

RICHARD HOOKER'S WORRIES ABOUT THE MIND: THE PATH TO CERTAINTY

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ABSTRACT. Focusing on two of Richard Hooker's sermons, "Certaintie and Perpetuitie of Faith in the Elect" and "Learned Sermon of the Nature of Pride", this essay explores Hooker's worries about how the mind reacts to matters of religious doubt, curiosity, arrogance, and mental confusions. These worries of what enters the mind influence the search for what Hooker calls the certainty of adherence (faith) and the certainty of evidence (knowledge). Such worries, prompted by what Hooker sees as the mind's fragility in the face of religious experience and religious truth, lead Hooker in the sermons, as well as in his *Ecclesiasticall Lawes*, to a certain religious and rhetorical position which emphasizes the notion of approaching faith and knowledge in terms of simplicity or singleness. This approach, Hooker counsels, should lead the potentially confused mind, regardless of the certainty it seeks and of the influence of the Holy Spirit, toward the notion of surrender—to God or to the rhetor.

KEY WORDS: Richard Hooker, Hooker's sermons, religious certainty, mind, Reformation faith

There appear to be ten extant sermons (or sermon fragments) which are attributed to Richard Hooker and printed together for the first time in volume five of *The Folger Library Edition of The Works of Richard Hooker*.¹ This essay focuses on two of the sermons: "A Learned and Comfortable Sermon of the Certaintie and Perpetuitie of Faith in the Elect" and "A Learned Sermon of the Nature of Pride". The specific concern is Hooker's worry about how the mind works, a concern made clear from the question Hooker asks in "Certaintie and Perpetuitie of Faith". The text of the

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¹ Richard Hooker, *The Folger Library Edition of The Works of Richard Hooker*, gen ed. by W. Speed Hill, vols. I-V (Cambridge, MA: 1977-1990); vols. VI (2 parts) and VII (Binghamton, NY: 1993-1998). All references to Hooker are to this edition with volume and page number given in the notes.

sermon is Habakkuk 1:4 where Habakkuk complains against God because of the “great felicitie of the wicked, and the miserable oppression of the godlie, which indure all kinde of affliction and crueltie”. Habakkuk’s conclusion is, as the biblical text reads—and I am using here and elsewhere the Bishops Bible (1568) as Hooker often did—that “the law is dissolved, judgement doth never go foorth: for the wicked doth compasse about the righteous, therfore wrong judgement proceedeth”.

Hooker’s question is this: “Whether the prophet Abacuk by admitting this cogitation into his mind, the law doth fail did therbie shew him selfe an unbelever”.² Among Hooker’s interests, then, is how the mind works (whatever Hooker meant by “mind”) and the problem of admitting or allowing a cogitation (a thought, a reflection, a consideration) into one’s mind. I would like to explore some of the instances of Hooker’s worries about mind, how those worries are manifested in Hooker’s use of the Pauline notion in Ephesians 4:23 of the imperative for one to be “renued in the spirite of your mynde”,³ and why attention to how Hooker plays with the problem of the mind is important in understanding not only his voice in the sermons but his rhetorical positionality in *Of the Lawes of Ecclesiasticall Politie*.

Hooker’s interest in “Certaintie and Perpetuitie” concerning how the mind works is best understood by following the contrast Hooker makes between what he calls the certainty of adherence and the certainty of evidence which he discusses in the sermon. Sixteenth century reformed Christians, as can be expected, longed for certainty of one kind or another. In general, the contrast pits the natural against the spiritual, the natural man who longs to know (to have knowledge, to see a demonstration) alongside those “in whose harts the light of grace doth shine”.⁴ The spiritual, of course, is the realm of faith, but Hooker seems to complicate matters by holding up both mind and heart as objects of “the light of grace”. Momentarily, at least, we could simplify matters if we bring the power of the mind to the project of ascertaining the certainty of evidence, and then think of the heart as the arena for the certainty of adherence.⁵

The mind is that force which assents to the “truth” of what it sees and hears and reads around it. Habakkuk, for example, saw the victory of the sinful and was certain that God was no longer interested in the Israelites, this despite Habakkuk’s

2 Hooker, V:69.

3 Paul writes “If so be that ye have hearde hym, and have ben taught in hym, as the trueth is in Jesus, To lay downe, accordyng to the former conversation, the olde man, which is corrupt, accordyng to the lustes of error: To be renued in the spirite of your mynde, And to put on that newe man, which after God is shapen, in righteousnesse and holynesse of trueth”.

4 Hooker, V:69.

5 Corneliu C. Simuț discusses Hooker’s notion of evidence and adherence in chapter 4, “The Epistemology of Faith” of his study of Hooker’s sermons in *The Doctrine of Salvation in the Sermons of Richard Hooker* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2005), 129-157.

possession of the light of grace amid his doubts.⁶ The certainty of evidence is a product of the mind's epistemology. The certainty of adherence, on the other hand, is a matter of the heart cleaving and sticking "unto that which it doth beleeve". Of the cleaving heart, Sir Walter Raleigh in his "Treatise of the Soul" (ca. 1603) cites Jesus' words in Matthew 5:8 to argue that the heart, as the fountain and beginning of life, is the principal faculty of the soul: "Blessed are the clean in heart, for they shall see God".⁷ "This certaintie [in the heart] is greater in us then the other", that is, the certainty of evidence. Why? Because "the fayth of a christian man doth apprehend... the promises of god, not only as true but also as good".⁸ Note here that it is not the mind which apprehends but rather faith, by which Hooker might mean heart or the renewed mind. The certainty of evidence is of a different kind than the certainty of adherence, requiring something else in its affirmation of truth. Evidence of one kind or another, small or large, is situated before the individual to be accepted, with the aid of "the common light of nature",⁹ by that individual's knowing, educated, rational, and well-ordered mind, despite the fact that "the minds of all men" are "darkned... with the foggie damp of originall corruption".¹⁰ The certainty of adherence implies the struggle for belief. That which one "faintly and fearfully" believes through "his spirit" causes a striving, Hooker says, "to hope even against hope to beleeve even against all reason of beleeving".¹¹ Enter the work—and power—of the Holy Spirit, that spirit "which god hath geven us to no other end but only to assure us that wee are the sonnes of god... to open our eyes and to make the trueth of thinges beleeved evident unto our mindes".¹² Apparently, true assurance comes only with the certainty of adherence through the Holy Spirit. But there is also, as Hooker suggests in this sermon fragment, the force of desire: "if [men and women] thinke those thinges to be, which they show that they love when they desire to beleeve them, then must it needs be that by desiring to belev they prove themselves to be true beleevers".¹³ But where does this desire come from?

6 Of Habakkuk, Hooker asks: "But they in whose harts the light of grace doth shine, they that are taught of god, why are they so weeake in fayth?" (V:69).

7 Sir Walter Raleigh, "A Treatise of the Soul", *The works of Sir Walter Raleigh, kt., now first collected. To which are prefixed the lives of the author*, vol. 8 (New York: Burt Franklin, 1965), 589.

8 Hooker, V:71.

9 *Ibid.*, 72.

10 *Ibid.*, 71. Debora K. Shuger's essay "Faith and Assurance", *A Companion to Richard Hooker*, ed. by Torrance Kirby (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 221-250 comments extensively on "Certaintie and Perpetuitie". When she writes that "Hooker described faith in terms of the heart cleaving to what it believes, not of the will choosing to assent" (239), she may be indicating a way of seeing the difference between the certainty of adherence and the certainty of evidence, evidence to which the mind and will choose to assent.

11 Hooker, V:71.

12 *Ibid.*, V:71.

13 *Ibid.*, V:76.

The mind? The heart? The spirit? As Debora Shugar describes it, this sermon deals with the “interior vicissitudes of belief”.¹⁴

In other words, as Hooker’s analysis of Habakkuk’s faith and thinking (or cogitation) reveals, one can see how fragile the mind can be despite that “first grace which god poureth into the harts of them that are incorporated into Christ”.¹⁵ The mind, regardless of a willing heart—a heart into which grace has been poured—can be affected by the physical, by ignorance, by doubt, by grief, and by self-deception. In terms of self-deception, the Presbyterian Walter Travers would be Hooker’s example.

Walter Travers was Hooker’s assistant at the Temple congregation to which Hooker was appointed in 1585. It was in this congregation that the sermons “Certaintie and Perpetuitue” as well as “A Learned Sermon of the Nature of Pride”, which will be discussed later, were delivered. Travers took issue with how Hooker was “called” to this congregation as well as with Hooker’s preaching of allegedly erroneous doctrine. Both behaved badly, attacking each other from the pulpit and circulating rumors and writings. Things became so problematic that Archbishop John Whitgift had to silence Travers who, in turn, wrote *A Supplication Made to the Privy Counsel* defending himself and seeking reinstatement. Hooker responded with *The Answere of Mr. Richard Hooker to a Supplication*.¹⁶ Hooker defended his doctrine as being thoroughly Church of England and criticized Travers’s behavior. But he was also eager to expose the weakness of Travers’s mind. It was a mind that was angry, for, as Hooker reports, it was “in the heate” of uttering “publick invectives”¹⁷ that Travers was silenced. Travers’s strategy had been to breed opinions “in mens mynds” of Hooker’s contentious disposition. Precisely because of the weakness of mind in others in the Temple congregation, Hooker proved an ease victim. As he reports, “For in a mynde perswaded that I am as he discifereith me, one which refuse to be att peace with such as imbrace the truth... anything that shall be spoken concerninge the unsoundness of my doctrine cannot choose but be favourablye interteynd”.¹⁸ On the one hand, Travers simply didn’t understand what Hooker was saying. On the other hand, because of how and what Hooker preached, Travers’s mind became “troubled” which resulted in “bolde wordes”¹⁹ or accusations against Hooker. Indeed, Hooker describes his cousin as losing control and having a “fytt... so extreme to make him speake he knoweth not what”.²⁰ Certainly a loss of control,

14 Shugar, “Faith and Assurance”, 233.

15 Hooker, V:73.

16 Both can be found in volume V of *The Folger Library Edition* along with a supplementary essay by William P. Haugaard titled “The Controversy and its Dissemination”, 264-292.

17 Hooker, V:227.

18 *Ibid.*, 235.

19 *Ibid.*, 246.

20 *Ibid.*, 246, The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines “fit” as excitement, conflict, even lunacy in the mind.

but also an inability of Travers's will to do what was right, or so Hooker argues in his *Answer*. Hooker cites from Travers's *Supplication* that Travers himself admits he could have acted differently. For Hooker, Travers's mind was a "good mynd" in that it admitted the error—the "lighte of his owne understandinge proved the waie he tooke perverse and crooked"²¹—yet he continued to offend: his intention (if it were a true intention) "served not his turne".²² Perhaps because his mind—the mind explored in the sermon "Of the Nature of Pride"—swelled. One can see, then, the dichotomy Hooker is exploring and, as this essay suggests, his solution for both a weak mind and a stubborn will, was to have them both come to God. As Raleigh writes: "The mind in searching causes is never quiet till it come to God, and the will never is satisfied with any good till it come to the immortal goodness".²³

No wonder Hooker stresses the dangers of trying to understand doctrinal and ecclesiastical complications by oneself, stresses the dangers too of a changeable mind that replies on itself for certainty. One might have "a most willinge hart", Hooker observes in "Certaintie and Perpetuitie", "yeat how sone and how easelie, upon how smale occasion ar we changed if we be but a while lett alone, and left unto oure selves".²⁴ Apparently to be left alone invites troublesome cogitation. Add the stratagems of Satan to human "alterable inclination",²⁵ and one finds the vulnerable mind in great danger indeed.

It may be then that when one is left alone, the devil attacks through the mind. This is Paul's worry, and Hooker duplicates Paul's words (from 2 Corinthians 11:3) to indicate that Satan's "subtilie" manipulates or corrupts the mind. Paul's (and Hooker's) example is Eve.²⁶ Rather than accepting the simple and direct commands of God she is "beguiled" by the devil, that serpent laboring, as Hooker explains in "Certaintie and Perpetuitie", "continuallie to pervart corruptinge the minde with vane imaginations of repugnancie and contrarietie betwene the promise of god and those thinges which sense or experience, or some other conceived persuasions haith

21 *Ibid.*, 249.

22 *Ibid.*, 249.

23 Raleigh, "Treatise of the Soul", 582.

24 Hooker, V:76.

25 *Ibid.*, 77.

26 Hooker duplicates the words from 2 Corinthians: "I am jelous over yow with a godlie jealousy for I have prepared yow to one husband, to present yow a pure virgin to Christ. Butt I feare least as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilie so youre mindes should be corrupted from the simplicitie that is in Christ". In Book I of the *Lawes*, in chapter 7 where Hooker discusses will and reason and cites the Ephesians passage concerning "that divine power of the soule, that Spirite of our mind as the Apostle termeth it" (1:77), he points to the weakness of Eve: "There is not that good which concerneth us, but it hath evidence enough for it selfe, if reason were diligent to search it out. Through neglect thereof, abused wee are with the shew of that which is not, sometimes the subtilty of Satan inveagling us as it did Eve; somtimes the hastines of our wils preventing the more considerate advise of sound reason..." (80-81). "Inveagling" could mean enticing or drawing in mentally.

inprinted” on the mind.²⁷ Rather than all this imagining and persuading and doubting and altering, the mind—and the heart we could add—surrenders to “the simplicitie of faith” which accepts without question (or cogitation) the literal promises of God. As Hooker concludes: “Faith is simple and doubteth not of it”.²⁸

But what makes this simplicity of faith possible? Although the mind is fragile and changeable, is it possible that such a mind can be “renewed in the spirit”, and as renewed able to simply accept God’s promises? The answer may lie in Hooker’s reference in the sermon to Philip the Apostle and his faith: “The word of promise of god by Moses and the Prophetes made the saveoure of the world so apparent unto Phillip that his simplicitie could conceive no other messias then Jesus of Nazareth the sonne of Joseph”.²⁹ Although Hooker has no scriptural citation, the added reference in the text to Nathaniel indicates the story found in the first chapter of John’s gospel. After Jesus calls Simon Peter, the narrative tells us that “The folowyng day, Jesus woulde go into Galilee, and founde Philip, and sayth unto hym, folowe me”. It is that simple; without question, without cogitation Philip followed. In contrast to Philip is Nathaniel, for when Philip shortly thereafter finds Nathaniel to proclaim that he has found the messiah, Nathaniel cogitates in verse 46: “Can there any good thyng come out of Nazareth?”

Worth considering is one of the next appearances of Philip in John’s gospel. It is in chapter 14, the epistle read for Saints Philip and James Day. The scene is the upper room. Jesus is making the point that only through him does one encounter God. Philip asks (is this a cogitation?): “Lorde, shewe us the father, and it suffiseth us”. Jesus responds with: “he that hath seene me, hath seene the Father”. Importantly, in this scene when Jesus announces that he will soon be going to his Father, he promises that those who believe in him will do great things through the Holy Spirit, that “Spirit of Trueth”. So this familiar encounter with Jesus as Savior is direct, if not sudden; the response is not cogitation but surrender and faith, and is linked to the assuring work of the Holy Spirit. Philip has the certainty of adherence.

Perhaps another way of seeing the difference between the certainty of adherence and the certainty of evidence is to recall the story of the walk to Emmaus, the gospel reading for Monday in Easter Week in Luke 24. The story (which Hooker does not use) reports two of Jesus’ disciples reasoning together who encounter the risen Lord. He first scolds them—“O fooles and slow of heart, to believe”—and then explains about the messiah in scripture (not unlike Philip’s report). With this knowledge, later at table Jesus breaks the bread, and then in an instant “their eyes were opened, and they knewe him”. And they ask: “Dyd not our heartes burne within us, whyle he talked with us by the way, and opened to us the scriptures?” In a moment belief comes—belief in the risen Christ; that is, in what God has done.

27 Hooker, V:77.

28 *Ibid.*, V:77.

29 *Ibid.*, V:78.

No debating, no reasoning, no cogitation; these are just simple, faithful “new” men embracing belief.

These disciples, like Philip, have not been “hassarded” or hazarded by the three threats Hooker identifies in “Certaintie and Perpetuities” that attack mind and faith: “the frailtie of oure nature, the subtiltie of Satan, the force of oure deceivable imaginations”.³⁰ And why? Because there is someone to trust, like the child trusting the mother, like the believer trusting God, like the student trusting the teacher. Christ’s intercession provides safety and assurance, Hooker quoting in the sermon a passage from Luke 22: “Simon, Simon, beholde Satan hath desired to sift you, as it were wheate: But I have prayed for thee, that thy fayth fayle not”.³¹ In the face, then, of that which brings assurance and certainty what is required is “sedulitie”³² (81) or perseverance which amounts, quite simply, to trust. Hooker ends the sermon with a passage the reader or auditor rehearses: “I am not ignorant whose precious blood haith bene sheed for me, I have a sheperd full of kindenes full of care and full of power: unto him I committ my self”.³³

It may be important then to consider Hooker’s worries about the mind and how the problem of mind preoccupies Hooker in the sermons but also, in a different way, in the *Lawes*. For in the *Lawes*, there is a sense that the best readers are those who ought “to be renued in the spirite of [the] mynde”, able to compensate for human frailty, withstand Satan’s subtleties, and control deceivable imagination through trust and surrender.

The *Lawes* and Hooker’s sermons do display worries about the mind at the same time acknowledging in Book I, which I cited earlier, that there is a “divine power of the soule” which Paul terms “that Spirite of our mind”, Hooker’s reference to Ephesians 4:23 used to begin chapter 7 of Book I. There were others of course who worried about mind. And it might be useful in providing a context for Hooker’s worrying as well as for that hope for the “Spirite of our mind” to review the thoughts of a few of Hooker’s contemporaries.

For example, Henry Bullinger acknowledges confusion about the mind and the soul, and so preaches his 10th sermon (The Fourth Decade) on “The reasonable soul of man” in the spirit of Augustine. Although there is one soul, and it is spirit, it is experienced within the body and understood in the mind.³⁴ It is this latter that I

30 *Ibid.*, 80.

31 *Ibid.*, 81. The passage is Luke 22:31-32.

32 *Ibid.* Hooker writes: “To oure safetie oure owne sedulitie is requiredd. And then blessed for ever and ever be that mothers child whose faith hath made him the child of god”.

33 *Ibid.*, 82. Shugar, in part, discusses Hooker’s sense of perseverance as it contrasts with Reformed thinking to emphasize that “Hooker’s claim that belief in Christ as saviour, even a weak and tormented belief, and even if bundled together with grave doctrinal error, counted as saving faith”, 246.

34 Henry Bullinger, “Of the Reasonable Soul of Man: and of his most Certain Salvation after the Death of his Body”, The Tenth Sermon in *The Decades of Henry Bullinger*, ed. by Rev. Thomas

would like to emphasize, and so soul and mind, which may have been used interchangeably admits Bullinger, is something God affects or breathes into. As the soul is understood in the mind, both soul and mind then engage in cognitive activity—conceiving, knowing, judging, discerning, and so can be a site for the certainty of evidence. In writing about the work of the “soul” in his *Nosce Teipsum* (1592), Sir John Davies echoes Hooker’s own construction (as well as Bullinger’s and Raleigh’s):

When [the soul] defines, argues, divides, compounds,
 Considers Vertue, Vice, and general things;
 And marrying divers Principles and Grounds,
 Out of their match, a true conclusion brings.³⁵

But Bullinger, like Hooker, worries about the troubles caused by a “curious” mind which staggers and doubts and can never come to the knowledge of the truth with a quiet mind. The curious, according to Bullinger, cannot “abide in the plain truth”³⁶ which should prompt certainty of adherence, but instead search after many other more subtle matters than they understand. Raleigh too, as we have seen, describes the mind’s restless searching for “causes”, never at rest until it surrenders, until “it come to God”, a mind wise and faithful yet also foolish and unfaithful. Bullinger contrasts curious wits with the mind which “simply, godily, and religiously rest[s] in” those things for salvation “simply and plainly delivered in the holy scriptures”.³⁷

But both the simple and the less than simple, the wise and the foolish, pursue cognitive activity which needs to be or can be touched by the Holy Spirit to understand and will the good. This I take is to “be renewed in the spirite of your mynde”, as Paul has it. However one defines soul or understands soul or mind in the Augustinian tradition, mind and soul are strengthened with faith, remolded by God, and inspired by the Holy Spirit. But the mind can still cause trouble—or be troubled—regardless of the truth made evident to the mind by the Holy Spirit.

One then has to be careful of too aggressive cognitive activity in the search for adherence. Even in the search for the certainty of evidence one has to be wary, according to John Calvin, of embracing the mind of reason as understood by the ancient philosophers.³⁸ Although it appears that Hooker celebrates the necessity of the law of nature and of a mind of reason for certain cognitive activity, adherence

Harding (Cambridge: The University Press, 1851), 371. Raleigh in his *A Treatise of the Soul* (cited above) also labors to explain what is meant by the reasonable soul.

35 Sir John Davies, “Of the Soul of Man, and the Original, Nature and Immortality thereof”, *Nosce Teipsum* (London, 1688), 10.

36 Bullinger, “Of the Reasonable Soul”, 366.

37 *Ibid.*, 366.

38 John Calvin, “Commentary on Romans”, Romans 12:1-2 *Christian Classics Ethereal Library*, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/calcom38.xvi.i.html>.

embraces not natural law but, as Bullinger writes in other sermon, God's law "which is written in our hearts, fasseneth in our nature, and planteth in us a rule to know justice, equity, and goodness".³⁹ And so one has to trust that divine law. This is what Raleigh means when he argues that the mind can never be at rest until it come to the immortal goodness which is God. The renewed or transformed mind abandons its own counsel or ought to abandon its own counsel—"thinketh nothig" as the Genevan gloss on 1 Thessalonians 5:23 explains—and so becomes divinely reoriented. As Calvin puts it, a "mind so framed to render obedience to God".⁴⁰ Is this not what the disciples on the road to Emmaus did in abandoning their own cogitations when the risen Lord inspired them? We sense that the certainty of adherence seems connected with the heart—"did not our hearts burn within us", the Emmaus disciples ask. But how does the certainty of evidence fit into all this? As "Certaintie and Perpetuitie" makes plain, the certainty of evidence works through the mind or intellect, and performs this evidence in a supposedly rational human arena. But from the Christian perspective, of course, as Bullinger remarks in "Of the Law of Nature" (Second Decade Sermons) the "disposition of mankind"—soul, mind, and heart—is corrupted by sin.⁴¹

An additional problem, as we shall see, for both evidence and adherence is the hardness of heart, for Hooker cites in Book 1 of the *Lawes* where he is dealing with "right reason" Paul's words from Ephesians 4:17: "even men indued with the light of reason... walk notwithstanding in the vanities of their mindes, having their cogitations darkned... through the ignorance which is in them, because of the hardnes of their harts".⁴² Is there a solution to all this?

Hooker is very much interested in Bullinger's notion of the "disposition of mankind" in another sermon on a Habakkuk text: "A Learned Sermon of the Nature of Pride". As the mind trusts its own counsel and brings itself to the task of searching for the certainty of evidence, the great danger, according to Hooker, is a mind that "swelleth". Hooker's text of this sermon is Habakkuk 2:4: "His mind swelleth and is not right in him" which the Geneva Bible glosses as "To trust in himself or in anie worldlie thing, is never to be quiet". That adjective "quiet" throws us back to Hooker's use of "fytt" to describe Travers's behavior at the Temple.

39 Bullinger, "Of the Law of Nature", 197.

40 See Calvin's commentary on Romans 12:1-2 cited above. That commentary cites 1 Thessalonians 5:23 ("I pray God that your whole spirit and soule and bodie, may be kept blameles unto the comming of our Lord Jesus Christ.") which the Geneva Bible glosses "Then is a man fully sanctified and perfect, when his minde thinketh nothig, his soule that is, his understanding and will, covet nothing..."

41 Bullinger, "Of the Law of Nature", 197. Hooker's phrase is "our mindes from the highest to the lowest are not right" (V:312), and unless touched by the Spirit of God remain in understanding on the level of ancient philosopher.

42 Hooker, I:92-93.

“Pride” appears to be a group of five sermon fragments based on Habakkuk 2:4 which explores on the one hand the mind that swells and on the other the mind that surrenders. Within these five fragments, it is possible to see three divisions: the nature of pride, justice in general, and the justice of God. It is in the first fragment (which is the longest) where Hooker explores the “mind as it were turned upside down”.⁴³ The mind that swells belongs not to the prophet Habakkuk (whose cogitations were explored in “Certaintie and Perpetuitie”) but rather to the Babylonians whom God had used to punish sinful Israel. The relentless focus in the sermon on the mind of pride, the crooked and perverse mind, prompted the writers of the Textual Introduction to this sermon in *The Folger Library Edition* to suggest that “the subject of the... sermon itself grew out of the acrimonious controversy with Travers, a characteristically oblique but nonetheless personal response on Hooker’s part to Travers’s public challenge to his teaching, as well as his comment on Travers’s refusal to submit to the ecclesiastical authorities established in the realm”.⁴⁴

From the many themes Hooker touches on in these five fragments, I would like to draw attention to the discussion on pride we find mostly in the first fragment—pride, “a vice which cleaveth so fast unto the harts of men”, a “vice which setteth the whole world out of course”.⁴⁵ Hooker suggests that an oppositional mind (whether Travers’s or not is at this point irrelevant) is problematic to good order and community. Problematic too for the quest for certainty. Problems with the prideful mind abound. Sometimes (as we see in the *Lawes*) in the exercise of understanding humans are not willing to exert that “greater intention of brain then our nice mindes for the most part can well avail with”.⁴⁶ Sometimes the “severitie of rigour” in following God’s expectations is too much to handle. Sometimes there is just plain “wilful opposition of mind against god”⁴⁷, a willfulness which tyrannizes reason. But there may be a solution.

The causes of pride are many. Men’s ignorance, for example. Or self-deception⁴⁸ But there are also those swelling minds with their “impatience to live in subjection their mutinous repining at lawfull authority, their grudging agenst their superior

43 Hooker, V:314.

44 Lactitia Yeandle and Egil Grisliis, V:299.

45 Hooker, V:314, 315.

46 *Ibid.*, 310.

47 *Ibid.*, 314.

48 Hooker writes: “There is in the hart of every proud man... an error of understanding a vain opinion wherby he thinketh his own excellency and by reason thereof his wourthines of estimation regard and honour to be greater then in truth it is”, V:318.

ecclesiasticall and civill".⁴⁹ Hooker concludes: "Pride is nothing but an inordinate elation of the mind proceeding from a false conceipt of mens excellency..."⁵⁰

If there is an action which destroys or mitigates pride, one finds it in the paradigm for the certainty of adherence: surrender. The hearts of all men must be humbled, hearts admitting to being "nothing but soarnes and festered corruption".⁵¹ One sees one's errors, accepts God's chastisement in acknowledging that Christian paradox of surrender: "my strength hath bene my ruine and my fall my stay".⁵² And this is only possible if Christ rules within rather than having one's "festered corruption" in control. This is the possibility of renewal in the spirit of one's mind, Hooker paraphrasing verses from Paul's letter to the Ephesians: that God "graunt you according to the riches of his glorie to be strengthened in the inner man that Christ may dwell in your harts".⁵³ Since one cannot accomplish this on one's own, the individual releases control of the self so that God can give "unto his that spirit which teaching their harts to acknoweldg and tungues to confesse Christ the sonne of the living god".⁵⁴ As one surrenders to the Spirit, Christ "ruleth our thoughtes, guideth our lives".⁵⁵

But the desire for that certainty of adherence doesn't always succeed. And the culprit can be the mind apparently. As Hooker writes, there are some individuals who "walk in the blind vanitie of their own mindes, that have their cogitations darkned through ignorance, that have hardned their harts" because they refuse to abandon human effort and so actively and "gredilie set upon all uncleanes and sinne".⁵⁶ Simply put, they do not trust. "O mindes voyd of faith full of distrustfulnes", Hooker laments in this sermon.⁵⁷ These are not Raleigh's "clean in heart".

Can the mind be the culprit even in that search for the certainty of evidence, evidence brought to bear as one acknowledges the social, political, and ecclesiastical world where there ought to be no mystery of the spiritual experience? An intellectual world where all is lucidly explained and can be conscientiously embraced by a rigorous mind. A mind renewed, possibly. The *Lawes*, as it is directed to human

49 Hooker, V:319. When Hooker utters the following, it is easy to believe Walter Travers and his Presbyterian followers were in his mind: "...how high they bear their heades over others, how they browbeat all men which do not receyve their sentences as oracles with mervelous applause and approbation, how they looke upon no man but with an indirect countenance nor heer any thing saving their own praises with patiences, nor speak without scornfulnes and disdain... how they use... their inferiours as servants, their equals as inferiour, and as for superiours acknowledg none", 319.

50 *Ibid.*, 320.

51 *Ibid.*, 321.

52 *Ibid.*, 324.

53 *Ibid.*, 326.

54 *Ibid.*, 327.

55 *Ibid.*, 329.

56 *Ibid.*, 327-328.

57 *Ibid.*, 345.

cognition, provides, Hooker is convinced, that certainty of evidence so that an assenting mind can embrace “cleere truth”. But the mind does not always assent. In both sermons and the *Lawes*, Hooker worries that the mind can too easily and frequently become agitated by too much mental activity. Note in the discussion on justice in the third fragment of “Pride” how the mind, for “want of right understanding”⁵⁸ confuses things and wrongly concludes. For example, “the mindes of so manie being entangled with such perplexities when they enter into these alleaged considerations through an opinion of discoherence theerby conceyved between the justice of god and the state of men in this world”.⁵⁹ The solution is to move beyond the inquisitive—and perhaps confused—mind to faith even here.

Hooker’s example is David, the reference to Psalm 73 in the concluding paragraphs of the fourth fragment. David frets about injustice, struggling between hope and despair in his “cogitations” (the noun used in Geneva gloss), in a sense disputing with God until he abandons the swelled mind through repentance. He admits to being foolish and ignorant, and comes to self-understanding by entering the sanctuary or school of God, learning by the word and the spirit that God orders all things wisely.

To return to the sermon on “Certaintie and Perpetuitie”, the most powerful villain, of course, is Satan who attacks the vulnerable mind. Surely, Hooker, as we have already noted, is taking his clue from Paul who writes in the 2 Corinthian letter, chapter 11: “I feare least as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtiltie so youre mindes should be corrupted from the simplicitie that is in Christ”. The emphasis is simplicity (of “singleness” which is the Genevan translation). Satan casts a mist; he putteth in the “heade” of Nathaniel, entangling the mind with argument as was mentioned above. The “stratagemme [Satan] doth use with so greate dexteritie, the mindes of men ar so straungly ensoreld [that is, bewitched] with it...” The mind is bereft “of that which should releve them and be there comfort”⁶⁰—the simplicity of trust and faith. Philip has that simple trust and faith. But what of the mind that “swelleth” as Nathaniel’s does momentarily?

The sermons, along with the *Lawes*, point to different experiential realms. There is the spiritual realm which expects one through faith to embrace weakness, this a spiritual attitude, not an intellectual action. The *Lawes* on the other hand demands an inquisitive mind but one that does not swell since Hooker’s *Lawes* focuses on the secular or political “state of men in this world” where Hooker hopes for “the orderly disposition of the mind... kept in aw by a... sober will: will framed by reason; reason directed by the law of god and nature”.⁶¹ These phrases are not from the *Lawes* as one might expect but from “Pride” and clearly anticipate chapter 7 of Book I of the *Lawes*.

58 *Ibid.*, 346.

59 *Ibid.*, 350-351.

60 *Ibid.*, 78.

61 *Ibid.*, 314.

As we have seen in “Pride”, there are various sources for a swelled mind. But Hooker also writes about the intellectual mind which can also be problematic. In the *Laws*, especially in Book 1, Hooker describes various types of intellectual endeavor. Some individuals do see, some will never see. Some lead, others follow. Some work hard, others prefer rest. Some labor intellectually, others merely look on.⁶² Even in a sermon on prayer like the one “found in the Study of the late Learned Bishop Andrews” on Matthew 7:7 (“Aske and it shalbe given you”), Hooker points to various behaviors the “disposition of the mind of men” is capable of. Some hear the call but never come to the knowledge of truth. Others have “perplexity of mind”,⁶³ apparently a common theme for Hooker. Some are indeed blessed “with the spirit of understanding above others”.⁶⁴ And finally there is Gideon, mentioned in the Matthew 7:7 sermon, whose trust in God’s promises brings victory.⁶⁵ Although this least of many tests God often enough in the story, Gideon hears God’s promise—“Peace be unto thee, feare not, thou shalt not dye” (Judges 6:23)—follows God’s directives, surrenders so that “the spirite of the Lorde came uppon” him (6:34), believes the dream he overhears, and confident with the 300 defeats thousands. He acknowledges that it is God who gives the victory, and so in refusing to be king he again surrenders to the lordship of God, proclaiming “the Lord shall raigne over you” (8:23). In simplicity or singleness, he surrenders.

Yet another sermon, this one “Remedie against Sorrow and Feare”, contrasts the mental confusions of the natural world with Christ’s childlike approach to a troubled mind—“wee are in danger like chased birds, like Doves that seeke and cannot see the resting holes, that are right before them”. Disciples—Gideon, Philip, Nathaniel, those headed to Emmaus, Hooker’s parishioners—are reminded to “repaire, for comfort, councell, and succour”⁶⁶ to the Savior.

My point is that there is always some place to go, some point of surrender for Richard Hooker.

But going to that place involves either the quest for the certainty of evidence or the certainty of adherence. For Gideon, the search for evidence—all those tests which the Lord God passed—gives way soon enough to the power of adherence. If

62 See my “Language and Exclusion in the First Book of Hooker’s *Politie*”, *Richard Hooker and the English Reformation*, ed. by W. J. Torrance Kirby (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2003), 227-242.

63 Hooker, V:388.

64 *Ibid.*, 389.

65 Hooker writes: “This is the reason why god would neither have Gideon to conquer without any army nor yet to be furnisht with too great an host, this is the cause why as none of the promises of god do ever faile, so the most are in such sort brought to pass, that if we after consider the circuit wherin the steps of his providence have gone, the due consideration therof cannot chuse but draw from us the very self same words of astonishment which the blessed Apostle hath O the depth of the riches of the wisdom of god, how unsearchable are his counsels and his wayes past finding owt!” V:393.

66 *Ibid.*, 377.

the *Lawes* is that place to go for truth about ecclesiastical polity, we could ask whether Hooker wants all those who embrace and act upon his work to be Gideons, that is those “with the spirit of understanding” who surrender. The *Lawes* does not perform on that mysterious and personal yet straightforward spiritual level of the sermons, but in that more complicated, tentative, and polemical “state of men in this world”. Hooker as a mind renewed manifests that mind in the plane of human discourse where textual behavior and the act of reading perform that “spirit of understanding”, while some with minds less renewed, we might say, exhibit “perplexity”. For Corneliu Simuț, these are the rehabilitated, yet still plagued with little self-understanding.⁶⁷ Surely this is one reason Hooker calls repeatedly for self-reflection and self-knowledge. This call might be heeded by the fragile, but what about the mind that swells, a mind which cannot or will not surrender?

Even the fragile mind, however, could be content with or embrace the certainty of evidence as it is presented in Hooker’s *Lawes*. For the *Lawes* is principally a logical demonstration “for mens information”,⁶⁸ providing for those with open minds and open hearts all the evidence needed for obedience. It is a “sentence” or learned opinion and a “conference” or conversing. The reader is expected to “trie all things” and respond intellectually.⁶⁹ Rational conference, even for the fragile, is Hooker’s method “to resolve the conscience, and to shewe... what in this controversie the hart [or the mind] is to think if it will follow the light of sound... judgment, without either cloud of prejudice or mist of passionate affection”⁷⁰—characteristics, in part, of the mind that swells.

But just as in the sermons, Hooker’s Preface to the *Lawes* manifests worry about mind as a fragile, tense arena; “ten thousand fighting things in her do lie”, argues Sir John Davies.⁷¹ And it can be a stubborn thing. Witness the citizens of Geneva whom Hooker describes in chapter 2. Once convinced they had the truth, their wit was sharpened “to dispute, to argue, and by all means to reason for” the Presbyterian polity.⁷² In the Preface, Hooker appropriates the figure and words of Paul from

67 See Simuț’s examination of “Pride” in chapter 7 of *Doctrine*, especially the fifth section on “Spiritual Life and the Presence of Christ”, 266-297.

68 Hooker, I:1.

69 *Ibid.*, 2. Brian Vickers in “Public and Private Rhetoric in Hooker’s *Lawes*” argues that Hooker is concerned to “lead on” the rational mind of the reader “positivelie”, that is through a series of positions, set out and argued according to correct forensic procedures. See *Richard Hooker and the Construction of Christian Community*, ed. by Arthur Stephen McGrade (Tempe, AZ: MRTS, 1997), 121.

70 Hooker, I:34.

71 Davies, “Of the Soul of Man”, 45.

72 Hooker, I:10.

1 Corinthians 10:15 as both Paul and Hooker “speak as to them which have understanding”.⁷³ For Hooker, to embrace “sentence” should lead to doing what is pleasing to God, to obeying as citizens of the established church this Church of England as a particular earthly manifestation of God’s will.

This is especially true as Hooker insists that he is not dealing with matters of faith. Hooker’s “controversies of disputation” in search of that certainty of evidence are about “other things”,⁷⁴ a notion articulated by Augustine whom Hooker quotes in the Preface’s chapter 3. In contrast to “things absolutely unto all mens salvation necessarie”, there are those other things “belonging (though in a lower degree of importance) unto the offices of a Christian man: which, because they are more obscure... God hath appointed some”—those with really renewed minds I would suggest—to spende... time principally in the studie of things divine, to the end that in these more doubtfull cases their understanding might be a light to direct others”.⁷⁵ Surely Hooker thinks of himself as one of the “some”. “Wise in heart” (we might as well say wise in mind) who “do shew the simple” as well as the more learned “where his way lyeth”.⁷⁶ In this chapter 3, Hooker admits that “matters of discipline [are]... more darke and doubtfull” than “the principles of Christian doctrine”.⁷⁷ We need to observe how Hooker is positioning himself in terms of the universal desire, amid complexity (rather than simplicity), for the certainty of evidence. Who brings light to this dark and doubtful enterprise? What brings certainty? The answer is Richard Hooker.

It is within the context of God’s will in lesser “other” things that reason is helpful. A renewed mind relies on reason not entirely bankrupt to determine what should be embraced—or surrendered to. Will, as chapter 7, Book I of the *Lawes* has it, is directed to “that good which reason doth lead us to seeke”.⁷⁸ To will is to bend our souls (Hooker’s word which could very well also be “minds”) to the doing of that which “we see to be good”. In the case of the *Lawes*, this good is not to withstand “the received orders of this Church”.⁷⁹ As one surrenders in faith to the truth of scripture or to confrontation with the divine, so on the political and social levels one surrenders in understanding to the authority of the state or its representative. This is the key to seeing a fundamental similarity between the certainty of evidence and the certainty of adherence, especially in gauging the intended behavior or attitude of the believer or seeker. The path to the certainty of evidence, however, is fraught with more complexity of mind than the path to adherence. Obedience is no “difficultie or unplesant quality”,⁸⁰ Hooker insists. Those who believe that obedience is a

73 *Ibid.*, 12.

74 *Ibid.*, 13.

75 *Ibid.*, 13.

76 *Ibid.*, 13.

77 *Ibid.*, 18.

78 *Ibid.*, 78.

79 *Ibid.*, 2.

80 *Ibid.*, 79.

“difficultie” simply will not incline their will to act. In preferring a lesser good before a greater, the Presbyterian exhibits a mind composed of understanding and will which does not seem completely “renewed”. That is, Hooker uses the passage from Ephesians in service to his disputation: not unlike the Holy Spirit, he hopes to stir “unto action” “that divine power of the soule, that Spirite of our mind” but already concluding reluctantly that the opponents will fail to embrace the good. Their minds do swell after all.

Nevertheless, Hooker has hope. Although weak minds prefer “rest in ignorance before wearisome labour to know”,⁸¹ a renewed mind ripe for the certainty of evidence can be subjected to the exhortations to labor, provided that mind listens to the exhorter. Hooker ends chapter 7 of Book 1 with scriptural citations which stress the importance of human effort cooperating in the intellectual enterprise. “Awake thou that sleepest... Labour, strive... grow in knowledge”.⁸² Those “men indued with the light of reason” who will not awaken—that is, those who refuse to follow or surrender to the exhorter—are condemned for “hardnes of their harts”.⁸³

Certainly those who wrote *A Christian Letter* (1600), the first response published in reaction to Hooker’s first five books of the *Lawes*, were not about to surrender to Richard Hooker as exhorter, and so Hooker took notes as he read the *Letter* to prepare an answer. His answer to *A Christian Letter*, Hooker assumed, would silence the opposition if only, as he wrote, “my mind were explained unto them for satisfaction in their doubts”.⁸⁴ Hooker believed that he had written a treatise of evidence that would carry his readers “away from the errors and vanities of [their] mind”⁸⁵ which he would have exposed in his answer to the *Letter*. Furthermore, their problem was not “apprehending” concepts like nature and reason which can be used in rational discourse in order to understand elements of religion and ecclesiology. Indeed, these critics are slothful, not exerting the effort to understand the evidence which Hooker presents. Hooker reiterates his position by using an unidentified Latin passage which the *Commentary* translates as “... Reason, which is the eye of the mind, lies in us slothfully buried in a deep sleep. But stirred up and illuminated by the power of the Holy Spirit it judges among all things, and decrees that those things which once through pride were hidden, being now perceived, are to be embraced in all ways”.⁸⁶ So the mind renewed, then, is a mind stirred up and illuminated by the Holy Spirit, unable to resist Hooker’s truths. The Presbyterians are either unilluminated or hard-hearted—or both.

81 *Ibid.*, 81.

82 *Ibid.*, 81.

83 *Ibid.*, 92-93.

84 Hooker, IV:8.

85 *Ibid.*, 73.

86 *Ibid.*, 194. As we saw in the sermon on “Pride”, Hooker laments that wisdom is often not understood because it requires “greater intention of brain then our nice mindes for the most part will awaie with” V:310.

On the one hand, resistance to evidence is a matter of a hard heart. With eyes blinded, “spite” possesses their “hart and deadly malice” makes them speak against the light of their own conscience, so Hooker responds to *A Christian Letter*.⁸⁷ Hooker characterizes these as the alleged learned who “do oftentimes but show theyr wit”.⁸⁸ On the other hand, their minds are weak, and they are simply not in their “right witts”.⁸⁹ “Witts” should be open to the light of divine grace which can abolish slothfulness, as we saw above. As the sermon on “Pride” makes plain, the mind can respond to divine chastisement and instruction. As Gideon, Philip, the disciples on their way to Emmaus, and those who hear the “Comfortable Sermon of Certaintie and Perpetuities” (as well as those who read the *Lawes*), it is finally a matter of trust. As Hooker proclaims near the end of “Certaintie and Perpetuities”, “blessed for ever and ever be that mothers child whose faith hath made him the child of god”.⁹⁰ These are the “clean in heart” Raleigh hopes for. Hooker confirms for himself and for his auditors and readers “I have a shepherd full of kindenes full of care and full of power: unto him I committ my self”. To whom to commit oneself—that’s the real struggle for certainty. For the certainty of adherence, the child trusts the risen Lord so that Christ is within, Hooker in “Pride” citing Gregorie Nazianzan “according to that intellectual comprehension which the mind is capable of”.⁹¹ But cannot the same be said for the “child” confronted with the “evidence” which is the *Lawes*: to trust the teacher to whom one surrenders “according to that intellectual comprehension which the mind is capable of”? Thus, intellectual comprehension, as well as “publique consultation”⁹² or Hooker’s “sentence” are in part the work of the Holy Spirit. The “soundnes of those reasons whereupon the [truth of one’s position] is built... [is] wrought by the holie Ghost, and not by the fraud of that evil Spirit” as Hooker explains in the Preface.⁹³ In public disputation, the goal of which is to perform the certainty of evidence, one must be willing, like a child—or perhaps a willing student—to take the outstretched hand of the righteous rhetor or teacher. One can be shaken out of delusion by the rational, public voice which has power and which performs the authority of the wise by means of “publique consultation”.

Richard Hooker does indeed worry about the mind, the mind as vulnerable, changeable, deceivable, fragile, and full of curiosity and doubt. It is a mind easily perplexed, agitated, plagued by too much mental activity. Full of pride, it can swell, especially through a hard heart and a selfish will. Regardless of whether the individual seeks after the certainty of adherence or the certainty of evidence, the mind can be—and probably will be—problematic, in need of self-reflection and self-knowledge. And this is true despite the light of grace or a renewed spirit. Yet the

87 *Ibid.*, 68.

88 *Ibid.*, 76.

89 *Ibid.*, 70.

90 Hooker, V: 81.

91 *Ibid.*, 327.

92 Hooker, I:14.

93 *Ibid.*, 18.

light of grace can help, along with some human effort (according to Hooker), help one embrace “plain truth”, can help one “to come to God”. This provided one is willing to relinquish control of the self, to commit to the relief which will, in surrender, bring quietness and simplicity. Of course, one must allow the inspiration of the Holy Spirit or of the rhetor to stir one up. Perhaps it is a matter of desiring to know and believe, but it is finally a desire that seeks a singleness in following the risen Lord and acknowledging what God has done.

Hooker hopes to influence that desire, for his is the mind and heart renewed. As he says to his *Christian Letter* brethren, “I must looke as nature, speake as custome, and **think** as gods good spirit hath taught me”.⁹⁴ Hooker’s strategy is not unlike the one used by God’s spirit to call Gideon—to stir up and illuminate. To inspire hearts that will burn within. Surrender with a clear conscience to what must be done or embraced. In the case of the *Lawes*, one surrenders to the established church’s liturgy and polity, not so much with the simplicity or singleness of the certainty of adherence, although there certainly is some of that, but with the certainty of complex evidence that will relieve doubts, bring comfort, inspire obedience, and provide direction. This should work for the fragile mind. But when the stubborn mind “swelleth”, there is little to do except pray.

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94 *Ibid.*, IV:71 (emphasis mine).

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—*This paper honors the work of Corneliu C. Simut*—