

"And The Word Was Made Flesh"

JOHN FRITZ

The Law Gospel Debate
In The Missouri Synod

DAVID P. SCAER

Current Lutheran Beliefs And Misbeliefs
According To "A Study Of Generations"

RAYMOND F. SURBURG

Abortion: A Moment For Conscientious
Reflection

DAVID P. SCAER

Leuenberg Concord: Three Responses
Confessional Lutherans React
To Leuenberg Concord

HANS-LUTZ POETSCH

The German-Scandinavian Theological
Conference At Ratzeburg

GERHARD ROST

The Concept Of Church Fellowship
In The Leuenberg Concord:
A Critique

EUGENE F. KLUG

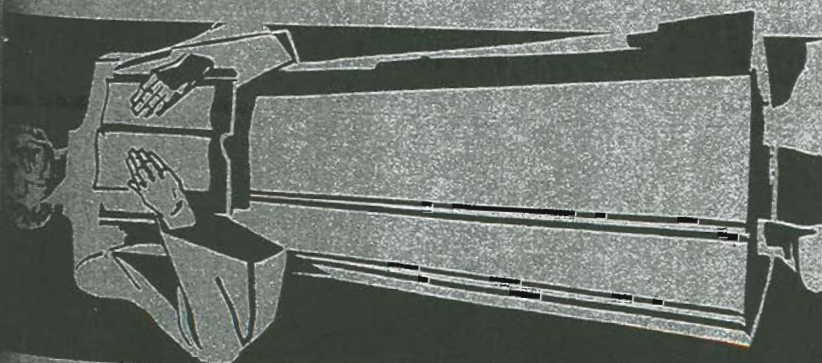
History A Proof For The Christian Faith?

H. P. HAMANN

The Outside Limits Of Lutheran
Confessionalism In Contemporary
Biblical Interpretation

HORACE HUMMEL

Book Reviews



the springfielder

VOL. XXXVI • NO. 3

DECEMBER, 1972



Book Reviews

I. BIBLICAL STUDIES

THE HEART OF THE OLD TESTAMENT. By Ronald Youngblood. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1971. 108 pages. Paper. \$2.95.

This book was originally published under the title: "Great Themes of the Old Testament." In this useful and informative book nine theological concepts are traced by Dr. Youngblood—monotheism, God's sovereignty, election, the covenant, theocracy, the law, sacrifices, faith and redemption. There is no doubt about it that these are major themes that constitute the heart of the Old Testament.

In the preface Dr. Youngblood writes:

The unity of the Bible has made an indelible impression on the minds and hearts of untold numbers of readers. Not only does the subject matter of the first three chapters of Genesis bear a remarkable resemblance to that of the last three chapters of Revelation, but also all the chapters in between are so intimately interrelated as to betray the divine purpose that brought them into being.

One way of showing the unity of the Scriptures is to select certain themes and trace them from Genesis to Revelation. Although a number of themes discussed in this volume are also New Testament concepts, the same key ideas characterize the writings of the Old Testament.

The presentations of these important concepts are from a conservative theological viewpoint. The author describes the cultural setting in which each concept arose in ancient Israel, and delineates the various stages through which God's people passed as they received every new revelation about God's plan of salvation. Dr. Youngblood shows how many of the themes found their fulfillment in Jesus Christ, Whom he holds to be the world's only Savior.

In opposition to much Old Testament scholarship the author contends—correctly so—monotheistic ideals characterized Israel's religion from the very beginning. Regarding the "angel of the Lord," met with a number of times in the Old Testament, he takes an ambivalent attitude, stating that this angel may have been an infinite spirit, serving as Yahweh's messenger, or that he was "a kind of pre-incarnation appearance of the Second Person of the Godhead."

With other Reformed theologians the author does not believe that God revealed Himself as a Trinity. "To have done so would have been to provide needless temptations to polytheism in the light of the cultures of that early day" (p. 15). Two of the ten chapters deal with the covenant concept, which has occupied the attention of Old Testament scholars and specialists in the history of Israel's religion and theology. Youngblood has adopted Kline's position that the Book of Deuteronomy is organized in terms of the covenant structure, so that Moses was well acquainted with the covenant form as employed in the Hittite historical documents that are dated between 1600 and 1200 B.C.

A study of this volume will contribute to a better understanding of the Old Testament and of its relationship to the New.

Raymond F. Surburg

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH AND THE OLD TESTAMENT. By A. A. van Ruler. Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, 1971. Paper. \$2.45.

A. A. van Ruler, who died in December of 1970, was Professor of Dogmatic Theology at the University of Utrecht, the Netherlands. Previously published by him were *God's Son and God's World* and *The Greatest of These Is Love*, which were translated into English.

Professor van Ruler was greatly concerned that many today have relegated the Old Testament to an inferior position. The relationship of the Old Testament to the New has been one of the crucial hermeneutical questions of modern times, and Bromiley, who translated the Dutch scholar's book from the German text, aptly states in the preface that "in tackling the understanding and use of the Old Testament van Ruler necessarily becomes involved in weighty, ecclesiastical, biblical, and dogmatic themes, e.g., the status of Israel today, the unity and interrelation of the Testaments, and the function of Jesus Christ within the total purpose and work of the Trinity."

In the introduction van Ruler has listed ten different ways in which the Old Testament has been related to the New. To most of these the author takes exception. With some of the positions enunciated by the Dutch professor the reviewer finds himself in agreement. The Biblical student agrees with him that the Old Testament must not be considered inferior to the New; indeed, the Christian Church cannot do without the Old Testament.

The reader will find an excellent bibliography of books written in Dutch and German, dealing with the subject of this book. Throughout the book he is constantly commenting on the views of well-known German and Dutch systematicians and Old Testament scholars.

Many statements made by van Ruler are not in agreement with what the New Testament teaches with great clarity. Thus he claims "it is only thus that there is a special place for the people of Israel in God's plan for the world. If we relate the Old Testament exclusively to Christ and find the people of Israel only in the body of Christ, we cannot integrate the Jews, the synagogue, and the state of Israel in our systematic theology" (p. 35). However, Christ condemned the Jews of his day for not accepting Him as the promised Messiah of the Old Testament Scripture. Peter announced to the Jewish leaders of the first half of the first Christian century "that there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). Van Ruler is often a poor Biblical exegete, for many passages pertaining to the use of the Old Testament are ignored by him or their meaning rejected.

Van Ruler does not believe that Christ was foretold in the Old Testament Scriptures. In rebuttal we ask: What was Christ talking about when He said to the Jews: "Search the Scriptures for in them you think ye have eternal life and they are they which testify of me" (John 5:39)? Paul wrote Timothy that the Old Testament Scriptures were able to **make him wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus** (II Timothy 3:17).

The Dutch professor is able to put forth many views that neither

Calvin nor Luther held because instead of abiding by the teachings of the New Testament he uses philosophical arguments in trying to make a case for the necessity of the Old Testament. In the last chapter of this volume he endeavors to establish a case for the necessity of the Old Testament by enumerating the following arguments: 1. The Old Testament is necessary for the legitimation of Jesus as the Christ; 2. The Old Testament is indispensable to the Christian Church because it has received in Jesus Christ the foundation of all that is at issue in it; 3. The Old Testament is necessary for the Christian Church because it interprets legitimately the gospel of Jesus Christ; 4. The Old Testament is necessary for the Christian Church in the concept of *illustration*; 5. The Old Testament is necessary for *historization*; and 6. The Old Testament is necessary for *eschatologization*.

The arguments for accepting the Old Testament given by van Ruler will not satisfy scholars and students who accept the authority of Christ and the Apostles. For them the Old Testament was God's infallible and inerrant Word and many times we find New Testament writers saying: "It is written." It is unfortunate that van Ruler cannot accept the clear teachings of the New Testament, but to have done so would not impress many modern Biblical scholars employing the historical critical method.

Raymond F. Surburg

THE OLD TESTAMENT--ITS CLAIMS AND ITS CRITICS. By Oswald T. Allis. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1972. 508 pages. Cloth. \$9.95.

This volume by Dr. Allis, professor at Princeton Theology Seminary for seventeen years (till 1929) and then professor at Westminster Seminary for seven years, may be the *magnum opus* of a very distinguished Semitic and Old Testament scholar. Positions set forth in earlier volumes will be found repeated in its seven chapters, which were delivered some time ago at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California. This major volume is the culmination of the fruits of labor of one of the most erudite American scholars that conservative Protestantism has produced in this century.

Those who believe in the inerrancy and reliability of Holy Writ will find this a faith-strengthening book. It contains many pages of useful apologetics directed against the guesses and speculations of many European and American Biblical scholars.

In the first two chapters of the volume, Dr. Allis deals with the "Old Testament from Within," and treats especially "its facts and doctrines," and "its literary forms and varied contents." In the next chapter Allis looks at "The Old Testament from Without," in which the successes, limitations and the failures of modern archaeological research are discussed. The next chapter presents a discussion of such critical reconstructions of Old Testament history as Literary Criticism, Form Criticism, Traditio-Criticism and other critical approaches to the various Old Testament books. The last part of the book sets forth the uniqueness of the Old Testament, and the conclusion is reached that Christianity is a supernatural religion and contains the only revelation to mankind prior to the

coming of Christ and the giving of the New Testament Scriptures which concluded the Judeo-Christian canon.

The reader will find most of the problem passages of the Old Testament explained in a manner satisfactory to those who hold the presuppositions of historic Christianity, namely, that the Bible is both inspired and infallible. Allis focuses on both theological and historical data, which must not be tempered with and as he contends can only be properly evaluated from an "inside" point of view. Biblical critics fail to realize that in the Old Testament "the history is consistently and sanely supernatural from beginning to the end." Allis also claims that "the history recorded in the Old Testament is unique history and is to be studied as such. It is not to be measured and tested as to its correctness and accuracy by the course of history among neighboring nations."

Chapter 5, entitled: "Comparing the Incomparable" shows how the Old Testament is in a class by itself and claims that the comparative method of comparing the religion of the Old Testament with that of the surrounding nations is inadequate because of the distinctive characteristics of the Old Testament, one of which is that it is a revelation from God. Near Eastern Patternism is shown to be completely inadequate for those accepting the statements of the Old Testament Scriptures at face value. The alleged influence of the Canaanite religion on the theology of the Old Testament is rejected as contrary to the basic teachings of the Law and the Prophets.

The last chapter treats of chronology. Allis points out "that the Bible is more concerned with genealogies and synchronisms than with era or period datings. For this reason the data which it supplies are, on the whole, meager and sometimes hard to interpret" (p. 379). Chapter 1-11 of Genesis are held to be historical, although no solution is offered as a date for creation. He places the time for Abraham at about 2,000 B.C. Allis shows that a 1290 B.C. date for the Exodus from Egypt cannot be harmonized with Biblical chronological data. Many pages are spent in dealing with the complex chronology that characterizes the period of the divided kingdom.

This book has 56 pages of footnotes in fine print, thus furnishing the student with references to books that can be further examined. *The Old Testament: Its Claims and Its Critics* is worthy of study even by those who do not agree with its viewpoint.

Raymond F. Surburg

HOW DEPENDABLE IS THE BIBLE? By Raymond F. Surburg. J. B. Lippincott Co., New York, 1972. 204 pages. Cloth. \$5.95.

Dr. Raymond Surburg, long time professor of Old Testament at the Missouri Synod's teachers' college in Seward and seminary at Springfield, Illinois, brings a lifetime of learning, teaching and experience to bear in this readable and eminently useful survey of past and current problems of Biblical interpretation. Professor Surburg, who belongs to the tradition of Machen, Young, Unger, Harrison and other conservative scholars presents the issues from a firm commitment to the Bible as the inspired and inerrant Word of God. There can be no doubt that the title *How Dependable is the Bible?* is a rhetorical question for Surburg as he has

dedicated his entire scholarly life to a presentation and defense of what is the church's traditional position—at least as it was until the 1700's.

The book is directed at the Bible student and inquirer who comes to the study of the Bible at a time when many scholars are questioning the reliability and dependability in reporting past events. In the first chapter a comparison is made between our time with its lack of Biblical knowledge, even in seminaries, and a previous period when even the education of the young was done on the basis of the Bible. Surburg does not argue for the traditional position, but assumes it as he sets out to warn the Bible reader of theories in Biblical methods that are destructive of the Bible as the Word of God. The main thrust of argument is that assuming that what the Bible states as really true and really happening is in fact true and did really happen, then the conclusions of scholars stating directly opposing opinions must be *ipso facto* rejected. For example, Moses is the writer of the Pentateuch and any theory putting forth a contrary idea, e.g., the Documentary Hypothesis, must be wrong. Though not every reader will attack the problem from this stance, it is a stance that is rarely, if ever, discussed by the prominent pace-setting scholars. Surburg is right in observing that the originating proponents of the theories do not even take into consideration that doctrine of the Bible that held sway for about 1700 years. The fathers of what is called the historical critical methods of today were men who not only did not hold to Christianity but who in fact opposed it. They approached the Bible as human literature and not the Word of God. Spinoza, Schleiermacher, Reimarus, and Strauss were anything but champions of Christianity. Only infrequently in the study of modern hermeneutics are we informed about the anti-Christian bias of the founding fathers of the various critical methods now in use. Before examining the various sections of the Bible, Surburg sets down his own basis. He clears the air by distinguishing between special and natural revelation and examining the passages used to teach the inspiration of the Scriptures. A chapter surveying Bible study in church history is very useful. Another chapter argues for the reliability of the ancient texts still available to the church. Still another chapter argues eloquently for accepting as history what really is described as history. Special chapters are reserved for a discussion of the synoptic Gospels, Paul's letters and John's writings.

Professor Surburg's conclusion is that the Bible as we possess it today can be trusted. The concluding chapter sums up the thoughts of Christians who believe that some current theories do not do justice to the Bible as the divine Word:

"Christian believers are convinced that their faith in the Bible's truthfulness is not resting upon wishful thinking and feeling, but that there is abundant evidence for the belief that the Bible is dependable. While only the Holy Spirit can convict a man and lead him into true faith, He can and does make use of the efforts of men in areas such as apologetics and archaeology. For those who already believe, the knowledge of the infinite care evidenced in the transmission and preservation of the Bible leads to an even greater understanding of the power, wisdom and glory of God."

Surburg is addressing not those who have already surrendered the dependability of the Bible, but those who are committed to it, though it

be in an unformed way, and now are forced into wrestling with current dilemmas. Both the majority of the clergy and the laity of the Missouri Synod might find themselves in this position today and on this account should begin their approach to the study of these problems from this book. As the serious student of the Bible, professional and amateur, enters an increasingly more confusing situation in the current Biblical problems, he will do himself a service by starting with Surburg's introduction. A selected bibliography will lead the more energetic student into further study where desired. Here Dr. Surburg could have included some of his own printed articles. The popular style of the writer should not deceive the reader concerning the writer's outstanding academic credentials and literary contributions.

dps

SIGNALS FROM THE BIBLE. By H. M. Kuitert. Translated by Lewis B. Smedes. Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1972. 95 pages. Paperback. \$1.95.

Thirty "chapterettes" pack the 95 pages of this little book with a lot of readable information. "My purpose is simple," explains the author, namely, "to take several key words, phrases, and concepts of the Bible and let them offer us a chance to listen again to the Bible's own signals." This he proceeds to do, on topics ranging from God to the glory of God, with many important concepts of Christian truth in between, like peace, righteousness, justice, truth, kindness, sin, God's jealousy, Son of Man, election, etc. The idea is that there should be less of preconceived notions and more objective handling of the Bible and its contents.

Kuitert has carried it off well for the most part, though it may be debated whether he has attained the kind of objectivity throughout, as initially promised. The fact that his little book, originally published in Dutch (1964), has gone through three editions in Holland, prior to being translated into English, is evidence for the author's having scored. None of the chapters exceeds three pages. As a result things move quickly, and the style (a tribute to the translator) is lively. The book's arrangement suggests use not only by the individual reader but in discussion groups as well.

"Covenant"—God as the partner of man, as having established His covenant with the foremost of His creatures—is the main thread on which the author strings his topics. For reasons not entirely clear Kuitert settles almost exclusively on an Old Testament emphasis or orientation, although his announced purpose is to let the Bible sound its own signals. Not entirely clear, we say, in view of the fact that every Bible reader soon discovers that the whole idea of covenant, as well as the whole Old Testament itself, stands most fully uncovered, revealed, and interpreted in the New Testament. Kuitert actually does not slight this great truth—who can really, if he wants to remain true to the Biblical signals?!—which reaches its climax and fullest clarity in Christ. But strangely he is repelled by the idea of "predictive prophecy," even though he draws in quite rightly and faithfully many of the Old Testament Messianic passages. A few other strictures: the discussion of heaven comes off sounding a little too earth-bound; the body-soul complex, or make-up,

of man is tuned out in favor of modern psychology's unitary notions (and man's nature thus is little different from an animal's); and divine election is depicted as an act of God's "preference" styled to effect a resolution between God's sovereign power and man's free choice. But some of the topics, for example, on the Name of God, on the significance of the title Son of Man, the meaning of Shalom, etc., are beautifully and engagingly handled. Kuitert wrote in order to make the Bible more meaningful and rewarding; and in large measure he succeeded. One does not have to agree with an author in all points, to get practical benefit and return on one's time and investment!

E. F. Klug

WHAT CHRIST THINKS OF THE CHURCH. By John R. W. Stott. Intervarsity Press, Downers Grove, 1972. 128 pages. Paper. No price.

This book is an expository study of the letters to the seven churches of Asia Minor recorded in Revelation 2 and 3. The purpose of the book is to help Christians understand what Christ would have them be and do in today's troubled world. The author considers the Book of Revelation as the Word of God recorded by the Apostle John. He believes that Jesus Christ is true God and man.

There are many passages in the book which can be read with profit. "The word of God is its own best interpreter . . . Christ is the bright morning star from whom they derive their light. In pledging this star to the conqueror, then, Christ is but pledging Himself" (p. 8). "The only way to be made fit for entry into God's Kingdom is to be cleansed by Christ who died for us, or, in the rich imagery of this book, to wash our robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb" (p. 97). "To be lukewarm is to be blind to one's true condition" (p. 118). "Why does He recommend the Laodiceans to buy from Him? Can salvation be bought? No. Certainly not. It is a free gift to us because it was purchased by Christ on the cross. His invitation 'buy from me' should not be pressed" (p. 122).

But there are basic errors which must be called to the reader's attention. There is a strain of legalism. With reference to the Letter to Thyatira it is said: "His all-seeing eye is ever upon us. To remember this is a most powerful stimulus to holy living. It is what the Bible means by living 'in the fear of the lord'" (p. 76). Furthermore, there is a synergistic strain which pervades the whole book. With reference to the Letter to Laodicea the author says: "To be wholehearted in one's devotion to Christ, having opened the door and submitted without reserve to Him, is to be given the privilege both of supping with Him on earth and of reigning with Him in heaven. Here is a choice we cannot avoid. We must either throw the door open to Him or keep it closed in His Face" (p. 126). On page 92 the author downgrades orthodoxy and separates the Holy Spirit from the gospel: "What had they received and heard which they were to remember? Was it simply the word of God, the gospel? I think not. Sound doctrine alone cannot reclaim a church from death. Orthodoxy can sometimes itself be dead. They had received more than the gospel. They had received the Holy Spirit. He is the great gift that men and women receive when they respond to the gospel with the hearing

of faith and obedience." We agree with the author when he says "Vast multitudes of our nation (England) are ignorant of the saving truths of the Christian gospel. Why? Because they have never heard them. Why? Because they are seldom preached. Why? Because they are unpopular. Such facts of the Biblical revelation, as the universal sin of man, the wrath of God against sin, the atoning death of Jesus Christ, justification by faith only, the need for conversion and the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit are seldom heard from our pulpits today and if heard are often so travestied as to be almost unrecognizable. The fear of man has ensnared us. We trim our sails to the prevailing theological wind" (p. 44). This little book can be read with profit by pastor or layman. It might serve a good purpose as a base for a Bible class. But the reader should not overlook the criticisms given above.

Harold H. Buls

WRITTEN IN BLOOD. A Devotional Bible Study of the Blood of Christ.
By Robert E. Coleman. Flemming H. Revell Company, Old Tappan,
N.J., 1972. 128 pages. Cloth. \$3.50.

This book traces the references to blood throughout the Old and New Testaments. A great amount of study of Scripture and related secondary sources has gone into this volume. Meditations, questions, hymns, verses, and suggested readings from the Scriptures are interspersed throughout the book. There is much good in this book. "Blood is the scarlet thread which weaves the whole scope of revelation into one harmonious witness to the drama of redemption" (p. 13). "Ultimately the Word of God and the blood of the Lamb are inseparable" (p. 14). "The Old Testament sacrifices were a foreshadowing of the perfect one to come. In symbol and prophecy they spoke of that day when Christ Himself would offer His blood on the cross" (p. 30). On pages 97-99 the author traces the everlasting covenant of God's grace in Christ from Gen. 3:15 to Mal. 3:1. In the final chapter he portrays justification and reconciliation because of the blood of Christ as presented in the New Testament.

Nonetheless the Lutheran reader will likely differ with the author on a number of items. On the basis of Hebr. 9:12 and 24 he maintains that in heaven "in some way beyond our present understanding, we will see the blood of Christ." However the point in these passages is that Christ has accomplished our salvation through His blood. On page 25 in a footnote he writes: "Ultimately, of course, all blood guilt is dealt with by God himself (Gen. 9:5; I Kings 2:32; Ps. 79:10; Job 16:18-21). What is set forth here may seem rather harsh to our permissive society today, but we must remember that the primitive tribes of Israel lacked many of the restraining influences of our culture." But he does not state what these influences are. A few sentences later we read thus: "This does not argue for capital punishment in our day."

There seems to be some confusion as to whether the active obedience of Christ is meritorious for man. "Finally it is the sacrificial death of Christ, not His meritorious life, which gives us redemption; yet it is by virtue of who He was in life that His death has eternal relevance" (p. 26). In the author's defense, however, it must be stated that he clarifies his position in a footnote: "The reason the life of Christ has saving

power to us is because by dying He dealt with the fatal necessities of our situation." Furthermore, a little later (p. 31) he writes: "The Father wanted a life to be lived before Him in perfect obedience. Only such an offering (of Christ) could fulfill the intent of true sacrifice."

Here and there the Lutheran reader will note an absence of the Word as a means of grace. With reference to John 6:54-56 the author states: "To drink of this substance is to take into our heart the life-renewing power of the cross." And on the following page (p. 34): "It might be said that the blood speaks of the life of Christ poured out; the Spirit speaks of His life poured in." This is a strange separation of the sacrifice of Christ from the work of the Holy Spirit. Jesus says in this context: "It is the spirit that gives life, the flesh is of no avail; THE WORDS that I have spoken to you are spirit and life" (John 6:36). On pages 35-36 the author uses the analogy of a blood transfusion for the death of Christ for us. "How much more wonderful is the blood bank of Calvary! There in unlimited supply is the incorruptible blood of the Son of God. Its lifegiving power is as strong today as it was when given at the cross. It matches every type, avails for every need, and is free to all who will receive it into their heart by faith. If for any reason your life has not known this divine transfusion, receive it now. Make your great decision. Offer yourself to Him, even as He has given Himself to you. And in this holy outpouring of life your heart will feel the throb of the heart of God." This is plain synergism. But the author speaks otherwise elsewhere (p. 96): "God knew that His people could not fulfill perfectly the moral obligations of the law. Human nature, corrupted by sin, simply cannot attain to the incorruptible nature of God's Word. Though man was expected to measure his life by it and had to suffer for disobedience, the only hope for salvation was in the mercy of God. In this sense the law was like a schoolmaster to bring the children of the covenant to see the necessity for deliverance on the sovereign level of grace."

In his discussion of the Lord's Supper (pp. 77-78) it is clear that the author does not accept the Lutheran point of view: "By taking internally these physical emblems of His spiritual strength and conquest, we demonstrate how we live in Him. The feast around the family table reflects the sweet fellowship which we have in the church."

In conclusion we mention an interesting thought offered by the author with reference to the child Jesus in the temple: "That Jesus thought deeply about the meaning of the Passover is evidenced by His conversation with the learned doctors in the temple at the age of twelve. Those that heard Him were amazed at His understanding. Even at this early time, He seemed keenly aware that He was about His Father's business" (p. 68). It cannot be proved that the Passover was the topic of conversation on that occasion. But the author does see the Passover and Isaiah 53 in their proper light.

Harold H. Buls

THE WRITINGS OF ST. PAUL. Edited by Wayne A. Meeks. W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., New York, 1972. Paper. \$4.95. xvii plus 454 pages.

Herbert J. Muller, Indiana University, is the general editor of this and forthcoming Norton Critical Editions in the history of ideas. The

text of *The Revised Standard Version* is used with text-critical footnotes. The epistles are divided into "The Undoubted Letters of Paul" and "Works of the Pauline School." The concept "history of ideas" is taken quite seriously. Many ancient and modern selections follow to indicate the manner in which the writings of the Apostle were read and used. The Judaizers did not take kindly to St. Paul's dismissal of the Law. Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Harnack are quoted on Marcion's radical Paul. Augustine, Luther, Barth and von Soden are cited in the chapter on "Law, Grace, and Ethics." A chapter entitled "The Second Founder of Christianity" cites F. C. Baur, Friedrich Nietzsche, G. B. Shaw, von Harnack, and Wilhelm Heitmüller; in the history of ideas it is appropriate to read Nietzsche's "The First Christian" and "the Jewish Dysangelist." Shaw adds "The Monstrous Imposition upon Jesus." But if the history of ideas is used as a progressive setting of precedents, in which the twentieth century learns, from what point on it may proceed with its appreciation of the Apostle Paul, then indeed the cart has been placed before the horse. The editor also cites modern Jewish opposition: Martin Buber, Leo Baeck, Han Joachim Schoeps. There has been much Jewish New Testament scholarship in this century, but it does not fall into the category of the ancient Judaizers. Here is much programmatic propaganda which seeks to discredit the New Testament.

The most modern scholarship is represented by Kierkegaard, Deissmann, Schweitzer, M. Dibelius, Bultmann, and Stendahl. In these writers it becomes apparent that *Ideengeschichte* is not a search for truth; it merely purports to record the development of ideas, their influence and their interdependence. It matters little whether St. Paul was a bearer of divine revelation; there are only ideas, which have their own history. An academician who still has personal convictions relative to these ideas may hardly be competent to practice the art of interpreting the history of ideas.

The authorship of 2. Thess., Col., Eph., and the Pastorals is declared questionable, although in the latter case it is said that "the evidence is not conclusive." Yet the evidence is thoroughly accepted. For those who seek material against the acceptance of the historicity of the New Testament this book will offer ample sources. For those who accept Holy Scripture, there is opportunity to learn about the sophistication that passes for Christian scholarship.

Otto F. Stahlke

II. THEOLOGICAL—HISTORICAL STUDIES

A NEW LOOK AT THE LUTHERAN CONFESSIONS (1529-1537). By Holsten Fagerberg. Translated by Gene J. Lund. Concordia, St. Louis, 1972. 320 pages.

"The purpose of this volume," according to the author, "is to describe the theology of the confessional statements written by Luther and Melancthon between 1529 and 1537"—thus the Large and Small Catechisms, the Augsburg Confession, the Apology, and the Smalcald Articles. At given points the Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope (1537) and the Formula of Concord (1577) are cited. The 12 chapters present the following topics: Basis for the Confessions (Scripture as the

Word of God); Scripture and Tradition; Law and Gospel; Nature of God; Creation and the Fall of Man; Justification; the Sacraments; Penitence; the Ministry; the Church; Christian Life; Eternal Life. Fagerberg's concern is to let the Confessions be heard clearly on these subjects, to evaluate other interpretations which have appeared in recent years, and to show points of continuing tension between Lutheran and Catholic teaching. The analysis is clear, convincing, incisive; and for this reason the work deserved translation.

The first chapter on the Bible as the "Basis of the Confessions" is probably worth the price of the book alone. Fagerberg cements solidly: the point that the Formula of Concord "was not saying anything new," or different from the earlier confessions, when it designated the Holy Scriptures as the "fountain" and "norm" for all doctrine and teaching in the church (p. 15); also that these Confessions by Luther and Melancthon use the terms "Holy Scripture" and "Word of God" interchangeably "to refer either to the Bible or to a certain word in the Holy Scriptures" (p. 16); and that "the conclusive thing for Luther was not that the Word possessed a certain quality—e.g., that it could be described as Gospel—but that it is found to be a clear, divine statement in the Bible" (p. 17). Fagerberg faults von Loewenich, Schlink, *et al.*, for contending that "the authority of the Bible is not found in the written but the spoken Word, the Gospel, as addressed and preached to men" (p. 30); and against these same critics he shows convincingly that "they (Luther and the Confessions) do not interpret the content of the spoken Word as anything other than the Word of *Scripture*," (p. 31) and that, therefore, "the spoken Word does not become a critical authority to be used in opposition to the Bible, but it is God's active Word in the present, precisely because it bases itself on Holy Scripture" (p. 33).

Needless to say, this bit of fresh air is welcome and, in a sense, long overdue, for the field has been dominated in recent years by scholars bent on lowering the normative authority of Holy Writ in the name of the Confessions! Also good is Fagerberg's rejection of the notion (again, Schlink's and many others') that in the interpretation of Scripture all is well as long as Law and Gospel are the key, and/or as long as the Gospel informs us what is, and what is not, normative in Scripture. Fagerberg says what has to be said, viz., that the doctrine on justification is indeed the Reformation's central, major theme, and that the Law and Gospel are vital in distinguishing properly how a man becomes just before God" (Apol. IV, 87); but the facts are that "the whole of Scripture is looked upon as a uniform divine Word" (p. 37) by the Confessions; that the basic rule of interpretation with which the Scripture must be approached is that "the meaning of Scripture is clear, and what it intends to say can be formulated in comprehensible statements"; and that "when there is some doubt about the meaning of a given passage, such passage must be understood in the light of those whose meaning is clear" (p. 41). No two ways about it: "Reformation theology in its entirety is an expression of a distinct interpretation of Scripture" (p. 43) in line with this stance.

In his second chapter Fagerberg gently but firmly drives home the point that "tradition's changeable and temporary *ius humanum* is in oppo-

sition to the unchangeable *ius divinum* found in Scripture" (p. 52). Yet he shows that the Confessions do not categorically dismiss all traditions or usages *per se* and *ipso facto*. His answer thus to Rome and Trent is in tune with Chemnitz' masterful presentation in the *Examen*.

The third chapter on Law and Gospel is also a big one in our book. "The confessional statements on Law and Gospel do not contain any general orientation for the interpretation of the Bible," Fagerberg reiterates, but they serve a very important though "clearly limited purpose," namely, "to clarify the premises on which the doctrine of justification rests" (p. 63). Fagerberg proceeds to lay out clearly and at length the nature of the Law (*opus Dei alienum*) and the Gospel (*opus Dei proprium*), i.e., *what* they are; and then he also explains their respective functions, i.e., *what each does* as an instrument of the Holy Spirit. Worth noting especially is his demurrer on Schlink's (and others') reduction of the meaning of the Gospel merely to "message" or "proclamation." This is an insight, observes Fagerberg, which "Schlink has here made use of" by adopting what "has become common property through the efforts of the form criticism school" (p. 88). Fagerberg also notes duly and correctly that while the Confessions written by Luther and Melancthon do not generally make use of the term "third use of the Law," as the Formula of Concord does, nonetheless the thing termed is surely there, for "it was self-evident that Christians should do good works" according to "the norm for good works in the Ten Commandments" (p. 86). Ever and again the emphasis comes, too, that the Confessions in emphasizing the Gospel in its liberating, quickening, restoring function (in Word, Baptism, Lord's Supper, and the Keys) do "not contain any negative attitude toward the written words of the Bible" but rather affirm that "it is these very words which are to be proclaimed and actualized in the church day by day," (p. 97) for the nurturing of faith. In this same chapter, moreover, Fagerberg rightly asserts that Luther was dependent, not upon Augustine, but solely upon Scripture for his understanding of *justitia Dei* in the sense which gave the Reformation its peculiarly evangelical thrust and power (p. 109).

Suffice it to say—and to leave some discovery to the reader—a uniform excellence pervades Fagerberg's work in the remaining chapters. If we may venture a few strictures at this point in passing, the following come to mind: we cannot agree with Fagerberg in labeling the Confessions' teaching on the atonement as akin to Aulen's so-called "Latin type" (p. 119)—our reasons being that Aulen's categories or distinctions are not entirely valid; we miss a forthright and clear presentation of the doctrine of objective justification or reconciliation in the manner of our Lutheran forebears (cf. especially, 154); we are a little puzzled by Fagerberg's *handling* of the matter of the number of the sacraments (two or three, etc.) and letting the label "consubstantiation" for Luther's view of the real presence stand unchallenged (p. 193); we doubt that "the confessional writers" held that "to its (the church's) true essence belong the Word, the sacraments, and a functionally conceived ministry" (p. 259). Perhaps this latter is only a misstatement or mistranslation, since Fagerberg is otherwise quite consistent in distinguishing the church's *essence from its marks*. There is some very good reading to be had on the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, particularly the solid way in which Fagerberg upholds the Confessions in putting down the idea of the Lord's Supper

as "sacrifice," (pp. 200f) a notion on which many Lutherans today are not a little fuzzy and misguided.

Finally, a word about the bibliography. Naturally, as we might expect, it is Europe-oriented. This is not unusual; but what is unusual is the fact that Concordia Publishing House, which mothered the English version to the light of day, slights some of its own products. Tappert, Elert, Schlink are in the list; but we find it strange that Bente's classic work on the *Triglotta* could have been omitted, particularly his brilliant introduction; not to mention the overlooking of other recent works, published by Concordia itself, like the brand new translation of Chemnitz' *Examen*, Part I (by Kramer), and Ralph Bohlmann's *Principles of Biblical Interpretation in the Lutheran Confessions*. Why hide good and pertinent and scholarly things under the proverbial bushel? Nonetheless, kudos to CPH for helping to keep interest in the Confessions alive through translation and publication of Fagerberg!

E. F. Klug

INFALLIBLE? An Inquiry. By Hans Kueng. Translated by Edward Quinn. Doubleday, Garden City, N.Y., 1971. 262 pages. Published originally in German, 1970.

ZUM PROBLEM UNFEHLBARKEIT. Antworten auf die Anfrage von Hans Kueng. By Karl Rahner, and others. Herder, Freiburg, 1971. 376 pages.

Taken in tandem—as indeed they should be since the second was written in direct response to the first—these two books unquestionably document a very significant happening in contemporary Roman Catholic theology. The gut-struggle which they expose is more than a quarrel of words. Involved is the very basic question of authority within Catholicism. That Rome should experience internecine strife is, of course, not new. But the issue raised by Kueng, and the way in which he raises it—daring frontal attack on what he calls the "institutional-personal power-structure of the Church leadership," viz., pope, Curia, bishops—strikes at the very heart of the "Roman system," which, as he charges, "is the sole absolutist system that has survived the French revolution intact" (p. 28).

Now, then, one could dismiss Kueng—many Romanists do—as that popular, personable globe-trotter who deliberately seeks to win over his audiences by his novel, crowd-pleasing, scholarly-sounding attacks on hitherto sacrosanct territory in the ecclesiastical structure of Catholic polity and theology. But he hardly can be dismissed this time, a fact underscored by Karl Rahner—his erstwhile friend and teacher—entering the fray against him. Not alone, mind you, but with an imposing team of fourteen name theologians from within Catholicism, plus official judgments by three continental bishops' conferences, German, Italian, and French! A face-off against Karl Rahner—Rome's show-case theologian, who with Heinrich Schlier (the ex-Lutheran) has produced the *Quaestiones Disputatae* series, of which this is volume 54!—is reminiscent of Luther's being attacked finally by the reluctant—he feared being fried at the stake!—Erasmus, the reigning "brain" of Europe in that day.

Kueng has woven a strong case in powerful, plain, unmuddled prose. There is no doubt about it that for him Paul VI's encyclical, *Humanae*

Vitae, which brought the ruling against all artificial means of birth control, was the proverbial straw breaking the camel's back. It is the "Galileo-case of today," "an uncollegial solo effort," "the neuralgic point" (p. 40ff), which made one thing very clear that "the permissibility of contraception could have been conceded only under the one condition completely unacceptable to Pope and Curia of disavowing the traditional teaching of the Church and particularly of the last three popes, of admitting an error in this teaching of the Church" (p. 50f). According to Kueng, however, this is but one of the "classical errors of the ecclesiastical teaching office, now largely admitted" (p. 31). "Textbook theology," or "Romanist mentality," Kueng argues, is what keeps the traditional definition of infallibility as "the impossibility of falling into error" alive in the church. At any number of places in his text Kueng comes very close to, if not in fact espousing actually, the *sola Scriptura* principle in passing his judgments. The ecclesiastical teaching office as the infallible voice of God he categorizes as a fiction, completely without Scriptural base. He makes no secret of the fact that he despises the chicanery by which Pius IX, who had pontificated in Olympian style, "Tradition, that's me," got his "deepest wish" with Vatican I's dogmatizing papal infallibility when speaking *ex cathedra*. With pixie-like delight Kueng points to John XXIII's contrasting stance: "I'm not infallible; I'm infallible only when I speak *ex cathedra*. But I'll never speak *ex cathedra*!" (p. 87) With Pius IX's kind of thinking, charges Kueng, "if he wants, the pope can do everything, even without the Church," e.g., pronounce "an infallible definition of the immorality of birth control."

On what is this pretension grounded? Chiefly on two presuppositions, both of which have feet of clay, according to Kueng. First, the unfounded claim of primacy, which, according to Kueng, is unsubstantiated either in Scripture or in history. (Shades of Luther's stance in the famous Leipzig Debate with John Eck?!) And, secondly, on the faulty theologizing of Aquinas who "basing himself—we may assume, in good faith—on the forgeries (from Cyril's *Liber thesaurorum*) in this way laid the foundations for the doctrine of infallibility of Vatican I" (p. 119). Such footing, says Kueng, can in no way "be described as secure and unassailable" (p. 124). Sounding for all the world almost like Luther when he pressed Scripture's authority against that of the church, Kueng holds that "it must be regarded as an aberration when a Church—without being compelled to do so—*produces dogmas*, whether for reasons of ecclesiastical or theological policy (the two Vatican dogmas of the pope) or for reasons of piety and propaganda (the two Vatican dogmas of Mary);" and, he adds, "the aberration is all the greater when it deepens the division of Christendom" (p. 149).

Kueng is not presumptuous enough to suggest *the* answer to his church's dilemma. But he ventures the substitution of "indefectability" for "infallibility" as the term which most nearly expresses what the church ought be claiming for itself, because the church—he seems to be speaking of the *una sancta*—will never perish when it is grounded on the promises of the ever-faithful God (p. 181). The church, therefore, must at all times refrain from "dogmatizing" the promise, urges Kueng, from setting up abiding truth in propositional form. Its basic business rather is to proclaim the Gospel, the promises of God.

All of this sounds rather good and evangelical, until Kueng himself pulls the rug out from under a genuinely Biblical theology by subscribing whole hog to higher criticism's denigrating of Holy Scripture into nothing more than—and only that—a thoroughly human book, spoofing at the doctrine of verbal inspiration (“it is not a question here of a miracle,” he says, p. 216), and denying that Scripture itself comes to us with actual, real, and ever-valid propositional truth. Except for these blasts he might easily have been seen as writing from within evangelical theology's camp when he clamors for “a radical reform of the papacy according to the Gospel of Jesus Christ” (p. 242). And no doubt many within his own church, carried along by their memories and by Kueng's persuasive rhetoric, would not question his contention that John XXIII showed “that such a pope would be possible” (p. 247).

It was only a matter of time before Kueng's frontal assault on the papal authority came under full scale counter-attack. This not so pleasant task fell to Rahner—he could hardly avoid it!—and his self-chosen crew of distinguished Catholic theologians. They had a clearly defined objective as they sought to come to the defense of papal authority, especially as regards the teaching office: make mincemeat of Kueng's audacious claims and charges. Kueng had a name for them, even before they started: the pope's “new Inquisition”—scholars whose one purpose in life is to preserve the *status quo* and to put down all critical voices in the church. Maybe even the cardinal's cap will be thrown in, quips Kueng, again reminiscent of Luther's not so subtle jibe at Erasmus for playing the party-line.

Rahner contributes the first three chapters in the reply to Kueng, making special point of the fact that the opening chapter was written and in print earlier, even before Kueng's book appeared, and was in support of the dogma of infallibility on its 100th anniversary, July 18, 1970. But it is a somewhat ambiguous, not to say slippery, piece—an art Rahner has learned well—and Kueng could probably interpret it—as he also did—in his own way as supportive of his position, and Paul VI at the same time could view it as a scholarly, up-to-date endorsement of papal teaching authority. So, Rahner's second essay or chapter came as a reply to this very notion of Kueng's, and now, in no uncertain terms, spelled out the fact that Kueng's theses “contradicted the whole of Catholic theology since the time of the Reformation” and, in particular, “the teachings of Vatican I and II” (p. 31). Once again, however, Kueng had parried with the barb that he was only saying what he had in fact learned in substance and methodology from his teacher. He notes with regret that Rahner, contrary to his previous utterances, had now at last spoken unambiguously in support of papal infallibility. This prompted Rahner's third essay or chapter—his last, he says, for he feels that the argument no longer is merely and safely *within* the church. Incensed, he disclaims being the sorcerer's apprentice who has spawned more than he could handle (p. 69). There is a certain understandable pathos and pitiable squirming to be seen here on the part of the older man who feels that his erstwhile friend and student has turned on and betrayed him. Maybe Kueng has, to Rahner's way of thinking, but his reply is hardly as convincing as Kueng's methodical probing after the “soft spots” in Catholicism's pretension on papal authority and the ecclesiastical teaching office. The point at which the various essayists—among them, Otto Semmelroth, Juan Alfaro, Karl Lehmann,

Karl Becker, Yves Congar, Rud. Schnakenburg, *et al.*—converge with considerable force and punch is in repudiation, first of all, of Kueng's subjectivism—not without some justification!—and, then, secondly, his critical rejection of the church's right and capacity for expressing its articles of belief in propositional form.

One of the more interesting chapters is that by Walter Brandmuller who attempts, point for point, to demonstrate that Kueng's charges of "classical errors" in Rome's history are without foundation. One has the feeling that Kueng nonetheless is the historian who confronts the facts with more objectivity, shall we say, honesty? Congar's critique of Kueng is chiefly on the score of what he categorizes as Kueng's over-simplification" of the historical question in the history of dogma, by his insinuating an unwelcome historical judgment against the church, and by too strong a recourse to the *sola Scriptura* principle.

It is probably no overstatement to say that only a study course, devoted entirely to these two books in a seminar perhaps on contemporary Roman Catholic theology, could do justice to them and the issues they raise. Looking in from the outside, as we do, one can hardly escape the feeling that Kueng is one of those redoubtable, intrepid, evangelical souls within the Catholic church, who has had the misfortune of being compelled by his honest convictions to speak out on some of the old issues, left unsettled by Trent and the Counter-Reformation. As a result it is also his lot to end up doing the same old thing: hit the pope on the crown and the theologians in their bellies—neuralgic points of yore! Time will tell what the outcome will be. Kueng has at least this much on his side—if not a Frederick the Wise of Saxony—that Paul VI happens to be a milder, more moderate sort of fellow than Leo X!

E. F. Klug

GREAT DIALECTICIANS IN MODERN CHRISTIAN THOUGHT. By Ernest B. Koenker. Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, 1971. 158 pages. Cloth. \$5.95.

In his study of dialectic the author of this book has brought together philosophers and theologians in their attempts to understand reality and the relationship of God to reality. The book is valuable particularly for the theologically trained inquirer who can relate some of the issues involved to his own search for certainty amid a growing complexity of thought and forms. From Plato to Werner Elert dialectic is carefully, even though sometimes too briefly, lifted from the realm of sterile and oftentimes vacuous theoreticism to the dynamic role it has played in Western thought. The comments on reconciliation will prove helpful to the student who is himself attempting to "reconcile" the existential elements which seemingly can find happy residence in the thought of such divergent writers as Kierkegaard, Barth, Tillich and Bultmann. Hegel and Heidegger are the chief philosophers considered, an opinion on the part of this reviewer which is in no way meant to minimize the abiding influence of Plato upon all who engage in the pleasant, though sometimes difficult, task of thinking. It was, after all, Plotinus the neo-Platonist who named dialectic the most precious aspect of philosophy.

John F. Johnson

ETHICS: ALTERNATIVES AND ISSUES. By Norman I. Geisler. Zondervan, Grand Rapids, 1971. 270 pages. Cloth. \$6.95.

This book has been described as a long-awaited evangelical treatment of modern ethical thought. In its development it does deal with contemporary ethical concerns; moreover, it presents a careful analysis of alternatives to the major issues of normative ethical systems. In the first part of his book the author treats ethical alternatives under the themes of generalism, antinomianism, situationism and absolutism. He clearly points out difficulties involved in the various positions which have been enunciated when these positions are examined in the light of biblical theology. The second part of the book is devoted to ethical issues which relate to the Christian and his attitude toward, and involvement with, war, sex, social responsibility, birth control, euthanasia, capital punishment, and ecology. Selected readings and a lengthy bibliography are helpful to the reader who desires to engage in a depth study of the issues raised.

The author arrives at certain conclusions which will not be shared by all of Christian persuasion. But philosophical and theological questions (and dilemmas) have never been either easy to grapple with or noted for summoning unanimity of opinion or resolve.

John F. Johnson

EVOLUTION OR DEGENERATION. WHICH? By H. R. Siegler. Northwestern Publishing House, Milwaukee, 1972. 128 pages. Paper. \$3.00.

This volume purports to be a positive contribution to the discussion of evolution which has convulsed the church ever since Darwin's publication of *The Origin of Species* (1859) and *The Descent of Man* (1871). Many theologians and Christians have accepted the theory of evolution, because they believe that it has been scientifically proven. To accept this theory necessarily results in the rejection of the miraculous account of the creation of the universe by God. The theory of evolution has repercussions not only in the field of theology and Biblical interpretation, but also in the fields of politics and morality. Harold Wicke, in his foreword to this volume, wrote:

Accepting the theory of evolution as Gospel truth, men asserted that both the world and man was gradually evolving into something better and better. But history has not borne out this hope, and disillusionment has set in. The beautiful, new world has failed to materialize. Instead, men have become brutalized and civilization is in danger of collapse. What is more, scientific evidence itself has been found to be inconsistent and variable.

In this book Siegler advances a theory which not only agrees with the Bible, but which he hopes more readily explains currently-known phenomena of life than the present theory of evolution. With the Scripture the author rightly holds that the Creator made a world that was "very good" and in the beginning of time the Supreme Being made a cosmos which was superior to that now in existence, and that plants and animals were given at the beginning of history their greatest potentialities, a level never again reached by them. In the view of Siegler the big mistake of modern evolutionary taxonomy, paleontology, and anthropology was the

assumption of the development of vast processes of change that took place over hundreds of millions of years. This he believes has been a blind alley and hindered the true advancement of a number of scientific disciplines.

It is the thesis of this book that in all created things there is the germ (the innate disposition) to degeneration and decay. "At the time of their creation all inorganic matter and all planetary bodies were endowed with their highest potentials. Degenerative and disintegrative processes were, however, soon set in motion. New elements, compounds—yes, even new stars and galaxies—may have since then developed because of these degenerative processes. All living organisms, too, were endowed with their greatest potentialities at the time of their creation. The countless new varieties that have since then developed are the result of this process of degeneration. The manner in which it has taken place will be elaborated on in the following chapter" (p. 14).

Siegler examines his theory relative to the origin of species (ch. 2), to taxonomy (ch. 3), to the origin of the cosmos (ch. 4), and in chapter 5 he relates his view to the evidence from morphology, embryology, geography, geology, paleontology and radiological dating. On pages 83-85 the author poses ten questions for which evolution does not have the answer. He points out specifically that the two laws of thermodynamics do not allow for the contention that the universe, the earth, and life on it have evolved into the present state of orderliness and complexity.

On pages 89-116 the reader will find a list of authenticated hybrids. The volume concludes with a glossary of technical terms which the general reader will find helpful and a bibliography for further reading and study. Recommended to our pastors, science teachers, interested laymen, and young people.

Raymond F. Surburg

BROKEN BREAD IN A BROKEN WORLD. By Brian A. Greet. Judson Press, Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, 1972. 121 pages. Paper. \$2.50.

This book on the Sacrament of the Altar is penned by a Baptist minister who received his training in England. Though reflecting a basically Reformed orientation, the author knows other traditions, and especially the Biblical material, well enough to offer a fine and meditative monograph on a subject which has often been treated. His chapters on Eucharist and Real Presence are gems.

The author can use quotations from Luther, Cranmer, Brother Lawrence, Aquinas, C. S. Lewis, and Brunner with both ease and understanding. Yet the book remains a devotional exercise on a subject which is central to every Christian communion's worship and life.

John F. Johnson

INTERPRETATION AND IMAGINATION. By Charles L. Rice. Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1970. 158 pages. Paper. \$3.50.

The renewal of the Church which is uppermost in the minds of theologians, ecclesiastics and parish pastors has been approached via liturgy, sacramental resurgence, theological reappraisal and lay involve-

ment. But relatively little has apparently come from the pulpit—at least in much of Protestantism. The Preacher's Paperback Library, to which the volume under review belongs, is an attempt to enrich preaching by means of greater utilization of contemporary literature, art, and drama. The author makes a good case for his claim that new rubrics for homiletical treatment of the arts will result in the renewal we all want. He seems to proceed from two assumptions: 1) the task of communicating the Gospel led biblical preachers of all ages (including Jesus) to range through the world and speak of God in terms of the world. Thus religion and culture confront each other. 2) The sermon which starts in the Bible and stays in the Bible is not Biblical. With the first assumption few will argue, if the Gospel is properly understood as a message of grace for a sinful, estranged world. The second assumption is one of those paradoxical bits which can be understood to say that without proper *applicatio* a sermon can be all but detached from reality.

There are two areas of concern which attract the attention of the systematician. First, the relationship between religion (theology) and culture; second, the matter of hermeneutic. Both are at once recognized as of paramount importance to the contemporary preacher—that is, the preacher who wants to speak the Word of God to the contemporary situation. Theology and culture point one almost reflexively to Paul Tillich who shared Schleiermacher's concern for religious experience and who rejected what he considered to be chauvinistic form which led to dogmatic idolatry in the church. Homiletic form then became irreligious sermonization. Good "theonomous" preaching must be in accord with the conviction that religion is the substance of culture, and culture is the form of religion. When Tillich asks in his *Theology of Culture* how the Gospel can be communicated, how the message can be heard, he is challenging every man who occupies the pulpit to evaluate the answer which he in fact has given and which is being reflected in his preaching! This does not suggest that Tillich's analysis or answers are correct; it does suggest that his concerns are valid and call for answers.

The second concern is related by Professor Rice to the theology and preaching of Karl Barth. Barth, quotes Rice, bestrides the Protestant pulpit like a colossus. Barth is said to equate the homiletical task with textual exegesis and narrow exposition. This is because he did not remain open to Schleiermacher! Well, thank God for that. Barth insisted that the Word of God is event; the Word, in other words, is eventful. Barth also insisted that theology, as well as proclamation, begins with the revealed Word (Jesus Christ). Barth's preaching form, says Rice, was determined by his inner theological dialectic. This apparently means that his preaching was informed by theological assumptions. Isn't all preaching? And it seems to me that it's not a bad hermeneutic at all when along with Barth the preacher today begins with the revealed Word of God, the Word made flesh, the Christ of Scripture who died and rose again for the justification of sinners.

But back to *Interpretation and Imagination*. If the reader can be severely critical of what he reads in this little volume of renewal via pulpit ministry he can gain new insights in the value of literary expression. Just so he knows what to express!

John F. Johnson

THE RETURN OF CHRIST. *Studies in Dogmatics*. By G. C. Berkouwer. Translated by James Van Oosterom. Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1972. 477 pages. Subject and Scripture indexes. \$9.95.

Dogmatics done in the manner of Prof. Berkouwer is unquestionably that of a master. Few contemporary theologians have evidenced such competence and prolific output on the whole field of basic Christian belief, wide range of reading in contemporary writings, familiarity with Reformed, Catholic, and Lutheran exponents, thorough-going exegetical treatment of Scripture, and the skill to put it all together in crisp, vigorous, challenging, tactful manner.

In size of production alone the 19 volume series (12 completed in translation) constitutes a mammoth undertaking, approached only perhaps in our day by that of Karl Barth. Add to this the fact that Dr. Berkouwer is the leading spokesman of the Dutch Free Church (*Gereformeerde Kerk*), with more than 30 years devoted to teaching in dogmatics at the Free University of Amsterdam, and the result is a product which is not dependent, as Barth was, upon liberal roots, but upon a conservative Reformed orientation. Thus Berkouwer has come to be read with appreciation by many evangelical theologians far beyond the confines of his own land and church.

Eschatology, God's final, definitive acts and activity as regards His creation, especially mankind, is the central concern of this present volume, its focus being on the certainty and the content of God's promise in connection with the "last things." Critical of those who advocate a "realized eschatology," Berkouwer at the same time quashes notions which are so futuristic that they ignore consideration for and connection with the present. The time between death and the Parousia is carefully weighed. Berkouwer cautions against "formulating theoretical constructs about the way God permanently sustains the lasting communion and calls to rest the deceased believers" (p. 63). The fact that Christ has not yet returned but promises definitely to return, presses the church and each believer to give attention to matters like: God's delay; the need for continuing watchfulness; reverent respect for God's own time for doing what He promises; a cautious approach to the meaning of the time between the already and the not yet, especially as regards the "reading" of current history; the undeniable link between Christ's promised parousia and the resurrection of the body. Berkouwer rightly rejects "spiritualism" and/or dualism which portrays salvation as liberation from the body or redemption *from* our bodies and upholds what Paul teaches, "the redemption of our bodies," Rom. 8, 23; but he leaves some unclarity on the matter of man's nature constituted as body and soul. Nonetheless Berkouwer supports the fact that the believer at death is immediately with his Lord, and that his body shall be raised at the last day. In his chapter on the "new earth," Berkouwer, on the one hand, dispels the chiliastic, utopian notions and, on the other hand, warns against an eschatology which divorces itself completely from the idea of God's restoration of "things" in the form of a new earth and heaven. His criticism of Lutheran theologians as generally supporting total destruction as the Biblical teaching on the end of the world is not quite adequate. Lutheran theologians differed, it is true, on whether there would be total destruction

or a transformation of the present world as we know it; but in each case they agreed that the world in its present external shape and form would pass away completely on the last day (cf. especially 1 Cor. 7,31; Ps. 102; 2 Pet. 3, 6-13; etc.).

Berkouwer's handling of the "signs of the times," specifically the antichrist, the millennium, and the future of Israel, presents significant Biblical and historical material, but is bound to elicit debate, particularly among Lutheran readers. The points of contest will be the identification of the Antichrist; the interpretation of Rom. 9-11 as a matter of God's "style" of divine election and the denial that Paul speaks here with a primary focus on spiritual Israel, Israel after the faith; and the "future" of Israel as a state, or political entity. Chapters on the "Visio Dei," "Apocatastasis" (universal reconciliation), and the "Coming of the Kingdom" conclude Berkouwer's effort. Lutherans again will have some difficulty seeing objective reconciliation or justification as Scripture teaches concerning the scope or extent of Christ's redemptory work and, as well, complete lucidity and explicitness on the matter of *gratia universalis/sola gratia*. But these are areas where Lutheran and Reformed theology have historic and known differences, as also on eternal election, and the *genus majestaticum*. There is meaty reading here which will test not only endurance but willingness to comprehend, and we can quite agree with Dr. Berkouwer that "unless the powers of the age to come (preaching, prayer, worship, meekness, praise) operate in this life (Heb. 6, 5), our perspective on the eschaton will fade" and "eschatology simply degenerates into a last chapter of dogmatics, an irrelevant futurism lacking any appeal, a future age with no word for the present" (p. 451).

Eerdmans is to be commended for its persistence in getting Berkouwer's works into English. No serious theological endeavor of our times can rightly neglect the giant production of the eminent Dutch theologian.

E. F. Klug

RELIGION AND THE NEW MAJORITY: Billy Graham, Middle America and the Politics of the 70's. By Lowell D. Streiker and Gerald S. Strober. Association Press, New York, 1972. 202 pages. Cloth. \$5.95.

American religion watchers will welcome this anatomical study of religion by two prominent sociologists. Differing from other sociological studies, it does not dwell on the compilation of statistics, leaving the reader with a number of unresolved and even contradictory conclusions, but paints a composit picture of religion in our country. According to the writers, there is a type of unified American religion that is interested in religion more for the sake of religion than of God. The "Bible" for this American civil religion, is founding documents of the nation. Blended together are the humanistic thoughts of liberal religion and some of the outward trappings of fundamentalistic-conservative religion. A quote from Miller sums up the picture, "The faith (of America) is not in God but in faith; we worship not God but our own worshipping" (p. 172). Quite intriguing is the role that Nixon and Graham play as high priests, both representing the values of middle America which are both more centrist than Carl McIntyre's. The United States is perhaps the world's first

attempt at offering a religionless national culture. When the evidence of the writers is examined, we might all want to come to different conclusions. In America no politician can afford to be explicitly anti-religion, a choice which is open to politicians in "Christian" Europe. This reviewer is suggesting no crusade in behalf of or against the American religious culture, but certainly no pastor can afford not to understand the cultural religious climate of his nation. While avoiding some aspects of it, it can certainly use others for the benefit of the church. On this account this study is highly recommended.

dps

WITCHCRAFT IN EUROPE. A Documentary History. Edited with an Introduction by Alan C. Kors and Edward Peters. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 1972. Cloth. 382 pages, 78 illustrations. \$17.50.

With the rise of the occult in the 1970's, it would only have been a matter of time before a volume of this type would appear to supply the historical background. As Dr. Ralph Moellering pointed out in his article in the March 1972 issue of *The Springfielder* that religious (and anti-religious) mysticism has sprung up as a reaction against the extreme scientism of the post-World War II years. When any issue reaches such major proportions that it reaches the cover story of Time magazine it cannot be overlooked any longer.

Though witches and demon possession are known outside Christian Europe, the editors have restricted themselves to collecting essays from theologians representative of their periods. Major topics covered include the period from 1100-1250, St. Thomas Aquinas; 1250-1484, where witch hunting became a prime episcopal sport; the pre-Reformation period; 16th and 17th century attitudes covering Protestant, Catholic, and Rationalistic attitudes.

The only Lutheran whose writings make it into the tome is a section of the great reformer's *Commentary on the Galatians* centering on Paul's words, "Who hath bewitched you, that you should not believe the truth?" Luther's words seem to be more of a description of 16th century witchcraft than an appropriate interpretation of St. Paul. Lutherans apparently did not have the interest in the subject that other religionists of that time did. Mention could have been made, at least from a Lutheran point of view, that the Lutherans up to the age of Rationalism fought for the retention of the exorcism in the rite of infant baptism. Luther's hymn, *A Mighty Fortress*, with its cry against "the old evil foe" might have also received a passing mention or quotation.

Some of the subjects handled are magic and sexual impotency (both by Aquinas) and the recantation of those New England jurors who sentenced the Salem jurors to death. Concluding the book is a writing by Balthasar Bekker, a Rationalist of the Cartesian stripe, who did not deny the personality of a devil, but held to the free will of man as a fortress against an involuntary satanic possession. For a Rationalist, that is reasonable. *The Exorcist* has introduced the American reading public to the problem of satanic possession in a modern 20th century culture. Drs. Kors and Peters have opened a large section of the past. Only time will

judge our current interest in the occult to be a fad. If history is any rule of thumb, it will be with us to the end of time. The volume is done in handsome style and the illustrations taken from the periods discussed will immediately represent the past. For those caught up in the movement, the volume becomes a "must."

dps

III. PASTORAL—PRACTICAL STUDIES

THE PREACHER AND HIS MODELS. By James Stalker. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1967. 284 pages. Paper. \$2.95.

This volume, a reprint of Stalker's Yale lectures on preaching, is one of a series of notable books on preaching being reprinted by Baker Book House. The publishers are to be commended, for to read a volume like this is to relish the flavor of old wine.

Stalker, the great Scottish divine, finds in the prophets and in St. Paul the preacher's models.

The prophets, as ambassadors and watchmen, preached a message not their own. The burden of their preaching was criticism of evil, prediction of calamities, and the message of hope in Christ. A preacher who fails to preach these truths—the Law and the Gospel—is really a false prophet.

The essence of Paul's ministry was a love for Christ and a love for people. What a model for today's preacher!

A minor theme of the book is the importance of study on the part of the preacher. Says Stalker:

Preachers should remember that the large silent part of their flock is only reached by preaching, and, therefore, they should give their strength to it, and not to little meetings (p. 22).

But, if a man gives up his habits of study, he is lost . . . Robert Hall used to say that when the devil saw a minister was likely to be useful in the church, his way of disposing of him was to get on his back and ride him to death with engagements (p. 226).

The book is old wine, good wine.

Henry J. Eggold

MINISTERING TO THE YOUNG SINGLE ADULT. By Elmer L. Towns. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1972. 125 pages. Paperback. \$1.95.

This brief volume discusses the young adult as both a challenge and an opportunity for the congregation.

Young adults include those at college away from home, those at college at home, those in the military service, those working but living at home, those working away from home, those separated from their mate, and those separated from their mate and having children. Eight to nine per cent of the single adults never marry, some by design and some by misfortune.

Problems which young adults face are loneliness, achieving self-identity, finding the meaning of existence and the meaning of work, and personal purity. Since the church is family oriented, the young adult is often estranged because he feels himself an outsider to the life of the church.

The church's ministry to young adults should include trying to understand their world, providing counseling services and a program for young adults which includes opportunity for spiritual growth, fellowship and recreation, and Christian service.

The extensive bibliography provides opportunity for further research into this often neglected area of the congregation's work.

Henry J. Eggold

THE SUBSTANCE OF FAITH AND OTHER COTTON PATCH SERMONS.

By Clarence Jordan. Edited by Dallas Lee. Association Press, 1972. 160 pages. Cloth. \$4.95.

Clarence Jordan is famed for his three works: *The Cotton Patch Version of Paul's Epistles*, *The Cotton Patch Version of Luke and Acts*, and *The Cotton Patch Version of Matthew and John*.

As these translations attempt to make the Bible speak colloquial, modern English with a Southern accent, so do Jordan's sermons.

Founder and moving spirit of the Koinonia Farm in south Georgia, an experiment in Christian community living, Jordan is concerned that Christian faith be authentic in the lives of Christ's followers. Hence, his sermons are more prophetic than kerygmatic.

Using the homily style, Jordan does a creditable job of translating the thought forms of Scripture into the every-day language of the kitchen and street. But he doesn't forget the Greek as he tries to make the Scriptures come alive. The devil is "one who throws things about, one who stirs up things and gets them confused" (p. 56). *Blessed* "means to have a deep security that comes from loving and being loved" (p. 62).

Here are two samples of his style: Speaking of the Zealots he says: "All you would have to do is strike up one strain of 'Dixie' and those boys would be out there waving the Confederate flag" (p. 61). Another: "I remember an old farmer who went to my daddy (he used to be a banker) and wanted to put up his old mule and get some money. Daddy says: 'All right, describe the mule.' He said, 'Well, Mr. Jim, he's 23 years old. He's blind in one eye and ain't got no teeth, and he's crippled.' Daddy said 'What in the world do you keep a mule like that for?' He said: 'For collateral'" (p. 69).

A book like this jolts one to see the importance of making the Biblical word a contemporary word when one preaches.

Henry J. Eggold

THEY DARED TO DREAM. By Thomas A. Fry, Jr. Word Books Publishers, Waco, Texas, 1972. 170 pages. Cloth. \$3.95.

It is difficult to say whether the author intends his chapters to be sermons or not. Some he identifies as such, even though the Biblical and

Gospel content is so meager. In fact, these are interesting biographical accounts laced with some moral, social, and political applications. As such, they are highly interesting. And well written. Considerable research evidently went into the preparing of these sketches. But Christian sermons, in a Lutheran sense, they are decidedly not!

John F. Johnson

PROTESTANT CHURCH MUSIC IN AMERICA. By Robert Stevenson. A short survey of men and movements from 1564 to the present. The Norton Library. W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. New York, 1966. XIII + 170 pages. Paper. \$1.95.

This should be a required course for every pastor and organist. Robert Stevenson's coverage of the subject indicated is most competent, comprehensive, and fair. The musical habits of Americans are traced from New England Puritanism to Diverging Currents, 1850 to the Present. The period before the Independence of 1776 saw a great improvement in "regular singing," abandoning the improvised embellishment of psalm tunes, in which the worshipers went everyone his own way. Singing schools arose in New England, Pennsylvania and Virginia. During this time the Germans in Pennsylvania attempted many new and enthusiastic modes. Beissel at Ephrata established a commune of "the singing celibates" with a heavenly treble wafting from the balcony. The Shakers and others developed their own "singing in the Spirit" along with the dancing and painting and speaking "in the Spirit." They apparently did not rejoice in the disciplined music, which Cotton Mather praises as early at 1723:

A mighty Spirit came Lately upon abundance of our people, to Reform their singing which was degenerated in our Assemblies to an Irregularity, which made a Jar in the ears of the more curious and skillful singers. Our Ministers generally Encouraged the people, to accomplish themselves for a Regular singing, and a more beautiful Psalmody (p. 22).

The Episcopalians are frowned upon because their music was mainly concertizing. The patristic aversion to instruments was frequently cited by Presbyterian and Congregational writers before 1800. On the other hand, Pachelbell, son of Johann, was organist in Charleston, S.C. from 1737-1750. His first name was also Charles. By 1792 the Methodists could declare that fugues are not sinful in "private companies," but not approved for worship. Bach's choral harmonizations were found unsuitable for congregation singing. Negro psalm singing often shamed the congregation, who would listen to the harmonious sounds coming from the balcony.

Most interesting are the comments on the earliest use of church music by the Huguenots. In 1564 three shiploads came singing Marot psalms (128 and 130) which the Indians learned to sing very well. In fact, the Indians used these tunes to distinguish between the French and the Spanish. Calvinistic psalm tunes were sung also by the Massachusetts Indians.

Otto F. Stahlke