and notes that to be in "friendly cooperation" with the SBC, a church must hold to a confessional-ethical standard, report numerical information to the Annual Church Profile (ACP), and give to the CP. In all of this first part of the book, Hildreth creates what one might call a hagiography of the SBC in specific relation to its doctrine and practice of cooperation; that is, though the SBC has failed a time or two, the convention should be admired for its continual cooperation for the sake of the Great Commission.

While the first part of the book is mostly historical, the second part of the book is more theological and the third part more applicational. In chapter four, Hildreth writes of the missio dei, concluding that the "Bible unveils the mission of God to rescue his lost creation from the brutal consequences of sin" (53). In chapter five, Hildreth writes of the church's mission in light of what has been revealed about God's mission. Since the Bible's overarching message is "God's mission to redeem the nations and establish a people who work to fulfill his mission," this should, thus, be the mission of the church (55). It is both an understanding of God's mission and the church's mission that led the SBC to begin in the first place: "We are on mission together… because we are one church serving the same mission" (60). This is a mission that has been taking place since Christ's ascension and will take place until His second coming. Furthermore, as a perceived prioritist, Hildreth claims that the church's job is rather simple: (1) preach and witness; (2) make disciples; and (3) [go] to the nations (61-63). He closes the book by offering a "proposal for Southern Baptist cooperation" (75). Unfortunately, the SBC has become rather divided in more recent years. Hildreth desperately implores his readers to aim for cooperative unity so all nations may hear of Christ.

For the most part, Hildreth does a fine job. He tells the history of the SBC rather well and in a way the average church member will comprehend and retain. He truly accomplishes what he said was the difficult task of taking an academic work and revising it for the church. As well, the book is overtly missional from the start. Hildreth wants the SBC, today, to own a doctrine of cooperation for the sake of reaching every nation with the gospel. Though negative circumstances surrounded the inauguration of the SBC, it started for this purpose, and this should still be its purpose today. In relation to cooperative mission, Hildreth is to be commended for his prioritist framework. Though one can do many good things, the primary goal and priority of missions is to make disciples of all nations. Lastly, Hildreth does well in his recommendation that cooperation should go above and beyond mere giving. He writes, "If the only thing many Southern Baptists hear when we say, 'cooperation' is 'giving money,' something is wrong" (82). This issue becomes most important toward the end of the book and for good reason.

As for the book's shortcomings, two stand out. First, one has to question whether a book on this topic was truly warranted as Hildreth suggested. Did we really already need an update on the work done in *One Sacred Effort*, a book almost three times the size of this one? As noted earlier, Hildreth believes that much has changed since *One Sacred Effort* was published in 2005, yet he does not really dive into those changes in detail. Almost a third of the book is devoted to the history of cooperation in the SBC, something that surely has not changed in the past fifteen years. At one point, he even writes, "It is beyond the scope of this book to explore all these changes," the very changes he said called for the writing of this book (30). He does write about two significant changes in the SBC: the Covenant for a New Century and the Great Commission Resurgence (30-34). However, only the latter of these two has occurred since 2005. In my personal estimation, One Sacred Effort is much more comprehensive; however, Together on God's Mission is useful in ways that the other is not. Hildreth could have simply stated that his ambition was to provide a more concise, practical, and readable book on cooperation in the SBC.

Second, Hildreth is much more descriptive than analytical. Again, this book, at various points, seems like a hagiography of the SBC. Hildreth had opportune moments to address a variety of problems that exist in the SBC, and he does not. For example, should churches that give more

be allowed more messengers (28)? How many churches truly have a "friendly cooperation" with the SBC, when so many fail to report to the ACP? Since only 38% of money given ever leaves the state convention, should restructuring take place to allow more giving directly for Great Commission causes (29)? Do SBC churches actually adhere—at large—to the doctrines Hildreth says Baptists have historically cared about, such as regenerate church membership and church discipline (44-45)? And lastly, if cooperation for the sake of the Great Commission is so important to the SBC, should this not be the litmus test for true cooperation?

Nonetheless, *Together on God's Mission* proves to be a most helpful introduction to the history of the SBC and its ever-enduring purpose to cooperate for the sake of the Great Commission. In this book, Hildreth proves himself to be a most capable theologian, historian, and missiologist. One can only hope that, in the future, he does write a magnum opus on the history and work of the SBC and its effort to fulfill the Great Commission—something akin to William Estep's thorough work, *Whole Gospel, Whole World* (B&H Publishers, 1994).

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***Preaching in the New Testament: An Exegetical and Biblical-Theological Study*. By Jonathan I. Griffiths. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2017. 153 pp. $22.00. ISBN 978-0-8308-2643.**

Jonathan I. Griffiths, the author of *Preaching in the New Testament: An Exegetical and Biblical-Theological Study*, has identified a problem: many champions of preaching struggle to articulate a basic definition of it. Offering a solution to this dilemma, Griffiths, who is the Lead Pastor of Metropolitan Bible Church in Ottawa, Canada, outlines a biblical theology of the word of God, undertakes an extensive study of the Greek verbs used in the New Testament to refer to preaching, and exegetes key New Testament passages. While there is no shortage of books on preaching, as Griffiths quickly acknowledges, few address its exegetical and theological foundations. *Preaching in the New Testament*, however,

directly targets them. So while other excellent manuals on preaching may equip preachers with practical tools, helpful techniques, and valuable methods, this book intentionally grapples with the toughest and most basic questions. Two of those questions guide his project: First, is there a distinct biblical category for preaching which is different from other word ministries like counseling or leading a Bible study (2)? Second, what is the relationship between Old Testament prophecy, apostolic preaching, and preaching today (3)?

When it comes to methodology, *Preaching in the New Testament* is primarily an inductive study of Scripture. As Griffiths writes, "History has much to teach us, and pragmatic concerns are not irrelevant, but neither history nor pragmatism must be allowed to control theology. The vital question is what Scripture says about this issue" (1). Initially, Griffiths attempts to sketch biblical-theological underpinnings for his project. "If preaching is a ministry of the word," he writes, "its character must be shaped fundamentally by the nature of the word itself" (9). As he takes the reader on a brief tour through Scripture, Griffiths shows that God speaks, acts, and encounters his people through his word (16). While these conclusions are not exclusive to preaching, they provide a foundation for the remainder of the project.

The backbone of Griffiths' study is his careful analysis of three Greek verbs: *euangelizomai*, *katangellō* and *kērryssō* (19). He chose these three words because their normal meaning closely resembles Griffiths' working definition of preaching—"*Preaching is a public proclamation of God's word*" (17). Following the work of Claire Smith, Griffiths proposes that these three lexemes function as "semi-technical" terms for preaching (17). To test his working definition, he analyzes every occurrence of these verbs in the New Testament (20-24). While the three verbs aren't synonyms and have unique characteristics, they share essential commonalities. "As used in the New Testament," Griffiths writes, "the verbs typically refer to the act of making a public proclamation; the agent is generally a person of recognized authority; and the substance of the proclamation is normally some aspect of Christ's person and work, the implications of the gospel, or some other truth from God's word" (33). According to Griffiths, these observations suggest that preaching is a distinct activity in the New Testament and form the foundation of a fuller definition of preaching.

Putting away the microscope, Griffiths also considers ministries of the word beyond preaching (45-49). Significantly, he argues, "Nowhere does the New Testament call or instruct believers as a whole group to 'preach'" (49). When added to the lexical evidence, this silence loudly suggests that the New Testament authors conceptualize preaching as distinct from other ministries of the word.

While Griffiths strongly argues that preaching is a distinct task given to commissioned male leaders in the church, he does not belittle other word ministries like counseling or leading a Bible study. Instead, he highlights the symbiotic relationship between the various word ministries of the church. He writes, "All God's people are ministers of his word, and a healthy church will be a church where all kinds of word ministries (formal and informal) flourish and abound" (133). The priority of preaching, according to Griffiths, doesn't disenfranchise the other word ministries of the local church; it empowers them.

Moving to exegesis of specific New Testament passages, Griffiths isolates 2 Timothy 3–4, Romans 10, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians 2–6, 1 Thessalonians 1–2, and the book of Hebrews. While Griffiths' selected texts vary in length, he carefully selects each for its direct relevance to preaching. After examining these passages, he draws several conclusions, including "the New Testament presents God as speaking through preaching" (121).

Since *Preaching in the New Testament* is primarily an inductive study, his argument only fully emerges at his conclusion. Griffiths claims, "The public proclamation of the word of God in the Christian assembly has a clear mandate from Scripture and occupies a place of central importance in the life of the local church" (133). Expanding his working definition of preaching, Griffiths concludes that preaching is public proclamation of the word of God by commissioned leaders (120).

In short, *Preaching in the New Testament* is an excellent work. By dealing with biblical-theological themes, lexical data, and specific New Testament passages, Griffiths' fuses together a compelling argument. Beyond this material, two brief excursuses, dealing with Philippians 1:14–18 and the connections between Old Testament prophecy and New Testament preaching, diversify and strengthen his argument. Furthermore, Griffiths' conclusions are admirably modest, so readers looking for provocative claims may be disappointed. He acknowledges the limitations of word studies, the limited scope of his research, and the

need for further study; however, readers will quickly notice the dramatic and wide-ranging implications of the conclusions he does draw.

Importantly, Griffiths targets a diverse audience, and he reaches one. By presenting his evidence in clear tables, explaining technical terms, and simply summarizing his findings, he opens his research to readers outside the world of academics. Furthermore, the brevity of his book will be attractive to busy pastors who may not have time for exhaustive scholarly works. At the same time, Griffiths does not lower the bar. Marked by extensive research and careful analysis, his study will challenge and educate readers. For example, he introduces and clearly explains the concept of semantic range and wrestles with the interpretation of difficult passages. Moreover, while academics will not consider this work exhaustive, it advances the conversation. While he answers many questions, Griffiths leaves many others unanswered. For example, while he claims preaching should be carried out by commissioned leaders, he does not describe a particular commissioning process. Curious readers may wonder whether or not the commissioning of preachers should be carried out through a formal ordination process. However, Griffiths' goal is not to answer every question. Instead, he is targeting the foundational questions beneath a commitment to preaching, and he gives answers to those.

Preaching in the New Testament is timely, because the church can only benefit from answers to the questions Griffiths is asking. While he leaves many questions unanswered and does not directly instruct readers on how to grow or improve as preachers, Griffiths gives compelling answers to some of the most important questions the church can ask about the ministry of the word.

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***Sex Difference in Christian Theology: Male, Female, and Intersex in the Image of God*. By Megan K. DeFranza. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2015. 311 pp. $24.00, Paperback. ISBN-13: 978-0802869821.**

While both evangelicals and non-evangelicals have offered numerous analyses of identities based on same-sex attraction and, to a lesser degree, transgenderism, there is a limited quantity of theological research on intersex conditions. Furthermore, the unique issues related to intersex conditions often get lumped in with LGBTQ discussions. In *Sex Difference in Christian Theology,* Megan K. DeFranza explores how intersex people may be incorporated into discussions of the Imago Dei. DeFranza is currently serving as a Visiting Researcher at Boston University's School of Theology and is a Research Associate with the Center for Mind and Culture. This book is basically an edited version of her doctoral thesis, which she completed at Marquette University.

DeFranza's purpose is to "help Roman Catholics, evangelicals, and other conservative Christians begin to open up space for the intersexed among us who are, truly, made in the image of God, so that together we may all become more fully human" (17). To do this, she proposes we leave a gender binary model and embrace a paradigm composed of male, female, and intersex, saying "the simplistic binary model is no longer sufficient. It is dishonest to the diversity of persons created in the image of God" (67). To make her case, DeFranza begins in chapter one by providing a brief medical and historical summary of intersex conditions. In chapter two, she explores the history of eunuchs as a possible category for including intersexed people. Chapter three is a cursory survey of sex-differences from an egalitarian perspective. Chapters four and five discuss the image of God in relation to intersex people while chapter six argues that Jesus, the true image of God, may have himself possibly been intersex.

DeFranza's Christological statements are somewhat puzzling. While she seems clearly to affirm a Trinitarian view of an eternal Son of God who became completely human, she makes odd statements about Jesus' gender which are founded more on speculation and citation of theologians with a low view of inspiration of Scripture as opposed to being ideas which emerge from the text of Scripture itself. For example, she says, "It is simply inaccurate to present Jesus as a male 'like every

other male,' as if all males were alike" (170). This is weak argumentation: Just because there is variation between males does not mean there is no basic definition for "maleness" which can be accepted by the average rational person. She later says, "I believe that reflection on the possibility of an intersex Christ reveals a confidence that Christ stands with the intersexed, that 'his' humanity does not stand over against them, that Jesus is with them in their struggles for identity, for love, for acceptance, for wholeness" (279). While Jesus Christ certainly loves intersex people (and we should as well), DeFranza's logical argumentation is quite confused: It is not necessary for Christ to be intersexed in order for the intersexed to identify with him any more than it is necessary for him to be female in order for females to identify with him. To go even further, it was not necessary for Jesus to be Gentile so that Gentiles could identify with him. The clear biblical evidence is that Jesus Christ was a Jewish male and suggestions he was intersex are unfounded.

Some comments in the book are unusually speculative. For example, commenting on Matthew 19:14 and Jesus' admonition to "let the little children come to me." DeFranza says, "Did those who had not yet reached puberty represent those without gender or the innocence associated with a lack of sexual desire?" (81). This argument seems to be a case of forcing an extremely unlikely meaning on to the passage in hopes of finding a proof-text. Concerning eunuchs in antiquity, she asserts their "gender ambiguity" enabled them to mediate between different groups (74). Yet this claim overlooks the fact that eunuchs were considered male; but they were males who had been castrated, which is far different from shoehorning modern categories of gender ambiguity back into the historical context.

DeFranza provides an egalitarian approach to the problem of intersex, but not one that even all egalitarians will find appealing. She is influenced by many people beyond the pale of evangelical egalitarianism, such as Susannah Cornwall of the University of Exeter. She accepts rather uncritically the feminist claim that the conservative view of gender is a derivative of the Victorian era and not something rooted more deeply in Scripture (132–133). Similarly, she claims Christians once had a golden age in which intersex people were accepted until repressive forces pushed them underground. This reminds one of John Boswell's revisionist history *Same-Sex Unions in Premodern Europe,* in which he posited the existence of a golden age in church history when same-sex marriage was

gladly accepted. Throughout the book, DeFranza compares and contrasts the views of Pope John Paul II as representative of Catholics and Stanley Grenz as representative of evangelicals regarding gender, yet DeFranza makes little mention of works representative of conservative complementarians, such as John Piper's *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism*. The presentation is weakened by a repeated tendency to quote secondary sources as opposed to primary sources when citing ancient authors.

Children are born with disorders of sexual development which can lead to ambiguous genitalia. Most evangelicals are woefully ill-informed to offer counsel regarding the unique challenges posed by children with these conditions. DeFranza's book is an attempt to offer substantive and compassionate answer to the topic. The effort is ultimately unsatisfying, weakened by confused argumentation and uncritical acceptance of certain revisionist theories regarding gender. DeFranza does challenge conservative evangelicals to explore how the concepts of the image of God and Christology can be used to address thoughtfully and compassionately the issue of intersex. The book points to a need for robust theological a pastoral work in this area.

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***Knowing Creation, Volume 1: Perspectives from Theology, Philosophy, and Science*. Edited by Andrew B. Torrance and Thomas H. McCall. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018. 341 pp. $39.99, Paperback. ISBN 978-0-310-53613-0.**

Knowing Creation: Perspectives from Theology, Philosophy, and Science is the first volume of a new two-volume set from Zondervan that brings together a wide range of leading Christian scholars in the theological area of creation. The book's stated purpose is to present "a broad picture of creation that finds harmony with both contemporary science and orthodox Christian theology" (17). Thus, the two commitments holding the chapters together are the affirmations of the contemporary scientific picture of the world and orthodox Christian theology. Within these

commitments, the authors move through a number of current issues, such as the relationship between faith and science, the proper place of scientific understanding within Christian theology, and the historical Christian understanding of the doctrine of creation, amongst others. This book addresses these issues and more from the perspective of these two commitments.

The book is divided into four sections corresponding with theological, biblical/historical, philosophical, and scientific perspectives. The first section is devoted to theological understanding of creation and science. In chapter one, Simon Oliver argues that the doctrine of creation can overcome the modern dualism between nature and culture through the understanding of creation as an ex nihilo gift, which "invests both nature and culture with intrinsic significance and value" (31). In chapter two, Christoph Schwöbel uses Martin Luther's view of creation as speech-act as a potential starting place for dialogue between science and theology. Particularly, Schwöbel finds in this metaphor power for conceiving creation as bearing being, meaning, and created dignity. In chapter three, Randall Zachman uses Calvin as an exemplar for the relationship between faith and scientific inquiry, particularly concerning how Scripture and science can inform each other in their mutually edifying quests. In the final chapter of this section, Andrew Torrance critiques methodological naturalism and methodological atheism as unnecessary disciplinary methods for Christians since these methods preclude or bracket out the understanding of nature as creation, which is a core Christian commitment.

The second section contains four chapters on biblical and historical perspectives on creation and science. John Walton begins this section in the fifth chapter with a summation of his work in other places on understanding Genesis within its ANE setting. In the sixth chapter, Francis Watson critiques Christian attempts to harmonize Genesis with science, preferring instead to see them in distinct domains that communicate different truths in different ways. In the seventh chapter, William Brown notes the interesting parallels between the decentering of humanity in creation in the book of Job and the decentering of the world in astrobiology. In the eighth chapter, Susan Grove Eastman uses Paul's anthropology to highlight the similarities between the biblical picture of humanity as necessarily interconnected and contemporary notions of humanity as selves-in-relationship.

The third section moves into the area of philosophy. In one of her last essays before her death, Marilyn McCord Adams emphasizes in the ninth chapter some aspects of creation that are outside the bounds of scientific inquiry, such as the purpose and holiness of creation, and thus critiques the attempt to turn science into a theory of everything. In the tenth chapter, Peter van Inwagen offers a reflection on Julian of Norwich's vision of creation as a hazelnut as a metaphor for the distinctions between God and creation. In chapter eleven, C. Stephen Evans reframes theistic arguments for God's existence as signs or pointers that are both widely accessible and also easily resistible, thus upholding humanity's freedom to believe or not believe in God. In chapter twelve, Robert Koons argues that the quantum revolution of the last hundred years has cleared out intellectual space for Aristotelian ideas such as teleology and causal agency within the science-faith dialogue.

The final section of the book is devoted to scientific perspectives. In chapter thirteen, William Simpson continues Robert Koons's theme from the previous chapter that Aristotelian ideas can be affirmed within the modern scientific picture of creation. Like Koons, Simpson argues that the modern scientific picture reveals a world that is not understood through physical reduction but through a return to the Aristotelian notion of hylomorphism. In the fourteenth chapter, Denis Alexander presents a view of evolutionary creation that understands the prima facie randomness of natural selection within the scope of God's non-determined providence. In the fifteenth chapter, Mark Harris reflects on passages of Scripture that speak of nature praising God and argues that they should be understood within a wide tapestry of meaning that accounts for God's independent relationship with non-human creation. In the final chapter of the book, Tom McLeish turns the table on the normal science-faith conversation by giving ideas from the book of Job for a theology of science that affirms wisdom in caring for the world.

Knowing Creation is a valuable contribution to the current science-faith dialogue because the authors point toward places of potential reconciliation between these two fields that are often portrayed as enemies. One of the areas where the book is most helpful is in the category of methodology. Although it is not an explicit feature of the book, and there is some implicit dissonance between the chapters on this topic, this book demonstrates a way to affirm orthodox theology and science. Of course, a person does not have to affirm the complete modern

scientific picture of the world to appreciate many of the arguments of the book. One example is in the field of quantum mechanics, where there is still large debate over how to understand reality at the micro level, as Adam Becker points out in his recent book What Is Real?: The Unfinished Quest For the Meaning of Quantum Physics. Robert Koons and William Simpson take up this challenge by demonstrating that ancient non-physical notions of causation can play an important role in understanding quantum (and larger) reality. The reader does not have to agree with certain aspects of evolutionary development affirmed by the writers to see the value of Koons's and Simpson's work in these chapters. Other chapters in this book are helpful because they summarize the scholarship of leading voices in the field, such as John Walton, Simon Oliver, and Denis Alexander. Finally, this book does a good job of not only showing areas of reconciliation, but areas where theology can point toward the limits and proper aims of the scientific enterprise. Marilyn McCord Adams, Andrew Torrance, and Tom McLeish each demonstrate that the conversation between faith and science is not a one-way street. Although the section headings can be a bit arbitrary (many of these chapters could fit under multiple headings), all of the chapters themselves are helpful for framing this important discussion.

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***The Plot-structure of Genesis: 'Will the Righteous Seed Survive?' In the Muthos-Logical Movement From Complication to Dénouement.* By Todd L. Patterson, Leiden: Brill, 2019. 243pp. $132.00, Hardback ISBN 978-90-04-36250-5.**

Todd L. Patterson is Assistant Professor of Old Testament at Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica, Slovakia. He received his Ph.D. from Trinity International University. In his book, *The Plot-structure of Genesis*, Patterson argues that, "The goal of this study is to apply the moral of the story of plot to the Genesis narrative and show that the organizing principle of Genesis is a *muthos*-logical plot structure, a movement from complication to dénouement, from beginning to middle to end" (10). By

muthos-logical, Patterson is referring to Aristotle's *Poetics* where Aristotle argues that a well-formed plot, from beginning, middle, and to its end, will have a complication that, "stretches from the beginning to just before the point of change and the dénouement from the change to the end" (1). This complication is directly related to the main theme that unites the entire book.

Patterson argues that the main plot-structure of Genesis centers on "the survival and righteousness of the seed through which humanity's return to creation rest must come" (30). Therefore, each section of Genesis must interact with the question of the righteousness and survival of the seed. This, for Patterson, is the unifying principle.

To test this thesis, Patterson first sets out to establish the overall structure of the book. He, like most scholars, argues that the book is organized by the *tôlĕdôt* structure. By dividing the book in this way, Patterson sees six major interwoven sections or plexuses (Creation Prologue Plexus 1:1–2:3; Heavens and Earth Plexus 2:4–4:26; Noah Plexus 5:1–11:9; Terah Plexus 11:10–25:18; Isaac Plexus (25:19–37:1) and Jacob Plexus (37:2–50:26) (24–25). If his thesis is correct, each section should develop the theme of the survival of the righteous seed.

First, Patterson distinguishes between the overarching complicating factor for all of Scripture (Gen 3:15) and the complicating factor for the book of Genesis (Gen 4). He writes, "With this central tension in mind the reader continues into chapter four and so naturally will seek to follow the seed of the woman and its struggle with the seed of the serpent." (30) Since this is the complicating factor of the entirety of Scripture, the complicating factor for Genesis begins in Gen 4 with Cain killing Abel. This puts the righteousness and the survival of the seed in a questionable situation. By starting the narrative in this way, Gen four introduces the central complication to the narrative of the entire book of Genesis.

This idea is further developed in the Noah plexus where all of humanity is wiped out, but Noah is found to be "righteous." Yet, by the end of the Noah plexus, humanity has returned to a "fallen state" (97) where they must be exiled again. Heading into the *tôlĕdôt* of Terah, the reader again must question whether the seed of the woman will survive and be righteous. Patterson finds that all six divisions of the *tôlĕdôt* interact and develop this central tension until the Jacob plexus, which is the dénouement. By the end of the book of Genesis, the reader is left with the idea that the seed will continue towards unrighteousness. But,

because of God's goodness, "God himself will ultimately ensure the survival of the seed, and, by implication, the righteousness of the seed that will lead us back to his creation-sanctuary." (206)

Overall, the book is an excellent work which describes the overall literary structure of the book of Genesis. Patterson has many literary insights for the book of Genesis. He provides a compelling argument that the chiastic structure of most of the *tôlĕdôt* sections center on the primary question of the book of Genesis.

Despite Patterson's insights into the text, he plays a cautious hand throughout the work. This is especially evident in his discussion of the Jacob Plexus. He states that Rendsburg, Dorsey, and Mathews have suggested an unconvincing chiastic structure for this section (183). He adds, "due to the subjectivity involved in determining textual divisions, which in the end could provide artificial support for our exegesis and due to the apparent dominance of the movement from tension to resolution, it seems best to approach the Jacob *tôlĕdôt* through the plot and leave aside the proposed chiastic structures" (183). He puts in a footnote that his primary reason for dropping the chiastic structure is because he cannot defend a chiastic structure as easily as he could in other sections. In doing so, he keeps one hand on the possibility that there is indeed a chiastic structure. This is admirable, but he could have provided his own chiastic structure to show how this final section was the culmination of the central question of Genesis or, perhaps even better, shown how the lack of a chiastic structure indicates to the reader that the conclusion has come. The final answer to the question has been given. In not offering either of these solutions, Patterson loses a little crispness to his argument that is present elsewhere in his work.

This is not to say that Patterson argues his case horribly. Actually, he sticks to his argument throughout the work tightly. He shows that by asking the question, "Will the righteous seed survive?" the entire book of Genesis is united under one major theme and best explains the ordering of the book. This work would be a very good resource for anyone teaching a course on the book of Genesis. It is easily accessible to students and it could help them see the purpose of the book of Genesis.

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***Superheroes Can't Save You: Epic Examples of Historic Heresies*. By Todd Miles. Nashville: B & H Academic, 2018. 194 pp. $19.99, Hardback. ISBN 978-1-4627-5079-5.**

John Piper pointed out that, "All heroes are shadows of Christ." However, in Todd Miles' work *Superheroes Can't Save You: Epic Examples of Historic Heresies*, the author goes the opposite direction by explaining how superheroes can serve as illustrations of unorthodox ideas about the nature of God and the person of Christ. In other words, some of the heroes of comic book lore are *good examples of bad ideas about Jesus*.

Miles, an instructor of Christian theology at Western Seminary and comic book enthusiast from an early age, has produced this work to help Christians to "understand and worship Jesus better" (6). The author accomplishes this goal by surveying seven of the most well-known and long debated heresies of the church over the past two-thousand years through the prism of the champions of the comic universe. Each chapter features a mythical hero and the corresponding heresy they illustrate: Superman illustrates Docetism; Batman illustrates Christian Liberalism; Ant-Man illustrates Modalism; Thor illustrates Arianism; Green-Lantern illustrates Adoptionism; Hulk illustrates Apollinarism; and finally, Spider-Man illustrates Eutychianism.

Throughout the book, the author follows the same template in each chapter by giving the background of the comic book legend, and then he makes the connection to how the hero serves as a type of heresy, for example, Ant-Man is representative of the ancient heresy known as Modalism. The author illustrates the Modalism heresy by explaining that Ant-Man can shrink to the size of a molecule and then expand to be the size of a large building, but he cannot be both small and large at the same time; instead Ant-Man is one person that operates in different modes just as Modalism teaches that God is one person who at times operates as Father, other times as Son, and still other times as the Spirit (56). After examining the biography of each comic hero and the corresponding heresy the author then provides a concise biblical response that refutes the false teaching. Further, the author provides the reader with modern examples of those who still practice those ancient heresies in the present. In the conclusion of each chapter, Miles provides a series of discussion questions that are meant to cultivate further independent study or could

be utilized within a group format to spur increased dialogue and interaction.

In general, the book is an attempt at contextualizing theological controversies, most of them ancient, into a medium that may be more palpable for the modern audience. Students of church history who happen to be fans of D.C. or Marvel Comics would enjoy and benefit from this work. Miles is especially helpful because he gives the contemporary reader a grid to understand and organize heretical movements; the author uses these famous comic superheroes to symbolize what is otherwise sometimes challenging to remember and often hard to organize in the mind's eye, etching these illustrations into the memory banks of the reader.

Nonetheless, there are some aspects of the author's historical details that may blur the line between creative license and history as it happened, especially regarding Miles perspective on the Arian controversy (78-83). Miles is a proponent of the view that Arianism began more as a personal vendetta between Arius and Bishop Alexander over who would become the next bishop in Alexandria in the early fourth century (78). From Miles' perspective Arius was threatened by Alexander's protégé, Athanasius; outraged, Arius began to cast aspersions upon Alexander and promote his view that Christ was less than God. However, it is more likely that the matter between Arius and Alexander was, from the outset, a theological issue that would divulge into personal attacks—not the other way around.

Notwithstanding, Miles demonstrates a genuine pastoral concern for the reader and wants the book to serve as a warning to Christians who might be tempted to "unwittingly fall into" some of the heresies examined throughout the work (7). One could describe Miles' work as an amusing combination of church history, apologetics, and pop-culture in an easy to read format that most lay Christians would enjoy, reminiscent of Timothy Paul Jones' *Finding God in a Galaxy Far, Far Away: A Spiritual Exploration of the Star Wars Saga* (2005).

Superheroes Can't Save You is a book that could work effectively in a discipleship group for teenagers or college-age students as well as those who, like Miles, have a penchant for both theology and comic books. Of course, this work could be beneficial to would-be scholars of church history who may want a mnemonic device to help them keep track of the similarities and differences between the heresies explored by the author.

Finally, Miles deserves credit for creatively exploring old heresies in a way that may breed strong interest for a younger generation of Christians who might want to cut their teeth on this book before they move onto Alister McGrath's *Heresy: A History of Defending the Truth* or exploring the Christological section in Wayne Grudem's *Systematic Theology*.

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***Spurgeon on the Christian Life: Alive in Christ*. By Michael Reeves. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018. 188 pp. $19.99, Paperback. ISBN 978-1-4335-4387-6.**

Over 125 years after his death, Charles Spurgeon remains a revered exemplar among Baptists in the English-speaking world. Michael Reeves, President and Professor of Theology at Union School of Theology in Oxford, provides a concise and encouraging portrait of the famed preacher in his book Spurgeon on the Christian Life: Alive in Christ. This volume is neither an exhaustive biography nor "a comprehensive analysis of Spurgeon's overall theology" (16). Rather, the volume contains both biographical and theological elements which focus on the Christ-centered nature of Spurgeon's faith and practice. Broken into four parts, Alive in Christ provides readers with insightful snapshots of Spurgeon's teaching and character. Reeves, an Anglican, wrote the book in part so that Spurgeon's example might become a treasure for Christians outside the Baptist tradition.

Reeves begins with a personal portrait of Spurgeon, examining the contours of the preacher's immense personality. Spurgeon was a man who "embodied the truth that to be in Christ means to be made ever more roundly human, more fully alive" (26). Indeed, the Prince of Preachers clearly lived with all his might. A man of many laughs and many tears, Spurgeon proved himself to be "a big-hearted man of deep affections" (26). However, this intensity of emotion and sincerity of affection was not simply due to his natural constitution. Rather, this was a "wholly self-conscious expression of his theology" (26). Those who are in Christ must think, feel, and act like Christ. Therefore, the Christian must embody

"real cheer" in light of the Gospel as well as "real hatred for wickedness and injustice" (27). Even as a man prone to bouts of depression and sorrow, Spurgeon was ultimately a joyful Christian with a proclivity toward fun and a healthy regard for "holy cheerfulness" (31). Reeves presents Spurgeon's personality with clarity.

In the second section, Reeves examines the Christ-centeredness of Spurgeon's theology and ministry. In particular, consideration is given to Spurgeon's views of Scripture, salvation, and preaching as they relate to the person and work of Christ. His unabashed reverence for the Bible was directly tied to his love and reverence for Christ. Spurgeon "treasured the Bible and held it to be entirely trustworthy because he treasured Christ and held him to be entirely trustworthy" (42).

Regarding his Calvinist soteriology, Spurgeon saw this and all his doctrinal confessions as convictionally Christ-centered. Spurgeon's theological outlook was not one of dry, lifeless orthodoxy. Rather, Spurgeon's connection of doctrines with the living Christ brought life and power to his theology. He once asserted, "You cannot taste the sweetness of any doctrine until you have remembered Christ's connection with it" (45). Indeed, Spurgeon was "fearful of human systems of doctrine" (be they Calvinist or Arminian) that would divorce Scripture's truths from the life and work of the living Christ (61).

Spurgeon's Christocentric views of Scripture and theology carried over into his practice of preaching. It was Spurgeon's assertion that the "Spirit of God bears no witness to Christless sermons" (72). This single-minded fixation on proclaiming Christ in every sermon has led critics to accuse Spurgeon of reading Christ into texts where He is not to be found. However, Reeves asserts that Spurgeon's sermons "commonly address the historical context and the original intention of the human author" even as they point forward to further fulfillment in Christ (74).

Reeves' third section focuses on Spurgeon's convictions regarding the new birth. Spurgeon's ministry, in large part, was shaped by the necessity and nature of the new birth. Recognizing that regeneration is not merely a shift in intellectual assent, Spurgeon aimed to preach to the heart. Regeneration brings with it a "radical transformation of our affections and desires" (101). Indeed, this heart-level work of the Spirit was so primary that he would declare, "The affections are the most powerful part of our nature, they to a great extent mould even the understanding itself,

and if the heart be defiled all the mental faculties becomes disturbed in their balance. God, therefore, commences at the heart" (101).

In his final section, Reeves examines some of Spurgeon's teachings on sanctification, particularly in the areas of prayer, suffering, and activism. Spurgeon, a man of mighty prayer, weathered various trials and storms throughout his decades-long ministry. Spurgeon saw suffering as a "covenant mark" of those being made holy by God the Father (165). As Christians follow the Man of Sorrows, God the Father will graciously ordain trials to bring them into closer communion with their Master. Moreover, Spurgeon espoused that those who have been given new hearts and affections in Christ will be rich in good works. Reeves provides a catalogue of Spurgeon's ministries outside of preaching and pastoring – "he established and oversaw a host of ministries, including the Pastors' College, the Stockwell Orphanage, seventeen almshouses for poor and elderly women, the Colportage Association, and a day school for children" (159). Not only was Spurgeon a man whose heart and affections had been transformed by Christ; he was a man whose activism confirmed that truth.

Spurgeon on the Christian Life: Alive in Christ provides readers with a glorious glimpse into the life of Charles Spurgeon. Through a balanced blend of direct quotations and subsequent commentary, Reeves crafts a simple yet profound vision of Spurgeon. One striking element pervading the entire account is the manner in which Spurgeon saw every facet of Christian theology and practice as tied to the living Christ. Alive in Christ proves to be an excellent introductory volume to the study of Spurgeon's life and theology. Seasoned Spurgeon scholars will find no groundbreaking revelations within this book. However, Reeves has provided a broad Christian audience with an encouraging and upbuilding picture of Spurgeon's life and doctrine.

Though the book has many strengths, one potential weakness is its lack of a traceable biographical arc. Though Reeves explicitly warns that he is neither writing a full-fledged biography nor a complete theology, there are particular episodes in the life of Spurgeon that might have received more attention. For instance, there is a noticeable absence of material pertaining to the infamous Downgrade Controversy toward the end of Spurgeon's life. A section treating this controversy would have provided a fuller context for readers to understand Spurgeon's suffering and depression. Each biographical glimpse provided by Reeves adds

valuable context to the theology presented in the book, so more biographical information would have been a welcome addition.

In summary, Reeves' *Spurgeon on the Christian Life: Alive in Christ* provides a winsome and uplifting introduction to the life of Charles Spurgeon. Though a bit sparse in biographical material, the book presents a clear and convincing picture of Spurgeon's Christ-centered personal devotion and public ministry. Those unfamiliar with Spurgeon will find in the pages of this book a first glance into the Christ-exalting, God-glorifying legacy of the Prince of Preachers. Reeves' volume will surely be a standard introduction to Spurgeon for a broad Christian audience for years to come.

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***Theodicy of Love: Cosmic Conflict and the Problem of Evil*. By John C. Peckham. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018. 206 pp. $26.99, Paperback. ISBN-13: 978-1540960269.**

John C. Peckham is professor of theology and Christian philosophy at Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan. He is the author of *The Concept of Divine Love in the Context of the God-World Relationship* (Peter Lang, 2014); *The Love of God: A Canonical Model* (IVP Academic, 2015); and *Canonical Theology: The Biblical Canon, Sola Scriptura, and Theological Method* (Eerdmans, 2016). In *Theodicy of Love*, Peckham aims to improve upon the free will defense for evil by "articulating a theodicy that is rooted in the nature of God's love within the framework of cosmic conflict" (4). He offers nuanced doctrines of omnipotence, providence, and foreknowledge then addresses cosmic conflict and suggests that God's love provides sufficient grounds for the presence of evil in the world, evil which God took upon himself and defeated at the cross of Christ.

In chapter one, Peckham presents the free will defense and the necessary possibility of evil. He interacts with Alvin Plantinga's work, among others, to summarize the view that God granted humans a kind of free will that is incompatible with determinism and makes evil possible

but not necessary. Building on that defense, Peckham writes, "The free will defense is strongest when the value that is offered as the morally sufficient reason for God's allowance of evil is not moral freedom alone but love, which I take to be a greater good" (11). God's desire for a genuine relationship with his creatures results in the necessary possibility of evil. Peckham adds the prospect that the cosmic conflict of God and his angels against Satan and demons might account for instances of natural evil; the result is a theodicy of love as a robust reply to the evidential problem of evil (the objection against the free will defense based on the amount and kind of evil in the world). Peckham summarizes other attempts to address the free will defense, such as John Sanders's open theism, David Ray Griffin's process theodicy, Thomas Jay Oord's essential kenosis model, and John Hick's soul-making theodicy. Peckham's views share with some of those models the concepts of divine self-limitation and cosmic conflict, but he improves upon those alternate views by affirming divine exhaustive foreknowledge and a view of providence which allows for divine intervention, even acting strongly without determining the creaturely will.

Peckham, in chapter two, attempts to explain *how* God's love provides sufficient grounds for God's allowance of evil. After a brief explanation that most Christians affirm some type of human freedom but differ on how to define such freedom, Peckham sets up two basic positions, theistic determinism and theistic libertarianism. Using provocative but clarifying language, Peckham argues that a survey of Scripture reveals that God does not always get what he wants in the world. For example, his people sometimes rebel. If determinism were true, then God would always get what he wants. God does, however, determine some things to occur, such as the cross of Christ and the future return of Christ. God does not, though, determine the free agency of people because genuine love requires libertarian freedom. Peckham offers an indeterministic model of providence which distinguishes between God's ideal and remedial wills (think perfect and permissive wills), which relate to his strong or weak actualization of events. An event that is strongly actualized is one in which God acts alone; an event that is weakly actualized is one in which God and humans act to bring about the event. In this model, God indeterministically guides and directs all things via his exhaustive and comprehensive foreknowledge (including his knowledge of how creatures *would* act in a given situation, also known as

middle knowledge). The benefit of this providence of love is the via media it provides to the usual divine determinism-only or simple foreknowledge-only options for understanding God's rule of all things.

Peckham sketches his model of cosmic conflict in chapter three. He introduces the presentation by recounting the parable of the wheat and tares (Matt 13:24–30) and the temptation of Christ in the desert (Matt 4:1–11 and parallel passages). In the parable, the enemy sows evil and sets up God for the blame, but the enemy will be defeated at the end. The idea that evil sown by Satan must be permitted to remain in order to avoid damaging the wheat (God's people) is consistent with the book's claim that God might have benevolent reasons *not* to eradicate all occurrences of evil in this life. Peckham writes, "For some good reason, the enemy must be allowed to work—the wheat and tares must be allowed to temporarily grow together—in order for evil to *finally* be defeated while minimizing collateral damage" (56). The temptation of Christ reveals that Satan desires worship and is granted certain jurisdiction, a concept Peckham calls "rules of engagement" and to which he returns in chapter four. A survey of the New Testament exposes Satan as an accuser and slanderer, deceiver and tempter, and usurping ruler of this world. Peckham avers, "Via repeated deceptions and temptations, the devil works to persuade humans to believe wrongly and choose against God's desires" (61). Also, "Satan wields his limited but significant power to oppress people" (62). God defeated Satan at the cross of Christ, but Satan has been granted authority to cause problems for humans until his appointed time of judgment. Similarly, the New Testament refers to demons, which sometimes disrupt and disturb humans.

In a paradigm-altering portion of the chapter, Peckham explains, "Many OT texts depict a heavenly council consisting of 'gods' or celestial beings who are often described as possessing ruling authority relative to events on earth" (71). In this section, Peckham engages with a wide range of reputable biblical interpreters to establish by analysis of texts such as Dan 10, Deut 32, Job 1–2, and Zech 3 that God rules the cosmos, including events on earth, through a heavenly council which is subject to his control and is an arena for the display of his righteousness and subject to his corrective judgment. The upshot is that "temporary injustice is the result not of God's perfect rule (cf. Deut. 32:4) but of the unjust rule of the 'gods'" (72). The benefit of appealing to the concept of a heavenly council is that the activity of such a council would provide an explanation

consistent with Scripture for occurrences of natural evil and egregious instances of evil. Peckham raises and addresses the challenges of appealing to a heavenly council to explain evil on earth, namely western anti-supernaturalism (82–85) and, in chapter four, the challenge to God's omnipotence (107–14).

In chapter four, Peckham describes the nature of the cosmic conflict and what he terms the rules of engagement. God is not engaged in a dualistic conflict in which he struggles with equally powerful forces. Also, this struggle is not one of sheer power. Rather, "Scripture depicts the conflict as a dispute over God's moral character and government" (88). The slander and allegations against God which first surfaced in the garden reveal the enemy's template of casting doubt on God's character as well as Satan's desire to be worshipped. Such charges are answered in Scripture according to the "cosmic divine lawsuit" theme, in which God's name and covenant faithfulness is vindicated in the presence of a heavenly council. Just as God limited the activity of Satan in the life of Job, God also placed limits on his own activity by granting Satan certain freedoms to act in Job's life. The behind-the-scenes look at Job's circumstances illustrates the rules of engagement. Other instances in Scripture which illustrate God granting jurisdiction to the enemy include Satan's claim when tempting Jesus that the world has been given to him and he gives it to whom he wishes as well, the remark in Rev 12:12 that Satan knows he has only a short time, and Paul's comment in Thess 2:18 that Satan hindered him during his travels (105). The significance of this view of cosmic conflict is that God might be hindered from stopping some instances of horrendous evil due to 1) these rules of engagement to which God has agreed, 2) human freedom which is necessary for a genuine love relationship, or 3) the possibility of greater evil or less love if God intervenes.

In chapter five, Peckham points to the cross as God's answer to the problem of evil. Satan was thrown down and defeated at the cross of Christ, though he has been granted limited freedom to act on earth until his time of judgment. Peckham interacts with the conclusions of theologians such as G. K. Beale, F. F. Bruce, Kevin Vanhoozer, Leon Morris, and John Stott about the cross and resurrection of Christ as resulting in the two-stage defeat of Satan (legally defeated then later destroyed) and a demonstration of God's love and justice. Peckham writes, "What more could he do than give himself to die for us, so that he

might justify us without in any way compromising his justice and love (Rom 3:26)? The cross demonstrates that God is love and testifies that God has done everything that could be done to mitigate and eliminate evil without destroying the context for the unending flourishing of love" (126). Peckham does not pretend to answer all questions about evil and suffering. Rather, he calls for epistemic humility and points to God's character, his actions at the cross of Christ, and the promise of the future judgment of sin, Satan, and demons. Peckham writes, "God perfectly knows and wants what is best for everyone, and in light of the God of the cross, we can trust him even while many questions remain" (128).

Chapter six wraps up the book by evaluating the proposed model of theodicy of love. The chapter is a mixture of restating previous arguments, such as whether including the devil in a theodicy is helpful (142–45), and raising new arguments, such as the objections by some New Atheists about the character of God as revealed in the OT genocide passages (154–59).

John C. Peckham's *Theodicy of Love* should be required reading for anyone studying the problem of evil and suffering as well as the related doctrines of providence, divine omniscience, divine omnipotence, and divine attributes. Peckham's inclusion of cosmic conflict is careful, attentive to the biblical canon, and prudent. Threading the theodicy needle without blaming God for sinful choices or portraying God as weak or unloving is no easy task. Peckham's work on the matter is not without its weaknesses. For example, Peckham discusses middle knowledge as possibly inadequate for explaining God's work in the world in light of the interconnectedness of all events. Peckham anticipates the assumption that if God has middle knowledge, then he could actualize any situation that he wants. Peckham writes, "God might not be able to actualize a given situation without having to actualize unacceptably undesirable antecedent conditions or future events" (144). While acknowledging that God is unable to do certain things, such as lie or otherwise act in ways inconsistent with his nature, one wonders if this statement reflects a weakness in an otherwise robust configuration.[1] In Peckham's view, if

[1] For a fuller explanation of this position, see Peckham's comment on p.111, "Since we are not privy to the rules of engagement, which are themselves dynamic and connected to numerous factors (including, but not limited to, prayer and faith), we are not in a position to know when a given event falls within the enemy's jurisdiction such that God's intervention is restricted.

there is a situation that God desires that is somehow contingent upon the free choices of creatures, then it is not unilaterally up to God to bring about that situation. As Peckham argued in chapter two, God does not always get what he wants.

As a second possible weakness, Peckham observes that the rules of engagement "are the product of negotiation and thereby far from ideal" (108). He explains that the rules of engagement are "openly negotiated" before the heavenly council and these "covenantal rules" resulting from a courtroom dispute are binding on both parties (95). Does language of negotiation result in the model slipping into the dualistic model it explicitly rejected in the book? This is clearly not the author's intention. However, the concept that God negotiated cosmic rules by which he is constrained is a challenge to a biblically-informed intuition that God does not negotiate; instead, God sets the terms (sometimes unilaterally). Also, one wonders if Peckham has offered the best model for describing God's activity in the world in light of cosmic conflict since he concedes that the rules of engagement are "far from ideal." Perhaps "far from ideal" is all one can expect in light of the fallenness of creation, including humans, and the temporary jurisdiction God has granted his enemy. Indeed, this world will be far from ideal until God finally judges his enemies and establishes the new heaven and new earth.

Even with these possible weaknesses, Peckham's work is a refreshing, creative, and biblically-grounded way forward in addressing the ancient and difficult doctrine of theodicy.

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Accordingly, we need not assert that there is something good (instrumentally or otherwise) about each evil that God does not prevent. It might be that God greatly desires to prevent that evil but morally cannot do so, given the wider parameters of the rules of engagement or without leading to some worse result (cf. Matt. 26:39)."

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