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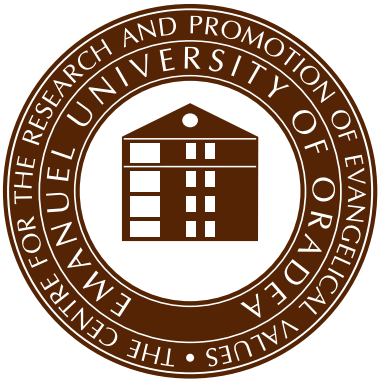

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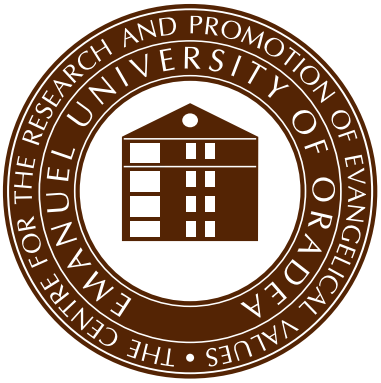

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Richard Hooker's "Discourse on Justification" and his *Via Media* Theology

LEE W. GIBBS

Cleveland State University

ABSTRACT. This article focuses on the continuing contemporary debate over Richard Hooker's doctrine of justification. It also addresses two other controversies which permeate current Hooker scholarship, namely: (1) How much of the Roman Catholic or Thomistic and the Magisterial Reformation traditions are discernable in the thought of Richard Hooker? (2) Is Hooker an exemplar or a prototype of what was later to become known as the Anglican *via media* tradition? The article concludes that in spite of all past and present disputes over the most appropriate way to interpret Hooker's writings, his wisdom continues to be valuable both for the instruction of individual Christian believers and also for the various Christian churches.

KEY WORDS: justification, Richard Hooker, Magisterial Reformation, Anglo-Catholics, *via media*

Introduction

The author of this article has been privileged during the course of his professional career to have been an intimate part of two very different generations of Richard Hooker scholarship. The juncture between these two generations was punctuated sharply for me with the recent passing of W. Speed Hill, General Editor of the Folger Library Edition of the *Works of Richard Hooker* (1977-98). The new generation is represented by the group of Hooker scholars who have been meeting for the past several years under the auspices of the Sixteenth Century Studies Conference with the organizational skills of W. J. Torrance Kirby and Daniel Eppley. These generations are further bounded by

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two important books in the history of Richard Hooker scholarship: namely, W. Speed Hill (ed.), *Studies in Richard Hooker. Essays Preliminary to an Edition of His Works* (Cleveland: The Press of Case Western Reserve University, 1972), and W. J. Torrance Kirby (ed.), *A Companion to Richard Hooker* (Leiden: E. J. Brill Academic Publishers, 2008).

The first of several professional journal articles, written by the author of the present paper, and published while he was preparing his Introduction to and Commentary on Book I of Hooker's *Of the Lawes of Ecclesiastical Politie* for the Folger Library Edition of *The Works of Richard Hooker* (1977-98), was "Richard Hooker's *Via Media* Doctrine of Justification." published in *Harvard Theological Review* 74.2 (1981), 211-220. Since this particular article has attracted more critical attention from contemporary Hooker scholars than any others written by the present author, this paper will be an attempt to summerize and to respond to some of the most important of these critiques by several eminent specialists within the field. Therefore, in the first section of this paper the author sets forth Hooker's three sermons on justification, collectively known as his "Discourse on Justification," delivered during the first year of his tenure (1586) as Master of the Temple Church in London, within their historical context. The second section sets the author's article on justification within its own autobiographical context. In the third section, several major criticisms of the above paper on Hooker's doctrine of justification are considered and responded to. Section four concludes with a few additional observations and reflections.

Hooker's "Discourse on Justification"

Hooker's so-called "Discourse on Justification" is best described as a tractate, even though it has traditionally been regarded as three separate sermons delivered on consecutive Sundays (before March, 1586) during Hooker's first year as Master of the

Temple Church in London. The tractate was first published in 1612.[1]

In these sermons Hooker analyses several doctrines and beliefs that were often debated by his contemporaries. He examines in particular the doctrinal issues which divided him from the popular afternoon Lecturer at the Temple, Walter Travers and which Travers noted in his later appeal to the Queen's Privy Council, written as a plea to reinstate him after he had been silenced by Archbishop John Whitgift.[2] These issues included Hooker's assertion in a sermon now lost, but repeated in his Discourse on Justification, that "I doubte not but God was mercifull to save thousands of our fathers livinge in papische superstition in asmuche as they sinned ignorantly." (FLE, 5:118).[3] This was the specific proposition of Hooker which elicited from Travers his caustic response: "I think the like to this and other such have not been heard in public places within this land since Queen Mary's days." (FLE, 5:208).

[1] See Laetitia Yeandle, "Textural Introduction: a Learned Discourse of Justification, Workes and How the Foundation of Faith Is Overthrowne," in The Folger Library Edition of the *Works of Richard Hooker*, ed. W. Speed Hill (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1990), 5:120 and 29-30; see also Paul E. Forte, "Richard Hooker as Preacher," in FLE 5:665; Philip Secor (ed.), *The Sermons of Richard Hooker. A Modern Edition* (London: SPCK, 2001), 47-56; and the judicious and carefully nuanced essay by W. David Neelands, "Justification in Richard Hooker the Pastor," in John K. Stafford (ed.), *Lutheran and Anglican. Essays in Honor of Egil Grislis* (Manitoba, CA: University of Manitoba, St. John's Press, 2009), 167-183.

[2] Walter Travers, "A Supplication made to the Privy Counsel," in FLE, 5:189-210.

[3] Philip B. Secor persuasively discusses just how radical this proposal of Hooker's concerning the probable salvation of at least some Roman Catholics in the past, was in his time both doctrinally and historically, and also the damage which Hooker probably sustained in his career or advancement in the hierarchy of the Church of England because of this assertion. *Richard Hooker, Prophet of Anglicanism* (Toronto: The Anglican Book Centre, 1999), 191-92.

Autobiographical Context of Gibbs's Article on Hooker's "Discourse"[4]

The first article which I wrote as a neophyte Hooker scholar and had published while I was still preparing my Introduction to and Commentary on Book I of Hooker's *Lawes* for the Folger Library Edition of Hooker's *Works* was entitled "Richard Hooker's *Via Media* Doctrine of Justification" (1981). Although several other articles followed; of all the articles which I have published on Hooker, this one in particular has drawn the most attention and criticism from contemporary Hooker colleagues.

Therefore, in this section of the present paper, I will attempt to set my publication of that first article on Hooker's doctrine of justification within its own autobiographical context. First, it should be noted that I was not among the first members of the team of scholars chosen to write commentary on Hooker's *Lawes* for the FLE. Initially, the prestigious English scholar, H. C. Porter, was invited to write the Introductions to, and the Commentaries on the Preface, and Books I-IV of Hooker's *Lawes*. Because of other commitments, Porter declined the invitation. It was at that time I was recruited as a relative late-comer to join the team of FLE commentary editors, specifically, to write the Introduction to and Commentary on Book I. By this time William P. Haugaard had already been solicited to write the Introductions and Commentaries for the Preface and Books II-IV. When I joined the team, I suddenly found myself to be an unseasoned rookie in the midst of a mature group of scholars who had already spent much of their careers reading, teaching, and writing about Richard Hooker.

In order to help bring me as quickly as possible up to speed on my Hooker studies, with the strong support of the General Editor, W. Speed Hill, I applied for and received a Folger Library Fellowship for the summer of 1977 and a National En-

[4] Since the next two sections of this paper are so heavily autobiographical, the author has chosen to use the first person singular rather than the more traditional and supposedly "objective" third person.

dowment for the Humanities Grant for Research and Publication during 1977-78. I knew that during this period of doing research, I needed, in order to bolster my credentials as a commentary editor on Hooker's *Lawes*, to write and have published in a professional journal an article on Richard Hooker. My article on Hooker's "Discourse on Justification" became that first article.

It was in the midst of doing that original research that I was forcefully impressed by what I later, in the process of writing that first article was to describe as Hooker's *via media* way of thinking and doing theology.It was then and only then, that I first read Hooker's "Discourse on Justification." I still remember well my astounded response to reading the following passage, where immediately after Hooker has made a distinction between the righteousness imputed to the believer in justification, and the righteousness of sanctification that is ingrafted into the believer:

> …which things being attentively marked, sheweth plainly how the faith of true believers cannot be divorced from faith and love; how faith is a part of sanctification, and yet unto justification necessary; how faith is perfected by good works, and yet no works of ours are good without faith… We are justified by faith alone and yet hold truly that without good works we are not justified.[5]

Upon reading this passage, I remember thinking to myself, "This is certainly one of the most amazing things I've ever read! Hooker has got St. Paul and St. James concisely together at one and the same time. He is going to have it both ways: he is putting the theology of the Epistle of James, wherein 'faith without works is dead,' side by side and simultaneously with the theology of St. Paul, especially in his letters to the Romans and Galatians, wherein 'justification comes by grace through faith alone.' This is also a position which is both Roman Catholic and Magis-

[5] "Learned Discourse of Justification," FLE, 5:129-30.

terial Reformation at one and the same time, and it does indeed seem to me to be a truly unique and distinctive way of dealing with the issues under debate." I have to admit that this first reading of Hooker's Discourse, so impressed me that it shaped, from that time forward, my understanding of his *via media* way of thinking, living, and doing theology.

To return to my earlier narrative, when I first entered my intensive study of Hooker and his works, I was at that time still personally a dyed-in-the-wool Presbyterian very much entrenched in the works and doctrine of John Calvin, especially his magnum opus, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. At this time I was also still under the heavy influence of my early exposure to the Westminster Confessions of Faith (1648) and was just beginning my spiritual pilgrimage from Geneva to Canterbury under the tutelage of Richard Hooker, who, in his own time, was primarily involved with opposing the Elizabethan Presbyterians in his monumental *Of the Lawes of Ecclesiastical Politie*.

Therefore, before writing on Hooker I had been a Calvinist, officially registered as a candidate for the holy ministry in the Presbyterian church. At the end of my writing, I found myself an ordained priest in the Episcopal church. During this time of my own transition, another crisis occurred among the commentators at work on the FLE. A Jesuit scholar, Joseph G. Devine, who had written his as yet unpublished Ph.D dissertation at Hartford Seminary Foundation on "Richard Hooker's Doctrine of Justification and Sanctification in the Debate with Walter Travers, 1585-1586," (1976),[6] had been invited to write the commentary on Hooker's much disputed "Essay on Repentance," which since the nineteenth-century edition of John Keble has been published as Book VI of the *Lawes*.[7] Devine sud-

[6] There is a succinct summary of the argument and the significance on Devine's dissertation in the essay by Ranall Ingalls, "Sin and Grace," in Torrance Kirby (ed.), *A Companion to Richard Hooker* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 7-83, especially 170.

[7] See, for example, the painful words of the General Editor of the FLE, W. Speed Hill concerning his decision to even include the traditional Book VI in

denly found it necessary for personal reasons to withdraw from his editorial responsibilities on the FLE. The decision which the editorial board then faced was whether or not to search out and solicit a new scholar to write the commentary on the traditional Book VI, long after the textual and commentary editors had been working together for several years and had formed a vital *esprit de corps* or whether to choose someone who was already a part of the team.

Most of the FLE editors had originally been assigned multiple tasks. I, on the other hand had been assigned to write only the commentary for Book I. Since I had been making strong progress and my work was nearing completion, the editorial decision was made to assign me the additional task of writing the commentary on Book VI.

This personal account of some of the internal history of the publication of the FLE explains, at least in part, why my first published article on Hooker's *via media* doctrine of justification focuses so pointedly on Joseph Devine's unpublished doctoral dissertation on Hooker's doctrine of justification, and also why there can be discerned at the end of that article a shift of emphasis to Hooker's doctrine of repentance and contrition.[8] In that first article I critiqued Joseph Devine's interpretation of Hooker's doctrine of justification in much the same way that some of the more recent Hooker scholars have been critiquing my use of the term *via media* in my early article on Hooker's doctrine of justification as well as my continuing argument in other published articles that Hooker was a "middle way" theologian in all of his major thought and writings.

the FLE, in his essay on "Works and Editions II," in Torrance Kirby (ed.), *A Companion to Richard Hooker*, 47-49; on the other hand, see also P. G. Stanwood, "Works and Editions I," in the same *Companion* volume, 34-39.

[8] See Gibbs, "Richard Hooker's *Via Media* Doctrine of Justification," 220.

Criticism and Response

In this section of the present paper I shall consider and briefly respond to a few of the most important critiques made by some contemporary scholars concerning my early article on Hooker's *via media* doctrine of justification. Some years ago, William H. Harrison noted "the long-standing debate which has continued among scholars concerning Richard Hooker's understanding of salvation, especially as it concerns the relationship between Hooker's Thomism and his Protestant stand on justification."[9]

This contemporary debate among Hooker scholars over how much of the Roman Catholic and the Magisterial Reformation traditions are discernible within the thought of Richard Hooker is intimately bound together with the more recent but equally virulent debate over the interpretation of Hooker as a pioneer and prototype of a distinctive kind of Anglican *via media* theology.

I forthrightly admit that in my first article on Hooker's doctrine of justification I began by boldly stating that: "The 'judicious' Richard Hooker (1554-1600) gave classic expression to the *via media* position of Elizabethan Anglicanism. He attempted to steer a middle course, appropriating what he considered to be the truths and avoiding what he considered to be the errors and excesses, between Roman Catholicism and the Magisterial Ref-

[9] "Powers and Influences of Grace in Hooker's *Lawes*," in W. J. Torrance Kirby (ed.), *Richard Hooker and the English Reformation* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2005), 5, Harrison here cites Gibbs, on "Hooker's *Via Media* Doctrine of Justification," along with articles by Philip Edgecumbe Hughes, William David Neelands, Bryan D. Spicks, P. G. Stanwood, and Gunnar Hillerdal. While claiming that he does not intend in his chapter to mediate this dispute, Harrison, does acknowledge, however, his agreement with Nigel Voak's argument in *Richard Hooker and Reformed Theology* (Oxford: 2003), namely that there is a marked development in Hooker's thought from his earlier discourse on justification and his later writing in the *Lawes*. In the latter writing Harrison, in accord with Voak observes that Hooker regularly uses the term "sanctification" to describe the process of salvation while avoiding the term "justification" altogether. See Harrison, 16.

ormation (Lutheranism, and especially Calvinism)."[10] I certainly acknowledge that I continued to argue this thesis in several of my subsequent articles published on Hooker.[11]

W. J. Torrance Kirby is the leading exponent of the new revisionist school of interpretation which regards those, including me, who hold that Hooker is a leading representative of an emerging Anglican *via media* mode of living, thinking and doing theology are guilty of anachronism. Kirby is correct here when he observes that there is, in fact, wide current scholarly consensus that the terms, "Anglican" or "Anglicanism" were not used in the polemical literature of the sixteenth century. According to Kirby and his school supporters of the *via media* interpretation of Hooker are also guilty of being duped by the hagiographical efforts of Hooker's High Church seventeenth-century biographer, Izaak Walton, along with the nineteenth-century High Church Anglo-Catholics of the Oxford Movement, such as John Keble, editor of Hooker's *Works* (1836), and also John Henry Cardinal Newman, both of whom wanted to make Hooker an Anglo-Catholic and a patron saint of their view of Anglicanism.[12]

With regard to Kirby's thesis, and those contemporary scholars who are following his lead, I must confess that I remain un-

[10] Gibbs, "Richard Hooker's *Via Media* Doctrine of Justification," 211.

[11] For example, Gibbs, "Richard Hooker's *Via Media* Doctrine of Repentance," *Harvard Theological Review* 84 (1991), 59-74; and "Richard Hooker's *Via Media* Doctrine of Scripture and Tradition," *Harvard Theological Review* 95.2 (2002), 227-35. Nigel Atkinson, with a certain shortness of patience, observes that "the [anachronistic] case is now so well entrenched that any doctrine that Hooker teaches is immediately presumed to be a doctrine that enhances the *via media*." At the end of this sentence he adds a footnote which lists of all the articles by Gibbs cited in the note above including the article on Hooker's doctrine of justification.

[12] See, for example, Torrance Kirby, "Hooker as Apologist of the Magisterial Reformation in England," in A. S. McGrade (ed.), *Richard Hooker and the Construction of Christian Community* (Tempe, AZ: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1997), 219-33; see also Nigel Atkinson, "Hooker's Theological Method and Modern Anglicanism," *Churchman* 114.1 (2000), 40-70.

convinced and unwilling to concede that the origin of a concept so essential to what has been called "the spirit of Anglicanism" as that of the middle way is to be attributed to the nineteenth-century John Henry Cardinal Newman.[13] Newman, more than any other theologian of his time certainly understood the concept of the *via media* clearly and perhaps even wrote about it more definitively than any other theologian in his time. Prior to his highly visible conversion to the Roman Catholic Church in 1845, Newman wrote his lectures on *The Prophetical Office of the Church*, which was published in two editions in 1836 and 1837, and republished in 1877 with a new preface and a new title, namely, *The Via Media of the Anglican Church*.[14] Although Newman, acknowledges the ideal of a church that holds a middle ground position between the Protestant Reformation and the Church of Rome as a desirable one, eventually, however, he went on to reject this vision of the middle way because it was an ideal that only existed on paper but never in reality, and certainly *not* in the Church of England. In his own search for absolute certitude in his religious faith, Newman, before the end of his life finally renounced the Church of England altogether and submitted himself to the authority of the Roman Catholic Church, in which he was eventually elevated by Pope Leo XIII, in 1879, to the office of Cardinal.

It is interesting and probably important to note at this point that the critics of the interpretation of Hooker as an exponent of or pioneer of what later became identified as an Anglican *via media* theology do not agree among themselves as to exactly when and where to locate the actual beginning of what was to become this venerable tradition in later Anglican historiography. For example, Diarmaid McCullough, in his foundational article suggests that the *via media* interpretation of Hooker is to

[13] For an excellent recent study of Newman's life and thought, see Benjamin John King, *Newman and the Alexandrian Fathers. Shaping Doctrine in Nineteenth-Century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2009).

[14] On Newman's writing on the *via media*, see H. D. Weidner (ed.), *The Via Media of the Anglican Church* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960).

be identified with the High Church Laudians in the early seventeenth century.[15]

Torance Kirby, as stated above, has specified the nineteenth-century Tractarian, John Henry Newman as the original formulator of the "*via media* myth" of the Church of England as occupying a middle ground between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism.[16] Nigel Atkinson, however, finds the beginning of the *via media* interpretation of Hooker with John Keble, the nineteenth-century Tractarian editor of *Hooker's Works*.[17] Corneliu Simuț opts for Hooker's sixteenth-century contemporary, Richard Bancroft, the successor of John Whitgift as Archbishop of Canterbury;[18] while Michael Brydon traces the phrase *via media* back to a sixteenth-century sermon by Archbishop Samuel Parker, where Parder speaks of "a golden mediocrity between Rome and Geneva in the discipline and doctrine of the Church of England."[19]

In the midst of all this scholarly uncertainty, I personally remain more convinced than ever that the primary historical origin for the Anglican concept of the *via media* must be traced at least as far back as the ethical teaching about the nature of moral virtue by the ancient Greek Philosopher, Aristotle (304-322 BC). There is widespread consensus among Hooker scholars, past and present concerning the strong influence of the philosophy of Aristotle upon his teleological way of thinking. The place in Aristotle's thought where the concept of the *via media* emerges is in the realm of his ethical and moral theory. Aris-

[15] "Richard Hooker's Reputation," *English Historical Review* 117 (2002), 790-791.

[16] *Richard Hooker's Doctrine of the Royal Supremacy* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1990), 36-37.

[17] "Hooker's Theological Method and Modern Anglicanism," *Churchman* 114.1, 42-43.

[18] *Richard Hooker and His Early Doctrine of Justification. A Study of his* Discourse of Justification (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005), 5.

[19] *The Evolving Reputation of Richard Hooker. An Examination of Responses, 1680-1714* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 114-15.

totle defines moral virtue as an "excellence" (*aretē*), which he further defined as a "mean" (*mesotēs*). In other words, in Aristotle's view, virtue is a mean between two extremes, each of which in itself must be regarded as a "vice" or "excess." It is in this context, for example, that Aristotle interpreted the ancient Greek virtue of courage as being "the golden mean" between the vicious excess of two extremes; foolhardiness or rashness on the one hand, and the vicious excess of cowardice on the other.

There is another important reason for my general reluctance and unwillingness to surrender altogether the validity of the whole idea of an Anglican *via media*. After years of reading and studying philosophy and theology and their mutual interaction through the centuries of the history of Western Civilization, I strongly feel that I have never before come closer to what I have experienced as a viable working philosophy of life and faith in this pluralistic and postmodern era than that which I have found in the *via media* way of thinking. To explain this as simply and straightforwardly as I am able, I must first say a few words about what I understand the middle way to be and *not* to be. First of all it must not be understood as a kind of compromise negotiated between two conflicting parties. It is comprehensiveness or inclusiveness rather than compromise. The concept of the middle way is similar to what the great mystics of the church (both Eastern and Western) have called the "reconciliation of opposites" (*reconciliatio oppositorum*) within the framework of a larger and more all-encompassing whole. Further, *via media* thinking must be regarded as a very sophisticated and dialectical way of saying both "yes" and "no" to each of the extremes represented by two opposing parties, whether the issues that divide those parties be theological, philosophical, political, or moral in nature. This method of finding both truth and error in the extreme positions of two opposing parties allows for the rejection of error or excess, whatever its source, and for the affirmation of truth wherever it may be found. Such a perspective leaves room for a much more inclusive view than usual of the Christian church and allows not only for toleration, but, even

more, for affirmation of differences of opinions that may be held among the different members of a worshiping community.

Taken in this sense, the highly dialectical approach of *via media* thinking is strikingly similar to the dialectical logical thinking of the brilliant nineteenth-century German philosopher, G. W. F. Hegel, in whose thought a logical thesis, naturally generates its own opposite in an antithesis, both of which are "sublated" (*aufgehoben*) or reconciled by the human mind in the unity of a higher "synthesis."

This dialectical way of thinking makes possible the emergence of a set of new and more inclusive paradoxical combinations. It is possible religiously to call oneself a Reformed Catholic or, politically speaking, a liberal conservative, and morally speaking, to be a person who is both pro-life and pro-choice on the highly controversial issue of abortion; one may be a person who recognizes and affirms the wide range of perspectives and the convictions in the Episcopal church on issues related to human sexuality while still strongly supporting the full protection of the civil or human rights of all persons, regardless of their sexual orientation. Theologically speaking, it then becomes the obligation of the Christian Church to see the image of God in every human being and to love them all as members of Christ's Body, the Church, always recalling that every Christian is a sinner who has been forgiven and reconciled by God in and through the cross of His Christ.

Perhaps the most severe criticism of all concerning my *via media* interpretation of Hooker has come in the recent publications of Corneliu C. Simuț. For example, in the recent publication of his doctoral dissertation written originally for the Department of Divinity at the University of Aberdeen, he writes:

> Though recent studies have shown that Richard Hooker should be understood in relation to Reformed Theology… Lee Gibbs has likewise [with the Tractarian John Keble] argued that Hooker's complex doctrine of justification incorporated insights and aspects of both Catholic and Protestant traditions [Simuț in a footnote here

> cites my article on Hooker's doctrine of justification as arguing that Hooker advances a genuine *via media* between Rome and The Reformation]. Simuț continues: In Hooker, Gibbs observes the internal righteousness of sanctification and the external righteousness of Jesus Christ (which is imputed) are always united *in tempore* and received simultaneously.[20]

Simuț continues his critique of my *via media* interpretation on Hooker's doctrine of justification by objecting that I largely interpret Hooker as "a non-reformed theologian, but rather as a *via media* Anglican or as a Catholic thinker."

Although Simuț as we have seen in one place cited above, identifies the sixteenth-century Archbishop of Canterbury, Richard Bancroft, as the beginning of the Anglican *via media* tradition, in another place where he writes he is found to be in agreement with Kirby by identifying John Henry Newman as the origin of the *via media* interpretation of Hooker. Simuț writes:

> …it is vital to note here that Hooker is not a *via media* Anglican theologian as Gibbs has suggested. It seems that Gibbs followed the argument of John Henry Newman who in his *Lectures on Justification* was the first to argue that Hooker's views of justification occupied the *via media* of Anglican theology… To sum up, Newman's assessment of the doctrine of justification is incorrect and his entire argument is seriously flawed… Gibbs takes over Newman's interpretation of Hooker and writes that the internal formal cause of the external imputation of the righteousness of Christ is caused by the sanctification of believers. In other words sinners are first sanctified and then justified or forensically declared righteous. Newman, like Gibbs nowadays, seems to have missed Hooker's point.[21]

[20] *Richard Hooker and his Early Doctrine of Justification*, 1-2; see also his *The Doctrine of Salvation in the Sermons of Richard Hooker* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2005).

[21] *Richard Hooker and his Early Doctrine of Justification*, 114-116.

My initial response to this last critique is that at the time I was writing my article on Hooker's doctrine of justification I was familiar with John Henry Newman as a leading representative of the nineteenth-century Oxford Movement, and also as a later convert to the Roman Catholic Church in which he was eventually elevated to the office of Cardinal, the point here is that I had not, at the time of my early writing yet read Newman's important *Lectures on Justification*. I must, however, at the same time note that I was intensively reading the unpublished doctoral dissertation of the Roman Catholic, Joseph G. Devine, on Hooker's doctrine of justification. Upon a close reading, however, it is clear that Devine, in his dissertation, is primarily focused upon the Canon on Justification promulgated by the Council of Trent, rather than Newman's *Lectures on Justification*.

Simuț's criticism, that I wrongly followed the lead of John Henry Newman in identifying Hooker as an exponent of a *via media* theology, is intimately bound together with his further criticism that my writing on Hooker on justification, is incomplete, because I only discuss justification and sanctification while saying nothing about divine election and effectual calling. A related charge is that I have misleadingly reversed Hooker's *ordo salutis*, by suggesting that sanctification is followed by justification instead of *vice versa*.[22]

Simuț, however, ends this particular argument with an apparent concession:

> Despite his incorrect understanding of Hooker's *ordo salutis*, Gibbs is right when he mentions that the inherent righteousness of sanctification is worked by the Holy Spirit based on the merits of Christ obtained by His sacrificial death.[23]

[22] *Richard Hooker and his Early Doctrine of Justification*, 116.
[23] *Richard Hooker and his Early Doctrine of Justification*, 116.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I would observe that it is important to note that in all of the revisionist critiques of Hooker as a *via media* theologian, there is an effort to attribute the creation and perpetration of this *via media* position to High Church Anglo-Catholicizing parties which are, thereby, concerned to emphasize any Catholic elements or tendencies which are imbedded within Hooker's thought and writings. The contemporary evangelical Anglican theologian, Alistair McGrath, has recently described just what is at stake for evangelical Anglicans in the *via media* interpretation of Hooker:

> There is no doubt that Richard Hooker is one of the most important writers in the history of the Church of England. Yet he has remained neglected by those who stand to gain most from reading and appropriating him—namely, the evangelical wing of that church. The most significant reason for this neglect is not difficult to discern. John Henry Newman initiated a way of approaching Hooker as a theologian of the *via media* which deliberately underplayed his Reformed heritage, and portrayed Hooker as a writer determined to move the Church of England away from the Reformation to a more Catholic vision of the church. Evangelicals have largely accepted this portrait of Hooker and studiously ignored others in consequence.[24]

In spite of the recent barrage of criticism of my *via media* interpretation of Hooker, I regard such criticism as deriving from the inherent Protestant tendency to think largely in disjunctive (that is, either…or) categories rather than in the more Catholic conjunctive (that is, both…and) categories on such issues as na-

[24] "Forward," Nigel Atkinson, *Richard Hooker and the Authority of Scripture, Reason, and Tradition* (Carlisle, Cumbria CA: Paternoster Press, 1997), vii; compare Torrance Kirby's effort to dismiss the presence of any medieval Catholic aspects in Hooker's thought including any significant indebtedness to Thomas Aquinas as a misguided attempt to further remove Hooker from the Protestant Reformation, see *Richard Hooker, Reformer and Platonist* (Burlington, VT.: Ashgate, 2005), "Preface", ix-x.

ture and grace, revelation or Scripture and reason, and especially with regard to the presence in Hooker's writings of both Protestant and Catholic elements.

When I am confronted with the contemporary portrait presented by the new revisionist school of Hooker scholars, who portray him as a thoroughly orthodox representative of the Magisterial/Calvinist Reformation in England—a Hooker largely expurgated from all traces of Aristotelian or medieval Catholic influences—this is a portrait of Hooker which I can scarcely recognize after so many years of intensive study of the man and his works. Michael Brydon, in the conclusion of his recent study of Hooker has spoken words of wisdom which any interpreter of Hooker, past or present, would be well advised to heed. He rightly comments upon Hooker's, "elusive and often idiosyncratic formulations" which make it hard to categorize him or place him authoritatively into any theological group.[25]

I remain firm in continuing to regard Hooker as being primarily a sixteenth-century Elizabethan theologian, who was under the heavy influence of the northern European Renaissance, and who was enlisted by the hierarchy of the Church of England as it struggled with the Genevan left and the Roman right, and strove to establish its own unique identity on the European stage which was characterized by vitriolic religious conflict. In assuming this charge Hooker was very critical of the weaknesses and corruptions of the very Church of England which he was so instrumental in helping to emerge into the light of history.[26]

[25] Michael Brydon, *The Evolving Reputation of Richard Hooker. An Examination of Responses, 1600-1714* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 203. Brydon also rightly observes that "different groups in the past and now have not necessarily misread Hooker, so much as they have emphasized different aspects of the *Polity* while ignoring others."

[26] Compare the position of Philip Secor in his biography of Hooker where he argues that Hooker is not so much the founder but the prophet of a later Anglicanism, *Richard Hooker, Prophet of Anglicanism* (Toronto: The Anglican Book Centre); see also Lee W. Gibbs, "Richard Hooker: Prophet of Anglican-

Even with remaining differences of opinion on the best way of interpreting Hooker, I am very grateful for, and challenged by the new scholarship which is helping to keep Richard Hooker and his works so much at the center of focus for ongoing scholarly research. For his rich and complex thought still has so much wisdom to contribute, both to individual Christian believers and to the one holy apostolic and catholic Church of Christ at large.

ism or English Magisterial Reformer?," *Anglican Theological Review* 84.4 (2004), 943-960.

"My Sister, Dearest Friend." The Marriage of Charles and Sally Wesley

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ABSTRACT. This article is a brief presentation of the relationship between Charles Wesley and Sarah Gwynne, the woman who eventually became his wife. Details are offered first about their encounter and the way their friendly relationship blossomed into the earnest love which leads to marriage. An interesting though very short account about some opposing attitudes towards their marriage follows with indication about various concerns entertained by Charles' brother, the equally famous John Wesley, but also by Sarah's father. There is also a section dedicated to Charles' and Sarah's wedding, which is completed by a longer account of their married life with all the struggles and pains produced by the death of five of their dearly beloved children. Despite these horrible experiences, Charles' and Sarah's marriage lasted to the end as a token of what real love should be within the Christian family.

KEY WORDS: Charles Wesley, John Wesley, Sarah Gwynne, marriage, love.

> Two are better far than one,/For counsel or for fight!/How can one be warm alone/Or serve his God aright?
>
> Join we then our hearts and hands;/Haste, my sister, dearest friend,/Run the way of His commands,/And keep them to the end![1]

[1] This is part of a poem that Charles wrote for Sarah and that is found in a letter to her from Charles, written on September 17, 1748. See Tabraham, *Brother Charles*, 136, n. 20.

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The Beginnings

Unlike John Wesley (1703-1791), his brother, who fell in love with a number of women, the only really serious romantic relationship that Charles Wesley (1707-1788) ever had was with the woman he eventually married in 1749, Sarah (a.k.a. Sally) Gwynne (1726-1822).[2] Sally was the daughter of a Welsh Calvinistic Methodist, Marmaduke Gwynne (1692-1769), who had been converted in 1737 under the preaching of the Welsh evangelist Howel Harris (1714-1773).[3] Also unlike John's eventual marriage to Molly Vazeille, Charles' and Sally's marriage was a triumphantly happy one.

Charles first met Sally in the late summer of 1747 when he paid a visit to her father's estate in Becknockshire, Wales. Although Sarah was nineteen years younger, it appears to have been almost love at first sight for both of them. In his diary record of their meeting—Charles, like John, kept a regular journal, though not as obsessively—Charles noted of his meeting the father and daughter, "my soul seemed pleased to take acquaintance with them."[4] In their ensuing correspondence, Charles soon moved from addressing her as "Miss Gwynne" to calling her "Miss Sally" and then finally to "My Dearest Friend," a clear indication of what was taking place within his heart.[5] Many years later, in 1782 and in a letter to one of his sons, Charles wrote, "If any man would learn to pray, let him think about marrying," for, he went on to say, "No one step or

[2] Extremely helpful in the preparation of the following paper were these studies: John R. Tyson (ed.), *Charles Wesley. A Reader* (New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989); Barrie W. Tabraham, *Brother Charles* (Peterborough: Epworth Press, 2003); and Gareth Lloyd, *Charles Wesley and the Struggle for Methodist Identity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

[3] Geraint Tudor, "Gwynne Family", in John A. Vickers (ed.), *A Dictionary of Methodism in Britain and Ireland* (Peterborough: Epworth Press, 2000), 145.

[4] Cited Tabraham, *Brother Charles*, 50.

[5] Tyson (ed.), *Charles Wesley. A Reader*, 311; Tabraham, *Brother Charles*, 50-51.

action in life has so much influence on eternity as marriage. It is a heaven or hell… in this world…"[6] How true this is!

To express his love, Charles often resorted to writing hymns. In his *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (1749), he included fifty-five hymns under the title "For Christian Friends." And while they are all applicable to Christian friends in general, it is obvious, knowing the context in which they were written, their subject: his friendship with Sally.

> My gifts and comforts all, I know,/From Thee alone descend;/Thou only couldst on me bestow/So true, and kind a friend./Cast on one mould by art Divine/Our blended spirits agree,/And pair'd above our spirits join/In sacred harmony.[7]

> Let us both together rise,/To Thy glorious life restored,/Here regain our paradise,/Here prepare to meet our Lord./Here enjoy the earnest given,/Travel hand in hand to heaven.[8]

Opposition to the Marriage of Charles and Sally

During a lengthy preaching tour of Ireland with his brother John in the autumn of 1747 and the winter of 1748, Charles told John of what was taking place and of his growing desire to marry Sally.[9] Now, apparently, they had agreed, when together in America in the mid-1730s, not to get married without each other's approval.[10] John, according to Charles, was lukewarm. He "neither opposed" Charles's choice, but nor did he encourage him. John's lukewarmness is evident from Charles' short-

[6] Letter to Charles Wesley, Jr., August 30, 1782 in Tyson (ed.), *Charles Wesley. A Reader*, 351, 352.
[7] "Hymns for Christian Friends: 12," in Tyson (ed.), *Charles Wesley. A Reader*, 338.
[8] "Hymns for Christian Friends: 16," in Tyson (ed.), *Charles Wesley. A Reader*, 339.
[9] In his Journal for April 19, 1748, Charles recalled how he had told his brother of "his embryo intentions" while they were in Ireland. For the entry, see Tyson (ed.), *Charles Wesley. A Reader*, 312; Lloyd, *Charles Wesley*, 91, n. 13.
[10] Tyson (ed.), *Charles Wesley. A Reader*, 311, 318.

hand diary which has not been used to any real extent up until recently.[11]

Why was he reluctant to encourage his brother? Well, first of all, there was the complexity of John's own attitudes towards marriage. He believed that celibacy was better for believers than marriage, plain and simple. While he did not think anyone should forbid marriage, the married life was, in his mind, clearly second-best.[12] It is noteworthy that in his *Journal* from 1738, the year of John's and Charles' conversions, to 1791, the year of John's death, he recorded only four marriages that he did as a clergyman or that he assisted at—and of these four, one was that of Charles. During the same period, he mentioned 104 funerals he did. "Funerals, Wesley believed, might edify; marriages were best avoided."[13]

Then, John would also have been concerned that his ministry partnership with Charles was going to have been threatened by this relationship. Charles would now be reluctant to spend massive amounts of time away from home, which would affect the itinerant evangelism in which the two of them were involved.[14] It is interesting that John says nothing about either the engagement or the marriage of Charles and Sally in any of his extant letters or journal entries up to the day of the wedding.

Finally, Charles returned to Wales in March 1748 where he fell quite ill and was nursed back to health by Sally. It was thus, on April 3, 1748, that he seems to have proposed to her. In his *Journal*, he noted: "At night my dearest Sally, like my guardian angel, attended me… I asked her if she could trust herself with me for life and with a noble simplicity she readily answered me she could."[15] Charles does not seem to have told his brother definitively of the upcoming marriage until November of 1748,

[11] Lloyd, *Charles Wesley*, 92-93.
[12] Henry Abelove, *The Evangelist of Desire. John Wesley and the Methodists* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1990), 48-53.
[13] Abelove, *The Evangelist of Desire*, 56.
[14] Lloyd, *Charles Wesley*, 93.
[15] Cited Lloyd, *Charles Wesley*, 91, n. 10.

which might have been another reason for John's coolness. He would have felt that Charles had broken their promise to tell the other if they were going to get married.

Sally's parents were also initially not in favour of the marriage. Her father and mother were very wealthy and were concerned that Charles had no fixed income and thus would be unable to provide for her. Charles was determined that if her parents, and in particular, her mother, were opposed to their marriage, he would take it as a sign from God not to go forward with it.[16] Sally's mother personally liked Charles. At one point, she said, "she would rather give her child to Mr. Wesley than to any man in England."[17] The problem was that he didn't seem to have a steady source of income. Charles did speak with his brother about this, and apparently in a letter to Sally's mother, Charles indicated that monies would be available from the sale of Charles' books. To be precise, £2,500 was to be invested to yield an annuity of £100, which would be placed in Sarah's name. This was a considerable sum for the early Methodists to sign over to Charles, and would cause friction between John and Charles in the days to come.[18]

The Wedding

A week before the wedding, which John was to perform on April 8, 1749, John raised further doubts as to the propriety of the wedding. Charles recorded in his *Journal* that "my brother appeared full of scruples; and refused to go" from Bristol to where the wedding was to be held in Wales. Charles was enabled to keep his temper and persuade his brother to go. When John finally agreed to go, he informed Charles that he had arranged for preaching engagements on the way to where Sally lived! Understandably, Charles was eager to see Sally, and was

[16] Tyson (ed.), *Charles Wesley. A Reader*, 319.
[17] Cited Tabraham, *Brother Charles*, 51.
[18] Lloyd, *Charles Wesley*, 96. On Charles' finances, see also Lloyd, *Charles Wesley*, 138-142.

upset to find that John had made such arrangements to preach at various places along the way! At one point John actually climbed all of the way up to the top of an uninhabited Welsh mountain to preach to some folk who had gathered there.

Some Methodist scholars have argued that this reveals John's heart for the salvation of the lost. It could be seen as that from one vantage-point. From another perspective, though, it could be seen as John giving his brother an object lesson: marriage must come second-place and evangelism had to be first.[19] Eventually, though, they got to their destination on April 7 and Charles and Sally were married by John on April 8, 1749, at a small chapel in Llanlleonfel.

John's entry in his *Journal* is quite impersonal: "I married my brother and Sarah Gwynne. It was a solemn day, such as became the dignity of a Christian marriage."[20] Here is Charles' entry in his *Journal*—quite a contrast:

> Sat., April 8th
> *"Sweet day! so cool, so calm, so bright,*
> *The bridal of the earth and sky."*
>
> Not a cloud was to be seen from morning till night. I rose at four' spent three hours and a half in prayer, or singing, with my brother, with Sally… Her father, sisters, [he mentions by name five others]… were all the persons present… Mr. Gwynne gave her to me (under God): my brother joined our hands. It was a most solemn season of love! Never had I more of the divine presence at the sacrament.[21]

Married Life

A two-week honeymoon followed, but we might raise some questions about it, for Charles preached every day! By that September Charles and Sally had got a house in Bristol—4 Charles

[19] Lloyd, *Charles Wesley*, 96-97.
[20] Cited Lloyd, *Charles Wesley*, 94.
[21] Cited Tabraham, *Brother Charles*, 52.

Street. After his first night there, Charles wrote in his *Journal*: "I slept comfortably in my own house…"[22] This was a foreshadowing of the future for Charles gave less and less time to itinerant evangelism, and by 1756 had pretty well given up his extensive travelling.[23] When he was away from Sarah, he missed her dearly, as the portion of this letter shows:

> My prayer for my dearest partner and myself is, that we may know Him, and the power of His resurrection… My heart is with you. I want you every day and hour. I should be with you always, or not at all; for no one can supply your place."[24]

This decrease in itinerant evangelism, along with other matters, brought a coolness between Charles and his brother, which lasted the rest of their lives.[25]

It is noteworthy that one of those other matters was a growing receptivity towards Calvinism by Charles. To one of his close friends, John Bennet—who eventually married Grace Murray, whom John Wesley had wanted to marry but whom Charles encouraged to marry John Bennet—Charles could write in 1750 that it made no difference to him if John Bennet followed the thinking of Luther or Calvin.[26] During the decade that followed Charles increasingly strengthened ties with Calvinist Evangelicals like Selina Hastings (1707-1791), the Countess of Huntingdon, who became an intimate family friend and who helped nurse Sally through a very dangerous attack of smallpox. Charles also resumed his friendship with George Whitefield (1714-1770) which had been shattered with the Wesley brothers during the early1740s owing to controversy over Calvinism. In fact, Sally used to worship regularly at White-

[22] Cited Tabraham, *Brother Charles*, 52.
[23] Lloyd, *Charles Wesley*, 97.
[24] Tyson (ed.), *Charles Wesley. A Reader*, 337.
[25] For details, see Lloyd, *Charles Wesley*, 97-109, 134-138.
[26] Lloyd, *Charles Wesley*, 106.

field's Tabernacle Chapel in Bristol after her marriage. Her father, after all, had been a Calvinist.[27]

Over the years that followed they had eight children, of which five died in infancy. The eldest, named John, only lived sixteen months, dying on January 7, 1753, from smallpox, which also nearly killed the mother, Sally. When Sally and the boy were struck with the disease, Charles was away in London. He hurried home. He found Selina Hastings ministering to the bodily needs of his wife. After a week or so in which Sally's life hung in the balance, she came through, but her face was deeply marred and she looked twice her age. To comfort herself after the death of her son, Sally folded a lock of his hair onto a sheet of paper and labelled it: "My dear Jacky Wesley's hair: who died of the small-pox, on Monday, Jan. 7th, 1754-4, aged a year, four months, and seventeen days. I shall go to him; but he shall never return to me."[28] To comfort himself after the death of his son, Charles wrote hymns.

> Mine earthly happiness is fled,/His mother's joy, his father's hope;/O had I died in *Isaac's* stead!/He *should* have lived, my age's prop,/He should have closed his father's eyes,/And follow'd me to paradise.
>
> But hath not Heaven, who first bestow'd,/A right to take His gifts away?/I bow me to the sovereign God,/Who snatch'd him from the evil day!/Yet nature *will* repeat her moan,/And fondly cry, "My son, my son!"[29]

Sally was heartbroken over these infant deaths, and a goodly number of letters that survive from Charles are focused on Charles' attempts to console his wife. When, for example, John James Wesley died in 1768 aged seven months, Charles wrote to Sally:

[27] Lloyd, *Charles Wesley*, 144-145.
[28] Tyson (ed.), *Charles Wesley. A Reader*, 335.
[29] "On the Death of a Child," in Tyson (ed.), *Charles Wesley. A Reader*, 335.

> Father, not as I will but as thou wilt… I cannot doubt His wisdom or goodness. He will infallibly do what is best, not only for our children, but for us, in time and eternity Be comforted by this assurance… Peace be with you! May the Lord Jesus himself speak it into your heart, "My peace I give unto you!"[30]

Charles died in 1788, while Sarah Wesley lived to be 96, dying in 1822. Many were amazed at how good a singer she was well into her eighties. A Rev. Francis Fortescue wrote in his diary of her that Mrs. Wesley, "who is upwards of eighty years of age, sung, to our great astonishment, two of Handel's songs most delightfully—'He shall feed His flock,' etc. and 'If God be with us'."[31] Their marriage speaks across the centuries of what a Christian marriage should look like as well as the challenges such a marriage can face.

[30] Tyson (ed.), *Charles Wesley. A Reader*, 346.
[31] Cited John Telford, *The Life of Rev. Charles Wesley, M.A.* (1900), 316. For this reference I am indebted to "Sarah Gwynne Wesley" at the website *John Wesley. Holiness of Heart and Life* (http://gbgm-umc.org/umw/wesley/).

Baptists and other Christian Churches in the First Half of the Twentieth Century

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ABSTRACT. This study of one aspect of the collective life of some Baptist bodies in the first half of the twentieth century will of necessity be a very brief overview of their relationships with other Christian Churches. Baptists have been committed to world mission as part of their core identity, at least since the 1790s. The first part of this study will note the different Baptist groups that participated in the 1910 World Mission Conference, a highly significant event in the history of the Protestant missionary movement. Edinburgh 1910 laid the foundations of interdenominational understanding for the ecumenical movement of the twentieth century and is, therefore, an appropriate place to begin a study of the relationship of Baptists with other Churches in the first five decades of the twentieth century. The second theme under consideration will be the relationship of Baptists with other Churches in their own countries, followed by their approach to international ecumenical initiatives, in particular the founding of the World Council of Churches.

KEY WORDS: Baptists, mission, Edinburgh, Protestants, Evangelicals

Baptists and World Mission

The key event that had a major impact on ecumenical relations between Protestant Churches in the early twentieth Century was the World Missionary Conference held during 1910 in Edinburgh. It has been with hindsight that historians have recognised its pivotal importance.[1] John Mott, the chairman of that

[1] S. P. Mews, "Kikuyu and Edinburgh: The Interaction of Attitudes to Two Conferences", in G. J. Cuming & D. Baker (eds), *Councils and Assemblies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 346. Kenneth S. Latourette,

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event described it as: "the most notable gathering in the interest of the worldwide expansion of Christianity ever held, not only in missionary annals, but in all Christian annals."[2] However, as C. E. Wilson, the foreign secretary of the Baptist Missionary Society openly acknowledged in *The Baptist Times and Freeman,* the English Baptist periodical, this conference would be a Protestant, primarily Evangelical conference "because the great Romanist and Greek Churches will not be represented".[3] A number of scholars have suggested that this gathering of Protestant Church leaders was more limited in its scope than is sometimes assumed.[4] This Missionary Conference was restricted to delegates from missionary societies operating among non Christian peoples. This policy was carefully upheld to ensure that a greater variety of ecclesiastical and theological convictions would be represented than at any previous gathering of this kind.[5]

The Baptist Union of Scotland wholeheartedly welcomed this event taking place in Edinburgh.[6] Two Scottish Baptists were included in the twenty-two strong (male) Baptist Missionary

"Ecumenical Bearings of the Missionary Movement and the International Missionary Council," in R. Rouse & S. C. Neill (eds), *A History of the Ecumenical Movement, 1517-1948*, 2nd edition (London: SPCK, 1967), 356-357. A. R. Vidler, *The Church in an Age of Revolution. 1789 to the Present Day* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1961), 257.

[2] Cited without a reference in C. H. Hopkins, *John R. Mott 1865-1955* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979), 342.

[3] C. H. Wilson, *The Baptist Times and Freeman,* 3 June 1910, 362.

[4] For example, B. Stanley, "Edinburgh 1910 and the Oikoumene", in A. R. Cross (ed.), *Ecumenism and History. Studies in Honour of John H. Y. Briggs* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2002), 89-105. H. H. Rowden, "Edinburgh 1910, Evangelicals and the Ecumenical Movement", *Vox Evangelica* 5 (1967), 53-54.

[5] Latourette, "Missionary Movement", 357-362. Stanley, *World Missionary Conference Edinburgh 1910*, 320.

[6] BUS Council, 10 May 1910, Baptist Union of Scotland Minute Book, 1906-1915, n.p.; *Scottish Baptist Magazine* 36.6 (June 1910), 86-87.

Society (BMS) delegation[7], though four female British Baptists attended as representatives of the Baptist Zenana Mission and some other British Baptists were present in some other capacity.[8] Half of the British delegates were Anglican and a quarter Presbyterian, with the other quarter comprising of Baptists, Congregationalists and Methodists in roughly equal numbers.[9] Baptists from North America were well represented at this event. The largest contingent that included nine women in its forty-three representatives came from the American Baptist Foreign Missions Society (ABFMS). The Northern Baptist Convention had been enthusiastic about working with other Protestant Churches since its own inception in 1907. Prior to that date these American Baptists had participated in the Foreign Missions Conference of North America in 1893.[10] The Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptists had eight delegates, two of whom were women. Three other American Baptist agencies were present in Edinburgh. The Foreign Mission Board of the National Baptist Convention, the Foreign Mission Board of the General Conference Free Baptists and the Missionary Society of the Seventh Day Baptists had two, three and one representative respectively. There were two societies present from the ranks of

[7] Details given in B. R. Talbot, "Fellowship in the Gospel: Scottish Baptists and their relationships with other Christian Churches 1900-1945", *Evangelical Quarterly* 78.4 (October 2006), 342.

[8] For example, Sir G. W. Macalpine, President of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland and Reverend Timothy Richard, a BMS missionary in China, were special delegates of the British Executive Committee. *World Missionary Conference, 1910. The History and Records of the Conference,* Vol. IX (Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, 1910), 39-41.

[9] Ashley Carus-Wilson, "A World Parliament on Missions. The Meaning and Methods of the Edinburgh Conference of 1910", *The Quiver* 45 (1910), 632. The present article was viewed on 29 May 09, on the following website: www.theologicalstudiesorguk.blogspot.com/2007/02/contemporary-account-of-edinburgh-1910.html.

[10] R. G. Torbet, "American Baptist Churches in the USA", in J. L. Garrett (ed.), *Baptist Relations with Other Christians* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1974), 54.

Canadian Baptists, the United Baptist Foreign Mission Board with two delegates and three from the Baptist Foreign Mission Board in Canada.[11] Baptists in the rest of the world had only one delegate, W. T. Whitley, on behalf of the Victoria Baptist Foreign Mission from Australia. Overall, out of the 1,215 official delegates 509 were British, 491 came from North America, 169 from Continental Europe, 27 from the white colonies of South Africa and Australasia and only 19 from the non-western world, of whom eighteen came from Asia. Only one black African attended, Mark Hayford from Ghana, and his name was not on the list of official delegates.[12] No-one was present from the Pacific islands and the Caribbean. Latin America was also unrepresented as Protestant missionary representation from those countries would have led to the withdrawal of Anglo-Catholic Anglicans who considered those countries to be Roman Catholic and therefore without a need of any Christian missionaries.

A similar view was taken by these High Churchmen of Protestant missions in Orthodox territories. Protests from various independent Evangelical mission agencies went unheeded.[13] The pragmatic rather than doctrinal basis of invitations to prospective delegates has been viewed as a major error by some Baptists and other conservative Evangelicals,[14] but no-one, including the various Baptist bodies from around the world, in the early twenty-first century, could be comfortable in hindsight with the balance of ethnic representation in evidence at the 1910 World Missionary Conference.

[11] *World Missionary Conference 1910. The History and Records of the Conference,* Vol. IX, 52-53.

[12] Contra J. J. Hanciles, *Beyond Christendom* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2008), 123, who stated that "not a single African was present".

[13] B. Stanley, *The World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh 1910* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 12-13. Talbot, *Fellowship in the Gospel*, 342.

[14] D. J. Hesselgrave, "Will We Correct the Edinburgh Error? Future Mission in Historical Perspective", *Southwestern Journal of Theology* 49.2 (2007), 121-149.

Edinburgh 1910 had been viewed at the time as "The Third Ecumenical Missionary Conference", following previous Protestant international missionary gatherings held in London in 1888 and New York in 1900.[15] The term "ecumenical" in the title of these events implied a global geographical reach rather than a comprehensive or inclusive conference at which all the major sectors of Christendom were represented.[16] At these events in London and New York their purpose had been to impress and inspire the Christian public. However, an alternative model of a "consultative conference" of authorised delegates had been in evidence at the fourth Indian Decennial Missionary Conference, held in Madras in 1902 and the Shanghai Missionary Conference in 1907 and this approach was adopted for Edinburgh 1910.[17] Following these meetings in Scotland a "Continuation Committee" had been formed to continue the work commenced at Edinburgh. A quarterly journal *The International Review of Missions* was launched under the editorship of J. H. Oldham, with the first issue appearing in January 1912.[18] John Mott, chairman of the Continuation Committee undertook a tour of the Far East between October 1912 and May 1913. He held no fewer than eighteen regional and three national conferences in Ceylon, India, Burma Malaya, China, Korea and Japan.[19]

These initiatives gave birth to a series of national and regional missionary councils or congresses. In China, for example, the China Continuation Committee took seriously the model of Edinburgh 1910 for its National Christian Conference in Shanghai in 1922 with half of all delegates Chinese and a large pro-

[15] W. R. Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations A History of the International Missionary Council* (New York: Harper Brothers, 1952), 102-103.
[16] Stanley, *World Missionary Conference Edinburgh 1910*, 18-19, 23.
[17] W. H. T Gairdner, *Edinburgh 1910* (Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, 1910), 13; Stanley, *World Missionary Conference Edinburgh 1910,* 26-28.
[18] *Report of Commission VI,* 53-54; K. Clements, *Faith on the Frontier A Life of J. H. Oldham* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1999), 105-108.
[19] Latourette, "Ecumenical Bearings of the Missionary Movement", 364.

portion of those present representing Chinese Churches. This event was followed by the formation of the National Christian Council in China. It became a member of the newly-formed International Missionary Council. As early as 1917 a comity agreement had been drawn up setting out principles for Protestant mission agencies proposing to work in an area in which another Protestant society was already established. Most mission agencies had signed up by 1919, including the BMS. H.R. Williamson, who served with that body in China from 1908-1938, stated that its missionaries did their utmost to promote the spirit of comity and co-operation between the different denominational missions and Churches in the vicinity of their own work and played a full part in the work of the National Christian Council.[20] American (Northern) and Southern Baptists from the USA had jointly established the Shanghai Baptist College in 1908 and were full partners in Ginling College in Nanking, founded in 1911. They were also committed to a Union Educational Commission that represented five American missions (Southern Methodist, Northern and Southern Presbyterian, together with Northern and Southern Baptist). It became the East China Educational Union for the entire lower Yangtze Valley co-ordinating a programme of higher education. The East China Missionary Conference of 1912 had approved a Baptist share with two Presbyterian Missions in a Union Institutional Evangelistic Centre in Hangchow. Baptists had also agreed to work with the China Inland Mission in evangelistic and educational work in the Kinhwa region.[21]

The American Baptists had also attended comity meetings, for example in Shanghai in 1913, and agreed to co-operate in future union projects in education and medical missions, but had declined to enter into any organic union with other denomina-

[20] H. R. Williamson, *British Baptists in China* (London: Carey Kingsgate Press, 1957), 216.

[21] R. G. Torbet, *Venture of Faith. The Story of the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society and the Women's American Baptist Foreign Mission Society, 1814-1954* (Philadelphia: The Judson Press, 1955), 291, 310-311.

tions in China.[22] Most of the Lutheran agencies and American Southern Baptists had also declined to participate in supporting the National Christian Council in that country. Within a few years a number of other conservative Evangelical bodies, for example the Christian and Missionary Alliance and the China Inland Mission, together with some national Chinese Christian groups withdrew, due to what they perceived as the increasingly modernist or liberal tendencies of the National Christian Council in China. A rival League of Evangelical Churches was formed under mainly Chinese leadership.[23] The future tensions in relationships between theologically liberal and conservative Christians, that would become a major problem by the second half of the twentieth century, were already in evidence amongst the various mission bodies working in China, but not uniquely in that country.[24]

The International Missionary Council (IMC) had been constituted in October 1921 with sixty-one representatives present from fourteen different countries[25], though overwhelmingly from the West with only seven delegates from the younger churches in the two-thirds world.[26] However, it was only a small natural step forward in uniting mission agencies because it built on the successful work of regional mission bodies amongst the Christian Churches. For example, The Committee of (Twelve) German Evangelical Missions had been founded as early as 1885 and the Continental Missionary Conference of Europe in 1886. This later body had brought together representa-

[22] Torbet, *Venture of Faith*, 295.
[23] Latourette, "Ecumenical Bearings of the Missionary Movement", 378-382.
[24] Adrian Hastings, *The Church in Africa 1450-1950* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 550-552. Perceptively noted that the majority of Protestant missionaries were more conservative in their theology than their respective denominations prior to Edinburgh 1910. This conference had retained the famous Student Christian Movement motto "The Evangelisation of the world in this generation", but it was quickly dropped thereafter.
[25] Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations,* 202.
[26] Latourette, "Ecumenical Bearings of the Missionary Movement", 366.

tives of missionary societies in Germany, Denmark, Finland, France, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland in Bremen, Germany, every four years from 1886 to its last meeting in 1935.[27] The largest of the member bodies of the IMC was the Foreign Missions Conference of North America, founded in January 1893 by twenty-three organisations in Canada and the United States. Edinburgh 1910 undoubtedly contributed to the founding of the Conference of Missionary Societies of Great Britain and Ireland in 1912.[28] Other national Missionary Councils were formed after the IMC. These included in Europe: The Northern Missionary Council in 1923, with representatives from Sweden, Norway and Finland and further afield, The United Missionary Council of Australia constituted in 1920 together with its sister body in New Zealand in 1926, both agencies formed after visits by John Mott to these countries.[29] Although Edinburgh 1910 had not created the conditions for the formation of National Missionary Councils, it had encouraged the spirit of co-operation between different denominational mission agencies in a number of countries and enabled the formation of the IMC to take place with a much wider representation of participating countries.

One example of the impact of Edinburgh 1910 on a specific country can be seen in its influence on the host country. In Scotland "The Missionary Congress of Scottish Churches" that took place in Glasgow in October 1922 was inspired by the 1910 World Missionary Conference. Baptist minister John MacBeath, the conference secretary[30], was convinced that this "occasion

[27] "Zahn, Franz Michael, 1833 to 1900, Bremen Mission, Germany", *Dictionary of African Biography* (New Haven, CT: Overseas Ministries Study Centre, 2002), n.p. This information was obtained from the following website: www.dacb.org/stories/non%20a-fricans/legacy_zahn.html, which was accessed 20 June 2009; See also Latourette, "Ecumenical Bearings of the Missionary Movement", 373.

[28] Stanley, *World Missionary Conference Edinburgh 1910,* 318-320.

[29] Latourette, "Ecumenical Bearings of the Missionary Movement", 373-377.

[30] *SBM* 48.11 (November 1922), 125.

would be a landmark in the history of the Scottish Churches and their missions overseas". There were seventy-five Scottish Baptists registered as official delegates, a significant number of representatives from a small denomination. MacBeath was convinced that a people with vision who prayed hard for God to be at work in the world would see that "the churches shall be full of increase and all lands shall see the glory of the Lord".[31] One of the follow-up events to this gathering was a major mission week in Aberdeen in which all the Protestant churches participated. "The campaign from Monday, October 30, to Sunday November 12, succeeded in arousing interest in Aberdeen as no religious effort has done for the past decade… All the churches… co-operated in the enterprise, thus affording a superb demonstration of the unity that lies deeper than their differences."[32] MacBeath, in his summary of the two year missionary campaign in Scotland, sought to underline the uniqueness of its successes.

It was the first effort in which all the Reformed Churches united together. There were no precarious negotiations concerning union—there was rather the impulse of a great task that could best be done together. The Campaign has created a new spirit of fraternity throughout the churches which will do much to facilitate common service in the future.[33]

This event underlined the benefits of co-operation, first of all in mission and then to other forms of united action.

Baptists and Other Churches in Their Own Countries

Baptists, like other branches of the Christian family in the first half of the twentieth century, recognised that closer ties with other Churches would be beneficial for work at home as well as

[31] *SBM* 48.8 (August 1922), 92. MacBeath echoed similar sentiments in a final article before the conference in the same periodical, 48.10 (October 1922), 115-116.

[32] *SBM* 48.12 (December 1922), 147.

[33] J. MacBeath, "The Close of the Missionary Campaign", *SBM* 49.6 (June 1923), 75-76.

overseas. American Baptists in the Northern Baptist Convention had joined the Home Mission Council in their country in 1908 and that same year were charter members of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America. In 1950 this denomination participated in the formation of the National Council of Churches of Christ. However, working closely with other churches is not the same as merging with them unless core principles were held in common. As a result a merger with the Free Will Baptists in 1911 was acceptable, but a potential union with paedo-baptist denominations in 1919 and the Disciples of Christ between 1930 and 1947 was rejected.[34] The Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), by contrast, was more cautious about ecumenical relationships.[35] In 1914 it produced its most conciliatory statement on inter-church relations in America entitled: "Pronouncement on Christian Union and Denominational Efficiency". However, the American War Department's decision to continue allowing Roman Catholics freedom to promote their principles amongst men in the armed forces in 1917, a concession that had previously been available to the various Protestant Churches, whereas Protestant bodies were forced to channel their efforts through interdenominational agencies like the YMCA, led to growing protests from Southern Baptists. James B. Gambrell, who gave the first Presidential address to the SBC in its history, in 1919, reversed his earlier favourable thoughts on inter-church co-operation and thundered against the government plan that "allowed three expressions of religion in the camps: 'Judaism, Catholicism and YMCA-ism'."[36]

[34] Torbet, "American Baptist Churches in the USA", 54.

[35] J. C. Fletcher, *The Southern Baptist Convention* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1994), 121.

[36] W. W. Barnes, *The Southern Baptist Convention, 1845*-1953 (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1954), 270-284. See also J. B. Gambrell, *Baptists and Their Business* (Nashville: Sunday School Board, Southern Baptist Convention, 1919), 95ff; cited by R. O. Ryland, "Southern Baptist Convention," in Garrett (ed.), *Baptist Relations with Other Christians*, 76.

A minor concern in 1917 had grown into full-scale resentment of this policy in 1919. As a result, the SBC decided in 1919 to reject participation in further ecumenical initiatives, a policy that continued to express the convictions of a majority of its constituency for at least the next fifty years.[37] The two major African-American denominations, the National Baptist Convention of America and the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc. were both full participants in the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA in the twentieth century.[38] Of the smaller Baptist bodies in the USA, only the Seventh Day Baptist General Conference has been a constituent member of the National Council of the Churches of Christ.[39] The overwhelming majority of American Baptists were happy in this period to work with other Christians on a wide range of issues, but were equally opposed to attempts at organic unions or mergers between Baptist and paedo-baptist bodies.

Inter-church relations in Canada in the first half of the twentieth century were dominated by the foundation of the United Church of Canada in 1925,[40] by the merger of the large Methodist Church, the small Congregational Church and around half of

[37] Ryland, "Southern Baptist Convention", 73-77. A good analysis of why Southern Baptists held this conviction is given in S. J. Grenz, "Baptist and Evangelical: One Northern Baptist's Perspective", in D. S. Dockery (ed.), *Southern Baptists & American Evangelicals* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1993), 64- 67.

[38] E. A. Freeman, "Negro Conventions (USA)", in Garrett (ed.), *Baptist Relations with Other Christians,* 88-92. More details on the witness of Black Baptist Churches in the USA are found in L. Fitts, *A History of Black Baptists* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1985).

[39] G. L. Borchert, "Other Conferences and Associations (USA)," in Garrett (ed.), *Baptist Relations with Other Christians,* 93-104.

[40] The movement towards church union both within denominations and then across their boundaries since the formation of the Confederation of Canada in 1867 is explained succinctly in P. D. Airhart, "Ordering a New Nation and Reordering Protestantism 1867-1914", and R. A. Wright, "The Canadian Protestant Tradition 1914-1945", in G. A. Rawlyk (ed.), *The Canadian Protestant Experience 1760-1990* (Montreal &Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990), 98-101 and 149-154.

the Presbyterian Church. The Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec (BCOQ) articulated a clear and unequivocal rejection of the invitation to join this new body in 1907 declaring that Baptists had a necessity to "maintain a separate organised existence" and also had a distinctive baptistic witness to proclaim to the world, although they commended these paedobaptist denominations on their plans for union.[41] A year earlier The United Baptist Convention of the Maritime Provinces (UBCMP) had also replied to this invitation with a similar response.[42] The wide range of beliefs and cultural backgrounds of the small Baptist bodies in a vast country hindered attempts to form any kind of workable organisation amongst Canadian Baptists until 1944 when the Baptist Federation of Canada (BFC) was constituted, embracing the three regional conventions, The United Baptist Convention of the Maritime Provinces (UBCMP), The Baptist Union of Western Canada, together with their sister body in Ontario and Quebec. Although an organic union with other Christian bodies was ruled out, Canadian Baptists willingly agreed to participate in the production of a new hymnbook with the United Church of Canada in the 1930s.

Further collaboration with the United Church resulted in the publishing of the Canadian Baptist-edited Sunday School materials as well. However, a minority of Baptist churches declined

[41] *The Canadian Baptist*, 12 September 1907; *Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec Year Book* (1907), 223-225; E. L. Morrow, *Church Union in Canada* (Toronto: Thomas Allen, 1923), 34-39. See also H. A. Renfree, *Heritage and Horizon. The Baptist Story in Canada* (Mississauga, Ontario: Canadian Baptist Federation, 1988), 205-206.

[42] *UBCMP Year Book* (1906), 128-129. For more details on Canadian Baptist responses to ecumenical initiatives in their own country see C. Jones, "Western Canadian Baptists and Ecumenical Initiatives in the Early Twentieth Century", a paper given in July 2009 at the International Conference on Baptist Studies V, Melbourne, Australia. I am grateful to Callum Jones for information on the approaches of the different Canadian Baptist bodies in this period.

to use these publications.[43] Baptists on the Atlantic coast, unlike their denominational colleagues in the rest of Canada played a more central role in the life of their region and were happy to work with other Churches in most initiatives that stopped short of formal mergers.[44] During the early 1940s, for example, the UBCMP showed its confidence in the co-operative principle in Christian Education through the Maritime Religious Education Council. Its social service board recorded its links with the Christian Social Council of Canada. Also a strong inter-church Committee on Protestant-Roman Catholic Relations was formed in 1943 to watch for movements infringing on religious liberty and to promote Protestantism. In addition, the new general secretary of this Baptist convention was appointed to attend the organisational meeting of a proposed national Christian agency, the Canadian Council of Churches that was operational by 1946.[45] It is not surprising that the branch of the Canadian Baptist family most secure in its own identity, the UBCMP, was the one that had the closest ties with other Canadian Churches.

Baptists in East Asia like their colleagues in Latin America were a small minority that sought to promote their distinctive witness in countries where other Christian traditions had established a presence a good number of years earlier. Congregations planted by various Baptist mission agencies in China, for

[43] Renfree, *Heritage and Horizon,* 241. J. K. Zemen, "The Changing Baptist Identity in Canada since World War II Prolegomena to a Study", in P. R. Dekar & M. J. S. Ford (eds), *Celebrating the Canadian Baptist Heritage* (Hamilton, Ontario: McMaster University Divinity College, n.d.), 3

[44] "Convention Minutes", *Yearbook of the UBCMP*, 1921, 15; cited by Renfree, *Heritage and Horizon*, 236. The Regular (Calvinistic) Baptists in the Maritime Provinces had united with their Free Will Baptist colleagues in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, five years earlier than a similar merger of Northern and Free Will Baptists in the USA, in 1906, and for similar reasons. For details of these mergers see G. E. Levy, *Baptists of the Maritime Provinces, 1753-1946* (Saint John, New Brunswick: Barnes Hopkins, 1946), 267- 282.

[45] *Yearbook of the UBCMP*, 1939, 18, 153-154; 1944, 44, 179-180; 1946, 211; cited by Renfree, *Heritage and Horizon,* 243.

example, tended to reflect the ecumenical sympathies or otherwise of their "parent" body. As a result those causes associated with the BMS joined with others planted by missionaries from some Presbyterian, Congregational, United Church of Canada, Reformed Lutheran, United Brethren (USA) and Swedish Missionary Society, together with some independent Chinese Churches to form the Church of Christ in China. This denomination by 1950 had a membership of 177,000 out of a registered total of 950,000 Protestant Christians in that country. However, congregations associated with Baptists from North and South America and Sweden made the decision not to seek formal affiliation with this national institution.[46] Burmese Baptists were enthusiastic about partnership with other churches in their country and joined the Burma Christian Council at its formation in 1950.[47]

Japanese Baptist Churches began through the work of Northern and Southern Baptists in the second half of the nineteenth century. Prior to the 1930s under the influence of American missionaries these causes had held back from significant ecumenical involvement until Dr. William Axling (ABFMS), together with some Japanese colleagues, encouraged congregations associated with his mission agency to retain an affiliation with the United Church of Christ in Japan. After Axling left Japan some of these Baptist churches left the United Church to form the Japan Baptist Union, though others remained and lost their Baptist identity. By contrast, congregations related to the Southern Baptists remained aloof from ecumenical engagement until forced to do so between 1941 and 1946 when together with

[46] Williamson, *British Baptists in China*, 216-219. P. S. Hsu, "East Asia", in Garrett (ed.), *Baptist Relations with Other Christians,* 155-157, while broadly agreeing with Williamson's position, disagreed over the position of churches associated with the American (Northern) Baptists. Hsu maintained that some of these churches affiliated with the Church of Christ in China, though none associated with Southern Baptists had taken this step.

[47] I am grateful to Samuel Ngun Ling from the Myanmar Institute of Theology for providing this information.

most denominations they were forced to join the United Church of Christ (Kyodan). In 1946 when free to do so these churches withdrew and formed the Japan Baptist Convention (JBC), though they were willing to work with other Christian Churches through the National Christian Council of Japan.[48] East Asian Baptists were inclined to engage in ecumenical initiatives, mindful as they were of being a small religious minority in these countries.[49] However, guidance from the mission agencies whose workers had planted these churches provided, in some cases, advice that pointed in a contrary direction. As a result, some East Asian Baptists were significantly less open to working with Christians from other Churches in formal interchurch bodies.

Australian Baptists in general have worked happily with all other Protestant denominations in their own country, although their involvement in ecumenical initiatives in the first half of the twentieth century had been limited due to a fear of increasing the power of the Roman Catholic Church, which then represented around 30% of the population.[50] On 1 January 1901 by an Act of the British Parliament, Australia was made a nation. Federation between the different Australian colonies led to a Presbyterian General Assembly of Australia that same year and a Methodist Union was achieved as early as 1902, but Baptists, although stimulated both by political union in the nation and denominational union amongst other Churches, could not agree

[48] Hsu, "East Asia", 157-158. There was, though some pressure from the SBC as its money and missionaries would not have been sent back to Japan to work with JBC congregations after World War Two had these churches remained in the United Church of Christ. I am grateful to Dr. Eiko Kanamaru from the Seinan Gakuin University, Fukuoka, Japan, for providing this information.

[49] Torbet, *Venture of Faith*, 349.

[50] D. M. Himbury, "Australasia", in Garrett (ed.), *Baptist Relations with Other Christians,* 178-179. A more detailed study of the relationship of Australian Baptists with other Christian Churches is found in D. Parker, "Baptists and Other Christians in Australia", a paper given in July 2009 at the ICOBS, V, Melbourne, Australia.

on a federal structure in their own ranks. There were even moves at that time to establish a United Evangelical Protestant Church, but this initiative did not succeed.[51] However, in the different regions of Australia there had been a variety of approaches to inter-church relations. The largest Baptist Union, New South Wales, the dominant power in national Baptist life, was firmly opposed to ecumenical engagement whilst South Australia and Victoria were far more open.[52] It had taken until 1925 for the different state Baptist Unions to agree on a constitution for the newly-formed Baptist Union of Australia.[53] As a result, a much longer timescale would be required for the formation of an agreed position concerning relationships with other Australian denominations.[54]

New Zealand Baptists, by contrast, had always had cordial relationships with the other Churches, even in the settlements which had a distinctly ecclesiastical origin such as Christchurch and Dunedin. A possible merger with the Congregationalists in Timaru led to discussions between the two denominations, but by 1912 the Baptists had decided to maintain a separate witness, both locally and by implication as a denomination. Relations were also good with the other Free Churches, and this ex-

[51] K. R. Manley, *From Woolloomooloo to "Eternity". A History of Australian Baptists*, Volume 1: Growing an Australian Church (1831-1914) (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2006), 182; See also F. Engel, *Australian Christians in Conflict and Unity* (Melbourne: Joint Board of Christian Education, 1984).

[52] Manley, *From Woolloomooloo to "Eternity"*, Volume 2: A National Church in a Global Community (1914-2005), 580. See also K. R. Manley, "The Shaping of Baptist Identity in Australia", I. M. Randall, T. Pilli, & A. R. Cross (eds), *Baptists Identities* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2006), 291-294, for more details of different Australian Baptist identities in this era.

[53] *The Australian Baptist* 10.31 (1 August 1922), 1; 14.30 (27 July 1926), 1; 14.33 (17 August 1926), 1-2; 14.35 (31 August 1926), 1-2; 14.36 (7 September 1926), 1-3, 8.

[54] Parker, "Baptists and other Christians in Australia", 13, after acknowledging some support for ecumenical initiatives noted that; "most Australian Baptists have been indifferent, opposed, or in some cases, vociferously hostile" to such ventures.

perience had led to a New Zealand equivalent of the Free Church Councils in Britain being established in various parts of the country.[55] It was, therefore no surprise that when the New Zealand Council of Churches came into being in April 1941 that the Baptist Union was a founder member of that body.[56] Although New Zealand Baptists had been committed consistently to ecumenical engagement, they were equally opposed to any involvement in the moves towards reunion which had been a feature of the life of the other major denominations in that country in the twentieth century.[57] In addition, like Australian Baptists, the majority in their ranks were deeply hesitant about ecumenical engagement with the Roman Catholic Church. It is likely that the slight differences between Baptists in the two countries on this subject can be accounted for by a more powerful and influential Roman Catholic Church in Australia, together with the geographical and communication challenges Australian Baptists faced in seeking to work together in the first half of the twentieth century.

Baptists in Continental Europe presented a varied series of responses to the subject of inter-church relations. In Northern Europe, Sweden, Denmark, Finland and Norway, together with Germany, Switzerland and the Netherlands, these countries were historically Protestant, holding the Lutheran or Reformed understanding of the Christian faith, although sizable numbers of Roman Catholics were found in Germany and Switzerland. The State Churches, to which the vast majority of the popula-

[55] J. B. Chambers, *"A Peculiar People". Congregationalism in New Zealand* (Levin: Congregational Union of New Zealand, 1984), 282-286.

[56] "Baptists and the ecumenical movement", *New Zealand Baptist* (1972), 8-9, cited by L. Guy (ed.), *Baptists in Twentieth Century New Zealand* (Auckland: New Zealand Baptist Research and Historical Society, 2005), 56-57. See also M. Sutherland, "The Basis of Union: New Zealand Baptists forge a Denomination in the 1940s," in *The Journal of Religious History* 27.1 (2003), 72-73, gives an unusual example of ecumenical co-operation in which Baptists played a leading part.

[57] Himbury, "Australasia", 182-184.

tion were nominally associated, had severely persecuted smaller denominations, for example, the Baptists, in the nineteenth century. Although this oppression had ceased it had been replaced merely by a civil toleration until the second half of the twentieth century. Baptists in these countries had close ties with the other smaller Free Churches, for example Methodists and Congregationalists, and were associated with the Evangelical Alliance.[58] Conditions for witness in the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in this period were extremely difficult. In 1944 the Baptists and Evangelical Christians united to form the All Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists (AUCECB) and a majority of Pentecostals also joined this body the following year.[59]

In Eastern Europe prior to World War Two Baptists there had also suffered greatly at the hands of the larger denominations. For example, from Roman Catholicism in Poland, the Orthodox Church in Romania and Reformed and Lutheran Churches in Hungary; Baptists were considered to be sectarians and ecumenical engagement with State Churches only became possible much later in the century. The small Baptist community in Poland has been an enthusiastic participant in the Ecumenical Council with the majority of other Churches in that country.[60] However, it has always been determined to maintain a distinctive witness in Poland since that country gained its independence in 1918. After World War Two, for example, Polish Baptists refused to enter the United Evangelical Church, a body that contained the various Free Church denominations, because they feared the influence of Pentecostals.[61]

[58] R. Thaut, "Northern Europe", in Garrett (ed.), *Baptist Relations with Other Christians*, 21-24.
[59] A. Bichkov & I. Ivanov, "The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics," in Garrett (ed.), *Baptist Relations with Other Christians*, 30-33.
[60] D. Lotz, "Eastern Europe", in Garrett (ed.), *Baptist Relations with Other Christians*, 35-36.
[61] A. W. Wardin (ed.), *Baptists around the World* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1995), 206-208.

Some of the most intense persecution experienced by Baptists in this era took place in Romania at the hands of their government, at the instigation of the Orthodox Church. This problem was at its most severe in the 1930s when, in spite of all their claims to be in favour of promoting religious tolerance, Archbishop Colan was the Minister of Cults and the Patriarch of the Orthodox Church was the Prime Minister.[62] This oppression culminated in the notorious 1938 decree enforcing the closure of all the approximately 1600 Baptist Churches in Romania, a policy enforced for over five months.[63] Baptist protests at this infringement of basic religious and civil liberties had some impact on the Romanian Government, especially when presented in person in Romania by J. H. Rushbrooke, a leading English Baptist and a passionate advocate for human rights.[64] Relations with Lutherans and Reformed Christians in this era were minimal but good.[65]

Baptists in Hungary, like the other Free Churches, were persecuted not only by Roman Catholics, but also by the other two "accepted" denominations, the Lutheran and Reformed Churches. However, Hungarian Baptists were committed to working with other churches and were members of the Free Church Council of Churches, and the Hungarian Evangelical Alliance.[66] In a context where religious liberty was often significantly restricted Baptists, along with other Free Churches, struggled to maintain an effective witness for their faith. Interchurch relations with other oppressed denominations were cordial, but having any kind of ecumenical engagement with State Churches needed to wait until after World War Two.

[62] *SBM*, March 1938, 4.
[63] Decizie [Law] No. 26, 208, cited by B. Green, *Tomorrow's Man. A Biography of James Henry Rushbrooke* (Didcot: Baptist Historical Society, 1997), 152. The BWA letter of protest at this Decizie is printed in the *SBM*, October 1938, 16.
[64] *SBM*, November 1935, 2; May 1938, 7, are examples.
[65] Lotz, "Eastern Europe", 39-40.
[66] Lotz, "Eastern Europe", 57-58; Wardin, *Baptists around the World,* 262-263.

British Baptists in England and Wales, in the Baptist Union of Great Britain (BUGBI), in the last decade of the nineteenth century, had played a leading part in the establishment of local Free Church Councils and in the formation of the National Council of the Evangelical Free Churches (NCEFC) in 1896. Dr. Richard Glover (Bristol), C. F. Aked (Liverpool), Alexander McLaren (Manchester) and J. C. Carlile (Folkestone) were amongst the prominent Baptist members of this body.[67] Welsh Christians had shown great enthusiasm for the new bodies and by 1908 167 local Free Church Councils had been established in Wales. However, Welsh Baptists, in the largely Welsh-speaking Baptist Union of Wales (BUW), had felt unable to join the Councils because these bodies by celebrating the Lord's Supper at some of their meetings had violated their Baptist conviction that only those baptised on profession of faith could participate in this ordinance. Interdenominational communion services, therefore, on these terms was impermissible.[68]

Some British Christians, including John H. Shakespeare, secretary of BUGBI from 1898 to 1924, had been dissatisfied with the NCEFC's perceived lack of vision for a closer federation of Free Churches[69] and formed a rival Federal Council of the Evangelical Free Churches in 1919 as a step towards a United Free Church of England. These two bodies were later united at a meeting held in Baptist Church House, London, in September 1940.[70] The vast majority of Baptists in BUGBI did not share Shakespeare's vision for a United Free Church, but ironically

[67] A. R. Cross, "Service to the Ecumenical Movement. The Contribution of British Baptists", *Baptist Quarterly* 38.3 (1999), 108-109.

[68] M. J. Collis, "Baptists and Church Unity in Wales in the Twentieth Century", 4; a paper given in July 2009 at the ICOBS, V, Melbourne, Australia.

[69] P. Shepherd, *The Making of a Modern Denomination John Howard Shakespeare and the English Baptists 1898-1924* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2001), 94-95.

[70] E. K. H. Jordan, *Free Church Unity History of the Free Church Council Movement 1896-1941* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1956), 127-135. See also Cross, "Services to the Ecumenical Movement", 108-109; E. A. Payne, "Great Britain", in Garrett (ed), *Baptist Relations with Other Christians,* 15.

his 1912 proposal for a United Board to supervise a redistribution of Free Church resources and to undertake a wide social and evangelistic ministry[71] was later accepted with reference to one particular form of Christian ministry, namely army and navy chaplaincy. The British Government had declined to accept chaplains from a number of Free Church denominations, including Baptists, for service with regiments in World War One. In response to this problem the United Navy and Army Board was constituted in March 1915 with Shakespeare and R. J. Wells, secretary of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, as its joint secretaries.[72]

Shakespeare was delighted with its success. In 1916 he declared: "we have seen the working in miniature and for a specific purpose of a partially United Free Church of England. It has worked well."[73] Shakespeare had sought reunion of all the Free Churches with the Church of England, but this vision had died after an Anglican conference in July 1923, in which it was suggested that Free Church ministries might be "irregular or defective" without Episcopal ordination.[74] However, many British Baptists had accepted the need for closer ties between the Churches and when the two Free Church bodies merged in

[71] Jordan, *Free Church Unity,* 127.

[72] For more details of the work of this organisation see N. E. Allison, *The Official History of the United Board*, Volume One: The Clash of Empires, 1914-1939 (Great Bookham: United Navy, Army and Air Force Board, 2008).

[73] J. H. Shakespeare, "Forward", in F. C. Spurr, *Some Chaplains in Khaki* (London: The Kingsgate Press, 1916), 8. See also Shepherd, *Making of a Modern Denomination,* 96-100. Idealist chaplains in the RAF during World War Two did call for the creation of a United Free Church after the war, although it was recognised that there were serious obstacles to overcome before Baptists could be incorporated into such a body, due to their understanding of baptism. See W. E. Mantle, "The Theological Significance of the PMUB Church of the Royal Air Force and its Contribution to the Reunion of the Churches", (MA dissertation, University of Bristol, 1965), 76-77.

[74] G. K. A. Bell, *Documents on Christian Unity, 1920-1924* (London: Oxford University Press, 1924), 156-163; cited by Shepherd, *Making of a Modern Denomination*, 126.

1940 the Federal Council was the model for the amalgamated body.[75] This crucial decision paved the way for the next steps in inter-Church relations in the 1940s. A further milestone in British ecumenism took place in the Council Chamber of Baptist Church House, London, when the British Council of Churches (BCC) was formed in September 1942. A number of Baptists from the BUGBI played key roles from the very beginning of the BCC. These included Dr. M. E. Aubrey, BCC Vice President, 1948-50; Dr. Hugh Martin, Chair of BCC Administrative Committee (1943-1956); Dr. J. H. Rushbrooke, Acting Chair of International Affairs (1945) together with Clifford Cleal, Secretary of the BCC Social Responsibility Department from 1948 to 1953.[76]

Baptists in Scotland were more cautious than the BUGBI over ecumenical engagement, but did not hesitate to join the Scottish Council of Churches (SCC) on its formation in 1924.[77] The success of the SCC was the reason why Scottish Baptists were to reject a Continuing United Free Church proposal for the establishment of a Free Church Council in Scotland.[78] British Baptists in the BUGBI had been committed to developing ever closer ties with other Churches in the first half of the twentieth Century, but stopped short of any thoughts of a merger with other denominations. Scottish Baptists had taken a similar approach. Welsh Baptists in the BUW, by contrast, had struggled over ecumenical engagement due to their strict communion principles.

Baptists and Other Churches on an International Level

After the traumatic events of World War One, progress in inter-Church relations was inevitably slow. A small gathering of ni-

[75] Shepherd, *Making of a Modern Denomination*, 129.

[76] Cross, "Service to the Ecumenical Movement," 107-111.

[77] D. B. Forrester, "Ecumenical Movement", in N. M. de S. Cameron (ed.), *Dictionary of Scottish Church History & Theology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993), 273-274.

[78] BUS Council, 25 May 1943, Baptist Union of Scotland Minute Book, 1942-1945, 245.

nety delegates from fifteen countries assembled at Geneva in 1920 and began the process of rebuilding and strengthening relationships damaged during the previous decade. Momentum increased following the Universal Christian Conference on Life and Work at Stockholm (1925) and the First World Conference on Faith and Order at Lausanne (1927), which bore fruit in the increased representation at the Second World Conference on Faith and Order at Edinburgh in August 1937, where 344 delegates from 123 denominations were present.[79] This latter Conference had been preceded by two smaller meetings in London and Oxford in July 1937 in which the proposal for a world Council of Churches had been promulgated. At the Oxford Conference Anglican Archbishop William Temple had proclaimed "the need for a body which would provide 'a voice for non-Roman Christendom,' and the desirability of basing the whole ecumenical movement more directly on the Churches themselves." His proposal was adopted with only two dissentient voices. After a vigorous debate the Edinburgh 1937 delegates approved the Oxford resolution with only one expression of dissent.[80]

A special advisory conference met in Utrecht in May 1938 to draw up the basis for the proposed World Council of Churches. The agreed statement which was confirmed at the first Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Amsterdam, in August 1948, read: "The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of Churches which accepts our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour." Utrecht delegates had not imagined the length of the delay that resulted, due to World War Two, before the vision for the WCC became a reality.[81] The work of the International Mis-

[79] A helpful summary of this process of events is given in W. R. Estep, *Baptists and Christian Unity* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1966), 26-40.

[80] William Temple cited by W. A. Visser't Hooft, "The Genesis of the World Council of Churches", in Rouse and Neill (eds), *History of the Ecumenical Movement, 1517-1948,* 703.

[81] Visser't Hooft, "The Genesis of the World Council of Churches", in Rouse and Neill (eds), *History of the Ecumenical Movement, 1517-1948,* 705.

sionary Council (IMC), although distinct from this process, was not in competition with it. In fact through its engagement with Churches in parts of the world virtually unrepresented at Edinburgh 1910 it enabled interaction between and fellowship with Christian bodies from a greater proportion of countries in the world. Its 1928 Jerusalem conference attracted nearly a quarter of its delegates from the "younger churches" in lands traditionally viewed as "mission fields". A major breakthrough came at its 1938 gathering at Madras Christian College, Tambaram, India, where 471 representatives from sixty-nine countries were present, with the majority of those present coming from the "younger Churches". This truly representative conference of Christian Churches was also the first IMC event held in Asia.[82] The groundwork had been laid for Amsterdam 1948, at which 351 official delegates of 147 Churches in forty-four countries had gathered, together with many other invited guests to launch this new body. Of the major Christian denominations only the Roman Catholic Church, the Russian Orthodox Church, the Southern Baptist Convention and the Missouri Synod of Lutherans were not officially represented. In assessing the significance of Amsterdam 1948 it is clear that it was in many respects only a significant milestone on an ecclesiastical journey, but one in which the Churches themselves had accepted responsibility for this process and that the ecumenical movement had gained a firm foundation in the continuous life of the Churches.[83]

However, Churches in Asia, Africa and Latin America were still under-represented[84], but this new venture had gained significant momentum and represented the ecumenical mobilisation of the vast majority of Christian Churches.

[82] Estep, *Baptists and Christian Unity*, 40-44.
[83] Visser't Hooft, "The Genesis of the World Council of Churches", 719-724. See also Estep, *Baptists and Christian Unity*, 49-54.
[84] Visser't Hooft, "The General Ecumenical Developments since 1948", in H. E. Fey (ed.), *The Ecumenical Advance. A History of the Ecumenical Movement*, Volume 2: 1948-1968 (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1970), 4.

How did the various branches of the Baptist family interpret the formation of the WCC and its vision for future inter-Church co-operation? The majority of American Baptists had seen the formation of the World Council of Churches (WCC) as a natural development for Churches already in membership with the National Churches of Christ in the USA. They did not see it in any way as compromising the unique witness of their Baptist constituency.[85] However, a minority of their members holding firmly to a more conservative theological position than many in their ranks, left the connexion in 1933 to form the General Association of Regular Baptists. Others with a similar theological framework who remained in the Convention opposed these ecumenical developments. In 1939 a motion was passed at the Convention declaring that the Northern Baptists could continue their relationship with the ecumenical organisations only if "their unique and historic Baptist principles" were recognised. The decision to affiliate with the WCC, taken in 1947, led to a further secession of members known as "the Conservative Baptist Association". The majority of members had won the day, at the price of the withdrawal of a significant proportion of their constituency.[86] The National Baptist Convention of America joined the WCC at its inception[87], as did the Seventh Day Baptist General Conference.[88]

The National Baptist Convention USA, Inc., took a more cautious line, but joined the WCC outside the time frame of this study.[89] Southern Baptists, by contrast had a minimal involvement in such initiatives. In 1937 the President of the SBC was authorised to attend the Edinburgh Conference on Faith and Order and George Truett from Dallas was appointed as the delegate for the Oxford Conference on Church Community and State that same year. As Truett was unable to attend, Conven-

[85] Torbet, "American Baptist Churches in the USA", 62.
[86] Estep, *Baptists and Christian Unity,* 135-141.
[87] Estep, *Baptists and Christian Unity*, 141.
[88] Borchert, "Other Conferences and Associations (USA)", 99-100.
[89] Estep, *Baptists and Christian Unity,* 141.

tion President John R. Sampey and his wife and two others represented the SBC at both these events. Three times in 1938, 1940 and 1948 the SBC affirmed its policy of isolation from the ecumenical movement. The 1948 rejection letter included the phrase "with perhaps increased conviction" indicating the strength of feeling in that constituency.[90] On this subject Canadian Baptists were closer in sentiments to the Southern Baptists. Full consideration was given to joining the WCC in 1948, but only the Convention of Ontario and Quebec, in 1949, voted to affiliate to this world body. The Union of Western Canada did not approve the proposal and the Maritime Baptist Convention voted formally against it in 1951. As a result of these decisions the Baptist Federation of Canada was prevented from joining the WCC.[91] The majority of Baptists in the Americas had not joined the WCC in 1948. This decision was in line with the majority of Baptists in other countries.

Australian Baptists were open to joining the WCC[92], but were determined to take time to work through their collective viewpoint through the various state Unions. They were represented in Amsterdam by "the Right Honourable Ernest Brown of England".[93] Many Australian Baptist leaders believed that their denomination would join this body early in 1949, but the meetings of the state Unions later that year revealed very mixed opinions about the way ahead. The leaders of the Tasmanian Baptists appeared to be committed to joining the WCC, but had delayed taking a formal vote on this matter. However, the

[90] "Proceedings of the Southern Baptist Convention", 1948, 58, cited by Ryland, "Southern Baptist Convention", 77-79. Helpful information on the Southern Baptist position is given in E. A. Payne, "Baptists and the Ecumenical Movement", *Baptist Quarterly* 18.6 (1960), 263.

[91] Zeman, "Canada", in Garrett (ed.), *Baptist Relations with Other Churches,* 112-113.

[92] *The Australian Baptist* 36.47 (1948), 4.

[93] Brown was appointed to the WCC Central Committee from 1948 to 1954, despite the withdrawal of Australian Baptists from the WCC. Cross, "Service to the Ecumenical Movement", 113.

Western Australian Baptists voted against affiliation by what *The Australian Baptist* called "a surprisingly large majority". New South Wales Baptists at their assembly referred the subject to their Council so that both sides of the argument could be thoroughly considered. At the triennial meeting of the Baptist Union of Australia in 1950 it was reported that Queensland, New South Wales and Western Australia had voted against affiliation; Victoria and South Australia were in favour with Tasmania having postponed a vote. The Baptist Union decided not to seek affiliation with the WCC, but requested the right to continue to send observers to WCC meetings. However, at the 1953 Baptist Union Assembly even the attendance of observers at WCC meetings was questioned.[94] Australian Baptists were enthusiastic about working with other Christians, but attitudes concerning the WCC became increasingly polarised, with the majority against any involvement with it. The majority of New Zealand Baptists, by contrast, chose to affiliate with the WCC in 1948 and the East Asian Christian Conference in 1957, though up to a quarter of its constituency was unconvinced of the wisdom of taking this course of action.[95] Like Baptists in the Americas Australasian Baptists were divided over the extent of their involvement in the ecumenical movement.

The responses from Baptists in Europe were very similar to their sister bodies in other parts of the world on this subject. In 1948 Baptists in Holland and Great Britain had chosen to join six other Baptist bodies represented in Amsterdam. In addition to the three American Conventions and Baptists in New Zealand already discussed, Baptists from the Burma Baptist Convention and the China Baptist Council had also chosen to affiliate with this new venture. However, Chinese Christians were forced to withdraw from the WCC after the Communist take-

[94] Opposition to involvement in the WCC was equally clear in 1955. See *The Australian Baptist* 43.1 (1955), 1, 8; 43.3 (1955), 15; together with Manley, *Woolloomooloo to Eternity*, Volume 2, 579-588, and Himbury, "Australasia", 180-181.

[95] Himbury, "Australasia", 182-183.

over in China, no later than 1950.[96] The Dutch Baptist were to leave the WCC in 1963,[97] though Baptists in Denmark joined shortly after the formation of the WCC in 1948[98] and Baptists in Hungary a few years later in 1956.[99] Baptists in BUGBI were committed to the work of the WCC and a number of its members took an active part in its proceedings. These included, in 1948, Dr. Ernest Payne who became a member of the Faith and Order Commission of WCC that year and who was then elected to the WCC Central Committee, becoming its Vice Chair in 1954 and retiring as its President at Nairobi in 1975. Dr. Percy Evans, Principal of Spurgeon's College, London, who was both a BUGBI delegate and a Faith and Order Commission member, like Ernest Payne in 1948, was also a participant in a follow-up WCC Commission on the Church at Cambridge in 1950.[100] M. E. Aubrey, secretary of BUGBI and C. T. LeQuesne, the BUGBI President 1946-1947, were the other two delegates from this Baptist Union.[101]

The Baptist Union of Wales was not represented at the formation of the WCC in Amsterdam in 1948.[102] Scottish Baptists, likewise, had no representation at Amsterdam, though they had decided to affiliate with the WCC by one vote that year. How-

[96] Payne, "Baptists and the Ecumenical Movement", 258-267.
[97] Thaut, "Northern Europe", 25.
[98] B. Hylleberg, "Denmark," in Wardin (ed.), *Baptists around the World,* 238-239. Danish Baptists had been prevented from joining the WCC in 1948 due to interference with its application to join this body by the Danish State Lutheran Church. See K. Jones, *The European Baptist Federation. A Case Study in European Baptist Interdependency 1950-2006* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2009), 73, n. 60, for more details.
[99] Payne, "Baptists and the Ecumenical Movement", 265.
[100] Cross, "Service to the Ecumenical Movement", 112-114.
[101] I. M. Randall, *The English Baptists of the 20th Century* (Didcot: The Baptist Historical Society, 2005), 254-255.
[102] Nor did it join the WCC that year contra Payne, "Baptists and the Ecumenical Movement", 263. See Collis, "Baptists and Church Unity in Wales", 7-9, for more details of BUW engagement with the ecumenical movement in the twentieth century.

ever, there was much opposition to this decision in the years that followed, leading to a withdrawal from membership in 1955.[103] Only a minority of European Baptist bodies joined the WCC. British Baptists in the BUGBI were amongst the most enthusiastic advocates on this continent for this inter-Church body.

Baptists in the various Unions and Conventions covered in this brief study showed a willingness to work with Christians of other denominations throughout the first half of the twentieth century. Although the total number of Baptists present at the World Mission Conference in Edinburgh in 1910 was limited, their commitment to world mission was not in doubt. They, together with other Christians, formed various inter-denominational mission bodies to facilitate good relations on the mission fields and to aid effectiveness in the task of world evangelisation. Co-operation overseas was largely mirrored by partnerships in the gospel at home. Baptists were often serving as a bridge between various mainline denominations and some of the more separatist Evangelical Churches and mission agencies. However, within the different Baptist bodies there had been tensions over the extent to which ecumenical engagement was desirable or permissible. Establishing good relations with some State Churches had proved to be problematic as they often refused to recognise Baptists as equal partners in the work of the Gospel. There was, though, far less enthusiasm for the proposed WCC. A minority of Baptist bodies did affiliate, but the majority of this constituency were unconvinced of the wisdom of such a course of action. Overall, though, relationships within and across Christian denominations had taken major steps forward between 1900 and 1950. As a result, this pointed forward to further encouragements in inter-Church relationships in the second half of the century.

[103] Details are given in Talbot, "Fellowship in the Gospel: Scottish Baptists and their relationships with other Christian Churches 1900-1945", 352-353.

Incarnating the Incarnation. A Theological Analysis of the Ontological Christology of Charles H. Spurgeon

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ABSTRACT. In this paper, Charles Haddon Spurgeon is situated in his nineteenth-century British evangelical context. Though not considered to be a theological systematician, Spurgeon demonstrated a highly developed and deeply appropriated Christology that laid the foundation for his orthodoxy and orthopraxy. His re-animation of classical Augustinian and Chalcedonian theology stood in high relief against the theological trends of his time. Since there have been few academic works to highlight his unique theological significance, this paper, as part of a doctoral thesis on Spurgeon's theology, seeks to recover him as a theologian, not merely a homiletician, philanthropist, and abolitionist. Spurgeon's Christology contains little theological originality, yet his innovative treatment of Christ's divinity, humanity, hypostatic union reveals a unique theological appropriation. While his rhetoric was not immune to shortcomings, it was successful in grounding a declining Calvinism in a new way for middle-class London. This paper explores Spurgeon's ontological Christology, while also analyzing his earthy rhetoric to see, in those instances when his vernacular becomes theologically imprecise, if it deviates from a classical reformed theology.

KEY WORDS: Spurgeon, Christology, incarnation, homiletics, nineteenth century

Introduction

Lytton Strachey writes that the task of a Victorian historian is to "row out over that great ocean of material, and lower down into it, here and there, a little bucket, which will bring up to the light of day some characteristic specimen, from those far

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depths, to be examined with a careful curiosity."[1] In the academic arena, Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834-1892) rarely surfaces as a theologian.[2] Most of his biographers position him as a homiletician, an evangelist and pastor, a social worker and abolitionist, a college president, and so forth. Yet his sixty-three volumes of sermons, forty-nine volumes of commentaries, sayings, illustrations, and devotionals, and a lifetime of personal correspondence reveals the fact that Charles Haddon Spurgeon is actually doing a theology worth investigating. Baptist theologian B. H. Carroll acknowledged Spurgeon's limitation as a systematic theologian, yet correctly recognized that if his sermons were topically organized they would constitute "a complete body of systematic theology."[3]

[1] Lytton Strachey, quoted in Asa Briggs, *Victorian People. A Reassessment of Persons and Themes 1851-67* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955), 7.

[2] With the exception of Mark Hopkin's chapter on Spurgeon's theology, there is little theological analysis of his Calvinism elsewhere. See Mark Hopkins *Nonconformity's Romantic Generation. Evangelical and Liberal Theologies in Victorian England* (Studies in Evangelical History and Thought, Milton Keynes, UK, and Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, an imprint of Authentic Media, 2004), chapter five. Helmut Thielicke treats Spurgeon more as a preacher than theologian in *Vom Geistlichen Reden. Begegnung mit Spurgeon*. Helmut Thielicke, trans. John W. Doberstein, *Encounter with Spurgeon* (Fortress Press: reprint by Quell-Verlag, Stuttgart, Germany, 1961). It is interesting that Thielicke stretches Spurgeon across the landscape of nineteenth-century Victorian theology and elevates him above Schleiermacher, Johann Tobias Beck, and Ludwig Hofacker. See Thielicke, 1961, 3. In the translator's preface, John W. Doberstein writes, "How piquant, how wonderful, how 'ecumenical' that Helmut Thielicke, the highly educated German university professor and Lutheran theologian, should find such deep and warm kinship with Charles Haddon Spurgeon, the self-educated Victorian Baptist preacher" (Thielicke, 1961, preface). Lewis Drummond has a few paragraphs on Spurgeon's theology in *Spurgeon. Prince of Preachers* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 3rd edition 1992), but his work suffers from unchecked sources, odd changes in voice and tone, and is far from being a historically reliable source for the serious student of nineteenth-century Victorianism.

[3] B. H. Carroll, *Genesis an Interpretation of the English Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Bookhouse, copyright, 1948, Broadman Press), see Section I, "Intro-

Though never seeking to depart from English Puritan theology as championed by those like John Owen, Richard Baxter, John Flavel, among others, Spurgeon offers more than a merely regurgitated Puritan dogma. Though certainly an heir of the Puritans as Bacon shows,[4] Spurgeon was no ventriloquist who merely puppeted Elizabethan Divines. Eric Hayden notes that Spurgeon "modernized" Puritan teachings, "keeping to simple Anglo-Saxon that the man in the street could understand."[5] With gritty imagery, crude and pedestrian metaphor, and a healthy dose of natural humor, Spurgeon incarnated his theology for middle and lower working class Londoners.

In this article, I pull from research gathered for my doctoral thesis at St. Andrews, Scotland, to investigate one facet of Spurgeon's theology, his ontological Christology.[6] Spurgeon will first be situated in his Victorian homiletical context, then examined in light of the primacy of his Christology, and finally be analyzed in the ways he unpacks *logos sarx egeneto* in terms of Christ's humanity, divinity, and hypostatic union. It will prove beneficial to examine his vernacular with a meticulous eye, particularly when it becomes theologically imprecise to see if at any point Spurgeon's playful and provocative rhetoric deviates from the orthodox reformed tradition he both inherited and adopted from seventeenth-century English Puritanism.

Spurgeon's Context

The nineteenth century was The Great Age of Preaching, an experimental Petri dish in which preaching and preachers could

duction to the Interpretation of the English Bible: Further Developments of the Idea."

[4] For a lengthy study of Spurgeon's connection to the Puritan tradition, Ernest W. Bacon's *Spurgeon. Heir of the Puritans* (London: George Allen & Unwin LTD, 1967) is helpful.

[5] Eric Hayden, *Highlights in the Life of Charles Haddon Spurgeon* (Rio, WI: Ages Library, LLC, 2006), 104-105.

[6] Spurgeon's functional Christology is currently being explored by this researcher.

multiply. As fashionable as the "tasting of the waters," sermon tasting also came into vogue.[7] Ellison's assertion that Spurgeon's lack of formal theological education was the impetus of his success as pulpiteer[8] is probably correct, given the soporific homiletical techniques employed by many university-trained preachers. As it was observed in London, "The intellectuals gather about the pulpits of Liddon or Stanley; the lovers of oratory follow Punshon; but the crowd goes to the Tabernacle."[9] Spurgeon's pompous vigor and atypical Essex flair drew large numbers of people when he first arrived in London (complete with a polka dot handkerchief that he eventually relinquished), but it was his departure from the dehydration and formalization of Victorian preaching that kept them there. Spurgeon "talked English, instead of pulpit,"[10] and in contrast to a sophisticated Victorian homiletic that placed more emphasis on style than substance, Spurgeon proved his place as "*Wunderkind* of mid-Victorian nonconformity."[11] His abilities for memorization, creativity, and extemporaneity were nothing short of prodigious, as James Sheridan Knowles, a famous Irish actor turned preacher, learned. In a lecture to his students at Stepney College, he said:

> Go hear him at once… He is only a boy, but he is the most wonderful preacher in the world. He is absolutely perfect in oratory; and, beside that, a master in the art of acting… he can do anything he pleases with his audience; he can make them laugh and cry and laugh again in five minutes… that young man will live to be the greatest preacher of this or of any age.[12]

[7] Robert H. Ellison, *The Victorian Pulpit. Spoken and Written Sermons in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Selinsgrove: Susquehanna University Press, London: Associated University Press, 1998) 44.
[8] Ibid., 61.
[9] Ibid., 62.
[10] Ibid., 70.
[11] Chris Brooks, *The Victorian Church: Architect and Society* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), 89.
[12] Charles Spurgeon. *Autobiography*, Volume 1: The Early Years, rev. edn.,

Spurgeon's world was in transition. An "enlightened" eighteenth century had succumbed to a skeptical nineteenth. An industrial revolution had stippled the English landscape with factories and filled the metropolis horizons with haze. Darwin's *Origin of Species* revolutionized the study of animals and nature. People began using words like pterodactyl, plesiosaurus, and iguanodon.[13] The invention of anesthesia in 1846 allowed for surgical advances previously unattempted, and in the same year, Marianne Evans (better known as George Elliot) published her English edition of Friedrich Strauss' *Leben Jesu*, a book that would threaten an already declining conservative evangelical orthodoxy.[14]

England found herself academically unprepared for the dangerous German "neology" that permeated the Channel.[15] Chadwick notes that travelers to Germany were shocked to discover that many of the Gospel narratives were regarded as fables and myths.[16] A naive medievalism was forced to reckon with the rising claims of historical critics, and the "crisis of faith" that followed ignited questions previously regarded as veritable.[17] Was Jonah really swallowed by a whale? Did Jesus really walk on the water?

originally compiled by Susannah Spurgeon and Joseph Harrald (Carlisle, PA: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1962), 354.

[13] Chadwick, *The Victorian Church. An Ecclesiastical History of England*, Part I, 559.

[14] Strauss' *Leben Jesu* was originally published in German in 1835.

[15] "Neology" was the name given to the rising trends of historical criticism in the 1820s. Ralph Waldo Emerson summarized the attitude of his time when he asserted that the English "cannot interpret the German mind." Ralph W. Emerson, *English Traits* (London, 1856), 144.

[16] Owen Chadwick, *The Victorian Church. An Ecclesiastical History of England*, Part I (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), 530.

[17] The Victorian "crisis of faith" describes the change in climate that resulted from advances in nineteenth-century science, morality, religion and politics. Sidney Eisen notes that while the crisis of faith had been discussed far too simplistically in the past, recent scholars who have a "deeper sense of the

By the time Spurgeon was born in 1834 in Kelvedon, England, the evangelical heat wave that George Whitefield and Charles Wesley had generated a hundred years prior had already begun to chill. Spurgeon was "born again" as he would say, at the age of fifteen in a Colcester Primitive Methodist Church. By the age of twenty he had already developed a reputation as a gifted preacher and when he accepted the pastorate at New Park Street Chapel in London in 1854 he possessed no formal theological education. The crowds soon became too numerous for the Essex attraction and Spurgeon moved into the Metropolitan Tabernacle. It was here that he would became a "mega-church" pastor, albeit, before mega-churches were popular. Spurgeon preached weekly to six thousand people, sometimes to ten thousand, one time to over twenty-three thousand, and by the end of his life in 1892 he is said to have preached to over ten million people, and all without the aid of microphones or amplification.[18] Spurgeon's sermons contain more words than the Encyclopedia Britannica and have been translated in dozens of languages. A. P. Peabody notes that those who visited London were often asked two questions upon their arrival: "Did you see the Queen?' and 'Did you hear Spurgeon?'"[19] Queen Victoria's disguised visit to the Surrey Garden Music Hall to hear Spurgeon preach may or may not be historically reliable.[20] But regardless, it speaks to the success and widespread popularity of London's "The Prince of Preachers."[21]

continuity of ideas, or great sensitivity to the role of religion, have pointed out that the Darwinian evolution was rooted in the Christian culture of the day, that science and belief were not inevitably antagonistic, and that advocates of science were not necessarily hostile to religion." See *Victorian Faith in Crisis. Essays on Continuity and Change in Nineteenth-Century Religious Belief,* edited by Richard J. Helmstadter and Bernard Lightman (MacMillan: Houndmills, London, 1990), 1.

[18] *Christian History,* Issue 29, Volume X, No. 1.

[19] A. P. Peabody, "Spurgeon," *North American Review* 86 (1858), 275.

[20] This would not have been out of the Queen's character to do such a thing. On November 2, 1873, Queen Victoria visited a Presbyterian chapel in Crathie. During the Eucharist, she unexpectedly stepped out into the isle and

Spurgeon's Christology

The entirety of Spurgeon's ministry is threaded with a consistent and thoroughly appropriated doctrine of Jesus Christ. While reconstructing Spurgeon's ontological Christology is a bit like looking at Christ through a kaleidoscope, it is useful to retrieve him in hopes that Lewis Drummond was correct in saying that though "Spurgeon has never been seen as a systematic theologian in the strict sense… something of a systematic Christology can be derived from his many sermons and writings."[22] In virtually all of Spurgeon's sermons there is a clear trajectory towards Christ.

> But what is the Scripture's great theme? Is it not, first and foremost, concerning Christ Jesus? Take thou this Book, and distill it into one word, and that one word will be Jesus. The Book itself is but the body of Christ, and we may look upon all its pages as the swaddling bands of the infant Saviour; for if we unroll the Scripture, we come upon Jesus Christ himself.[23]

Spurgeon's unrolling of the Scriptures, not to mention his frequent "bee-line to the cross"[24] engendered significant hermeneutical criticism. Sidney Greidanus and others challenge his hermeneutic, claiming that he isogetically inserts Christ into Old Testament passages where Christ does not comfortably

walked to the front of the chapel with the common people. Owen Chadwick records that few observed her actions. Owen Chadwick, *The Victorian Church. An Ecclesiastical History of England*, Part II (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), 320-1.

[21] See James T. Allen, *Charles Spurgeon. The Essex Lad Who Became the Prince of Preachers* (London: Pickering & Inglis, 1893).

[22] Lewis Drummond, *Spurgeon. Prince of Preachers* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Kregel Publications, 1992), 291.

[23] Charles Spurgeon, *The New Park Street Pulpit and The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*. (Rio, WI: Ages Library, LLC, 2006), Volume 69, 639. Hereafter cited as *MTP*.

[24] Charles Spurgeon quoted in Drummond, *Spurgeon. Prince of Preachers*, 223.

fit.[25] But for Spurgeon one cannot have too high or frequent a Christocentricity. Jesus Christ is the theme of Scripture, the locus of history, the axis of pastoral enterprise and the mediator through whom reconciliation with God can occur. "We dare not," he says, "we cannot, and we will not altar the great subject matter of our preaching, Jesus Christ, and him crucified."[26] For Spurgeon, orthodoxy and orthopraxy depend on a proper understanding of the person and mission of Christ and consequentially, in all his endeavors from his weekly lectures at the Pastor's college, to his sermons and itinerate revivals, Spurgeon's single-minded Christological focus played a significant role in the development of his ministry.

Concerning Christ's divinity, Spurgeon is clear: Jesus Christ is God—"not a man made into a God, nor a God degraded to the level of a man, not something between a man and a God; but 'very God of very God'."[27] Spurgeon never falls into a monophysitism in which Christ possesses only one nature. Nor does he succumb to an adoptionism in which Christ's divinity was infused at the moment of his baptism. Rather, Jesus Christ, the eternal divine *logos* that existed from before time as the second person of the Trinity, is united to the Father in nature but distinct from the Father in person.

Yet Spurgeon's language suddenly becomes slippery on the subject. "When Christ *in past years* did gird himself with mortal clay, the essence of his divinity was not changed [italics mine]."[28] If Spurgeon is to be elevated to the standards of theology, and if he is not forgiven that which may actually be homiletically forgivable, we might assume that it was only "in past years" that Christ "did gird himself with mortal clay." Here is an episode in which Spurgeon's rhetoric can allow for interpretive maneuverability. Did Christ upon his ascension

[25] Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament. A Contemporary Hermeneutical Method* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999).
[26] Spurgeon, MTP, Volume 56, 619.
[27] Spurgeon, *MTP*, Volume 56, 619.
[28] Spurgeon, *MTP*, Volume 1, 17.

ungird himself of mortal flesh? A classical reformed consensus would not allow for it. The Word was made flesh once and for all, and continues to bear the scars of the crucifixion. Spurgeon would never condone an unincarnate Christ, but on this point his language is far from theologically airtight.

For Spurgeon, any potshot at Christ's divinity is worthy of Arius' birthmark.[29] "Without a divine Savior," he insists, "your gospel is a rope of sand, a bubble; a something less substantial than a dream."[30] And if he does not budge concerning the divinity of Christ, he is equally as expected to be dogged concerning Christ's humanity.[31] Yet the way in which he communicates

[29] Spurgeon writes: "We have almost forgotten the life of Arius, and scarcely ever think of those men who aided and abetted him in his folly. Bad men die out quickly, for the world feels it is a good thing to be rid of them; they are not worth remembering". See Spurgeon, *MTP,* Volume 4, 502. Spurgeon's language concerning Arius' Christology is unnuanced. Spurgeon writes: "I find that, nowadays, there is a sad increase of that pestilent heresy which is practically a return to the old Arianism which sought to rob Christ of his true glory, and reduce him to the level of a mere man." Spurgeon, *MTP*, Volume 46, 209. R. P. C. Hanson would challenge Spurgeon's caricature of Arius, noting that it was Arius' concern that the Son not be seen as a "portion" of the Father that led him to the belief that "the Son derives from nonexistence." Arius quoted in R. P. C. Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God. The Arian Controversy 318-381* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark 1988), 7. Spurgeon's demonization of Arius and other heretics often led him to see their lives only through the eyes of the Puritans.

[30] Spurgeon, *MTP*, Volume 7, 309. Spurgeon goes so far as to challenge the salvation of those who doubt the divinity of Christ, "I cannot understand, nor do I believe, that any man will ever enter those pearly gates who, in doubting or discrediting the deity of our blessed Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, renounces the sheet-anchor of our most holy faith and dares to face his maker without a Counselor, without an Advocate, without a plea for mercy." See Spurgeon, *MTP*, Volume 19, 129.

[31] In Spurgeon's comparison of Christ to other men he writes, "No man is so fully a man as Jesus Christ. If you speak of any other man, something or other narrows his manhood. You think of Milton as of a poet and an Englishman, rather than as a man. You think of Cromwell rather as of a warrior, than as a man. Either his office, his work, his nationality, or his peculiar character, strikes you in many a man rather than his manhood; but Jesus is *the* Man, the model Man: in all his deeds and words man to the fullness of man-

the incarnation acquires a gritty and charming flavor. "The Infinite," he writes, "[has] become the infant."[32] This Jesus, who submitted to a corporeal condensation, who was born of the virgin,[33] and "never blushed to confess that He was man,"[34] experienced "pain, hunger, thirst, desertion, scorn, and agony."[35] God had planned on becoming flesh,[36] and at the appropriate time, he did not merely cloak himself in the appearance of a man. Spurgeon had no patience for Docetism. "Flesh, and bone," he writes, "and blood, and heart, that may ache and suffer, and be broken and be bruised, yea, and may die, such is Jesus.[37] Spurgeon never allegorizes or spiritualizes the incarnation.

> The fact that Christ was really in the flesh, that he was no phantom, no shadow mocking the eyes that looked upon him, is exceedingly important… I have preached him to you as no more ab-

hood, in its purest and truest state. The second Adam is, *par* excellence, man." Spurgeon, *MTP*, Volume 33, 267. The idea of Victorian "manliness" was prevalent in the nineteenth century. See J. W. Reader, *Victorian England* (London: B. T. Batsford Ltd, New York: G. P. Putname's Sons, 1964, 1973).

[32] Spurgeon, "Jesus, the Grand Object of Astonishment," in *Till He Come* (Rio, WI: Ages Library, LLC, 2006), 97.

[33] Spurgeon writes, "The angel of the Lord thus spake concerning the manhood of 'that holy thing' that should be born of the favored virgin by the overshadowing of the power of the Highest. As to his divinity, we must speak concerning him in another style than this: but, as a man, he was born of the virgin, and it was said to her before his birth, 'He shall be great'." Spurgeon, *MTP,* Volume 30, 33.

[34] Spurgeon, *MTP,* Volume 4, 548.

[35] Spurgeon, *MTP,* Volume 23, 873.

[36] Spurgeon maintains that it was the eternal covenant of God to send Christ for the redemption of His people. "The covenant is always described as being everlasting, and Jesus, the second party in it, had His goings forth of old; He struck hands in sacred suretyship long ere the first of the stars began to shine, and it was in Him that the elect were ordained unto eternal life." Charles Spurgeon, *Morning & Evening* (Geanies House, Fearn, Ross-shire: Christian Focus Publications, originally published in 1994, reprint, 2000), evening, February 2.

[37] Spurgeon, *MTP*, Volume 9, 877.

> straction, but as a real Christ. I have not talked of him as if he were a myth, I have spoken of him always as an actual personage.[38]

At the heart of this non-mythical incarnation was the suffering of God. Interestingly enough, in one instance Spurgeon intimates that in his humanity alone, Christ could not have accomplished the Father's will.

> I am told that deity cannot suffer… Well, if it be true, then I shall content myself with believing that the deity helped the humanity by strengthening it to suffer more than it could otherwise have endured: but I believe that deity can suffer, heterodox as that notion may seem to be.[39]

Here again theological analysis is required. It was Christ's deity that "helped the humanity,"[40] and thus enabled the son to endure the suffering. If this stream of thought is taken too far, Spurgeon could possibly drift into a Patripassianism in which the deity of the Father aids the humanity of the Son to the extent that the Father suffers in the Son's stead.[41] But Spurgeon was no Sabellian. At the heart of his theology is a robust Augustinian Trinitarianism that preserved not only the Father's distinction from the Son, but also the Father's wrath upon his Son for the sins of his people.

As the nineteenth-century industrial revolution reaches an apex, Spurgeon speaks to Christ's humanity with imagery that furnace workers and chimneysweepers could resonate with. "If man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward, certainly Jesus Christ has the truest evidence of being a man."[42] In an era when

[38] Spurgeon, *MTP*, Volume 57, 600.
[39] Spurgeon, *MTP*, Volume 26, 207.
[40] Ibid.
[41] Patripassianism falls under the umbrella of Sabellianism in which the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit exist as three separate modes of God. Patripassianism speaks directly to the moment of crucifixion in which the Father suffers instead of the Son.
[42] Spurgeon, *MTP*, Volume 9, 876.

bloodletting was a common alleviation for myriad maladies, Spurgeon reflects on Christ's humanity in Gethsemane, "No need to put on the leech, or apply the knife; [Christ's blood] flows spontaneously…"[43] Street musicians, farmers, cooks and miners could digest Spurgeon's treatment of Numbers 11:11: "Wherefore Hast Thou Afflicted Thy Servant":

> We should never know the music of the harp is the strings were left untouched, nor enjoy the juice of the grape if it were not trodden in the winepress, nor discover the sweet perfume of cinnamon if it were not pressed and beaten; nor feel the warmth of fire if the coals were not utterly consumed."[44]

It was this jargon, so uncommon in late nineteenth-century Victorian homiletics that Spurgeon uses to discuss the hypostatic union of Christ. "We must not divide the person [of Christ], nor confound the natures. He is as truly man as if he were not God, and as truly God as if he had never assumed the nature of man."[45] Christ's two natures are suspended in unresolved tension, a divine dialectic, to the end. Though Spurgeon never concerns his congregation with the nuances of *homoousia* and *homoiosia,* he does embrace a Christ who is "of the same" and not "like" substance with the Father. "[Christ] is not a deified man any more than he is a humanized God,"[46] he writes. "He was not man and God amalgamated—the two natures suffered no confusion."[47] "Think of this wondrous combination!" he continues, "A perfect manhood without spot or stain of original or actual sin, and then the glorious Godhead combined with it!"[48] Spurgeon fused Christ's humanity and divinity with phrases

[43] Spurgeon, *Morning & Evening,* morning, March 23.
[44] Spurgeon, *Morning and Evening,* morning, October 7.
[45] Spurgeon, *MTP*, Volume 22, 367.
[46] Spurgeon, *MTP*, Volume 33, 267.
[47] Spurgeon, *MTP*, Volume 1, 146.
[48] Spurgeon, *MTP*, Volume 30, 37.

like "deity espousing manhood,"[49] and the two natures "harmoniously blended."[50] He also spoke of Christ's divine nature working "in strange union with humanity."[51]

In one instance Spurgeon flirts with a kind of Manichaeism, saying "The precious gopher wood of [Christ's] humanity is overlaid with the pure gold of his divinity."[52] Manichaeism claimed that Christ's two natures were distinct in that Christ's humanity coated his divinity,[53] while Spurgeon reversed the heresy to say that Christ's divinity coated his humanity.[54] Though clearly making use of Puritan allegory, this statement could lead to an unorthodox perception of Christ's hypostasis if taken too literally. Spurgeon believed that Christ was not just God on the outside, as if he possessed a divine exoskeleton. Rather, Christ's divinity permeated the entirety of his person.[55] He was one hundred percent God though and through. On the flip side, Christ's humanity was not simply relegated to his interior being. Yet this is an example in which Spurgeon's language, though intended to simplify Christ's *hypostasis* has the potential to deviate from a traditionally orthodox position.

Nevertheless, Spurgeon recognized the difficulty and limitation of using brittle and capricious language to encapsulate

[49] Spurgeon, *MTP*, Volume 9, 878.
[50] Spurgeon, *MTP*, Volume 23, 863.
[51] Spurgeon, *MTP*, Volume 37, 313.
[52] Spurgeon, *MTP*, Volume 5, 238.
[53] Manichaeism was a movement in the second century that combined Christianity, Gnosticism, and the Persian Magi traditions.
[54] In other places, Spurgeon speaks to Christ's natures as distinctively covering one another. He sometimes uses language associated with clothing to express this. "God in our nature," he writes, "one Being, yet wearing two natures." Charles Spurgeon, *Christ's Incarnation. The Foundation of Christianity* (Rio, WI: Ages Library, LLC, 2006), 80.
[55] Spurgeon was careful not to err on the other extreme by completely fusing the two natures of Christ so they were indeterminable. He writes, "For, though Jesus Christ was truly human,—and let that blessed fact never be forgotten,—yet his humanity was in so close an alliance with the Godhead, that, though we do not say that the humanity did really become divine." Spurgeon, *MTP*, Volume 47, 67.

eternal truths. "It is enough for us to know that the incarnation is a glorious fact, and it suffices us to hold it in its simplicity. God was manifest in the flesh of Jesus Christ the incarnate Word.[56] It is this colorful simplicity that best characterizes Spurgeon's theology. Never claiming exhaustive proficiency on the subject, Spurgeon leaves ample space for mystery concerning Christ. "I wish that I had power to bring out this precious doctrine of the incarnation as I could desire."[57] He furthermore confesses it to be "a miracle among miracles, and rises like an alp above all other mountains of mystery."[58] "To gaze into this tremendous mystery were as great a folly as to look at the sun, and blind ourselves with its brilliance."[59]

But Spurgeon does not leave his congregation in the dark. He directs them from "the how" of Christ's *hypostasis* to "the why." In Spurgeon's words, "[Christ's] manhood brings Jesus down to us, but united with the divine nature it lifts us up to God."[60] Here we find an interesting picture—salvific seesaw, of sorts—in which Christ is the pivot. As the Son goes down, humanity is raised. Images such as these aided boasted of childlike simplicity, but were memorable enough for simple peasants to retain.

When examining the legacy of Spurgeon, it becomes tempting to categorize him unfairly through the lens of the twenty-first century. For instance, the argument can be made that Spurgeon was pre-modern in theology,[61] postmodern in homi-

[56] Spurgeon, *MTP*, Volume 13, 869-70.
[57] Spurgeon, *MTP*, Volume 12, 895.
[58] Spurgeon, *MTP*, Volume 30, 814.
[59] Spurgeon, *MTP*, Volume 38, 452. He adds, "[Christ] is God and man in one person, by a marvelous unity which we believe but can never comprehend." Spurgeon, *MTP*, Volume 35, 192.
[60] Spurgeon, *The Clue of the Maze,* 31.
[61] Spurgeon found himself constantly indebted to pre-modern theologians like Calvin, Luther, and also the Puritans. "The doctrines which I preach is that of the Puritans," he touted. Charles Spurgeon, *Autobiography*, 95. John David Talbert's claim that "the appreciation Spurgeon acquired as a youth for Puritans laid the foundation for his 'christocentric' focus in theology" buttresses his own words. John David Talbert, *Spurgeon's Christological Homi-*

letical style,[62] and modern in context. Yet it is best to refrain from such anachronistic temptations for fear of importing onto Spurgeon an era he would not have recognized.

Nevertheless, Spurgeon was doing an old theology in a new way. His re-animation of classical Augustinian theology stood in high relief against the theological movements and trends of his time. There is a sense that Spurgeon anticipated the reception of his life for future generations,[63] while simultaneously challenging the Gnostic Victorian homiletic[64] that all too often reduced preaching to lecture. Spurgeon's rhetoric was a midwife for his congregations, assisting in the birthing of a Christ who knew the struggles of the working class—the poverty of the factory worker, the sickness of the orphan. Yet Spurgeon's language was not immune to shortcomings. While, on the one

letic (Thesis, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1989), 31-32. Spurgeon's adherence to the Puritans doctrines is also evidenced in the theological identity of the Pastor's College. Spurgeon writes, "We wish to be known and read of all men, we say distinctly that the theology of the Pastors' College is Puritanic." Spurgeon, *Autobiography*, 163.

[62] The idea of Spurgeon as postmodern is wrought with problems and a discussion on the subject would necessitate too lengthy a definition of postmodernism. Nevertheless, if postmodernism is understood as a reaction to modernism, Spurgeon could perhaps fit into a postmodern paradigm when it comes to his *method,* not his message. Spurgeon's use of narrative, imagination, and innovative rhetoric stood in contrast to the tempered stoicism that often surfaced in Victorian homiletics. The themes of pilgrimage, journey, and process (as opposed to destination) were driving mechanisms behind his theology, undoubtedly influenced by his favorite book, John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. Spurgeon is systematic only when he had to be such as at the end of his life when faced with the Downgrade Controversy. His default *modus operandi* was more organic than organized, often fragmented and presented inductively in a way that appealed to the senses, community, art, music, and personal experience. Concerning the latter, Spurgeon spoke directly to the congregation, using myriad autobiographical experiences.

[63] "The more distant future will vindicate me," Spurgeon wrote. 1889 address in Spurgeon, *An All-Round Ministry,* 368, quoted in Hopkins, *Nonconformity's Romantic Generation,* 165.

[64] I use the word Gnostic here to mean the separation of spirit from flesh in Victorian homiletics.

hand, it grounded theology for the masses, it might have done so at the occasional expense of theological precision. But if Spurgeon is to be raised to the rigors and demands of theology, and if he is to be appreciated as more than a homiletician, a careful linguistic and theological scrutiny of his works is in order.

As Spurgeon is resurrected from the deep waters of the Victorian Era, I should think that our little bucket is too small to contain so enormous a faculty.[65] Though Spurgeon offers little to the contemporary church in terms of theological originality, the weight of his influence is more deeply felt by those who endeavor to carry on his legacy of rendering traditional theology in creative and relevant ways. To this end, Helmut Thielicke is correct, "This bush from old London still burns and shows no signs of being consumed."[66]

[65] Not to mention his rather rotund disposition. For an interesting account of Spurgeon's diet, see Spurgeon, *Autobiography*, Volume 4, 369.
[66] Thielicke, *Encounter with Spurgeon,* 4.

The Reality of Evil and the Primordial Self in Paul Ricoeur's View of Fallibility

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ABSTRACT. The idea but also the reality of evil is essential for Ricoeur especially in connection with the concept of fallibility. In order to investigate the link between evil and fallibility, Ricoeur begins with a thorough analysis of evil from the perspective of human freedom. The discussion about man's freedom and the fact that evil exists in the world leads Ricoeur to another fundamental concept, namely that of primordial self. The primordial self, however, does not exist without the inner reality of his own consciousness. For Ricoeur, the consciousness of the primordial self is double, so he speaks about the consciousness of fault and the consciousness of evil which are both critical issues for the primordial self. These analyses are detailed by Ricoeur within the context of the myth of the fall which is subject to complex symbolism. The reality of evil with reference to the myth of the fall pushes Ricoeur to consider the primordial self as both the Adversary and the Other. Despite the complexity of Ricoeur's analysis, it seems that his final conclusion has to do with man's freedom which is the very source of evil in the world. The factuality of this reality pictures the human being not only as a free agent but also as a victim, which is the direct consequence of evil that affects humanity.

KEY WORDS: freedom, evil, self, fault, fallibility

Freedom and Evil

Even if man's will is bound, Ricoeur still speaks of freedom in connection to evil.[1] He cautions us to be very careful when we link freedom to evil because such a discussion does not solve

[1] David Tracy, *Blessed Rage for Order*, 213-214.

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the problem of the origin of evil. The idea of freedom only shows the place of the manifestation of evil but not its origin. Ricoeur realizes that the introduction of freedom within the discussion about evil may direct our attention to the idea that evil may be a reality which stems from outside the human being. In other words, the human being itself may happen not to be what Ricoeur calls "the radical source of evil".[2] This also entails that man proves not to be "the absolute evil doer".[3]

At this point, Ricoeur's vision appears to come much closer to traditional Christian theology where evil is indeed an external reality to the human being. Man is certainly not the source of evil; the source of evil must be searched beyond the possibilities and frontiers of man's existence in what the primary sources of Christianity call "Satan", seen as a creation of God who chose to use his freedom in an utterly faulty way. Therefore, in traditional Christianity, evil even has an ontological status in the sense that it exists as a reality which manifests itself actively. Moreover, evil is even a personal reality because the originating being of evil can related itself to the created reality of God's universe, including the human being. It is true that Ricoeur does not seem ready to admit that evil has an ontological status as in traditional Christianity; he nevertheless acknowledges the possibility to ascribe to evil an external dimension or an otherness which has a real existence beyond the human being.

This is obvious when Ricoeur says that evil affects human existence. It is indeed very difficult to perceive evil on its own in the sense of pointing one's finger to a reality—personal or impersonal—which can be called evil. What can be seen, however, is that human reality—to which evil may be external—is categorically affected by evil and it is in this particular way that evil can be seen as manifest. In other words, we can identify evil by noticing the way it manifests within human existence. Evil is

[2] William Kerrigan, *The Sacred Complex*, 100.
[3] Ricoeur, *Fallible Man*, xlvi.

manifest when it affects human existence, so it is from this empirical observation that we can trace evil back to its—probably external—origin beyond the human being. It is important to see at this point the very way Ricoeur describes the mechanism of evil. The human being is affected by evil—and this pretty much the only way we can see and understand the existence of evil—but we gather from this that evil can exist beyond us. If this is true, then evil does exist apart from us and beyond us but, at the same time, evil affects us in such a way that we are contaminated by it. So, in Ricoeur, the manifestation of evil within the human being is realized by contamination.[4] This means that the origin or the source of evil is totally inaccessible to us directly; man can have access to evil only by the mediation offered through its relationship to us, namely through what Ricoeur calls "the state of temptation, aberration or blindness".[5] Thus, evil is mediated to the human being who in turn is contaminated by it. To quote Ricoeur:

> To try to understand evil by freedom is a grave decision. It is the decision to enter into the problem of evil by the strait gate, holding evil from the outset for "human, all too human." Yet we must have a clear understanding of the meaning of this decision in order not to challenge its legitimacy prematurely. It is by no means a decision concerning the root origin of evil, but is merely the description of the place where evil appears and from where it can be seen. Indeed, it is quite possible that man is not the radical source of evil, that he is not the absolute evil-doer. But even if evil were coeval with the root origin of things, it would still be true that it is manifest only in the way it *affects* human existence. Thus, the decision to enter into the problem of evil by the strait gate of human reality only expresses the choice of a center of perspective: even if evil came to man from another source which contaminates him, this other source would still be accessible to us only through its relation to us, only through the state of temptation, aberration, or

[4] Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Anthropology in Theological Perspective*, 118.
[5] See also Richard Kearney, "Ricoeur", in Simon Critchley, William Schroeder (eds), *A Companion to Continental Philosophy*, 444.

> blindness whereby we would be *affected*. In all hypotheses, evil manifests itself in man's humanity.[6]

Such a presentation of evil can lead to some sort of an objectivised perspective on evil in the sense that evil is a reality which can affect us in a way which excludes our subjective contribution. Evil is out there, beyond the reality of our own being, and it affects us without any subjective contribution from us. We are affected by evil because evil manifest itself within us in a way which is rather implacably impressed upon us. Ricoeur realizes such a danger so he continues to portray evil as a reality which not only affects us but also is committed by us. The concept of responsibility as attached to freedom[7] is crucial here because freedom must take upon itself a double role: that of accepting evil as committed and that of seeing evil as not committed. This apparently leads to the conclusion that evil is manifest and thereby committed by man through his own freedom. Therefore, freedom is both the manifestation and the author of evil as far as the human being is concerned. Man can equally manifest evil and author evil. This does not mean that freedom is the origin of evil but only that it can manifest itself as the author of evil within the human being. The bottom line for Ricoeur though is that evil can be set within the realm of human freedom which eventually places man in a position of relationship with the origin of evil:[8]

> It may be objected that the choice of this perspective is arbitrary, that it is, in the strong sense of the word, a prejudgment; such is not the case. The decision to approach evil through man and his freedom is not an arbitrary choice but suitable to the very nature of the problem. For in point of fact, evil's place of manifestation is apparent only if it is recognized, and it is recognized only if it is

[6] Ricoeur, *Fallible Man*, xlvi.
[7] Ursula King, *Religion and Gender*, 80.
[8] See also Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *Biblical Narrative in the Philosophy of Paul Ricoeur*, 239.

> taken up by deliberate choice. The decision to understand evil by freedom is itself an undertaking of freedom that takes evil upon itself. The choice of the center of perspective is already the declaration of a freedom that admits its responsibility, vows to look upon evil as evil committed, and avows its responsibility to see that it is not committed. It is this *avowal* that links evil to man, not merely as its place of manifestation, but as its author. This act of taking-upon-oneself creates the problem; it is not a conclusion but a starting point. Even if freedom should be the author of evil without being the root origin of it, the avowal would place the problem of evil in the sphere of freedom. For if man were responsible for evil only through abandon, only through a kind of reverse participation in a more radical source of evil than his freedom, it would still be the avowal of his responsibility that would permit him to be in contact with that root origin.[9]

Ricoeur is again quite close to the traditional side of Christianity because the manifestation of evil is evident in Scriptures and it is related to man's acts, personality and nature, as well as to Satan as the very source of evil. Where Ricoeur departs from the Christian tradition is his theory of human freedom as connected to evil. In traditional Christianity, man is anything but a free being. Evil affects him in such a way that life can better be described as being choked by the reality of evil; man is utterly sinful because this is his very nature. Man cannot exert his freedom in connection to evil; what man can do is refrain from certain manifestation of evil in his life but this does not mean that he enjoys total freedom in living, assessing and manifesting himself in relationship to the reality of evil. In other words, man cannot avoid evil because evil is intrinsically linked to his very nature. Whatever man is in his natural state perspires evil even if man can—to a certain and very limited degree—avoid some manifestations of evil; he cannot, however, avoid evil because he is evil. Thus, traditional Christianity may accept Ricoeur's theory of contamination when it comes to present the way evil

[9] Ricoeur, *Fallible Man*, xlvi-xlvii.

affects the human being but this must be supplemented by the observation that man is not only contaminated by evil and he chooses to act in an evil way; may even likes to act evil and cannot live without being and acting evil.

The Primordial Self between the Consciousness of Fault and the Consciousness of Evil

A certain apprehension of this necessity can be detected in Ricoeur when he acknowledges the fact that does not want to commit certain evil acts but he nevertheless does them. The realization of this dilemma which places the human being between the rock and the hard place in relationship to his own self is defined by Ricoeur as the "consciousness of fault".[10] When we commit evil acts we actually see who we really are. Ricoeur even says that we are "contracted and bounded"[11] in an act which displays our inner selves. The mechanism or even the mechanics of evil presupposes a causality of evil which pushes the human being to act evil despite his desire not to commit evil. This means that there is something beyond our will but still within ourselves which forces us to commit evil acts despite our desire to oppose such manifestation. The phrase used by Ricoeur to introduce this entity beyond our will but still within ourselves is "primordial self".[12] The primordial self cannot be directly accessed by us; what we can do in relationship to it is see and perceive its specific acts which trigger within us the consciousness of evil. In this sense, the consciousness of evil makes us resort to the primordial self or, in Ricoeur's words, "this consciousness is a recourse to the primordial self beyond its acts."[13]

The consciousness of evil cannot exist though without an awareness which allows the human being to realize its fallibil-

[10] See also Ernest Keen, *Depression, Self-Consciousness, Pretending and Guilt*, 90.
[11] David Wood, *On Paul Ricoeur*, 116.
[12] Henry Isaac Venema, *Identifying Selfhood*, 56.
[13] Ricoeur, *Fallible Man*, xlvi-xlviii.

ity. This particular awareness which permits us to see our relationship with evil is termed by Ricoeur "the consciousness of freedom".[14] We have to enjoy this freedom if we want to see ourselves how we really are but at this point Ricoeur holds a divergent position in relationship to traditional Christianity. It is true that Christianity admits that the reality of sin cannot be fully apprehended without freedom. Man, however, does not possess freedom in his natural state affected by sin; man is free only after God intervenes in his life and makes him aware of his condition. So, in traditional Christianity, man reaches the state of freedom despite his natural sinful constitution which makes him a slave to sin and blind with reference to the consequences of sin. Man can indeed see both his sinful condition and the results of his sin following the external intervention of God upon his natural condition which results in freedom. Unlike traditional Christianity which presents the reality of human freedom as an external and divine intervention despite man's natural state, Ricoeur posits the reality of freedom within the natural constitution of humanity. Man is free in his natural state even if his dual anthropology makes his aware that his will is bounded and constrained by the reality of the primordial self. Moreover, unlike traditional Christianity which allows the consciousness of evil and the consciousness of freedom only in man's regenerated state—namely following God's external intervention in man's life—Ricoeur presents both the consciousness of evil and the consciousness of freedom as realities of man's natural constitution.

This hermeneutics is possible because man is capable of handling the significance of religious mythology. For Ricoeur, the world of myths is broken[15]—a statement which is rather vague but could be interpreted in the sense that the world of myths is deciphered. If this is true, then it follows that myths have al-

[14] Cf. David Wood, *On Paul Ricoeur*, 121.

[15] For details, see also Theodoor Marius van Leeuwen, *The Surplus of Meaning*, 156.

ready been translated into symbols, so we now have to grapple with the significance of symbols. As Ricoeur's hermeneutics is based on his conviction that we must not work behind the symbol but from the symbol, it means that we must wrestle not only with the current significance we attribute to symbols but also with what the symbol can acquire in future. With reference to fallibility, we shall have to recapture the symbolism of evil as presented by the myth of the fall. Ricoeur's translation of the myth of the fall into the symbolism of evil presupposes at least the recognition that the myth of the fall is not all encompassing.[16] To be sure, in Ricoeur, the myth of the fall does not include other equally crucial myths. Here is Ricoeur's explanation:

> The main enigma of this symbolics lies in the fact that the world of myths is already a broken world. The myth of the fall, which is the matrix of all subsequent speculations concerning the origin of evil in human freedom, is not the only myth. It does not encompass the rich mythics of chaos, of tragic blinding, or of the exiled soul.[17]

At this point, Ricoeur is again miles away from traditional Christianity which makes the fall responsible for chaos, spiritual blinding and a restless soul.[18] At this point, it should be reaffirmed that traditional Christianity does not place the fall as well as the resulting chaos, spiritual blinding and the restless soul within the category of myths. The fall is the willful acceptance of sin and also the committing of sin, so it is a reality which can be seen as deeply rooted in man's existence. Sin is a human reality and the way from total freedom to total sinfulness is not a myth which requires symbolic hermeneutics—or man's intervention upon himself in order to refine the myth of the fall with view to producing the symbolism of evil. The fall is a human reality which requires God's intervention from out-

[16] Karl Simms, *Paul Ricoeur*, 25.
[17] Ricoeur, *Fallible Man*, xlix.
[18] See, for details, Patrick Downey, *Serious Comedy*, 106.

side the human being in order to restore man's existence with view to producing a new reality: personal, spiritual/physical, historical, existential etc. To draw the line, traditional Christianity—unlike Ricoeur—tackles the issues of man's fall, chaos, spiritual blinding and the restless soul from the perspective of human reality and causality as historical events with ongoing historical consequences. Ricoeur though breaks the fall apart from the rest and insists that the fall is a myth which presents us with a symbolism of evil. One possible conclusion is that the fall—as a myth of course—cannot be held responsible for the reality of evil in the world. The fall is just a myth which talks about the reality of evil but it is not in itself the very cause of evil. This is why in Ricoeur freedom can exist "after" the fall; it is actually no "after" moment following the fall because the fall itself is not a historical event but only a myth. As a myth, the fall cannot be followed—in a chain of causality—either by chaos or spiritual blinding and the restless soul. They are all myths which present the reality of human evil in a form which can be refined symbolically. Myths are important for Ricoeur because they not only display our fallibility—and also our fault—but also the fact that we can related to our fallibility in freedom. So it is due to myths that we can fully realize the consciousness of fault as well as the consciousness of freedom. Myths are therefore ways which help us cope with our own existence by explaining to us that our faults not only belong to ourselves but they can also be understood by freedom. In other words, the myth—which is essentially part of the past—supports our understanding of ourselves in the present, so it is only logical to claim that myths connect the past to the present and the present to the past. This is because by understanding, deciphering and refining the myth—the fall, for instance—we affirm our awareness of fault, so we manifest our consciousness of fault which, for Ricoeur, is the condition of the consciousness of freedom.[19]

[19] Ernest Keen, *Depression*, 90.

The Primordial Self as the Adversary and the Other

The myth of the fall is crucial for Ricoeur because it can be treated independently from other myths which means that, on its own, the myth of the fall is subject to colorful symbolism.[20] Ricoeur can trace at least two aspects which flow directly from the myth of the fall. The first is the coming of evil into the world[21] by means of man's positing of it,[22] while the second is man's positing of evil as the result of man's yielding to the adversary.[23] It is quite clear that Ricoeur's understanding of the myth of the fall is based on an exegetical hermeneutics which stresses the idea of evil; what is less clear—or actually rather unclear—resides in Ricoeur's use of the concept of "adversary". Ricoeur's "adversary" is essential at this point provided we understand the mechanism of evil as extracted from the symbolism of evil based on the myth of the fall. Evil exists in the world because it came into the world and it came into the world because man affirmed or postulated it.[24] Evil may well exist beyond the human being itself but this means that evil exists also beyond the world of man. Evil, however, entered the world of man as soon as man postulated it or acknowledged it. One could speculate on the meaning of Ricoeur's idea of positing evil unless he had said that man posited evil because the yielded to the adversary. So, the coming of evil into the world is directly linked—through man's positing of it—to the fact that man surrendered to the adversary:

> Even if the philosopher gambles on the superiority of the myth of the fall because of its affinity with the avowal that freedom makes

[20] For a good analysis of Ricoer's myth of the fall, see Thomas L. Brodie, *Genesis as Dialogue*, 146.
[21] Karl Simms, *Paul Ricoeur*, 21.
[22] William David Hall, *Paul Ricoeur and the Poetic Imperative*, 66.
[23] See, for further details, Rosalyn W. Berne, *Nanotalk*, 267.
[24] For an interesting discussion about the postulation of evil, which brings Ricoeur closer to Kant, see John Wall, *Moral Creativity*, 83.

> of its responsibility, even if taking the myth of the fall as the central reference point allows us to regroup all other myths, the fact remains that the myth of the fall does not succeed in abolishing or reducing them. Moreover, the exegesis of the myth of the fall directly brings out a tension between two significations: evil comes into the world insofar as man posits it, but man posits it only because he *yields* to the siege of the Adversary.[25]

Who or what is the adversary? It is very difficult to say who or what the adversary is given that Ricoeur does not elaborate on the idea of adversary. Even without a clear definition of the adversary, one can easily notice that it is quite logical to see the connection between evil and the adversary as well as the fact that man seems to be in the middle—namely between the reality of evil and the reality of the adversary. The difficulty of identifying the adversary resides in Ricoeur's—probably deliberate—decision not to name the adversary. Some observations can nevertheless be made: first, the adversary is somehow beyond man's will because man yielded to him or it; second, the adversary is—at least to a certain degree—connected to the reality of evil as either the source or a cause of evil; and third, the adversary is not necessarily external to man even if it affects his will. These three characteristics lack a clear referent but they do remind us of Ricoeur's definition of the primordial self. The primordial self lies within man, acts beyond man's will and the consciousness of fault—and implicitly the reality of evil—is manifested in its specific acts. But why is the primordial self the "adversary"? Probably because it cannot be directly accessible to man, so man has no power or capacity to control the evil which is mediated through his specific acts.[26] Man acknowledges the reality of evil, he can even realize that there is something in him which binds his will but he cannot refrain from doing the wrong deeds he hates to perform. This particular awareness of man triggers his consciousness of fault but the

[25] Ricoeur, *Fallible Man*, xlix.

[26] See also Anthony C. Thiselton, *The Hermeneutics of Doctrine*, 263.

consciousness of fault is available to man only through and due to the consciousness of freedom. In other words, man is aware of the reality of evil because he is a free being despite the binding nature of his primordial self. This interpretation seems to be confirmed by Ricoeur's conclusion that by means of affirming evil, freedom finds itself in an odd position, and this is the position of a victim.[27] For Ricoeur, the position of a victim, which is clearly applied to friend, must be judged in relationship to what Ricoeur calls the Other:[28]

> The limitation of an ethical vision of evil and of the world is already signified in the ambiguous structure of the myth of the fall: by positing evil, freedom is the victim of an Other. It will be the task of philosophic reflection to *recapture* the suggestions of that symbolics of evil, to extend them into all the domains of man's consciousness, from the human sciences to speculations on the slave-will. If "the symbol gives thought," what the symbolics of evil gives to thought concerns the grandeur and limitation of any ethical vision of the world. For man, as he is revealed by this symbolics, appears no less a victim than guilty.[29]

Of course it is not freedom which posits evil by man in his capacity of free being is capable of positing evil and therefore placing himself in the position of a victim. Man though is his own victim if the primordial self only transcends his will but not his being. Freedom, however, brings about responsibility and responsibility in connection to evil and especially the performance of evil acts produces guilt.[30] This is why, in Ricoeur, man's status of being a victim is doubled by his state of being guilty based on the responsible application of freedom with reference to the reality of evil.[31]

[27] See also Ursula King, *Religion and Gender*, 80.
[28] Also check Anthony C. Thiselton, *Thiselton on Hermeneutics*, 48.
[29] Ricoeur, *Fallible Man*, xlix.
[30] Richard Kearney, *On Paul Ricoeur*, 18.
[31] Ricoeur, *Fallible Man*, xlviii-xlix.

"Let Not Many of You Become Teachers." Applying James 3:1 to the Local Church

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ABSTRACT. How does James' word of discouragement to teachers in James 3:1 fit in with a canonical and synthetic approach that can be applied to the local church today? This article seeks to present a robust reading of James 3:1 that wrestles with the influential Pauline passages on spiritual gifts. The focus of this study is to present practical implications and results of reading James 3:1 as being in tension with Paul's teaching on spiritual gifts. Specific attention is given to the need to think critically about how James 3:1 impacts eldership, the role of faith, small groups and teaching authority. The study concludes that James 3:1 can provide gravity to the role of teachers when many view teaching in the church with flippancy.

KEY WORDS: teachers, elders, spiritual gifts, church growth, leadership

Introduction

Free of long qualifications, footnotes or parenthetical apologies, the short book of James has the potential to hit the implied reader right between the eyes. The contemporary context of evangelicalism makes the clear imperative of James 3:1 "let not many of you become teachers," difficult to implement. We live in a culture dominated by the notion an individual should pursue any dream or profession. In the church this often translates into a universal encouragement to pursue leading small groups or teaching Sunday school if they so desire. It is hard to imagine anyone saying, "Yes, you may indeed have a spiritual gift of teaching… but maybe you shouldn't use that gift in the church right now." But James 3:1 does admit at least the possibility of

such conclusions, even if they are very uncomfortable. What James 3:1 does demand, in addition to the need to obey it, is to not only determine its singular meaning but to reflect upon and think critically about its various applications.

The reflections offered here are intentionally systematic with a focus on ecclesiology that interacts with biblical studies. They are therefore indeed to be *synthetic* across diverse writers, *canonical* across diverse books and yet *practical*. The need for an ecclesiastical and systematic reflection on James 3:1 is based on several facts. First, many commentaries are not written for the church. Many are written for the academy and do not address practical problems and application. Second, the division between dogmatics and biblical studies has made systematic interpretations of biblical texts foreign. Third, in a matter of speaking, the topic of ecclesiology has been much neglected, although the study of it has gained traction over the past few decades.

An Application of James 3:1 Will Require Critical Thinking about Theological Method

One of the biggest challenges one faces when seeking to apply James 3:1 to the local church is that our ecclesiology and method of interpretation is often not sufficiently canonical. The use of rotating elders, the plethora of teachers of doctrine and the unbalanced call for the use of every spiritual gift of teaching can be attributed in part to a lack of balance in reading both the Pauline epistles and the general epistles such as James. Whereas Paul encourages the use of spiritual gifts such as teaching, James (and others) provides balance. Arguably, where many have become teachers, the church has not given sufficient consideration to theological method and the need for considering the whole counsel of Scripture (Acts 20:27). When considering the discouragement of James and the encouragement of Paul about teaching in the church, the proper paradigm is that of tension, not contradiction.

The methodological issue that must be addressed is that of tension and contradiction in a canonical reading of James. When one reads of the congregation at Corinth, it appears that when they assembled many gifted people were present with a desire to share psalms, teachings, revelations, tongues and interpretations. As a result, Paul admonishes them to let "all things be done for edification" (1 Cor. 14:26). For Paul, his focus is on encouraging the use of teaching and edification gifts in the assembly. Some have concluded from Paul's focus on encouragement that James 3:1, "does not, of course, mean to discourage such people" as Sunday school teachers and Bible study leaders "from communicating their scriptural insights."[1] Yet discouragement does seem to be exactly what James is doing. The reference to "brothers" in James 3:1 as his implied readers makes it unlikely that James is merely suggesting that Christians test themselves to make sure that they are saved before they engage in teaching.[2]

On the one hand Paul explicitly encourages teachers in 1 Cor. 14:6-26 while James explicitly discourages teachers in James 3:1. But reading James as a word of discouragement against a multitude of teachers in the church does not have to stand in *contradiction* to Paul's statements in the first letter to the Corinthians.[3] There are good reasons for denying that contradiction is a necessary framework to use. First, the occasion for Paul's comments are based the great desire on the part of the Corinthians to experience manifestations of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 14:12). This lead to a scenario wherein those present were "immature" (1 Cor. 14:20) because they were not being "built up" by intelligible communication (1 Cor. 14:17). Furthermore, Paul himself

[1] John MacArthur, Jr., *James* (Chicago: Moody, 1998), 146.
[2] John MacArthur, Jr. *James*, 146.
[3] For a survey of James versus Paul on salvation by grace and obedience to the torah see Bruce Chilton, "James, Jesus' Brother", in *The Face of New Testament Studies*, ed. Scott McKnight and Grant Osborne (Grand Rapids, MI, Baker, 2004), 259.

connects teaching with the possibility of future eschatological judgment in 1 Cor. 9:27.[4]

The occasion and audience of James' epistle was likely Palestinian and not Greco-Roman/Corinthian.[5] There is evidence that James was dealing with inappropriate speech or teaching that sprang from jealousy and selfish ambition (James 3:16). Recognition that the letters of James and Paul were responses to different scenarios frees one from unnecessary conclusion that a reading of James 3:1 as a note of discouragement contradicts Paul's note of encouragement. Second, both texts can offer principles for a systematic ecclesiology. The principles of freedom to teach (as found in Paul) and restraint upon teaching (as found in James) can remain in *tension*.

The discouragement against teachers in James 3:1 as part of a wider tension in the New Testament is completely compatible with the genre of James and Old Testament wisdom. The co-text of James 3:1 includes a call for "wisdom" on the part of the reader/auditor: who is wise and understanding among you? (James 3:13). The wisdom theme is tied to the very genre of the whole epistle. Carson and Moo argue that its genre resembles that of a homily or series of homilies rooted in a Jewish wisdom tradition.[6] While wisdom sayings or wisdom literature does not generally constitute a universally valid law that must be applied in every situation, the imperative of James 3:1 is rooted in a universal eschatological judgment (James 3:1b). However, a proper understanding of the genre and Jewish worldview of James supports the framework of tension over the framework of contradiction. The so-called contradiction of Proverbs 26:45

[4] Peter Davids, *The Epistle of James. A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1982), 136.

[5] "There is no warrant for associating James's warning specifically with an unregulated Pauline Church in whose meetings many speakers, more or less qualified, might intervene at will." Sophie Laws, *A Commentary on the Epistle of James* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1993), 141.

[6] D. A. Carson and Douglas Moo, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2005), 630.

(don't answer the foolish argument… be sure to answer the foolish argument) is an example of how comfortable wisdom literature is with tension.[7] Understanding the situational nature of wisdom and wisdom literature is necessary for a canonical reading of James 3:1 with Paul's epistles. It allows us to read it with all of the illocutionary force of the imperative that James communicates in this text.

An Application of James 3:1 Will Require Critical Thinking about Teachers

In order to apply James 3:1 we must think critically about the teachers that James is referring to. The command "do not let many of you become teachers" first begs the question: who are the "teachers" (*didaskaloi*) that James 3:1 is referring to? James 5:14 refers to the "elders of the church" but he only refers to "teachers" in 3:1. An application of this command for the church today demands that we further ask the question: should the teachers that James had in mind equate to the people who we normally think of as teachers today in our contemporary ecclesiastical context? These critical questions are unavoidable if the church desires a purposeful and reflective application of James 3:1 in the church today. The question that must be answered before application can be made to the church today is whether James 3:1 is referring to the teaching office (of elder) or to teachers in the church in general.

It is common to argue that James 3:1 is referring to the teaching "office" of elder or overseer.[8] Ralph Martin argues that entire pericope of James 3:1-18 refers to the "teaching office of the church."[9] Martin's argumentation about the unity of the pericope is largely convincing although it requires some qualifica-

[7] Tremper Longman III, *How to Read Proverbs* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2002), 48-49.

[8] Thomas D. Lea, *Holman New Testament Commentary. Hebrews and James* (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman, 1999), 311; James Adamson, *James. The Man and His Message* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1989), 369.

[9] Ralph Martin, *James* (WBC 48; Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1988), 103.

tions. He argues that James 3:1-18 is largely about an ecclesiastical setting or congregational worship. The use of the *sōma* imagery is primarily about the congregation: the teacher is like a rudder who can steer whole ship off course or set the whole forest on fire. It is quite likely that the whole pericope of James 3:1-18 is about teachers. Thus the primary message is that teachers who abuse their speech and let their tongues get out of control will soon become false teachers.[10] In this view, verses 13-18 function as a list of qualifications that one must meet before teaching in the congregation. Further references to the order or disorder of the congregation in verse 16 support this view.

The other position understands James 3:1 to refer to "authoritative and public transmission of tradition about Christ and the Scriptures."[11] It is not clear as to how much authority these teachers had, although if Martin is correct, they had the ability to set the whole congregation on fire. It may be that their authority was more practical or based on influence rather than an office such as elder. Evidence for this is based on the fact that James 3:13 addresses those who claimed to be "wise and understanding."[12] Thus, it is likely that the teachers were not official office holders necessarily but that they were charismatic teachers who had influence in the congregation due to their claim to have wisdom. The fact that offices and titles were rather fluid (compared to modern ideas of ecclesiastical offices) is seen from Jesus' own status as rabbi (Matt. 26:49; Mark 10:51; John 1:38, etc).[13] As MacArthur helpfully points out, Jesus was not an offi-

[10] Martin, *James*, 104.

[11] Thomas Schreiner, "An Interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:9-15," in *Women in the Church. An Analysis and Application of 1 Timothy 2:9-15*, ed. Andreas Köstenberger and Thomas Schreiner (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2005), 101.

[12] Pheme Perkins, *Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching. First and Second Peter, James and Jude* (Louisville, TN: John Knox Press, 1995), 116.

[13] Douglas Moo, *The Letter of James* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000), 148.

cial rabbi but he gave interpretation in a synagogue service.[14] One did not necessarily have to be trained or recognized by a particular body to claim a title of teacher.

The "teachers" (*didaskaloi*) that James 3:1 is referring to are most likely those whom the congregation recognizes as an authoritative teacher. James could have referred to "elders" here but he does not (James 5:14). These teachers may not have held an office of elder or overseer but had influence and could sway the people in a negative direction. Thus, our thesis modifies Martin's view in that James 3:1-18 can include the teaching office of elder or overseer but it is not restricted to it. The "teachers" are those who claim to be wise and are best viewed as active and influential sages in the community. This understanding of "teachers" has implications for application and developing a systematic ecclesiology. Contrary to MacArthur, this imperative does not apply only to those holding an office (of pastor, elder, or deacon).[15] It is meant to discourage people not only from taking the teaching office of pastor or elder but from public authoritative teaching about Christ and the Scriptures.

The implications for elders are further explored below. An additional reflection on small groups (cell groups) is appropriate since they are often the foundation for community in many churches. These groups are often led by a lay-person acting as a facilitator or a small group leader. Whether small group leaders should be men or women is beyond the scope of this paper but it is sufficient for this study to point out that most small group leadership involves some amount of teaching of Christ and the Scriptures. An application of the imperative of James 3:1 should lead churches to question who can be small group leaders and how they should be trained. Rotation of small group leaders may entail the rotation of teachers in the church—to its detriment. Alternatively, small groups could choose to be shepherding groups that are each led by an elder. Using elders in this

[14] John MacArthur, Jr., *James*, 146.
[15] John MacArthur, Jr., *James*, 146.

way will not only provide elders with an avenue to shepherd the flock directly, but they will also provide stability in the teaching functions of the small group.

An Application of James 3:1 Will Require Critical Thinking about Elders

Some of the most in-depth resources about the office of elder do not interact substantially with the imperative of James 3:1.[16] One of the biggest problems in local churches that James 3:1 speaks to in terms of contemporary application is the problem of rotating elders. For those who agree with such an assessment, they will find themselves in the company of pastors and theologians who have penned recent books on practical ecclesiology. There are a host of problems that accompany rotating eldership. Mark Driscoll notes two prominent ones, the first and most important being the "lack of precedent in Scripture for such time limitations" and second, the "discontinuity in decision-making and oversight."[17] In this study I want to explore an additional problem that must be considered by churches: *rotating elders multiplies teachers*. I offer several reflections on this problem in light of James 3:1.

The logic proposed here is rather straightforward and unavoidable: rotating elders multiplies teachers in the local church which is explicitly prohibited by James 3:1. This proposition is not so universal that it encompasses every church in every place. This is discussed in detail below. What is important to point out straightaway is that this proposition or logical syllogism will require a particular view of eldership. It could be argued that our syllogism falls apart as a *non-sequitur* because it

[16] The following offer only the briefest interaction: Alexander Strauch, *Biblical Eldership. An Urgent Call to Restore Biblical Church Leadership* (Littleton, CO: Lewis & Roth, 1995), 272; Peter Toon et all, *Who Runs the Church. 4 Views on Church Government*, ed. Steven Cowan (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004), 215; Phil A. Newton, *Elders in Congregational Life. Rediscovering the Biblical Model for Church Leadership* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2005), 85.

[17] Mark Driscoll, *On Church Leadership* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2008), 78.

does not follow that rotating elders multiplies teachers. It must be admitted that a practical application of James 3:1 against rotating elders requires a particular view of eldership.

The churches that practice rotating eldership are not few. Denominations that practice rotating eldership include independent bible churches, Disciples of Christ,[18] Assemblies of God and Conservative Baptists. This group is significant even after we exclude Reformed and Presbyterian denominations that rotate elders in the local church but differentiate between ruling elders and teaching elders.

The temptation that elder boards will face is the ability to respond to doctrinal pluralism with apathy or determined relativism. Apathy may appear in those who throw up their hands and proclaim that the doctrinal differences amongst Protestants must mean that the bible says nothing about ecclesiology. Determined relativism is the rigid and firm position that no one is right. There is a great deal of irony in this position, which is a dogma itself. In the church where the sin of pride is acknowledged as so dangerous, deceptive and widespread, especially amongst those who are educated, the pastors or elders who stand against the rotation of elders may be automatically judged as prideful. One might hear the term "epistemological humility" thrown around. The argument goes: if one truly had humility about the knowledge or epistemological certitude we have about eldership and ecclesiology, then rotating eldership would not be a problem! The answer to such an argument must rely on Scripture. Qualifications and discussions about the hermeneutical spiral, critical realism and speaking the truth in love may need to take place. Not only does it not follow that a claim to truth is necessarily prideful, but the knowledge we are talking about deals with the Scripture.

A firm stand against rotating eldership requires understanding and affirming two concepts. First, it requires understanding

[18] Colbert S. Cartwright, *People of the Chalice. Disciples of Christ in Faith and Practice* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 1987), 52.

that eldership is a teaching office. Due to space limitations let us consider two pieces of evidence. First, in Acts 6 where the "twelve" are overwhelmed by the administrative needs of the church, the "seven" are appointed to serve in order to free the "twelve" to devote themselves to "prayer and to the ministry of the word" (Acts 6:4). There is indeed discontinuity between the "twelve" and the office of elder and between the "seven" and the office of deacon. Yet, it is widely argued that this passage reflects the division of labor as found in early ecclesiology as found in the writings of Paul, Peter, James, etc. The office of elder is a teaching office and is broadly based on the ministry of prayer and the word. A second stronger argument comes from the fact that the qualifications for the two offices of elder and deacon as found in 1 Timothy are equal except that overseers (*episkopos*) must be able to teach (1 Tim. 3:2). The major distinction between elders and deacons in 1 Timothy is the ministry of the word. This reflects the distinction between the "twelve" and the "seven" and reinforces that argument. The text of James 3:1 will help to establish the biblical office of elder in the local church. This will require that the office elder be understood as a teaching office.

The second concept that must be affirmed is that the New Testament posits equality between what bishops, elders, overseers (and pastors). What is significant to note is that in the introductory chapter to *Five View of Church Polity* (2004), the editors argue that the use of Greek words in the New Testament for elders and overseers are coterminous. The editors ask in the introduction, "one has to wonder whether, first, the evidence from the New Testament is as clear-cut as it seems on face value."[19] The evidence that there are only two offices in the New Testament is very strong. Those seeking to apply James 3:1 to the problem of rotating elders must first wrestle through this evidence. To deny that elders must serve as pastors or shep-

[19] Chad Owen Brand and R. Stanton Norman (eds), *Five Views of Church Polity* (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman, 2004), 11.

herds of the flock through the ministry of the word will make it impossible to see how James 3:1 would have any practical effect on ecclesiology.

In sum, one cannot proceed with applying James 3:1 to the problem of rotating elders until a conceptual framework is formed from the biblical text. Even if the application of James 3:1 is rejected, it will at least be understood as a practical application derived from a synthetic and canonical reading of the New Testament.

An Application of James 3:1 Will Require Critical Thinking about Wisdom

The rotation of elders is not necessarily a sin. Simply because it can be a sin or is often a sin does not necessitate that it is often a sin. When considering the matter of rotating elders, wisdom must prevail. Wisdom must prevail as the necessary approach to the issue because the prohibition against an abundance of teachers in the local church in James 3:1 is admittedly subjective. James does not give numbers against which we may measure our churches. Nor is James' *Sitz im Leben* of the first century so clear that we may accurately read behind the text. The question must be answered by readers who seek to apply this imperative today is this: how many is too many?

The postmodern context of the church in the 21st century requires several clarifications. First, the subjective nature of this question does not entail *radical* subjectivism so as to render any answer to this question useless. In others words, subjectivity does not necessitate total subjectivism or relativism. Simply because there are no quantitative boundaries given for this imperative upon local churches does not mean that it can be ignored or dismissed. The answer is to this self-imposed dilemma is an answer that the text of James itself demands: wisdom.

The answer to our question (how many teachers is too many?) is qualitative in that the answer must meet the criteria of wisdom and quantitative in that this answer must result in a numerical answer in each application. Wisdom will demand the

local church navigate the matter while rejecting the idea that no application can be made at all. Practically speaking the wisdom required to turn this biblical imperative into application will be found in the paradigm of knowledge as articulated by John Frame. Frame builds on the work of John Calvin and other Reformed theologians and suggests that one must know oneself, one must know the situation and one must know God.[20] The knowledge of God and knowledge of self come simultaneously so that they grow together. One must not necessarily adhere to Reformed doctrine to appropriate this paradigm of knowledge. As we apply this paradigm of knowledge to wisdom and the imperative of James 3:1 and the problem of rotating elders, the paradigm looks like this: know the people that make up the local church body, know the leaders and teachers in the local church body and know what God says about ecclesiology as thoroughly as possible.

Time can turn wisdom into legalism. As the local church evaluates the people, the teachers and the Scriptures in an attempt to apply James 3:1 to biblical eldership they will inevitably find a quantitative answer. Whether this answer gets incorporated into bylaws or the tradition of the church, the danger is treating this number as though it was a law or standard that is forever binding upon the church. The demand to use and apply wisdom in the local church will demand courage and test the wills of those who fall into traditionalism or legalism. A genuine application of James 3:1 to the local church will require periodic evaluation as the church grows bigger or smaller.

Churches who have a very long history will likely encounter this problem. Even those churches that could be categorized as "low-church" in their traditions will encounter problems. Tradition can be a barrier to wisdom when the leadership does not have the courage to obey biblical imperatives such as James 3:1. One solution to periodic evaluation could be incorporating a

[20] John Frame, *The Doctrine of Knowledge of God. A Theology of Lordship* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 1987), 65.

quantitative answer into the church bylaws by indicating how many teachers or elders can be active at a time. But care must be taken not to write it so rigid that it will be continuously challenged by the growth of the church or by reoccurring or seasonal situations like vacation bible school.

An Application of James 3:1 Will Require Faith

There are many good reasons not multiply teachers in the church. What probably comes to the mind of most people when they think of the problem of "too many cooks in the kitchen" are the practical ramifications. The church was not designed to run with a lot of chiefs and few Indians. But that isn't the reason for James' discouragement of teachers in James 3:1. His argumentation is eschatological rather than pragmatic. Contra Perkins, the eschatological heavenly court is in view and not the human courts referred to in James 2:7 (or both).[21] It is true that the readers/auditors of James were dragged into (human) courts by oppressive and wealthy rulers. God's judgment is in view in James 2:23 where God *elogisthē* Abraham as righteous. The connection between the stricter judgment of James 3:1 and the reckoning action of God is conceptual as both are judging actions of God. The more immediate context is that of one's status before God and therefore God's own court that is the subject of the stricter judgment given to teachers in James 3:1.

Most Christians do not view church polity or structure in terms of sin or obedience. While there are certainly disagreements about polity and the nature and necessity of biblical offices few who have researched the matter would argue that the bible has nothing that must be obeyed. Yet practically speaking, many create mental boxes or categorize sin in such a way that prevents ecclesiological decisions from ever being sin. Sin is watching pornography or sin is swearing or getting drunk. Rarely are decisions about church government or polity cast in

[21] Perkins, *Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching. First and Second Peter, James and Jude*, 116.

terms of sin. This is what makes the text of James 3:1 so difficult to apply today, it forces us to think about church government and spiritual gifts and service in terms of something negative and possibly sinful.

The discouragement of James 3:1 is based not on pragmatic considerations of the present. Rather, all teachers in the church should expect stricter judgment. Failure to teach the church correctly will result in judgment before God. It is this eschatological reality that drives James 3:1 and his word of discouragement. If we follow Ralph Martin's conclusions as described above and understand James 3:1 as an integral part of the pericope from James 3:1-18, James does eventually cite pragmatic present concerns: selfish ambition is demonic and leads to disorder and every vile practice (James 3:16). Limiting the numbers of teachers of Scripture in the local church requires faith because the eschatological judgment must be understood by faith and the gravity of it grasped by faith.

Conclusion

Motyer sums up the word of discouragement of James 3:1 as "if one should say to a group of young people at a vocation conference: Whatever you do, don't think of Christian service!"[22] As long as it is not professional Christian service that only comes to mind, Moyter's summary reflects the conclusions of this study. James 3:1 is a word of discouragement not only to those seeking the teaching office of elder or pastor; it is also a word of discouragement broad enough to encompass small group teachers, Sunday school teachers and others. Such a conclusion is as shocking as Motyer's own way of stating the meaning of James 3:1. Motyer is quick to admonish against making "heavy weather over a passing allusion."[23] This word of discouragement is a word of wisdom. On the other hand, this imperative is

[22] J. A. Motyer, *The Message of James. The Tests of Faith* (Downers Grove, IL/Leicester: IVP, 1985), 118.

[23] Motyer, *The Message of James*, 118.

stronger than a passing allusion. It is an imperative that requires critical thinking as well as an acknowledgement that sin against God in this matter is a genuine possibility. The error of the day is a view of spiritual gifts and ecclesiology in a manner that is so democratic and flippant that James 3:1 must be heard afresh in most evangelical churches. The paradigm suggested here follows John Frame's development of Calvin's axiom to know the flock, know those who seek to shepherd it through teaching and know the Scriptures.

Colonialism and Christian Missions

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ABSTRACT. This paper unfolds some of the reasons which lay behind the missionaries' effort to take the Christian faith beyond the boundaries of the already more or less "Christian" Europe. While missionaries of all Christian denominations—Roman Catholic, Anglican, Methodist, Baptist but also Lutheran and Reformed—were eager to take their faith for the spiritual profit of those who were meant to hear their message, the secular state also shared a various range of reasons, amongst which the most salient were commerce and slave trade. This is why it is argued that Christianity reached all the corners of the earth during the time of colonialism and the church, as we know it today beyond Europe, is the result of such efforts.

KEY WORDS: colonialism, missions, commerce, slaves, martyrdom

Introduction

> "Tell them how interested the Queen is in their welfare, how she wants them to improve themselves and their country. We were like you long years ago, going about naked with our war paint on, but when we learnt Christianity from the Romans we changed and became great. We want you to learn Christianity and follow our steps and you too will be great."

This was the message that a late nineteenth-century colonial administrator asked a missionary to translate, and it exemplifies an extreme attitude to colonialism. (The fact that it was a missionary who was asked to translate these words is itself significant). Sir Harry Johnston, the author of these remarks, was an atheist, but nevertheless regarded missionaries as an essen-

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tial part of colonial expansion. "As their immediate object is not profit, they can afford to reside at places until they become profitable. They strengthen our hold over the country, they spread the use of the English language, they induct the natives into the best kind of civilization, and in fact each mission station is an essay in colonialism."[1]

Such were the attitudes of some colonialists. Was the link between Christianity and Western civilization seen as organic by all, missionaries as well as colonialists, or did the colonial spirit exercise a less direct but nevertheless pervasive effect on missionary strategy? That the colonial spirit exercised some influence is undeniable, but the extent of its influence is an exceedingly complex question. Political, economic, military, humanitarian and religious factors all played a part in the steadily increasing penetration and hegemony over the non-European world by the European powers and, towards the end of the nineteenth century, by the United States of America. Writers from colonised territories are often quick to point out the harm caused by colonialism and by missionary activity influenced by it. Those from colonial powers point rather to the laudable goals behind at least some colonial strategy. Those who write from a Christian standpoint are apt to defend instinctively the role of those who have worked in the name of their faith. Those who are non- or anti-Christian are more likely to be critical of missionary endeavour. Given both the inbuilt prejudices with which any writer approaches the subject, and the polemical nature of the debate, it is difficult to attain and impossible to prove objectivity. However, this should not act as a deterrent to tackling the question but as a spur to greater study of it, and particularly of the multifarious facts and details of the nineteenth-century missionary movement.

The nineteenth century certainly saw a prodigious growth in Christian missionary endeavour. Latourette writes:

[1] B. Gascoigne, *The Christians*, 243.

> Never had the faith more adherents among so many peoples and in so many countries. Never had it exerted so wide an influence upon the human race. Measured by geographic extent and the effect upon mankind as a whole, the nineteenth century was the greatest century thus far in the history of Christianity. That extension and that effect mounted as the century wore on.[2]

This great expansion of the Christian faith was increasingly influenced by the colonial spirit, but its mainspring lay elsewhere and its earlier expansion was substantially independent of colonialism.

Missions and Colonialism: Independent Motivations

The first point to note is that missionary endeavour did not start with the nineteenth century. If Latourette devotes to the nineteenth century three volumes of his comprehensive work on the history of the expansion of Christianity, he also writes three volumes on the preceding eras. Neill's division of material is similar. Missionary activity certainly became more profuse and widespread after 1800, but it did not begin with the political and economic expansion of Western "Christendom". In the earlier centuries of Christian history, the faith spread in random ways throughout the known world. Later it was severely challenged in the south and east by Islam, but it continued to spread north and north-east, at least intermittently if not steadily. The sixteenth century brought a return of missionary zeal among the early Reformers and particularly the various Anabaptist groups, though the former seldom ventured beyond Europe (despite Calvin's sending "missionaries" to Brazil)[3], and the latter were often hounded by the two "magisterial" forms of Christianity. Paul Johnson asserts that "Luther's mind was limited by national, almost provincial horizons" and that "Calvin-

[2] K. S. Latourette, *A History of the Expansion of Christianity*, Volume 6, 442.

[3] J. T. McNeill, *The History and Character of Calvinism*, 331. The "missionaries" were in fact sent to minister to a group of French Protestants who took refuge on an island off the coast of Brazil.

ists were preoccupied with the elite",[4] but the second of these assertions is belied by at least the early stages of the Calvinist infiltration in France. Stephen Neill is perhaps fairer in pointing to the struggle for the survival of Protestantism and the limitations resulting from the principle, *cujus regio, ejus religio*, as well as the dissipation of energy in endless controversies.[5] In any case, there is some truth in the claim made by Cardinal Robert Bellarmine, following the renewal within the Catholic Church, that "Heretics [Protestants] are never said to have converted either pagans or Jews to the faith, but only to have perverted Christians [Catholics]. But in this one century the Catholics have converted many thousands of heathens in the new world".[6] His reference was principally to the Catholic missionary endeavour which accompanied Spanish and Portuguese expansion in their American, and later in their Asian, colonies, but it also applies to the Jesuit advances in the Far East, with journeys by Francis Xavier, Matteo Ricci and others to Japan and China. These missions met with some success, more in the Americas and on the Indian coast than elsewhere. However, the reluctance to ordain national priests and the lack of literature in local languages proved to be of great consequence when the Catholic missions went through a time of "tragic collapse"[7] in the second half of the eighteenth century. In the Protestant world, Dutch and English commercial ventures brought a number of believers into contact with the wider world, and some at least made efforts to spread their faith. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in New England was formed in 1649, and it supported the work of John Eliot. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts was formed in 1701. By the end of the eighteenth century the Dutch claimed 140000 Christians in Java and Ambon. If it is difficult to deter-

[4] *A History of Christianity*, 401.
[5] S. Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, 220ff.
[6] Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, 221.
[7] Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, 204.

mine the sincerity of their faith, they at least had the New Testament in Malay (completed in 1688). In the early eighteenth century two German Protestants founded a Christian community at Tranquebar on the Indian coast. Other Germans worked as chaplains to British communities in India. A Danish pioneer was followed by Moravians in Greenland, leading to the formation of a church there. Moravians also went to the West Indies, and a sole missionary, an Englishman, went to work in Africa. Neill calls the eighteenth century "a time of renewed awareness and of small and tentative beginnings".[8] All this shows that the idea of mission had long been part of Christianity, and though dormant at times it had already begun to re-emerge well before the nineteenth century.

The second important point is that the missionary spirit of every age has ultimately been an expression of the health and vigour of the Christian Church (or Churches). Concerning the modern missionary movement Brian Stanley writes: "The only adequate explanation of the origins of the missionary societies is in terms of theological changes."[9] Different epochs have favoured or hindered missionary endeavour, but the real mainspring has always been the strength of the faith of individuals or communities. It was the Pietism of the seventeenth century which was responsible for much of the eighteenth-century missionary enterprises mentioned above. It was the evangelical awakening of the eighteenth century which led to the founding of a number of mission societies from 1792 onwards and the accompanying upsurge in Protestant missionary work.[10] The Baptist Missionary Society is an example of this, and evangelicalism in the Church of England led to the formation of the Church Missionary Society in 1799. Various revival movements in

[8] Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, 240.

[9] *The Bible and the Flag. Protestant Missions and British Imperialism in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, 59. See in particular Stanley's discussion on pages 61-78.

[10] See A. F. Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History. Studies in the Transmission of Faith*, 79f.

Germany fuelled missionary zeal. The 1830s *réveil* movement in France and Switzerland led to both countries contributing to mission work. Then "at a time when all the movements were showing signs of dying down, the Second Evangelical Awakening crossed the Atlantic from America to Britain in 1858", leading to a new surge in missions, spearheaded by interdenominational societies.[11] One could also cite the influence of the Keswick movement on missionary work, or the influence of D.L. Moody on the "Cambridge Seven" and on the "Mount Hermon Hundred". The Christian movements growing in British and American universities in the late nineteenth century were a major factor in the expansion of missionary work. As Latourette concludes:

> Although several exterior circumstances facilitated it, the nineteenth-century expansion of Christianity would not have occurred had the faith not displayed striking inward vitality.[12]

Referring to the growth of British missionary societies in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries Andrew Porter writes:

> Only through an understanding of missionaries' faith and their trust in Providence and the Bible can historians hope to explain the incurable optimism, and missions' persistence in the face of death, hardship, deprivation, and the tiny numbers of converts.[13]

The same point could be made with regard to the modern missionary movement in general.

Thirdly, missionaries often went to areas of little economic or political interest.[14] This was already true in the eighteenth cen-

[11] Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, 252.
[12] Latourette, *A History of the Expansion of Christianity*, Volume 6, 442.
[13] A. Porter in Norman Etherington (ed.), *Missions and Empire*, 51.
[14] It is only in the second half of the nineteenth century that colonialism really reached its heyday in the East and in Africa. The first half of the century

tury, with missionary work in Greenland, the West Indies and the Gold Coast (Ghana). Perhaps the clearest example in the nineteenth century is the work carried out in the Pacific Islands, where missionaries worked against cannibalism and fierce paganism to spread their faith. Different missionaries went to Tahiti, Tonga, the Society Islands, Samoa, Fiji and Hawaii. Some were killed and eaten, a few defected, some returned home. However, "defeat was never more than temporary. Where some had gone out, others came in, and held fast until the cause triumphed".[15] Another example is the early mission work in West Africa, where German and English missionaries went to work amongst a colony of ex-slaves in Sierra Leone. Many of the early missionaries lost their lives—the CMS lost more than fifty men and women in twenty years—but the Christian Church and witness there were established. One of the most memorable examples of missionary endurance is the case of Allen Gardiner, who started missionary work in 1850 with six companions in the lonely, inhospitable Tierra del Fuego. Due to lack of provisions the whole company starved to death, but their courage became a lasting inspiration to many others.

A fourth point is closely related to the above. In some places, Christian mission was positively discouraged by commercial interests. William Carey and his party were technically illegal immigrants when they reached the Indian port of Hooghly in 1793. The East India Company "was suspicious of missionaries and hostile to their entrance, not so much on religious grounds as from fear that the disturbance caused by the preaching of the Gospel might threaten their always uncertain control of their dominions".[16] It was only by moving to the Danish colony of Serampore that they were able to work freely. Later, pressure from evangelicals at home in England led to a more favourable

was more a time of uncontrolled commercial enterprise. Neill's division of the century around 1888 reflects a changing political situation more than a different Christian perspective.

[15] Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, 297.

[16] Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, 262.

attitude to missions being insisted upon when the company's charter was renewed in 1833. Similarly, the Dutch rulers of what is now Indonesia discouraged preaching to Muslims. "What was all-important was peace and the quiet acceptance of the rule of the foreigner, and preaching to the Muslims might 'involve a risk to beautiful rich Java, the chief source of revenue from the East Indies'."[17]

One particular aspect of conflict between missionaries and commercial interest was the slave trade. It is true that throughout the eighteenth century the "Christian" countries of Western Europe and the New World accepted slavery as normal, but a groundswell of opinion, in which evangelicals were to the fore, led to its abolition and eventual demise. In 1772 slavery was declared illegal in England—but not throughout the British Empire—and in 1807 Parliament declared the slave trade illegal in British dominions. This was followed in 1833 by the abolition of slavery itself. However, it was not until the second half of the nineteenth century that the slave trade was abolished by the Catholic European powers. Here it was the vigorous campaigning of the Catholic missionary Cardinal Lavigerie which did much to swing the balance. The problem of the slave trade delayed Christian mission in East Africa where the Arab traders were constantly hostile to mission work. However, it was the work of Livingstone and Stanley, exploring Africa from the south, which brought the problem to the English-speaking world. Though a man of many parts, Livingstone's evangelical zeal cannot be questioned. He wrote to mission directors: "Can the love of Christ not carry the missionary where the slave trade caries the trader?" It is within this context, Neill argues, that Livingstone's famous comment, "I go back to Africa to try to make an open path for commerce and Christianity", should be interpreted.

[17] Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, 291.

> The guilt of the white man on the west coast, and still more perhaps of the Arab on the east coast, in carrying on the slave trade, had been beyond all reckoning. But Livingstone had realised that the slave trade could not have been carried on at all apart from the African's own participation in it. When slave-raiding was the easiest, indeed the only, way of making oneself rich, the temptation was ever present to engage in these raids on weaker neighbours… Only if the Africans could be persuaded to engage in legitimate commerce… would the evil and destructive commerce be brought to an end.[18]

Livingstone's view may have been an oversimplification, but his motives were surely worthy ones.[19]

Fifthly, it is worth noting that "unlike their Spanish and Portuguese Catholic predeccessors, the new protestant missionaries were convinced that they had no need of, indeed were better off without, the state and its aid" and that British evangelicals regularly expressed "reservations about imperial authority and colonial government".[20] David Livingstone is often treated as the classic example of a missionary with a colonial/imperial agenda but in fact he was "a consistent opponent of white rule

[18] Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, 315ff.

[19] Livingstone's famous "commerce and Christianity" address was given at the Senate House of the University of Cambridge in December 1857 during a triumphant tour of Britain. However, he was to a certain extent echoing what Thomas Fowell Buxton, Wilberforce's successor as leader of the anti-slavery movement, had said at a massive public meeting in London in June, 1840. Livingstone was present at the meeting (six months before he first set sail for Africa), but it is unlikely to have been the first occasion when such ideas were brought to his attention. The relationship between "civilisation" and Christianity had been extensively debated in missionary circles since the 1790s, and Buxton's linking of commerce and Christianity had been anticipated by the thought of another great missionary pioneer (and prominent critic of British policy in South Africa), Dr. John Philip, in his *Researches in South Africa* published in 1828. See Andrew Ross, *David Livingstone. Mission and Empire*, 24ff; Brian Stanley, *The Bible and the Flag*, 73.

[20] Andrew Porter, "Religion and Empire. British Expansion in the Long Nineteenth Century, 1780-1914", *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 20.3 (1992), 377, 386.

in Africa and of large-scale white settlement".[21] In the case of New Zealand missionaries[22] were at first openly hostile to the economic links with and settlement by Europeans, "believing that nothing but harm could come from the mixture of races in a small country".[23] They lost the battle—British sovereignty was declared in 1840 by the Treaty of Waitangi. Much debate still surrounds the original intentions of this Treaty, particularly as regards Maori rights to land, and the official English version appears to differ from the Maori. Settlers viewed the Treaty in a different light from the missionaries, who had played a crucial part in persuading the Maori signatories to accept it by offering reassurances on the land issue. The settlers accused the missionaries of placing the needs of Maori "savages" above those of fellow-Britons. The missionaries' fears were well-founded and New Zealand went through a period of bitter warfare between races before achieving its present racial harmony.

Sixthly, the "cause and effect" linking of colonialism and missions fails to take account of the points made, for example, by Philip Jenkins in 2007 about the strength and growth of Christianity today in former colonial territories:

> If the modern missionary stereotype had any force, we can scarcely understand why the Christian expansion proceeded as fast as it did, or how it could have survived the end of European political power… If the faith had been a matter of kings, merchants and missionaries, then it would have lasted precisely as long as the political and commercial order that gave it birth, and would have been swept away by any social change[24]… It was precisely as

[21] Andrew Ross, *David Livingstone. Mission and Empire*, 243.

[22] The pioneer missionary to New Zealand was Samuel Marsden (1764-1838) who arrived in New Zealand in 1814, under the auspices of the Church Missionary Society. Methodist missionaries arrived in 1822 and from the outset worked closely with the CMS Anglicans.

[23] Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, 302.

[24] Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom. The Coming of Global Christianity*, 51.

> Western colonialism ended that Christianity began a period of explosive growth that still continues unchecked, above all in Africa.[25]

Missions and Colonialism: Interdependence

However, if the above points suggest the independence, in motive and action, of missionary activity from economic exploiter and colonialist, particularly in the early part of the nineteenth century, it is undeniable that there were also strong links. After all, the non-missionaries from Europe professed the same faith as the missionaries; and explorer, missionary, trader and colonialist followed each other in rapid succession. Missionaries came not only with a message of reconciliation between God and man but with a complete heritage of values. This heritage, regarded by them as civilization, included attainments in science well beyond those of the peoples to whom they went, and also included an ethic at least partly moulded by Christianity. It is not surprising that missionaries who wanted to improve the conditions of the people with whom they worked should seek to introduce them to what they understood to be a better life.

The negative side of colonialism has often been noted, and indeed keenly felt, by the ex-colonies. Colonialism tended to breed a feeling of inherent superiority on the one hand and growing resentment on the other. It facilitated exploitation and a form of two-class citizenship both of which run counter to true Christianity. However, Neill points out that some at least of the motives were laudable:

> It has to be remembered that in the nineteenth century the alternatives for many people were not independence and enslavement, but total destruction (by unscrupulous exploiters or through the slave trade) and the possibility of survival in a state of colonial dependence. In many areas the European powers found the peoples divided, poor, and barbarous, and left them united, prosperous

[25] Jenkins, *The Next Christendom*, 64.

> and well on their way to taking their place in the councils of the nations of the world.[26]

If the years since Neill first wrote this have shown up his optimistic view of the Asian and African world in the mid-twentieth century, his point about the nineteenth-century alternatives remains valid. To this extent it might be worth turning the whole study on its head and asking: To what extent was the colonial spirit a product of the Christian zeal which also produced the nineteenth-century missionary movement? It was the patrolling of the west coast of Africa to stem the slave trade which led, amongst other things, to treaties with chiefs, *de facto* occupation and finally annexation to the British Crown. The colonial spirit could hardly be called homogeneous, containing as it did elements of economic exploitation, the opening up of potential markets, empire-making, the spreading of civilization, and missionary enterprise. Perhaps the unifying factor, and that which marks the colonial spirit, is the sense of superiority of person, ability, knowledge or message of European over non-European. The fact that these different categories were often not recognised by the Europeans, and therefore indistinguishable to the non-Europeans, often led to the acceptance or rejection of the offered civilization as a whole.

From well before the nineteenth century travel and discovery had challenged Christians as well as whetted the imagination of all. However, it was the military domination of Western powers which opened the door to much missionary activity. In 1858 the British government took over the administration of India, including the East India Company's rule over the country and reversing the previous policy of opposition to missionary work. In the same year the second war of the European powers with China ended, and a series of treaties allowed the foreigner access to the interior beyond the sixteen treaty ports and implied that Chinese Christians would be free to profess their faith. The

[26] Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, 249.

Japanese opening to the outside world came as a result of internal developments and led to both a cautious treaty with America and the beginning of missionary work there.

Of the eastern countries, China is probably the saddest example of the influence of colonialism on missionaries. The treaties of 1858 had opened up new possibilities, but these were little explored. It took the visionary spirit of Hudson Taylor to take up the challenge of the interior. When he founded the China Inland Mission in 1865 only seven of China's eighteen provinces had seen missionary activity, and even in those it was seldom far from the coast. Besides going into the interior, Taylor challenged a number of accepted missionary practices. His insistence on having mission headquarters in China and on missionaries wearing native dress went against practices where the colonial spirit was clearly evident.

Two particularly thorny issues are important elements of this discussion. The first concerns the break-up of traditional societies. Contact with the West led to a ferment of traditional societies, and missionaries have often been seen as providing a further destabilising influence. Not all missionaries have been studious observers of native civilization as were Robert Morrison in China or Alexander Duff in India, but then on the other hand not all native customs were particularly worthy of preservation. One of the first missionaries to the Fiji islands celebrated his arrival by burying the heads, hands and feet of some eighty victims of cannibalism, and countless missionaries have sought to free animists from the fear of evil spirits. The Bataks of Sumatra reacted to conversions among their people by expelling the converts, presenting the missionaries with a dilemma often repeated. Neill comments:

> Missionaries have often been accused of unnecessarily separating Christians from the ordinary life of their people, but when converts have been cast out by their tribe, what is to be done? There

> seemed to be no remedy except that the missionaries should gather the little groups of the faithful into Christian villages.[27]

Paul Johnson describes the close link between colonialism and missionary enterprise in western Africa, and the somewhat cavalier attitude of certain missionaries. However, he continues:

> On the other hand, as experience in both Central and East Africa shows, without European rule, one of two things was likely to happen. The missionaries nearly always found a demand for Christian teaching. Many of the Africans were looking… for a refuge from the often appalling cruelties of cults centred on tyrannical chiefs. It was comparatively easy for missionaries to set up new Christian villages… becoming *de facto* chieftains… The alternative, which was worse, was for missionaries to become, as it were, agents of powerful kings whom they could not control or even influence.[28]

The whole issue of Christian reaction to native culture is complex and highly charged, but there is an overwhelming case for saying that missionaries did much to mitigate evils which they encountered, even if in doing so they sometimes failed to distinguish between the essential Christian message and the nineteenth-century version of it.

The other thorny issue is that of the training of local Christian leaders to take over responsibility from missionaries. One of the five principles of Bartholomew Ziegenbalg, sent to India in 1705 by the great Pietist leader A. H. Francke, was: "At as early a date as possible an Indian church with its own Indian ministry must come into being."[29] A century later, Carey had five similar principles including "the training at the earliest possible moment of an indigenous ministry".[30] In reflecting on

[27] Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, 349.
[28] Johnson, 449.
[29] Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, 229ff.
[30] Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, 263.

mission and its role, Henry Venn, secretary of the CMS, spoke in 1854 of the aim of mission being the calling into existence of self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating Christian churches.[31] But the principle was easier to state than to put into practice. Ziegenbalg initiated a policy of very careful selection—only fourteen pastors were ordained in the Tranquebar mission in a hundred years. However, this policy seems to have produced very effective local pastors. Carey opened a college at Serampore in 1819 for both Christian and general education. A year later, the Anglican Thomas Middleton opened Bishop's College in Calcutta, though it was not to fulfil its purpose of training ministers for another century. One of the early missionaries to have a real vision for training indigenous evangelists was John Williams, sent to the South Seas by the CMS in 1817. His policy was to place native teachers, often with the slenderest of qualifications, on remote islands which missionaries would hardly ever be able to visit, and he was able to report by 1834 that every island or group of islands within 2000 miles of Tahiti had been visited and that teachers had been left on them. Neill pays fitting tribute:

> Naturally there were some failures. But few in Christian history can equal the faithfulness of these men and women, left behind among people of unknown speech and often in danger of their lives, to plant and build churches out of their own limited stock of faith and knowledge, supported only by the invigorating power of the Holy Spirit and the prayers of their friends. Many watered the seed with their own blood, but the Churches grew, and far more widely than if reliance had been placed first and foremost on the European missionary.[32]

Sadly though, not all such efforts were as fruitful. In 1864 a former slave was consecrated the first non-European bishop, arousing much enthusiasm. Samuel Crowther had been the first

[31] Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, 259ff.
[32] Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, 299.

student of Fourah Bay College in Sierra Leone, had worked with Henry Townsend in Nigeria, and after years in England was sent to work in eastern Nigeria. He was a faithful and pious man but was already elderly, and he only had Sierra Leonean helpers, not all well qualified or reliable. This "African only" venture achieved only minimal success and not a little confusion, and on Crowther's death the CMS reconstituted it as a joint African-European mission. Fifty years passed before another African bishop was appointed. In some countries little or no effort was made to train national leadership. This had been one of the great weaknesses of the earlier Catholic missions in Latin America. It was also the weakness of the Dutch Reformed Church in Indonesia, who "had been very slow to ordain Indonesians, and even when ordained the pastor in most cases had not the right to administer the sacraments. He remained hopelessly in the position of assistant to his European master".[33] The Dane Ludwig Nommensen tried to set up a better system among the Bataks of Sumatra, but the Danes never seemed to have planned seriously for missionary withdrawal. Neill's comment on the attitude of Nommensen and his co-workers is one that could be applied to many other fields of missionary endeavour: "The missionaries seem to have been strangely unaware of the Bataks' cry for equality and independence."[34] It is perhaps this settling in to a fixed structure, with the missionary at the top of the pyramid, which has been the commonest fault of missionary work and the area where the influence of colonialism has been most marked. In many cases it was not until the second half of the twentieth century and the coming of independence that indigenous leadership has come effectively to the fore, with missionary work done by expatriates at the invitation of the national leaders. A more far-sighted and indeed Biblical approach by Western missionaries at an earlier date would

[33] Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, 350.
[34] Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, 351.

have avoided some at least of the rejection of Christianity in certain countries as "a white man's religion".

How then can one reach a conclusion about such a complex issue as the influence of the colonial spirit on the nineteenth-century missionary movement? In a book which addresses itself to this very topic Neill makes explicit what was already implicit in his historical survey. He speaks of the difficulty of generalisation and stresses the need for caution and restraint. Most missionaries have operated somewhere between the two extremes of either open resistance to colonialism or unquestioning acceptance of it as necessarily bringing culture and civilization. In many cases missionaries were on the spot before Western governments, and sometimes they resisted their encroachment. However, more often they welcomed their intervention, seeing it as being for the good of the native people who were under threat of extinction from unscrupulous exploiters. In most countries the missionary force has been international, including a good number not from the country exercising colonial power. However, missionaries have on the whole been insufficiently aware of the problem of bringing their culture with them. Indigenous people who have come to the Christian faith have both rejected the darker side of their previous culture and also been naturally imitative, leading to acceptance of some Western values which are only obliquely (if at all) Christian. This has led to a general suspicion of nationalistic movements, and, perhaps the most serious shortcoming of particularly the second half of the nineteenth century, the tendency of missionaries to hold on too long in positions of control. The failure of a few ill-prepared attempts at handing over control (such as the case of Samuel Crowther) confirmed prejudice and a sense of superiority and led to the postponing of the full independence of the native Church as a distant goal. In his final paragraph, Neill points beyond all human error to the supreme Judge and comments wisely:

> The history of the Christian mission in the colonial period must in the end be left to the judgment of God, who alone knows all the facts, and who alone can exercise a perfectly objective and merciful judgment. One thing however may be said in conclusion. As a result of the Christian mission in the colonial period the Christian church exists in every corner of the earth.[35]

[35] *Colonialism and Christian Missions*, 424ff.

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The average length of articles should be 5.000-8.000 words. We are willing, however, to consider articles in excess of 8.000 words should such a length be absolutely necessary. All articles should be written at a single line spacing with endnotes (not footnotes), which must be typed at a single line spacing and must be justified entirely. For instance, we suggest the following format: Philip E. Hughes, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), 140-141. Terms like *idem*, *ibidem (ibid.)*, and *op. cit.* can be used but not exceedingly. Double quotation marks should be used for quotation, and single quotation marks for quotation within a quotation. Greek and Hebrew words need not be transliterated and they should not be used very often. Transliteration is accepted only if performed in accordance with current academic rules. Please note that all articles must be preceded by a brief abstract (up to 200 words) and five key words.

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