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Editorial: Theme—Incarnating the Gospel

One of the most important parts of theological work is applying the teaching of Scripture to our contemporary context—in part an intellectual activity, understanding the thought patterns and cultural conditions of the day, and in part a practical matter—showing the grace of God in the day by day life of the community. However, these two are not always linked successfully.

So our first article is a fine example of how one preacher who was well known for his spiritual teaching was just as forthright in his application of the gospel to his community and nation. We are thankful to the author, Ian Randall (UK), for permitting us to reproduce this section of his biography of F. B. Meyer which deals with his remarkable ministry in the socio-political area.

Next, a completely different environment with a paper from Emiola Nihinlola (Nigeria) who applies basic biblical principles to the situation of women in Africa where, as he points out, there is much exploitation, especially in their role as mothers. His focus is on the controversial text, 1 Timothy 2:15. He discusses key issues such as creation, alienation, redemption and consummation, concluding that 'Christian women have a sacred and divine task … to give birth and rebirth to godly children who will establish the will of God in the hearts of men and prepare them to enter the Kingdom of God'.

Samuel Lee (USA) takes our thoughts to the specific area of church planting and evangelism, describing how business enterprises can be used to build 'spiritually and economically integrated communities of faith'. Typically, this involves the idea of a 'Third Space' to bridge the gap between the church and others (the gospel and the world) by 'implementing ventures of creative neutral spaces … that are more inviting to strangers than traditional ecclesiological models'. Using a particular case study, he evaluates this form of mission, concluding that it has much potential provided that it includes something more than an individual approach—one that includes the community and society at large.

On a rather different note, we now open up the topic of inter-religious encounter with an examination of arguments involved in the Muslim document, 'A common word'. On detailed exegetical grounds, the author, Gordon Nickel (Canada/India), questions the claims of this document that love of God and neighbour is a 'common essential'. While seeking friendly relations, Nickel shows that fidelity to one's own convictions and truth in discussion are essential.

So finally we turn to a 'classic' article from an earlier issue of our journal by Klaus Bockmuehl (Germany) which provides us with a simple but compelling framework for all of our theological work, encompassing the three horizons of theology—church, humanity and God.

Thomas Schirrmacher, General Editor
David Parker, Executive Editor

ERT (2016) 40:4, 292-313

Incarnating the Gospel: Socio-Political Activity in the Ministry of F.B. Meyer

Ian Randall

Frederick Brotherton Meyer (1847-1929) was a leading English Baptist minister, holiness teacher and evangelical social reformer whose unusual combination of ministries had a significant impact in his time. He was especially prominent in the period 1890-1914, an era which represented the heyday of the influence of the Free Churches in England.[1]

Meyer was one of several leading Free Church opinion-makers who occupied strategic positions, most as preachers in well-known London churches.[2] After three years of theological study at Regent's Park College in London, Meyer commenced ordained Baptist ministry in 1870, as assistant minister at Pembroke Chapel, Liverpool. From 1872-74 he was minister of Priory Street Baptist Church, York, where he was influenced by the American evangelist, Dwight L. Moody, who held an extended mission in York. He then had two ministries in Leicester before moving in 1888 to London, which was the scene of his ministry until retirement in 1920.

Many aspects of Meyer's work warrant attention. He was an effective pastor-evangelist, seeing significant church growth in his local ministries. His prolific writing meant that he had a widespread influence on the evangelical constituency. Within Baptist life he was noted for the way he connected with Free Church movements. He was the leading international speaker representing the holiness teaching of the Keswick Convention.[3]

This study concentrates on his socio-political activity, a dimension of

1 James Munson, *The Nonconformists: In Search of a Lost Culture* (London: SPCK, 1991), 2.

2 D.W. Bebbington, *The Nonconformist Conscience: Chapel and Politics, 1870-1914* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1982), 7.

3 These and other aspects are dealt with in Ian M. Randall, *Spirituality and Social Change: The Contribution of F.B. Meyer (1847-1929)* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2003).

Ian Randall (PhD, University of Wales) taught church history and spirituality at Spurgeon's College and the International Baptist Theological Seminary, Prague. Now based in Cambridge, he has interests in spiritual renewal and missional initiatives and has published widely in these areas, including, The English Baptists of the Twentieth Century *(2005),* What a Friend we have in Jesus: The Evangelical Tradition *(2005),* Spiritual Revolution: The Story of OM *(2008) and* Communities of Conviction: Baptist Beginnings in Europe *(2009). This article is an edited version of chapter 6 of* Spirituality and Social Change: The Contribution of F.B. Meyer (1847-1929) *(Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2003) and is used with permission.*

his work which has not been given the same attention as—for example—his contribution to Keswick spirituality.[4] Meyer is an example of someone who espoused an evangelical 'social gospel'.

It was F. B. Meyer's conviction that every local church should help not only to 'save souls'—a vision he had gained especially from D.L. Moody—but also to 'right social wrongs'.[5] His commitment to conversion and its implications led Meyer to search for ways in which the gospel could, as he expressed it in 1902, be 'incarnated again' in the community.[6]

His emphasis on social action emerged particularly during his period in Leicester. His first ministry in the city was at Victoria Road Church, but he found the ethos of the church too restrictive. The church manual reported in 1876 that the 'ordinary routine' of the church was continuing.[7] Meyer resigned in 1878 and although he was expecting to leave Leicester he was prevailed upon to stay and pioneer a new congregation, which became Melbourne Hall. An expansive social vision was expressed in Meyer's initiatives at Melbourne Hall in the 1880s. It then developed even further through the impact which Christ Church, Westminster Bridge Road, London, under his leadership, had on the Lambeth district of London in the 1890s and beyond.

But Meyer was not content with local church activity. Through the temperance and 'social purity' movements, his horizons widened until he found himself compelled to confront, at national level, what he referred to as 'grave moral perils'. Meyer's values were those of the socially aware 'Nonconformist Conscience', with its attempt by Nonconformist (Free Church) leaders to apply moral principles to public life.[8]

From 1902 Meyer became more overtly political. He used the medium of the National Free Church Council for his wider socio-political endeavours, especially in the period up to 1914. Even after that date, Meyer was involved in issues of war and peace. In 1912, however, Meyer commented that it was a 'miserable business to be always protesting' and that 'one breath from God would alter in a moment the entire outlook'.[9] The spiritual vision, which was fundamental to every aspect of Meyer's career, meant that his socio-political aims were always subsidiary to his all-embracing goal of seeing individuals and communities transformed by faith in Christ.

4 The present article is a revised version of chapter 6 of *Spirituality and Social Change*.

5 *The Times*, 22 June, 1907, 12. For background, see Kathleen Heasman, *Evangelicals in Action: An Appraisal of their Social Work in the Victorian Era* (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1962).

6 *Free Church Year Book* (London: National Council of the Evangelical Free Churches [NCEFC], 1902), 94. From an address by Meyer on 'Twentieth Century Evangelism'.

7 *Victorian Road Church Manual* (Leicester: Victoria Road Church, 1876), 6.

8 *The British Weekly* [hereafter *BW*], 17 March 1904, 611. See Bebbington, *The Nonconformist Conscience*, especially 11-17; D.W. Bebbington, 'The Baptist Conscience in the Nineteenth Century', *The Baptist Quarterly* [hereafter *BQ*], Vol. 34, No. 1 (1991), 13-24.

9 Letter from F.B. Meyer to James Mursell, 5 February 1912, quoted by W.Y. Fullerton in *F.B. Meyer: A Biography* (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, [1929]), 115. Fullerton remains a valuable biography.

I Caring for 'the masses'

The foundation of Meyer's socio-political activity was his struggle to bridge the gulf between the church and the common people. His own background was upper-middle-class, and in part it was probably as a consequence of this background that he realised the gulf that had to be bridged. His attempt began in earnest at Melbourne Hall, Leicester, from 1881, when the building which had been built to house the growing congregation (which grew to 1,500) became operational.

It was not possible, Meyer argued, to reclaim working men to Christian experience if they were cared for by the church for only two or three hours on a Sunday. A coffee room was therefore opened each evening at Melbourne Hall, and other facilities were used extensively as classrooms or for temperance, social purity and evangelistic agencies.[10]

The concept of a partnership between organised evangelism and social service, with the local church as the hub of these activities, was a creative one. It was generally accepted in Free Church circles that the principles which Meyer developed in the early 1880s influenced the early Methodist Central Halls.[11] This is not to say that Melbourne Hall was among the first of the 'institutional' churches—those churches which operated with a variety of socially-orientated institutions. As early as 1859, John Clifford was talking about the Praed Street Baptist Church in London, where he was the minister, as existing to 'save souls and bodies' and increase 'social good'.[12]

Meyer's strategy at Melbourne Hall, similarly, was to offer virtually non-stop 'wholesome and spiritual fare', as he put it, as an alternative to 'inane and injurious entertainments'. Melbourne Hall organised eighty-three widely varied meetings each week.[13] Influenced as he had been by Moody, Meyer's major objective was conversions, but because he directed his attention specifically to work among the poor, it was a consistent development for him to broaden out from evangelism to social endeavour.[14] Caring for the masses flowed out of evangelistic and spiritual concerns. Meyer's gospel was a social as well as a spiritual one.

Meyer found, however, that social work could not be carried out solely within the church buildings. What became known as his 'prison-gate' ministry in Leicester began when he discovered that men coming out of Leicester prison tended to gravitate to the nearest pub, where they joined their old companions who often drew

10 *BW*, 26 April 1906, 47; F.B. Meyer, *The Bells of Is: Or Voices of Human Need and Sorrow* (London: Morgan & Scott, [1894]), 23-4; M.J. Street, *F B Meyer: His Life and Work* (London: S.W. Partridge, 1902), 53.

11 Fullerton in *The Life of Faith* [*LF*], 7 February 1912, 141; Fullerton, *Meyer*, 54-5.

12 David Thompson, 'John Clifford's Social Gospel', *BQ* , Vol. 31, No. 5 (1986), 202-3. For Clifford's ministry see E.H. Bonsall, *The Dream of an Ideal City: Westbourne Park, 1877-1977* (London: Westbourne Park Baptist Church, 1978).

13 Fullerton, *Meyer*, 54; *Worship and Work*, October 1885, 2. This was a Melbourne Hall church magazine.

14 Meyer, *Bells of Is*, 24, 26. For this continued in Meyer's London ministry see D.J. Tidball, 'Evangelical Nonconformist Home Missions 1796-1901', University of Keele PhD (1981), 168, 309.

them straight back into crime. Meyer decided to do something. With the co-operation of the governor, he visited the prison each morning, taking discharged prisoners to a coffee house for a plate of ham. He estimated that he had provided breakfasts for between 4,500 and 5,000 men and women by the time he left Leicester in 1888.

Having contacted the ex-prisoners, Meyer's next objective was to find them employment, and when he found manufacturers reluctant to help, he launched out in business as 'F.B. Meyer, Firewood Merchant'. In 1885 he was employing twenty men who were producing and selling 25,000 bundles of firewood each week. He also provided them with accommodation.

Another rehabilitation venture was a window cleaning 'Brigade'. Meyer was at pains to stress—in the face of criticism—that his entrepreneurial efforts were subordinate to his aim of producing devotion to Christ. He set up accommodation and a workshop, with a manager, in premises which he named 'Providence House'. Although the immediate neighbours did not see a settlement of criminals as providential, Meyer persevered, and the project flourished. A minority of men, Meyer admitted, 'turned out very badly', but he claimed that many were converted and the prison population was reduced.[15] Social improvement was undergirded by spiritual change.

Drawing on his Leicester experiences, Meyer constructed the framework for Christ Church, which, as a Christian centre serving a needy neighbourhood, was reckoned by H.G. Turner, Meyer's secretary, to be 'probably the biggest thing of the kind in London'.[16] This was arguably not an exaggeration. Meyer's focus was on the working classes, and by 1905 a *British Weekly* correspondent could remark on the large proportion of working men at a Christ Church evening service.

Most of them were probably initially attracted to Meyer's Sunday afternoon Brotherhood, which he started in 1893 and saw grow to 800 men. He picked up ideas from a Brotherhood meeting at George Street Chapel in Liverpool. Pleasant Sunday Afternoon (PSA) meetings for men, which began in 1875, were, by 1890, as large as 1,000 in some Nonconformist churches.[17] There was some concern expressed within Nonconformity that PSAs were social rather than spiritual, but with Meyer's Brotherhood, evangelism and social action went hand in hand. An influx of some of the 'roughest class of working men' in Lambeth was bound to highlight social needs.[18] Through the Brotherhood Meyer opened an evening

15 Meyer, *Bells of Is*, 33-8, 73, 86-90, 102; Street, *Meyer*, 59-65; *Worship and Work*, October 1885, 13-16.

16 Interview with H G Turner, Meyer's Private Secretary, on 19 July 1899: London School of Economics, Booth Collection, B271, 79.

17 *BW*, 25 February 1905, 529; Fullerton, *Meyer*, 108; Turner interview, Booth Collection, 85. K.S. Inglis, *Churches and the Working Classes in Victorian England* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1963), 79. See pages 79-84 for background on the PSAs.

18 Turner interview, Booth Collection, B271, 87. Charles Booth said that Christ Church was middle class and touched the poor only through missions: C. Booth, *Life and Labour of the People in London; Third Series: Religious Influences*, Vol. 7 (London: Macmillan & Co., 1902), 123. This does not do justice to the Brotherhood.

school for adults, and the HM Inspector assessed this as having the best results in London. As well as being 'an institution for soul-winning', the Brotherhood was also an expression of Meyer's belief in the social reality of brotherhood. The men were his 'brothers', not his 'brethren' (an expression Meyer described as 'cant' used by clergy), and he was the 'skipper'.[19]

Meyer believed that people disliked and were repelled by Christian 'stand-offishness', and on Monday afternoons at Christ Church, when he spoke to women, he measured his success by whether he saw laughter 'on the faces marked by poverty and sorrow'.[20] Such meetings were part of Meyer's way of incarnating the gospel. He was determined, however, not to be confined to the church. Meyer initiated, through Christ Church, what he termed recreations, though he insisted that he did not promote amusements. He rented a tumble-down factory for gymnastics and for carpentry, and decided, because of the level of stealing and rowdiness, that he had 'got hold of the right sort' of young people. Linked with this was a club house.[21]

The Lambeth Chief Constable enlisted Meyer to help control some of the most problematic local youths and, as an indicator of Meyer's clientele, the term 'hooligan' apparently came into common currency from a difficult family called Hooligan, discovered by Meyer's helpers.[22] A huge social network, with all kinds of specialist societies, was spawned by Christ Church, largely through Meyer's determination to put his evangelistic principles to work in society and to seek to enhance human dignity.

II Temperance

A specific issue that Meyer, together with many Nonconformists, took up was temperance. He reflected the trend among Nonconformist leaders of the later nineteenth century towards an increasing stress on the need for total abstinence.[23] Throughout his theological student days at Regent's Park College in the late 1860s Meyer thought it was impossible to get through a Sunday without a glass of sherry. On one occasion, while a student preacher, Meyer was staying with hosts who were total abstainers and as he put on his coat to go to church to his embarrassment a bottle of sherry fell out. But by 1872 he had become teetotal, largely through the influence of W. P. Lockhart, the minister of Liverpool's West Toxteth (Baptist) Tabernacle. Meyer increasingly wanted to support working people, as he rather patronisingly put it, 'against their greatest enemy'.[24]

19 *BW*, 19 October 1905, 37; Street, *Meyer*, 94; Clyde Binfield, *George Williams and the YMCA* (London: Heinemann, 1973), 303.

20 *The Christian World* [hereafter *CW*], 21 January 1909, 11; F.B. Meyer, *Reveries and Realities: Or Life and Work in London* (London: Morgan & Scott, 1896), 74.

21 Street, *Meyer*, 98; J. W. Read, ed., *The Christ Church Souvenir Jubilee Year Book* (London: Christ Church, 1926), 29.

22 J. Cox, *The English Churches in a Secular Society: Lambeth, 1870-1930* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), 110; Street, *Meyer*, 98.

23 Bebbington, *Nonconformist Conscience*, 46-7; J.H.Y. Briggs, *The English Baptists of the Nineteenth Century* (Didcot: Baptist Historical Society, 1994), 329-39.

24 *CW*, 8 May 1906, 24; A. Porritt, *The Best I*

During his Leicester period, Meyer emerged as a fervent upholder of the temperance movement, describing drink as the 'giant evil of our time'. There was a call to undertake a war against this evil. The troops must 'sign the pledge' and wear 'the blue ribbon'. The Gospel Temperance or Blue Ribbon movement began in the 1870s and its revivalist fervour had an overwhelming appeal for the evangelistically-minded Meyer.[25]

Temperance leaders in this period often combined religion and temperance. The techniques Meyer used to promote the joint message were borrowed to a considerable extent from D.L. Moody. Meyer did not in any sense see the pledge or the ribbon as a substitute for Christian witness and the call to conversion. Rather, he could assert, in 1883, that after fifty years the temperance movement was coming to its true fulfilment through the introduction of the gospel element. To sign the pledge, Meyer argued, was a confession of sin and expressed a desire for deliverance. This was the theme which he stressed in Leicester and then in London, at the Christ Church Brotherhood and at the women's meetings.[26]

His social vision was distinctly conversionist. In 1882 there were more than one million blue ribbon people in Britain. The campaign which Meyer had led in the Leicester area resulted, it was claimed, in 100,000 signatures to the pledge.[27] While Meyer pictured temperance as a crusade against sin, Leicester publicans rightly viewed it as an attack on them. Their trade began to decline. Some publicans gave Meyer practical help in his work of reclaiming drunkards, but from other quarters he received threats which meant he had to have personal protection. Meyer wrote pamphlets advocating the pledge and the blue ribbon. The latter he described in rather sentimental terms as a 'beautiful emblem', but his faith saw beyond the emblem to God, who alone could make England 'sober and free'.[28] Temperance was an illustration of Meyer's belief that the gospel was intended to transform social life.

Initially, with a typical evangelical individualistic approach, Meyer concentrated on moral persuasion, one by one, but he became convinced that as well as reclamation at this level, action had to be taken to curtail the drink traffic. One of Meyer's Leicester campaigns was directed against grocers' liquor licences. In retaliation, the grocers tried to secure a boycott of Meyer's firewood merchant business, but the customers knew that Meyer's firewood was better value than that of his competitors

Remember (London: Cassell & Co., 1922), 211; Munson, *The Nonconformists*, 59.

25 Meyer, *Bells of Is*, 64. For the revivalist fervour, see L.L. Shiman, *The Crusade Against Drink in Victorian England* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1986), 96.

26 F.B. Meyer, *New Year's Words to Blue Ribbon People* (London: Marshall Bros., [1883]), 2. Meyer, *Bells of Is*, 41-2.

27 Meyer, *Bells of Is*, 75; *Catalogue of the Leicester Jubilee Exhibition* (Leicester: Jubilee Exhibition, 1887), 121.

28 F.B. Meyer, *Seven Reasons for Wearing the Blue Ribbon* (Leicester: J Vice, [1882]), 8. The seven reasons for signing the pledge are found in F.B. Meyer, *Why Sign the Pledge?* (Leicester: J Vice, n.d.). Seven reasons represented a typical Meyer approach; he also outlined, for example, seven reasons for believer's baptism.

and the boycott failed.[29] The attack on the firewood business was, of course, an assault on Meyer's prison-gate ministry and for Meyer there was a close link between his work for ex-prisoners and for temperance, since he saw drink as being the usual cause of crime.

Although he conceived of an overall web of social evil, Meyer, like other Nonconformists of this period, targeted specific wrongs. Meyer's methods of agitation were also typical of Nonconformist techniques.[30] Perhaps his most spectacular gesture while at Leicester was a defiant appearance at the races to protest against the gambling and drinking. There was an 'ugly scene' and a badly shaken Meyer was released unharmed only because a shopkeeper explained that he helped those in trouble in prison.[31] Meyer's view of the drink traffic as a spiritual enemy drew him into active social struggle against it.

Increasing involvement in national life from the 1890s sharpened Meyer's political awareness. By 1899 he was accepting municipal control of public houses as a realistic goal for the temperance movement. His ideal, however, was abolition. During his year as President of the National Free Church Council, he urged his hearers at the 1904 annual meetings in Newcastle to get into Parliament or the borough council to secure 'organised action' for the 'curtailment and abolition' of the drink traffic, with no compensation for brewers.

Meyer was in no mood for compromise over the British Conservative government's Licensing Bill of 1904. He supported mass agitation. A 'pro-Beer government' merited absolute opposition.[32] Yet Meyer's style, by contrast with the approach of some campaigners, was never wholly negative. In 1905 he opened, under his own management, the 'Old Nelson Coffee-House' in Lambeth. Opening hours matched pub hours. Meyer's concern was to offer leisure activities which were alternatives to drinking alcohol.[33] But positive measures did not replace denunciation.

Meyer, in 1907, berated publicans, betting touts and brothel-owners, calling them bandits, which the Licensed Victuallers' Defence League described as a 'scurrilous inference'.[34] Meyer was accused of being a bandit who was 'flourishing his spiritual tomahawk … and careering around with the scalps of the publicans in his girdle'.[35] Meyer, for his part, compared public houses with the bandits in the parable of the good Samaritan. Making much of this image, Meyer said in 1909 that he used to pick up mauled travellers (victims of drink) between Jerusalem and Jericho, but his more recent policy was to demand that Pilate 'blow up with dynamite the caves in which the bandits hide'.[36]

29 Meyer, *Bells of Is*, 75-6, 90-3; Street, *Meyer*, 65-6.

30 Meyer, *Bells of Is*, 41. For targets and techniques see Bebbington, *Nonconformist Conscience*, 16-17.

31 Meyer, *Bells of Is*, 121.

32 *BW*, 8 June 1899, 140; *CW*, 10 March 1904, 21-2; 26 May 1904, 3.

33 *BW*, 7 September 1905, 509; *CW*, 7 February 1907, 24.

34 *The Times*, 18 October 1907, 13.

35 J.A. Newbold, *The Nonconformist Conscience a Persecuting Force* (Manchester: John Heywood, 1908), 47.

36 *The Times*, 18 October 1907, 13; *Free Church Year Book* (London: National Council of the Evangelical Free Churches, 1909), 29, 30.

Meyer's reliance on state action was, in fact, always partial. Even in 1904, at the height of his vilification of the Conservative government, Meyer stated that apart from the renewing grace of God, temperance legislation, although important, was ultimately in vain.[37] Temperance, for Meyer, was a result of grace rather than law. His political faith was always distinctively evangelical.

III Social Purity

Another of Meyer's campaigns concerned what was called social purity. In the 1860s three Contagious Diseases Acts passed into British law, aimed at containing venereal disease through medical checks on prostitutes. By the 1880s these Acts had been repealed, after a concerted campaign. The argument of campaigners such as Josephine Butler (a cousin of C.M. Birrell, minister of Pembroke (Baptist) Chapel, Liverpool, where Meyer had been assistant) was that women were being targeted while the government was turning a blind eye to the sexual immorality of men—the double standard.[38]

The 1880s saw a 'social purity movement', as it came to be known, becoming increasingly influential in matters of public sexual morality in Britain. Prosecutions were brought against, on average, 1,200 brothels each year from 1885 to 1914.'[39] When Meyer went to Christ Church in 1892 he began to plan a 'systematic attack' on the notorious brothels of Lambeth, Southwark and Bermondsey, and achieved the closure of between seven and eight hundred of them during the period 1895 to 1907. The vehicle Meyer used for his 'Vigilance work', as it was called, was the Central South London Free Church Council, which was acknowledged to be 'practically Christ Church'.[40] Meyer and his associates worked hard to achieve a changed moral environment.

The massive battle for social purity took place on three fronts, two of which involved pressure groups. First, Meyer's team of vigilantes, called the Christian Stalwarts, systematically collected facts, and gave evidence at trials when brothel-owners were prosecuted. This work was a drain on Meyer's resources, since the finance came largely from him. His helpers were apparently 'very inadequately remunerated'.

Detailed records were kept of cases in preparation for submissions to local magistrates. For example, at one brothel a woman was seen to enter with twenty-three different men between seven and twelve at night. Information was passed to the police, and constables who rendered Meyer efficient service in the fight against prostitution were recommended, by Meyer, to Scotland Yard for promotion.[41]

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37 *Free Church Year Book* (London: NCEFC, 1904), 33.

38 For Butler see Lisa S. Nolland, *A Victorian Feminist Christian: Josephine Butler, the Prostitutes and God*. (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2004).

39 For background, see Bebbington, *Nonconformist Conscience*, 38-42; P. McHugh, *Prostitution and Victorian Social Reform* (London: Croom Helm, 1980), 28-9.

40 Read, ed., *Christ Church Jubilee Book*, 30; *Free Church Year Book* (London: National Council of Evangelical Free Churches, 1908), 179; Turner interview, Booth Collection, B271, 95.

41 *The Times*, 11 May 1907, 6; *Free Church Year Book* (London: NCEFC, 1908), 179; *Free Church Year Book* (London: NCEFC, 1910), 167.

Meyer also worked for sympathetic council members in Lambeth and Southwark, and attempted alongside that to mobilise the population at large. Residents were exhorted to 'make it hot for the houses of ill-fame' and to boycott shops with indecent displays.[42] Finally, Meyer encouraged rescue work. Members of his staff, like Sister Margaret, who opened her home for women each night—in fact from one until three in the morning—and brought some to Christ Church, were key to the rescue operation. One prostitute who came to hear Meyer preach was so taken with the sermon that she said to Sister Margaret after the service: 'Ain't he lovely: he wouldn't condemn you!'[43]

For Sister Margaret it was dangerous work. On several occasions she was physically assaulted by gangs. Christ Church persisted, however, in trying to help women in need. Meyer set up a 'Society for Befriending the Unmarried Mother and Child'. Two thousand children were helped, some through 'F. B. Meyer's Children's Home' in Leytonstone. The hope of salvation moulded Meyer's social action.

Arising from his grass-roots efforts on behalf of social purity, Meyer devoted energy to this issue as a lecturer, writer and national protagonist. Most of Meyer's books were devotional in character, but he also took up social issues. His book, *A Holy Temple* (1901), is probably typical of his addresses. In this book, which he said was 'For Men Only', he warned against the 'lonely sin' of masturbation and argued that sexual continence produced 'vivacity, muscular strength, manliness and daring' because the unexpended vital power was reabsorbed in the blood. Regardless of any biological proof, Meyer discerned a spiritual link between moral and physical fitness. The remedies Meyer suggested for sexual incontinence included sport, exercise and a hard bed.[44]

Meyer and other purity lecturers directed much of their teaching to men, but Meyer was also concerned to influence the conduct of women. His dream was of women, particularly working-class women, as 'visions of the Madonna'.[45] In 1910 he condemned suggestive cinematographs and the 'tons of filthy literature' which were threatening an epidemic of nastiness. He managed, in the following year, to force a dance about Adam and Eve, 'The Dawn of Love', off the London Palladium stage, on the grounds of its indecency.[46] The White Slave Bill of 1912 was a response to worries that London was becoming an international clearing house for prostitutes. At a meeting of Anglican, Free Church and Jewish leaders, Meyer supported the 1912 Bill and contended that the authorities needed powers to deal with stylish as well as ordinary brothels.[47] When it came to suppressing sexual

42 E.J. Bristow, *Vice and Vigilance: Purity Movements in Britain since 1700* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 1977), 167 Street, *Meyer*, 111; Cox, *Lambeth, 1870-1930*, 153.

43 Fullerton, *Meyer*, 151-3; Read, ed., *Christ Church Jubilee Book*, 30.

44 F.B. Meyer, *A Holy Temple* (London: S. W. Partridge, [1901]), 4, 9, 15.

45 Meyer, *Reveries and Realities*, 88, 91.

46 *The Times*, 7 October 1910, 4; Bristow, *Vice and Vigilance*, 215.

47 *The Times*, 7 October 1912, 2; Bebbington, *Nonconformist Conscience*, 45.

wrongdoing, Meyer's spiritual ardour was intense and his methods rigorous.

Meyer was not unusual in his stress on social purity. What was striking was his mobilisation of a local church to implement his policies. Meyer's achievements in closing brothels drew widespread admiration, for example, from the Archbishop of Canterbury, Randall Davidson, and in some quarters it was the facet of Meyer which was best known.[48]

Why did Meyer work with such ferocity on behalf of this cause? His commitment to personal holiness was offended by 'illicit intercourse' which he pictured in *Holy Temple* as a cancer. Because personal spirituality was central to Meyer's vision, he was inclined to enforce his standards more thoroughly than some other social purity advocates who were not immersed in the holiness movement. Also, although he did give positive teaching on marriage, he stated in *Holy Temple* that if marriage was used simply to indulge passion, offspring could be 'puny and sickly'.[49]

Finally, Meyer was fearful about the 'wreckage' being done to manhood by the activities of prostitutes, the 'siren-sisters'.[50] His recipe for victory was a simple one. 'Pledge yourself to God', he advised young men, 'in all purity and chastity'.[51] Sexual failure would finally be overcome only through individual relationship with God, although the gospel should also cleanse society of sexual sin.

IV The Education Debate

The Conservative government's Education Bill of 1902 drew Meyer into bitter political controversy. It proposed to allow aid from the general rates to schools which were under church rather than public control and in which religious tests ensured that only Anglicans could be appointed as head teachers. Nonconformists saw this as an essentially religious rather than a political question. When the Bill became the Education Act, in 1903, a movement of 'passive resistance' began, in which Nonconformist objectors deducted from their rate payments an amount (normally 3d to 6d in the £) which they estimated was for Church schools.[52] John Clifford was the leader of the crusade.

At first Meyer was reluctant to support passive resistance, since he feared the education crisis would renew old feuds between the Established and Free Churches. He tried to fulfil a reconciling role through discussions involving five Anglican bishops, key Nonconformists, and his Keswick colleague H.W. Webb-Peploe, a supporter of the Bill.[53] The attempt at mediation

48 *The Times*, 22 June 1907, 12; E. H. Jeffs, *Princes of the Modern Pulpit* (London: Sampson Low, 1931), 114.

49 Meyer, *A Holy Temple*, 10, 11, 23.

50 *The Times*, 4 January 1915, 9; 13 October 1915, 9; 12 November 1915, 9.

51 F.B. Meyer, *The Soul's Ascent* (London: H Marshall & Son, 1901), 42.

52 G.I.T. Machin, *Politics and the Churches in Great Britain, 1869-1921* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 262; J E B Munson, ' A Study of Nonconformity in Edwardian England as Revealed in the Passive Resistance Movement against the 1902 Education Acts', University of Oxford D Phil (1973), 126, 147-9, 210.

53 *BW*, 15 May 1902, 113. Munson, 'Passive Resistance Movement', 166.

was abortive and Meyer's convictions began to become firmer. He had not previously been known as a 'political parson' and he therefore amazed a meeting of London church leaders in June 1902 by denouncing the government's policy on education as absurd and retrograde.[54]

By the autumn of 1902 Meyer had decided that passive resistance was legitimate. Explaining his thinking, Meyer said that his instincts had been to resist the Church rate, and he had been convinced by discovering, on recent international tours, that the issue was regarded in other countries as 'a great fight for freedom'. He was now sure that religious liberty was at stake and that Free Churchmen were justified in civil disobedience, although they should not be 'threatening or truculent'.[55] The struggle was, in Meyer's eyes, a spiritual one.

The first prosecutions of passive resisters took place in the spring of 1903. In April, Meyer promised that Nonconformists would lobby Liberal MPs (Conservatives were unsympathetic) and would organise themselves in a campaign, but he believed that they would be overpowered in Parliament and would have 'to suffer, to refuse, to resist to the uttermost'. Meyer gave some attention to constructive educational proposals but more energy to fuelling indignation. John Clifford and Meyer were prominent in leading 140,000 people in a demonstration in Hyde Park in London against the Act.

In June 1903 Meyer wrote that he had been able to stand 'with the Nonconformists of every age in protest against wrong'.[56] As far as Meyer was concerned, this was the time for Nonconformists to rise up against their persecutors. He formulated a scheme in the autumn of 1903 to gain power in the sphere of local government in order to nullify the Act. Although this failed, Meyer pursued his cause elsewhere. Considerable controversy broke out in *The Times* in April 1904 over allegations by Meyer that Nonconformist children in village schools were suffering discrimination. Meyer highlighted one case in which, he said, a child had been caned because of the stance made by the child's (Nonconformist) parents on education.[57]

Non-payment of his own rates gave Meyer another opportunity for effective publicity. He had rented a house near Christ Church specifically in order to be liable for rates so that he could refuse to pay them; in September 1904 he made a well-orchestrated appearance before the magistrates as a passive resister. Meyer was the President of the Free Church Council that year and therefore received considerable press coverage.[58] Speaking to his cheering supporters beforehand, Meyer explained, somewhat ingenuously, that in terms of popularity he had nothing to gain by his gesture, but that he had to do everything possible 'to save the

54 *CW*, 12 June 1902, 3.

55 The interview with Meyer is in *BW*, 30 October 1902, 59.

56 *BW*, 23 April 1903, 32; 28 May 1903, 164. Letter from Meyer to J. Mursell, 19 June 1903, quoted in Fullerton, *Meyer*, 115.

57 *The Brixton Free Press*, 6 November 1903, 4-5; *The Times*, 18 April 1904, 12; 28 April 1904, 10.

58 *CW*, 8 September 1904, 14; 15 September 1904, 14.

children of England from the influence of Romanism and High Anglicanism'.

Meyer attempted to continue the religious theme in court, with a speech about Catholic beliefs regarding transubstantiation and the confessional being advocated in schools. This provoked the magistrate to interrupt three times, telling Meyer to keep to the legal point.[59] For Meyer, however, the law existed to right wrongs, and he insisted that he was in court because Free Church people were being wronged. Meyer's political agenda was dictated by his basic religious principles.

Opposition to the Education Act gave Nonconformists the motivation to fight for the return of the Liberals in the 1906 British general election. Free Church voters were no longer necessarily Liberal (as had been almost always the case earlier), but many now rallied to the Liberal cause.[60]

Meyer's party political activity reached a peak in this period. His contribution to the election campaign was an eventful motor car tour of the West Country in early 1906 during which, under the guise of talking about moral issues, he adopted a fairly militant political style. One of the stories Meyer enjoyed telling was of a man who had been a Liberal but suffered a fall and cracked his skull, after which he became a Conservative.[61] At the same time as he was ridiculing the Tories at political meetings, Meyer was telling readers in *The Christian*, which was widely read in Keswick circles, that it did not really matter which party won the election as long as 'Righteousness, Peace and Goodwill' were established.

The Keswick constituency was understandably confused. Significant numbers of Meyer's Keswick supporters, many of them Anglicans, felt alienated and stopped buying his books.[62] Meyer admitted that following his West Country tour he had heard of many evangelical Anglican clergymen turning against him, though he maintained that he had never spoken unkindly of the Church.[63] This was special pleading. In 1904 Meyer had described the evangelical party in the Church of England as narrow, contrasting this with the 'free air breathed by Nonconformists'.[64] Yet Meyer functioned as a bridge between Anglicans and Nonconformists and between other-worldly and socially committed evangelicals.

Meyer believed that in the education campaign he was not fighting a political battle so much as opposing Roman Catholic and high Anglican influences—'Rome and Ritualism'.[65] Keswick evangelicals agreed with his theology, even if they might not have wanted to be tainted by his politics. In 1907 Meyer was claiming, in conciliatory style, that he had not allowed party politics to enter the pulpit. Even Meyer's overtly political audiences applauded his 'consecration to his work

59 *BW*, 15 September 1904, 533, 539.

60 *BW*, 18 July 1901, 319; D.A. Hamer, *Liberal Politics in the Age of Gladstone and Rosebery* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), 311.

61 *The Baptist Times*, 12 January 1906, 30; E.H. Jeffs, *Press, Preachers and Politicians: Reminiscences: 1874 to 1932* (London: Independent Press, 1933), 116.

62 *The Christian* [*C*], 4 January 1906, 11.

63 *CW*, 1 February 1906, 5.

64 *BW*, 17 March 1904, 611.

65 *Free Church Year Book* (London: NCEFC, 1904), 24-5.

of evangelisation'.[66] Even at his most robustly political Meyer was fundamentally an evangelist.

V The Free Church Council

Local Free Church Councils multiplied in England in the 1890s, with social affairs as one of their central concerns. From 1896, when the National Council was formed, political issues became more prominent. The Council became the voice of the Nonconformist Conscience, calling for an infusion of politics with religion. The education debate heightened the Council's political profile. Meyer's presidential address to the Council in 1904, on the duty of the Free Churches, was generally recognised as 'one of the strongest pronouncements ever given from the chair of the National Council'.

Meyer's targets included, naturally, the government's educational stance, but also Britain's foreign policy, and the timidity of magistrates in dealing with publicans. After Meyer's tirade the highly charged atmosphere was relieved only by the civic welcome.[67] Meyer was subsequently questioned about charges that the Free Church Council was becoming too political and replied: 'I cannot understand that criticism.' He lamented that Britain no longer throbbed 'with the general impulses that responded to [William] Gladstone's moral appeals', thus indicating his view of Gladstone as the archetypal godly politician.[68]

Under Meyer's leadership as President, the Free Church Council launched proposals for national education and formulated tactics to be employed in the next election. The National Council meetings were, as *The British Weekly* saw it, becoming like a Parliament of the Free Churches.[69] Although Meyer relished this aspect of Free Church Council gatherings, what he highlighted was something different. There was, he said, a spiritual glow which reminded him of Keswick or Moody's meetings at Northfield.[70] Where that inner quality was present, the political consequences would be worthwhile.

In 1907 the Council was able (largely through the mediation of Thomas Law, the Council Secretary) to prevail on Meyer to give his full time to the organisation. The Council had worked hard for, and contributed towards, the landslide election victory of the Liberals in 1906. But the new government found it hard to deliver what the Free Church constituency wanted on issues like education and temperance. Meyer felt that government proposals met the needs of Anglicans, Roman Catholics, Jews and Nonconformists, but he became aware that the House of Lords was the real problem, with its opposi-

66 *The Times*, 22 June 1907, 12; Jeffs, *Press, Preachers and Politicians*, 116.

67 *BW*, 10 March 1904, 576; *Free Church Year Book* (London: NCEFC, 1904), 26-7.

68 *BW*, 17 March 1904, 611; *Free Church Year Book* (London: NCEFC, 1904), 26; D.W. Bebbington, 'Gladstone and the Baptists', *BQ*, Vol. 26, No. 5 (1976), 224-39; D.W. Bebbington, ' Gladstone and the Nonconformists: A Religious Affinity in Politics', in D. Baker, ed., *Church, Society and Politics* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1976), 369-82.

69 *BW*, 10 March 1904, 576; E.K.H. Jordan, *Free Church Unity: A History of the Free Church Council Movement, 1896-1941* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1955), 93.

70 *BW*, 17 March 1904, 611.

tion to Liberal legislation.[71]

As a result the political enthusiasm of the Free Church Councils soon began to wane. Meyer was in touch with the new, less political mood. As early as March 1906 he asserted that it was clear to him that a 'balance must be maintained between the spiritualities and the temporalities'. Meyer, however, was not swinging from one extreme to the other. His position was a centrist one. The *Christian World* rightly recognised Meyer's influence in countering the 'Plymouth Brethren limitation of religion to purely spiritual exercises'.[72]

Throughout the period 1907-9, in which Meyer was the itinerant overseer of the Free Churches, he advocated various causes. He urged support for Progressive candidates in London Council elections, told the Free Churches in 1908 to be concerned not only with soup-tickets but also with justice, and, in an address in 1909 on 'The Free Churches and Politics', argued for action over women's wages and housing conditions where people were living 'like pigs in a sty'.[73] But despite his continued interest in the political arena, Meyer was determined that the Council should give attention to the maintenance of a high spiritual tone. His stated mission in this period was to lead Free Churches to their spiritual source.[74]

Thomas Law, who had entered the political fray as Secretary of the Free Church Council, committed suicide while in a state of depression, and Meyer was invited by the General Committee of the Council, meeting on 7 October 1910, to accept the Honorary Secretaryship. He seemed to be the man for the hour.

Meyer was known as an ardent Liberal, but one who would put the religious side first. In his personal manifesto, Meyer intimated that he would tighten the Council's machinery, restore its spiritual priorities, and co-operate with the established Church in seeking moral and spiritual change.[75] The job gave Meyer a unique opportunity to combine his skills as a manager, an evangelist, a social reformer and an ecclesiastical unifier.

One immediate task for Meyer was to prepare for the General Election which was looming. He carefully explained that the Council was not allied to any political party and that although their hopes presently lay with the Liberals, they would not hesitate to support Labour or any other party which adopted Free Church objectives.[76] The enthusiastic Liberal commitment expressed in 1906, seemed, four years later, to be light years away.

71 *BW*, 22 March 1906, 667; 12 April 1906, 11; 4 October 1906, 629. See Bebbington, *Nonconformist Conscience*, 78 and S. Koss, *Nonconformity in Modern British Politics* (London: B.T. Batsford, 1975), 71, 74.

72 *BW*, 22 March 1906, 667; *CW*, 26 April 1906, 12.

73 *CW*, 28 February 1907, 21; *Free Church Year Book* (London: NCEFC, 1908), 34; *Free Church Year Book* (London: NCEFC, 1909), 29.

74 *BW*, 22 March 1906, 667; *Free Church Year Book* (London: NCEFC, 1907), 82.

75 Minutes of the National Free Church Council General Committee, 7 October 1910; *BW*, 8 September 1910, 539; *CW*, 13 October 1910, 13; Bebbington, *Nonconformist Conscience*, 81.

76 Meyer produced a Council manifesto for the election. See Free Church Council General Committee Minutes, 28 November 1910. He added a commentary: *CW*, 1 December 1910, 5.

Yet politics remained important. Meyer's focus of opposition in 1910 was the House of Lords, which he had described in the previous year as 'warped by class prejudice'. The Upper Chamber had frustrated the aspirations of Nonconformists and it was now essential, Meyer argued, for 'the will of the people' to prevail.[77] The conflict, Meyer insisted, was not part political but was about religious liberty.

From 1910 to 1914, when he handed over the parliamentary portfolio of the Council, Meyer continued to integrate the socio-political and the spiritual. Preachers, he said in 1911, should address issues like women's low wages since unless 'sweated people' received a fair wage they would not worship with their paymasters and there would be no revival.[78]

Meyer took the opportunity of his position among the Free Churches to offer pastoral support to political leaders. In 1911 Ramsay MacDonald, the future Prime Minister, thanked Meyer for his care at a time of bereavement. In the same year Meyer was calling for 'reason, fair play and common-sense' to prevail in industrial relations, and for the payment of decent wages, especially for women. Relief for the miners after their 1912 strike, correspondence with Herbert Asquith, the Prime Minister, about the education issue, and dealings with the Colonial Secretary were some matters which occupied Meyer in 1911-13.[79]

His vision was always of Free Church spiritual renewal having specific socio-political repercussions.

VI The Issue of Race

In the early twentieth century Meyer took up issues connected with race. His thinking on racial questions contained elitism and egalitarianism. An interest in eugenics—an interest quite widely shared in the early twentieth century—led him to argue in *Religion and Race Regeneration* for 'race-regeneration', to be achieved through families with ability having more children. There was concern in some circles at the time that the birth rate in Britain was declining among the professional classes due to birth control.[80]

Meyer believed that there were differences between black and white people: he suggested that black people were more passionate than whites, but his thinking did not imply a belief in white superiority. In fact Meyer despised the 'brutal insolence' shown to other races by the 'ordinary globe-trotter' from Britain.[81] South Africa gave Meyer the opportunity to fight for justice for non-white races, beginning with the Chinese. South African mine-owners, who badly needed labour, imported thousands of Chinese in conditions of virtual slavery.

77 *CW*, 9 December 1909, 3.

78 *BW*, 28 September 1911, 618. *The Free Church Chronicle*, Vol. 13, No. 153 (1911), 179.

79 *The Free Church Chronicle*, Vol. 13, No. 153 (1911), 179. *The Times*, 9 April 1912, 6. Meyer to Asquith, 27 February 1912; Asquith to Meyer, 1 March 1912: M. S. Asquith 13, 62, 64: Bodleian Library, Oxford.

80 F.B. Meyer, *Religion and Race Regeneration* (London: New Tracts for the Times, 1912), 11, 16; G.R. Searle, *The Quest for National Efficiency* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1971), 60-1.

81 *The Times*, 22 September 1911, 6; F.B. Meyer, *Friendly Counsels* (London: Horace Marshall & Son, 1901), 37.

Feelings about this ran high in Britain during 1904. Some British workers felt cheated of jobs, but Meyer and other Nonconformists saw the treatment of the Chinese as a moral wrong. Meyer spoke out strongly. In outlining his policy if he were in charge in South Africa, Meyer said no-one should be allowed to call coloured people 'niggers'. The term, he said, was damnable.[82]

Meyer spent a winter in South Africa in 1908, largely speaking at holiness gatherings. He was appalled by the South African government's policies which, he believed, cast 'an ominous shadow on the future relations between the white, native and coloured races'. When the native races were 'Christianised and educated', said Meyer, comparison between them and whites was wholly in their favour. In the context of white aggression he suggested there should be a forum giving Africans a voice, though with whites retaining 'the right to utter the final word'.[83]

This was very radical—too radical—for conservative white opinion, but it interested Gandhi, who was in South Africa. In Johannesburg Meyer was introduced to Gandhi, recognising in him an important leader in the struggle for Indian rights. They talked about spiritual and political issues and Meyer's comment was that he had never met a man so sincere. Gandhi, for his part, found Meyer's influence and experience valuable in the Indian 'passive resistance' campaign.

Meyer was delighted to be able to help those whom he saw as following in the steps of the English passive resisters.[84] Gandhi was deeply religious, although not a Christian, and Meyer's belief in 1912 was that religion was or at least could be the means of bringing a new kinship to the world.[85] A common concern for spirituality could unite races.

In 1911 a proposed fight at Earl's Court between an American, Jack Johnson (the first black man to take a world boxing title), and a British boxer, Bombardier Wells, brought Meyer into a controversy involving the issue of race. Initially, on 14 September 1911, Meyer objected to the prize-fight as a 'degrading spectacle'. Later he asserted that the match was being regarded as a 'decisive test in the matter of racial superiority'.

This became a major theme. Meyer's view was that those who were keen on the contest—10,000 had booked seats at Earl's Court for 2 October to see the fight—belonged to a 'past age'.[86] Evi-

82 *BW*, 25 February 1904, 529; 3 May 1906, 80. See H. Pelling, *Social Geography of British Elections, 1885-1910* (London: Macmillan, 1967), 20, and Bebbington, *Nonconformist Conscience*, 111.

83 F.B. Meyer, *A Winter in South Africa* (London: NCEFC, 1908), 152, 179, 201.

84 *BW*, 16 July 1908, 358; *Free Church Year Book* (London: NCEFC, 1909), 90; M.K. Gandhi, *Christian Missions* (Ahmadabad, India: Navajivan, 1941), 284. J.D. Hunt, in *Gandhi and the Nonconformists* (New Delhi: Promilla & Co., 1986), 52-3, 126-7, concludes that passive resistance in England was an important model for Gandhi, although Gandhi appears to have claimed that the idea of passive resistance as a political platform originated with him, aided by Tolstoy: R. Iyer, *The Moral and Political Writings of Mahantma Gandhi*, Vol. 3 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987), 25.

85 Meyer, *Race-Regeneration*, 60-2.

86 *CW*, 14 September 1911, 16; *The Times*, 18 September 1911, 5; 22 September 1911, 6.

dence was produced by Meyer showing that in a previous fight Johnson had battered his (white) opponent's head out of all recognition and as a result black people in New York were brutally treated by infuriated whites.

The promoter of the Earl's Court contest, John White, was at first dismissive of Meyer. Within the boxing world Meyer's intervention was seen as the action of a crank. On 22 September, however, White attempted, unsuccessfully, to open negotiations with Meyer, whose week-long campaign had won him influential supporters including Randall Davidson (who found the fight repellent), twenty Anglican bishops, Arthur Conan Doyle and Ramsay MacDonald.[87]

At this stage the wider boxing fraternity decided that Meyer was not a crank whom they could dismiss, and instead he began to be portrayed as a representative of the 'violent wing' of the opposition to the match.[88] Meyer's battle became known in the press as the 'Stop the Fight' campaign. Violent attitudes were not confined to one camp. Regent's Park Chapel, which at the time was the church where Meyer was minister, was surrounded by a mob and Meyer was denounced as a meddler, a Puritan and a kill-joy. Anything savouring of persecution was, of course, stimulus to Meyer. His conviction was that he must 'fight to a finish'.[89]

In the event, the finish came because local freeholders, fearing the fight might endanger the Earl's Court licence and thus adversely affect their property values, obtained an injunction restraining the contest organisers. Mr Justice Lush, who granted the injunction in the High Court, was a member of Regent's Park Chapel. Winston Churchill, who was then the Home Secretary, pronounced that in any case the fight was 'unsporting' and should not take place. 'Mr Meyer's triumph', as it was hailed, resulted in some reaction against prize-fighting. Jack Johnson himself retired from the ring.[90]

Meyer himself was jubilant, convinced that God had been in his victory. Indeed he was so buoyant that he teased Johnson, who had spoken about 'Bishop Meyer', saying that, after a life-time devoted to the Free Churches being called a bishop was worse than 'the choicest term of the boxing ring'.[91] Nonconformity had joined hands with others to act, even if briefly, as the conscience of the nation on an issue connected with race.

VII Peace and War

The First World War was a devastating

For an account of this episode, see S. Mews, 'Puritanicalism, Sport and Race: A Symbolic Crusade of 1911', in G.J. Cuming and D. Baker, eds., *Popular Belief and Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 303-31.

87 *The Times*, 22 September 1911, 6; *CW*, 21 September 1911, 1; 28 September 1911, 2.

88 *The Daily Telegraph*, 21 September 1911, 10. For the reaction of the boxing world in *Boxing* and *The Sportsman* see J.P. Green, 'Boxing and the "Colour Question" in Edwardian Britain: The "White Problem" of 1911', *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (1988), 115-19.

89 *The Times*, 20 September 1911, 4; 22 September 1911, 6; *CW*, 21 September 1911, 10; *The Daily News*, 22 September 1911, 5.

90 *CW*, 28 September 1911, 2; *The Times*, 29 September 1911, 7; *CW*, 5 October 1911, 1.

91 *The Times*, 20 October 1911, 10; Fullerton, *Meyer*, 122.

blow for many who had drunk deeply at the wells of Victorian optimism. Prior to the First World War, Meyer was very wary of British military strength. World peace and disarmament were his first objectives, although he did applaud the British victory at Khartoum in 1898.[92] During the Boer War he tended towards the pro-Boer position.

Free Churchmen were divided in their response to the Boer War, and Meyer's views were at variance with those of many Free Church leaders. Nevertheless, he produced, in 1901, a peace manifesto from London Free Church ministers which attempted to express a consensus opinion.[93]

For a time, in 1911, Meyer was caught up in the international peace process. As a representative of the Free Churches, he gave his weight to the Anglo-American Treaty of Arbitration, which involved contacts with Asquith and with President Taft, to whom he presented an illuminated address from the Free Churches and the Peace Societies. Taft told Meyer that he valued the support of religious opinion in the cause of peace.[94]

At this stage Meyer identified with the anti-militaristic attitude prevailing among Baptists and other Nonconformists. But he was also one of those who swung with the pendulum when the First World War commenced. By 1 October 1914, Meyer was openly supporting the government's declaration of war. In the following month, at an influential Free Church meeting held in the City Temple, Meyer spoke in favour of committing Nonconformity to the conflict.[95] Soon the matter had become, in Meyer's mind, distinctly religious. The hearts of the Germans were so full of hatred, he claimed, that their prayers—and by implication their military power—could not prevail.

The war was, he suggested, the 'clearest, cleanest and most Christian war' Britain had fought. Increasingly, Meyer perceived the struggle as a clash of spiritual forces. Britain, therefore, had no option but to fight in the cause of humanity and of God.[96]

Meyer's personal contribution to the war concentrated in the first place—in line with his existing concerns—on the sexual purity of military personnel. He was shocked by a report about the 'drunkenness, debauchery and indecency' of soldiers and sailors in London, and complained to *The Times* in January 1915 that the police and military authorities were apparently taking no action. A patriotic correspondent described Meyer's charges as scandalous and challenged him to prove them.[97]

92 F.B. Meyer, ed., *The Free Churchman*, Vol. 1 (1898), 145.

93 *BW*, 1 August 1901, 373; Street, *Meyer*, 154. For Free Church views see *BW*, 18 July 1901, 319; 19 September 1901, 503. The background is in Bebbington, *Nonconformist Conscience*, 121-4.

94 *The Times*, 20 March 1911, 6; 24 March 1911, 6; 19 June 1911, 29.

95 *CW*, 1 October 1914, 4. This was a reply to German theologians. K.W. Clements, in 'Baptists and the Outbreak of the First World War', *BQ*, Vol. 26, No. 2 (1975), documents the sudden change in attitude displayed by Baptists—see 77, 82.

96 *BW*, 28 January 1915, 349; F.B. Meyer, *Our Sister Death* (London: NCEFC, 1915), 8; *The Times*, 15 December 1915, 11.

97 *The Times*, 4 January 1915, 9; 6 January 1915, 9; 15 December 1915, 11.

Practical response was Meyer's next move. First he increased the pressure over the temperance issue by suggesting a 'King's Pledge Sunday' when the King's abstinence could be held up as an example to be followed from a patriotic point of view.[98] Then Meyer managed to make the YMCA in Waterloo Road available as accommodation for soldiers visiting London who might be exposed to 'serious moral dangers'. In November 1915 he was appealing to the public for funds to extend the premises since demand was so great.

Throughout the war Meyer continued to monitor the moral state of soldiers, many of whom, he asserted in 1917, hardly dared to go into parts of London because of the allurement of prostitutes.[99] Meyer also saw himself as supporting the war effort by his production of the *Service Messenger* which, he claimed in 1917, was the only Christian paper for servicemen and gave them the gospel in readable form. The financing of the paper proved, however, to be a headache for Meyer and the need to attract funds may have forced him to dilute the paper's content to 'love and comfort and Christian cheer' and finally to a message which would keep the soldiers smiling.[100]

Meyer was in touch with the feelings of the troops since Christ Church had 760 men in active service. In 1916 Meyer could pray, at Christ Church, for a crowning victory and for Allied soldiers to trap submarines and 'counterwork the enemy'.[101] Britain's enemies were God's enemies. In all its aspects the war was, and must remain, a holy one.

While supporting the war, Meyer was also working for the rights of conscientious objectors (COs). This was not inconsistent, since he held that all oppression was wrong, whether German or British. Conscience, for Meyer, was paramount. Following the introduction of conscription, in 1916, tribunals began to consider the cases of nearly 14,000 conscientious objectors.

Meyer soon became uneasy about the way some tribunals were treating COs. On 5 May 1916 he addressed the Quaker Meeting for Sufferings on the issue as part of an attempt to mobilise protest.[102] By June 1916, 1,200 non-combatant men were in custody and thirty-four out of a group sent to France had been sentenced to death for resisting military orders. Meyer was approached by the No-Conscription Fellowship (NCF) and he went to see the prisoners in France.[103]

Meyer relayed Free Church concerns

98 *The Times*, 13 April 1915, 4. See also S. Mews, 'Drink and Disestablishment in the First World War', in D. Baker, ed., *The Church in Town and Countryside* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1979), 469.

99 *The Times*, 12 November 1915, 9; 25 November 1915, 9; 9 February 1917, 7.

100 *LF*, 28 March 1917, 318; 16 May 1917, 525; 8 August 1917, 879.

101 *BW*, 6 May 1915, 117; 10 February 1916, 358; 20 April 1916, 49.

102 *The Tribunal*, 20 April 1916, 2; Minutes of the Meeting for Sufferings, 5 May 1916. This Meeting is the Standing Representative Body of Quakers. See also J. Rae, *Conscience and Politics* (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), 130.

103 *The Times*, 22 June 1916, 7; H.W. Peet, 'The Men Sentenced to Death', in *Troublesome People* (London: NCF, [1940]), 28-9; J. Vellacott, *Bertrand Russell and the Pacifists in the First World War* (Brighton: Harvester, 1980), 74.

to Asquith and Lord Kitchener, Secretary of War, and Kitchener promised Meyer that no CO would be ill-treated. Death sentences were not carried out. Meyer was proclaiming Britain's past indebtedness to those who had steered by the pole star of conscience and he advocated absolute exemption from civilian as well as military service, an option which was available but was granted by tribunals in only 350 cases.[104] He also proposed to the NCF a scheme—backed by Catherine Marshall, the NCF Honorary Secretary—to help both 'absolutists', who demanded total exemption, and 'alternativists', who would accept non-combatant work.

Marshall urged on Meyer the need for help from Nonconformists over 'the principle of respect for freedom of conscience'. Meyer was willing to help and the climax of his work for COs was his booklet on pacifism, *The Majesty of Conscience*, published in 1917. It seems likely that he used material supplied by Bertrand Russell, although the book has Meyer's stamp.[105] NCF leaders had doubts about Meyer (Russell called him a worm), but regarded his booklet as strategic. The conscientious objector, Meyer proclaimed in *The Majesty of Conscience*, could be the 'Apostle and Prophet' of a future spirit of peace.[106] He had fought a spiritual war for men whose conscience would not allow them to fight a worldly one.

VIII Socialism and the Social Gospel

Although much of Meyer's socio-political activity was social rather than directly political, it is difficult to draw a clear boundary line. Meyer had a utopian view of politics as an effort to 'illuminate the public mind with the ideals of Christ's kingdom', but he never pinned his hopes entirely on one political system. His goal was to see the mass of the people 'hail the religion of Jesus Christ', which he believed could happen as the Christian faith was linked with 'liberty and righteousness and truth'.[107]

For much of his career Meyer happily supported the Liberal Party. For a time, however, in the 1890s and for a few years afterwards, he expressed more radical political views. In 1898 he supported Fred Smith, an Independent Labour Party candidate for North Lambeth, at a time when few Baptists would have given much credence to the ILP, and in the following year he was described as 'practically a Christian Socialist'.[108] In fact Meyer's affinity was with the New Liberalism

104 *The Times*, 9 June 1916, 9; 22 June 1916, 7; 7 July 1916, 10; Sir Wyndham Childs, *Episodes and Reflections* (London: Cassell & Co., 1930), 152-3; M. Ceadel, *Pacifism in Britain, 1914-1945: The Defining of a Faith* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), 39; P.R. Dekar, 'Twentieth-Century British Baptist Conscientious Objectors', *BQ*, Vol. 35, No. 1 (1993), 38.

105 F.B. Meyer, *The Majesty of Conscience* (London: National Labour Press, [1917], 5;Velacott, *Pacifists*, 102-3, 213. For material in this section I am indebted to R.A. Rempel of McMaster University, Canada.

106 Vellacott, *Pacifists*, 213; Meyer, *Majesty of Conscience*, 16, 19.

107 *Free Church Year Book* (London, 1897), 159; *BT*, 27 April 1906, 309.

108 *London Leader*, 26 February 1898, 4; Turner interview, Booth Collection, B 271, 91. See W.C.R. Hancock, 'No Compromise: Nonconformity and Politics 1893-1914', *BQ*, Vol. 36, No 2 (1995), 65.

which accepted humanitarian collectivism and which stimulated Liberals to take social reform more seriously. He aligned himself with some of the radical Liberal thinking of this period. *The Christian World*, in 1906, discerned an evolutionary process in Meyer's thinking over about twelve years.[109]

As we have seen, Meyer's social concerns were very much present in the 1880s, but it is true that the years before and immediately after 1906 saw him at his most publicly political. In 1906 he warned that old party lines were becoming blurred, praised Labour for its concept of the brotherhood of man and argued that collectivism was looking over the shoulder of individualism.[110] A *Christian World* correspondent in 1907 spoke of 'Comrade Meyer', but this was to overstate Meyer's sympathy for socialism. Yet Meyer admitted two years later, in 1909, that because of what he had said in 1906-7 he had fallen from his position as 'a sort of sky-pilot', who was confined solely to spiritual matters. He was unrepentant and used the common argument that the causes rather than the cases (the symptoms) demanded attention.[111]

His willingness to continue to affirm aspects of the Labour agenda is seen by the fact that his 1917 book on pacifism was published by the National Labour Press. Even in the 1920s, when members of the premillennial circle with which Meyer was by then associated were abandoning hope of social progress, he contended that the 'axioms of the Labour Party were uttered by the Founder of Christianity' and that to do charitable work without removing the root causes of destitution was inadequate.[112] But Meyer's faith in political remedies was always limited. As he put it in 1914 in *The Times*, to deal with the external circumstances only, without the 'new heart', was absurd.[113]

Did Meyer, then, espouse a social gospel? Certainly he argued in 1904 that every great revival of religion issued in social and political reconstruction. He had no sympathy, he insisted, with Christians who spoke only of heaven while the wrongs of earth were not redressed.[114]

For evangelicals like Meyer, the social gospel was the application of the gospel to society. Meyer saw this social dimension as the concomitant of evangelism. The social gospel had been clearly articulated by John Clifford (as early as 1888), but Meyer later became a prominent advocate. Baptists, asserted Meyer in an address given to the Baptist Union autumn assembly at Huddersfield in 1906, shared with so-

109 *CW*, 26 April 1906, 11. See H.V. Emy, *Liberals, Radicals and Social Politics, 1892-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 117; G.L. Bernstein, *Liberalism and Liberal Politics in Edwardian England* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1986), 11,48.

110 *BW*, 4 October 1906, 629.

111 *CW*, 7 February 1907, 24; *Free Church Year Book* (London: NCEFC, 1909), 30.

112 *Free Church Year Book* (London: NCEFC, 1920), 14; F.B. Meyer, *The Church and After-War Problems* (London: National Free Church Council, [1922]), 5.

113 *The Times*, 29 April 1914, 6.

114 *Free Church Year Book* (London: NCEFC, 1904), 33; *BW*, 17 March 1904, 611. See D.M. Thompson, 'The Emergence of the Nonconformist Social Gospel in England', in K. Robbins, ed., *Protestant Evangelicalism: Britain, Ireland, Germany and America c1750—c1950: Essays in Honour of W.R. Ward* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990), 255-80.

cialists a desire for peace, for old age pensions and for better housing, and this would come as the gospel created, in its own revolutionary way, 'a kingdom of social justice'.[115]

The kingdom was a key concept. Against the background of the coming kingdom Meyer hoped to achieve 'the redemption of the State', with a consequent righting of the wrongs which made the few rich and the many poor.[116] He saw a historical inevitability about the passing of power from the aristocracy to the middle classes and then to the people.[117]

In 1907 Meyer confessed that some of his previous ideas about the work of the church had been too restricted. Although he always believed that the pulpit should major on the central doctrines of the faith rather than social issues, he was able to rejoice in 1908 that the 'humanitarian side' of the gospel was coming to the fore.[118] Meyer attempted to widen the scope of the gospel without losing its essential spiritual core.

IX Conclusion

F. B. Meyer's understanding of the social implications of the gospel clarified during his period at Melbourne Hall, Leicester. Meyer set himself the question, in Leicester and in London, of whether working people could be reached and integrated into church life, and his efforts to reach the point where he could say 'yes' meant active social involvement. Institutional churches had, as he put it in 1902, to work night after night for the neighbourhood. An evangelistic church should be an engine for good, confronting social evils.

This he sought to do through creative initiatives in Leicester and in Christ Church, with the prison ministry in Leicester and the massive Brotherhood meetings in London as examples. More widely, he became involved in national and international issues of temperance, social purity, equality in education, race and peace. In some respects Meyer was seeking to create the seeds of a new society. He argued in 1907 that the agenda of the church must be wide enough to include such issues as the election of members of Parliament as well as the subtle problems of the inner life—to which he gave much attention.[119]

Meyer's spiritual and conversionist priorities directed him throughout many years of his ministry towards a gospel which called for a personal relationship with Christ and which also applied itself to social wrongs. The hoped-for new society, said Meyer in 1907, expressed the human quest for brotherhood, but with this there must be spiritual recognition of the Fatherhood of God and of Jesus Christ as Saviour and 'Eternal Brother'.[120] Meyer's multi-dimensional social strategy was spiritually grounded and evangelistically shaped. It challenges any approach which draws back from the task of incarnating the gospel.

115 *BW*, 4 October 1906, 611, 630. See D.M. Thompson, 'John Clifford's Social Gospel', *BQ*, Vol. 31, No. 5 (1986), 204.

116 *BW*, 26 April 1906, 70.

117 *BW*, 4 October 1906, 629.

118 *CW*, 7 February 1907, 24; *BW*, 1 June 1905, 195; *Free Church Year Book* (London: NCEFC, 1908), 33.

119 *CW*, 7 February 1907, 24.

120 *CW*, 26 September 1907, 6.

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Saved Through Childbearing: An African Feminist Interpretation and Theology

Emiola Nihinlola

I Introduction

> 'Madam, open your mouth, push, push with your abdominal muscles and not your throat. Pu-u-sh, pu-u-sh, Madam please don't give up, don't fall asleep, save your baby's life, you will choke him. He is struggling and working so hard too.'[1]

This quotation is a part of the moving testimony of the experience of the process of a Christian woman while being helped to give birth to a child. Whether by natural process or even by caesarean section, every woman can tell the story of the pain involved in childbearing. Childbirth is the core of motherhood, the experience that this paper will examine critically in the context of feminist theology.

For the purpose of clarification, it should be stated at this juncture that the author considers feminist theology to be a valid field of Christian study. This position is based on the conviction that what is real in human experience and Christian theology ought to speak to human liberation from oppression, marginalization and poverty. These conditions affect any group of people, and feminist biblical interpretation and theology ought to be done in the context of total experience of womanhood including the aspirations, challenges and pain.

The paper recognizes that some Africans think that feminist theology is a western idea that has no relevance in Africa. As a matter of fact some African women also support this opinion. Maureen O. A. Okeke, one time Chief Executive Officer of Megaloise in Lagos said: 'The Nigerian woman is not marginalized. Marginalization is a thing of the mind.'[2]

Contrary to this kind of argument, the author is of the opinion that application of the principles of libera-

1 Grace Yemi Oladokun, 'The Birth of life', *An African Call for Life* (Ibadan: Daystar Press, 1983), 140-141.

2 Maureen O. A. Okeke, quoted by Bisi Alabi Williams, 'Maureen', *The Guardian* (Lagos), 21 August, 2005, 22.

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tion theology to the feminist setting is needed in Africa because African women are facing exploitation. Musimbi R. A. Kanyoro, a Kenyan feminist cultural hermeneut, asserts, 'When we look critically at our cultures, we know for certain that there are cases where our cultures dehumanize woman.'[3] She is not alone in this thinking.

In 1996 twenty seven theologians, male and female, from four West African countries, and over ten Christian denominations and academic institutions, held a conference in Nigeria to explore the theme, 'Women, Culture and Theological Education'. A part of the communique issued at the end of the conference read:

> …We have observed that many women in Africa have not been treated as equals with men in dignity, opportunity and power…, [D]own through the ages women have been regarded as second class citizens, inferior to men, stereotyped into roles of despondency, submission and passivity. Women have been exploited as sex objects and many have looked on them as a necessary evil to fulfill men's sexual needs and bear their children. They have not been expressively included in the power centers and decision-making process in church and society.[4]

This is a very strong witness in support of the need for feminist liberation theology in the West African experience. I would like to corroborate it further with my personal ministerial experience. In my pastoral practice I have seen wives and mothers marginalized in family lives. Some husbands have abandoned their wives (sometimes including children) for reasons like childlessness, having only female children, etc. Many African women are suffering and they stand in need of liberation.

Theology is an interpretative analysis of the revelation of God in any context of human experience. Feminist theology is the attempt to interpret the Christian faith from the perspective of the experience of suffering and exploitation of women. Models and issues of concern and interest constitute what is called the agenda of feminist theology. This paper does not make a distinction between the intellectual efforts, theoretical concerns and the social/practical ones. The feminist agenda is wide and includes: equality of sexes, incorporation of the experience of women in theological constructs; dealing with masculinist bias; women's rights in the home, places of work, church and society; violence against woman, involvement in state leadership and politics.

The paper is written from the viewpoint of an evangelical heritage. Evangelicals are Protestants who hold 'to the belief in justification by grace through faith and the supreme authority of Scripture'.[5] One of the distinct affirmations of evangelicals is the acceptance of the Bible as the true revelation of God. They give the Bible concentrated attention 'as a guide to

3 Musimbi R. A. Kanyoro, *Introducing Feminist Cultural Hermeneutics,* edited by Mary Grey et al (Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press, 2002), 92.

4 Protus O. Kemidirim and Mercy A. Oduyoye, *Women, Culture and Theological Education* (Enugu, Nigeria: WAATI, 1998), 175.

5 Gabriel Fackre, 'Evangelical, Evangelicalism', *The Westminster Dictionary of Christian Theology* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1983), 191.

conviction and behaviour.'[6] Therefore, to evangelicals the Bible is the first, the primary and the most important source for formulating Christian theology. As the final authority and guide in Christian faith and practice it is used to evaluate all other sources of knowledge. This is a presupposition of this little theological exercise.

The contention of the paper is that while the various agendas of feminist theology are valid, from the viewpoint of evangelical understanding as exemplified by 1 Timothy 2:15, they are inadequate and so defective if they do not incorporate the primacy of childbearing (understood as motherhood). This thesis will be argued with a twofold objective—to engage in an interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:15, and to propose a feminist theology of childbearing in the African context with particular reference to Nigeria.

II An Interpretative Analysis of 1 Timothy 2:15

In 1 Timothy 2:15 we find a biblical revelation that should not be ignored in any serious Christian feminist theological effort; it states: 'But women will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith, love and holiness with propriety' (NIV). What is the meaning of 'saved' and 'childbearing' in this phrase? How will childbearing 'save' women? These are the major questions that this section will attempt to answer. One principle of biblical interpretation is to interpret a text in its context. Therefore, it is proper for us to first look at the historical background and then the immediate context of the text, if only briefly.

1. The Historical Background

Scholars have adduced various proposed historical backgrounds for the text. According to the *Disciple's Study Bible*: 'This text contradicted an early non-biblical idea that women had to become males in order to be saved or that sexual relationships and birth are evil, part of the world's way instead of God's.'[7] Some interpreters think that the second idea is the more probable background, that is, that the writer, the apostle Paul, had in mind those false teachers who forbade people to marry (mentioned in 4:3). In this case, the apostle tried to persuade the Ephesian church, through Timothy, not to associate his own instructions with such an idea.

Without doubt, however, the text was written in the historical context of a double background—Jewish and Greek. In both cultures, during the first century women had a very low position. The apostle needed to give those temporary regulations not to bring the Christian church into unnecessary conflict with the prevailing cultures. What is more, if the women were allowed a more active role like teaching and leading a congregation they themselves would be considered loose and immoral.[8]

2. The Immediate Context

In 1 Timothy 2:8-14 the apostle Paul gave some guidelines concerning cor-

6 Fakre, 'Evangelical, Evangelicalism', 191.

7 *Disciple's Study Bible*, 1988 ed., 1548.

8 *The African Bible*, 1999 ed., 2007.

porate worship with an emphasis on some prayer attitudes of men, and the dressing and teaching roles of woman. He alluded to the order of creation and also referred to the historic experience of the fall of humanity. This context teaches us at least two things. The first is that these instructions were given against certain socio-cultural Greek and Jewish worship problems in the first century. He gave similar exhortations in some other New Testament texts (1 Cor 11:5-16; 14:33-35; 1 Peter 3:3-6). In view of the change in cultural values, it is reasonable to argue that the regulations under study lack normative authority for contemporary Christendom.

The second lesson is that the guidelines were not meant to make a case for superiority of male over female in the leadership of public worship. The apostle himself eloquently and emphatically declared the breakdown of such barriers in the gospel of Jesus Christ (Gal 3:28). However, critical objectivity demands that we recognize that he still upheld 'the universal principle of female submission to male headship',[9] in every culture in relation to some issues.

3. The Text

It would be naive to approach this text casually for it has been variously described as a 'difficult statement', an 'ambiguous promise' and one that is 'exceedingly obscure'.[10] The text is apparently as debatable and controversial as the agenda of feminist theology itself. The interpretation will focus on the first part of the verse, 'But women will be saved through childbearing' and it will be done in two stages; the first is an interpretation of the constituent words—but, women, saved, through and childbearing.

The *first word* is variously translated as 'but' (NIV, NASV, NAB, GNB, NLI, ERV), 'notwithstanding' (KJV), 'nevertheless' (NKJV, ANT), 'yet' (RSV, NEB) and 'so' (TLB).[11]

It is translated from the Greek word (*de*) which distinguishes 'a word or clause from one preceding'.[12] It can also mean 'on the other hand'. In the text we see it as a conjunction of insight and encouragement.

Paul used the 'but' to connect the instructions about worship already given (8-14) with the profound spiritual revelation that he was about to give about womanhood (15). According to Alan G. Nute, this verse clearly 'sug-

9 William Barclay, *Letters to Timothy, Titus and Philemon* (Edinburgh: The Saint Andrew Press, 1956), 79.

10 John R.W. Stott, *The Message of Timothy and Titus* (Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 1973), 86.

11 Alan G. Nute, 'The Pastoral Letters' *The International Bible Commentary*, F. F. Bruce (editor) (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979), 1477; E. Glenn Hinson, '1-2 Timothy and Titus', *The Broadman Bible Commentary*, Volume II (Nashville: Broadman, 1971), 316; Stott, *The Message of 1 Timothy and Titus* (Nottingham: InterVarsity, 1996), 87.

12 Abbreviations for the various Bible Versions: ANT—The Amplified New Testament; ERV—Easy-to-Read-Version; CV—Contemporary Version; GNB—Good News Bible; KJV—King James Version; (Authorised) Version; NAB—The New American Bible; NASV—New American Standard Version; NEB—The New English Bible; NIV—New International Version; NKJV—The New King James Version; NLT—New Living Translation; RSV—Revised Standard Version; TLB—The Living Bible.

gests to the woman that she is not to think that her contribution is of negligible worth.'[13] The phrase under study was thus apparently meant to encourage the women that whereas they were disallowed from playing certain roles in the church, they should not be discouraged as that limitation would not hinder the purpose of God for them that was meant to be fulfilled through childbearing.

The second word, rendered women is also stated as 'she' (KJV, NKJV, NEB, NAB), 'woman' (RSV, GNB) and 'women' (NA5V, ANT, TLB, NLT, ERV, CV). The Greek word (*sotheretai)* is to be translated as '*she shall be saved*'[14] but interpreted by the context as women (plural). It tells us the recipient of the promise. The promise is thus applicable to every Christian 'she'—whether single or married, whether she is giving birth to children physically or not. A Christian woman who is biologically barren but is godly, raises and trains children for God's Kingdom can appropriate this promise as a *bona fide* 'she'. It applies to every mother-in-the-Lord.

We now come to the word 'saved' itself. The Greek (*sotheretai*) means to save from peril, injury or suffering; keep from harm, preserve or rescue. It is especially used in the New Testament to describe salvation from spiritual disease and death (Rom 8:24).[15] This means that the word can apply to both physical and spiritual salvation and it makes the meaning enigmatic.

If it is understood as physical salvation then it refers to 'woman's physical safety in childbearing', against the background of Genesis 3:16.[16] If it means the physical safekeeping of Christian women in childbirth, how shall we account for many spiritual, godly women who have died in the process of childbirth? On the other hand if the reference is to a spiritual salvation the verse can be spiritualized to mean that women (as well as men) 'are saved spiritually because of the most important birth, that of Christ himself'.[17]

This interpretation is questionable: Is this a reference to spiritual salvation of the soul from sin? How do we reconcile that with the overall New Testament message that salvation is by grace through faith? (Eph 2:8-9). How can the physical work of childbirth provide salvation? Does it then mean that faithful women in Christ Jesus who do not bear children will not be saved? Certainly no. The issue will be considered again later.

We now come to the word 'through' (NIV, RSV, NEB, NAB, NASV, ANT, GNB, NLT), 'in' (KJV, NKJV, ERV), or 'by' (CV). From the Greek (*dia*) the preposition can be translated as through, by, between.'[18] According to the *Disciple's Study Bible* here 'through' does not mean 'by means of'[19] but as in 1 Corinthians 3:15, it means women will be brought (or come) safely through the process of childbearing;

13 William A. Lykins, *A Word by Word, Verse by Verse Lexicon of the Greek New Testament*, 1 Timothy, 1992, 14.

14 Nute, 'The Pastoral Letters', 1477.

15 George Ricker Berry, *Greek to English Interlinear* (Iowa Falls, U.S.A.: World Bible Publishers, Inc., 1981), 542.

16 Lykins, *Word by Word,* 14.

17 *Disciple's Study Bible,* 1548-1549.

18 *Life Application Bible*, 1988 ed., 2190.

19 Lykins, *Word by Word,* 15.

'they will be brought safely through childbirth.'[20]

The last word is 'childbearing' (NIV, KJV, NKJV, NLT), 'bearing children' (RSV), 'having children' (GNB, ERV, CV), 'motherhood' (NEB, NAB), 'being good mothers' (CV margin), 'the Birth of the Child' (NEB margin), 'the birth of the (divine) Child' (ANT). It is translated from one Greek word (*teknogonias*)[21] and so childbearing is the best literal rendering. Now we know that childbearing is much more than biological childbirth but includes child nurture for growth. Moreover, in view of the virtues of faith, love, holiness and propriety required, childbearing is not to be considered as a mere natural exercise but a spiritual responsibility. This makes the interpretation as motherhood and being good mothers to be very appropriate.

The definite article before the Greek word (*tes*) provides another perspective for our hermeneutical task. Some interpreters explain that the reference is to the birth of a particular child, that is, the birth of the child Jesus. In ancient times it was suggested that the apostle refers here to the birth of Jesus Christ through Mary.[22] The verse therefore 'refers to women being saved spiritually through the most significant birth of all, the incarnation of Christ'.[23]

Having attempted an interpretation of the text through the analysis of the key words, the phrase will now be examined as a whole. The best interpretation of the phrase, 'saved through childbearing', appears to be one that will relate the text to the most immediate reference to how woman (and man too) fell to the deception of Satan and sinned against God (1 Tim 3:14). It is interesting to note that in the story of the fall (Genesis 3) the three ideas in 1 Tim 2:14-18 also appear: The offspring to be borne by the woman will conquer the serpent, Satan, the agent of sin (15). She will bear the offspring in pain (16a); she will also live as a wife and mother in submission to her husband (16c).

When we put these elements of physical and spiritual salvation together, Paul appears to be saying that even if women play visible roles in church life, motherhood is also a profoundly spiritual role. As it was in the experience of the fall of man, with the promise made real in the experience of Mary who gave birth to Jesus Christ, Christian women should recognize that the apparently insignificant role of childbearing (motherhood) is not only natural but spiritual and God will preserve them from death (the consequence of sin) if they play the role spiritually. The *Amplified New Testament* paraphrase of the text is perhaps the best commentary on the verse:

> Nevertheless (the sentence put upon women (of pain in motherhood) does not hinder their (souls') salvation), and they will be saved (eternally) if they continue in faith and love and holiness, with self-control; (saved indeed) through the Childbearing, that is, by the birth of the (divine) Child.

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20 *Disciple's Study Bible*, 1549.

21 David and Pat Alexander, *The Lion Handbook to the Bible* (Lion: Oxford: 1973), 619.

22 Lykins, *Word by Word*, 15.

23 Hinson, '1-2 Timothy and Titus,' p.316. Some scholars object to this view e.g. Bruce, *The International Bible Commentary* (London: Marshall Pickering, 1986), 1478.

Salvation is thus to be understood in the comprehensive holistic sense of finding life, satisfaction and achievement. This synthetic approach has significant meaning and application to women and men as well as to all Christians. It means that whatever role a woman plays in the church, her work as a mother is more basic, more significant and more fulfilling; motherhood is a very comprehensive feminine task. It is physical, biological, social and spiritual. This is a call for greater appreciation of the importance of childbearing. One cannot but agree with the opinion of John R. W. Stott:

> So then, even if certain roles are not open to women, and even if they are tempted to resent their position, they and we must never forget what we owe to a woman. If Mary had not given birth to the Christ-child, there would have been no salvation for anybody. No greater honour has ever been given to woman than in the calling of Mary to be the mother of the Saviour to the world.[24]

Christian motherhood is then a call to a salvific responsibility. Christian women who give birth to and nurture children in the way of the Lord are performing an evangelistic task to populate the church and the Kingdom of God. This verse contains a similar message for men as well: Man sinned and so men were condemned to painful labour. Woman sinned and so women were condemned to pain in childbearing. Both men and women, however, can be saved, through trusting Christ and obeying him.[25] Men who are given apparently loud, visible roles in building the church should do so with the awareness that Christ, the owner of the church, was born by a woman. Men and women are partners in the task of building the body of Christ (1 Cor 3:5-9).

Paul's statement in 1 Timothy 2:15 is therefore a unique sotereological point with profound ecclesiological implications for all Christians. God is telling us through the apostle that trust, faithfulness and obedience in living for Christ compensate when circumstances do not allow us to serve the Lord through some desirable church responsibilities. The Lord of the church is telling us here that when we lack opportunities to perform certain evangelistic and ecclesiological functions for the glory of God we should carry out our family responsibilities as a task of the Kingdom of God and find joy and satisfaction in nurturing our children to live for God. Here then is a crucial lesson not only for feminist theology but even for one that may be masculinist as well.

III Towards a Feminist Theology of Childbearing: The Importance of Motherhood

Childbearing will now be examined from its need, importance, impact and agenda. From the discourse so far, it has been clarified that motherhood is more than a natural role. It is in fact social and even spiritual. The cultural, economic and political implications of motherhood call for a great appre-

24 Stott, *The Message of Timothy and Titus*, 87-88.

25 *Life Application Bible*, 2190.

ciation by society. The starting point is the biological childbirth.

It can be said that a woman is a womb-man, a man with womb. That definition is a significant assertion of at least two facts. The first is that it states the equality of woman with man, equality of the two sexes, female and male. Male chauvinism is thus a hoax and the idea of superiority of one sex over the other is theologically untenable; it is a product of the imagination of the sinful state of the human mind.

The second fact is that a woman has a special structure (the womb) for an additional responsibility (to give birth and nurture human life). According to modern midwifery, true labour takes place in three or four stages between 7 to 12 hours. Mothers have always stated that there is nothing comparable with labour pain in their life experience. Whoever has watched a human push in labour to deliver will have a rough idea of what that means. Most men desert their wives at that point.

A woman gives up her life at the moment of delivery to give birth to another life. I understand no woman knows exactly the moment the baby is delivered. She 'dies' momentarily and she wakes up to discover the baby by her side. God gives her life back to nurture the child. Motherhood should be valued more.

Childbirth is significant but there is more to childbearing. While the birth of a child takes place instantly, child-nurture is a life-long task. Unfortunately, modern society seems not to adequately appreciate the vital role of motherhood to develop a better-cultured, more-humane world. Katherine Kersten thus lamented most appropriately:

> Clearly, society's most pressing need at the moment is not more lawyers or accountants. What we need, I said, is more decent people, of the kind only strong families and dedicated parents can produce. We need people of character—self-controlled people who know right from wrong and are committed to the common good.[26]

In the biblical revelation the family is the fundamental means of Christian nurture and education (Deut 6:1-9; Eph 5:22-6:4). This means that the family is the most effective means to humanize and personalize society. If this is true then it is counterproductive for society to place greater value on building the career of the parents at the expense of family development. For instance, when a woman is given maternity leave to nurture her baby, it should be recognized as an important service to the community and the payment of her salary and allowances in the place of work should be done willingly and appreciatively (Ex 2:9). Is child nursing not more tedious than most jobs in life?

Reuben Abati once complained that the way female bankers are sometimes treated in Nigeria threatens family development. According to this well-known social and political commentator:

> The woman's right to maternity leave is further abridged, and nursing mothers are given no concessions whatsoever… It is an assault on family values that is not extended to male employees. Are the banks saying that female bankers must forsake marriage and moth-

26 Margaret Myles, *Textbook for Midwives* (E & S Livingstone Ltd., 1953), 241-242.

erhood in order to be successful in their chosen career?[27]

If this warped value system is not corrected, how shall we not be building a society where parents pursue wealth but have children that lack parental care and so become morally bankrupt? It is a materialistic tendency that is already rearing its ugly head, a twisted trend that is already bearing fruits of social and cultural dislocations and anthropological poverty.

There is no alternative to motherhood in family upbringing for humanizing a community. God has given a woman a womb for this purpose as 'one of the most important roles for a wife and mother is to care for her family'.[28] This is particularly an African cultural value that should be cherished and preserved for our good. Gloria Waithe, now living in Lagos, is a Jamaican by birth and parentage but British because she grew up there. She confessed, 'I have come to see the way marriage is taken seriously and the family commitment to it. In the West it is not like that.'[29]

The impact of family life on people is another indication of the gravity of motherhood. In the area of crisis care and counselling, Christian psychologists have drawn the Social Readjustment Rating Scale. They have determined the stress value of life events that produce grief. According to the study, the life events that give the highest mean stress values are: death of spouse (100), divorce (73), marital separation from mate (65); these ratings may be compared with being tired at work (47), retirement from work (45).[30]

This is not just a western, psychological theory. It is the reality of African human (female and male) experience. This is the corroborating opinion of Gloria whose marriage broke up: 'Marriage is a serious business and I failed in it. That is why I said it was my lowest point in life.'[31] She is not alone in this confession. Maureen also said one of the most tragic moments in her life was the death of. her first boyfriend. She lamented: 'The death of my first love shook me to the very foundation of my life.'[32] It is the people and things we appreciate and value that can give us pain, grief and stress when we lose them.

The truth is that in African experience, family problems give most people more stress than problems in the place of work.[33] It is for this reason that it is a bit easier for a woman to have to give up her job to join her husband in another town or country to take care of their children; that is, under normal circumstances, it is not expected of a Christian woman to sacrifice her marital relationship for the sake of her career. In the final analysis, childbearing is more important to a woman than ca-

27 Katherin Kersten, 'How the Feminist Establishment Hurts Women', *Christianity Today*, 20 June, 1994, 20.

28 Reuben Abati, 'Banks: A Moral Dilemma', *The Guardian* (Lagos), 7 March 2005, 52.

29 *The NIV Study Bible*, 2190.

30 Kamai Tayo Oropo, quoting Gloria Waithe, *The Guardian* (Lagos), August 28, 2005, 20.

31 Howard Clinebell, *Basic Types of pastoral Care and Counselling* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1984), 188-189.

32 Waithe, *The Guardian* (Lagos), August 28, 2005, 21.

33 Okeke, *The Guardian* (Lagos), 21 August, 2005, 23.

reer. There are women who even suspend their professional development while their children are young so they can give adequate care and attention to the children.

Along with motherhood, some other important concerns that feminist theologians and practitioners should continue to speak to are: promotion and protection of 'women's rights by improving knowledge, exercise and development of rights under customary, religious and statutory laws' of a nation,[34] violence against women such as sexual harassment of youth and rape; participation of more women in partisan politics and governance.

If motherhood is a noble task, an important, indispensable factor for human development, then conferences that are organized with 'the objective of empowering womenfolk for economic, mental and spiritual growth'[35] should include a strong emphasis on motherhood. Intellectual support for childbearing should be one important pre-occupation of African feminist theology.

Since motherhood, spiritual/community service, and a professional career are all integral parts of a woman's life we need to consider how to balance these concerns. It is encouraging to observe that African women are already achieving the sensitive balance. An example is T. S. Aina-Badejo, who, while serving as the General Manager of Lagos State Radio, said that 'moving from the office, I am going to church to do something and at home being a mother and a wife. But by His (God) grace I have been able to balance it all.'[36]

It is therefore heartening to see that highly placed African women are pursuing this holistic agenda for the welfare of women and for the good of society. Chief (Mrs.) Oluremi Tinubu, the wife of former Lagos State Governor and a Senator of Federal Republic of Nigeria, commented during a conference organized for wives of state officials:

> The woman has to take her place in the home as a woman and as a working woman; she must learn to balance both and try to be the real helpmate for her husband. Being a woman is enough pride, she should play her role well. No amount of achievement you get should make you to jeopardize your home, you have to be a wife in totality.[37]

This opinion is well grounded and expressed. It boils down to one point—'whatever else is true a woman is queen within her home.'[38] This is the importance of motherhood in the context of balancing all valid feminist interests. This is the foundation required to build a feminist theology, the skeleton needed to develop a theology of childbearing.

34 I testify that in my pastoral practice I myself handled counseling for family life problems more than any other aspect of human life.

35 'On violence against women and girls', *The Guardian* (Lagos), August 28, 2005, 5.

36 Dafe Ivwurie, 'Elishammah's Street Love', *The Guardian* (Lagos), 5 June 2005, 12.

37 T. S. Aina—Badejo quoted by Andrew Iro Okungbowa, 'A Rebel in the Air', *The Guardian* (Lagos), 4 August 2005, 53.

38 Oluremi Tinubu quoted by Omolara Akintoye, 'Women Reaching for Greater Heights', *The Comet* (Lagos), 24 October 2005, 18.

IV A Feminist Theology of Childbearing

In view of the foregoing interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:15, and the biblical, cultural and practical issues related to the primacy of motherhood, the stage is now set to formulate a feminist theology of childbearing. For the purpose of clarification it should be stated that this feminist theology is done from the perspective and experience of womanhood.[39] It is not basically a liberation from oppression or marginalization. The paper will adopt a contemporary fourfold scheme being used to examine a biblical/theological issue: creation, fall (alienation), redemption and consummation.

1. Creation and Childbearing

The Spirit of God hovered over the waters at creation to give life and orderliness out of the formless, empty and dark earth (Gen 1:2). Is this not a good picture of God 'pushing' (though without effort) to bring forth creation? There and then God gave the male and female the awesome task of childbearing to responsibly populate the earth (Gen 1:27-28).

I propose that there are hints of feminine imagery in the Genesis 1 account of creation, God pushing to give birth to the earth. Creation was an event of childbearing. In the Genesis 2 account the LORD God is also portrayed as a designer, a potter who fashioned the human from the dust of the earth. Pottery is also a feminine task in traditional Yoruba culture. Elsewhere God is described as nursing mother (Is 49:15), midwife (Ps 22:9-10), and female homemaker (Ps 123:2).[40] Women are especially endowed by God through the process of childbirth to bring new life into the world. Being created in the image of God, women imitate God through childbearing. By the enablement and grace of God women continue to push today physically to give birth and spiritually to give rebirth.

2. Alienation and Childbearing

One of the ways to define the biblical concept of sin is 'the break of relationship'. It illustrates the nature of sin as 'a state of our being that separates us from the holy God'.[41] The breakdown of relationships in the world validates the story of the fall of man as the history of the fact that sin has entered the human race.

The first Eve (in the presence of and with the active consent, support and collaboration of Adam) chose to be deceived by Satan, to disobey the word of God and rebel against divine authority (Gen 2:15-17; 3:1-7). Their disobedience alienated them from God's presence, plan and favour (Gen 3:8, 23-24). It also alienated human beings from one another. After the fall we read the story of how Cain killed Abel his brother and he was cursed (Gen 4).

However, as a good parent of creation and humanity, God took the responsibility to reverse the alienation

39 L. Peacore, 'Feminist Theologies', *Global Dictionary of Theology* (Nottingham: Inter-Varsity Press, 2008), 317-322.

40 Barclay, *Letters to Timothy, Titus and Philemon*, 79.

41 Conn, 'Feminist Theology', S. B. Ferguson (ed.), *New Dictionary of Theology* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity, 1988), 256.

of man. God arranged for the offspring of the woman to defeat the devil (Gen 3: 15). The second Eve, Mary, through submission to God gave birth to the second Adam, Jesus Christ who fulfilled the promise (Rom 5:12-19). This is a sensitive and fair theology which shows that not only was woman part of the problem of the historic cause of alienation in the experience of humanity, but also that she was actively involved in the provision of God to reverse the resultant alienation.

A Yoruba proverb, *'Eni to ba bi omo oran ni yoo' pon'* translates as 'the woman who gives birth to a child with problems will have to take care of the same'. This was true in the roles played by God in the biblical story of creation, alienation and redemption. Today, Christian women have significant roles to play in the efforts of the church to deal with the problem of sin which manifests itself as disconnections in the family, church, working places and the larger society. Women (and their husbands) give birth to the children responsible for so much evil and atrocities in our world. They also have an equally crucial role in saving our crooked generation.

3. Redemption and Childbearing

Since womanhood was significantly involved in the event of alienation, she had to be equally involved in that of redemption. Alienation came through Eve, redemption came through Mary. In her submission to serve the Lord the Holy Spirit came upon the latter (Lk 1:35, 38). She became pregnant by the power of the Holy Spirit (Mt 1:18-20). Mary 'pushed' to give birth to Jesus Christ (Lk 2:6-7; Mt 1:21).

At the dedication of Jesus on the eight day, Simeon prophesied that a sword would pierce the soul of Mary (Lk 2:35). About thirty three years later this prophecy was fulfilled as she stood in pain and agony to watch the sacrificial death of her son as the lamb to atone for the sin of the world (Jn 19:25-26). Just as a woman has to 'die' to give birth to a child, Jesus also had to die to give us new life (Jn 12:23- 24).

Through the experience of Mary the entire mankind was saved in childbearing. For Mary and all Christian women today, childbirth and child nurture are not only physical, biological functions but spiritual and ministerial assignments. When women give birth, they are also required to snatch their offspring from sin, evil and wickedness in the world, lead them to the Saviour and nurture them in faith. Such godly children will deal with the various alienations in the world, restore relationships and harmony between man and God, man and fellow men, man and creation.

4. Consummation and Childbearing

Creation participated in the judgement, curse, suffering and pains that came as a result of the alienation of man. The Lord cursed the ground because of the sin of Adam and Eve (Gen 3:17b-18). The earth also groaned as Jesus bore the weight of the sin of man on the cross at Calvary (Mt 27:45). The shaking of the earth, the splitting of the rocks, the opening of the tombs and the violent earthquake that accompanied the death and resurrection of Jesus are symbolic of the beginning of the experience of redemption of crea-

tion (Mt 27:52; 28:2). Since then creation has been waiting eagerly for its full redemption (Rom 8: 18-25).

The New Testament speaks of the mystery of wisdom and insight (Eph 1:9-10), for the unity of all things through Jesus Christ.[42] These cosmological and eschatological implications of redemption make the gospel of salvation full and perfect. God has called on women through faith in Christ to contribute to the process of reconciliation of the cosmos through the birth and rebirth of children, thereby raising a great multitude 'from every nation, tribe, people and language' that will stand before the throne and in front of the Lamb (Rev 7:9). Christian women have a sacred and divine task to continue to 'push' in childbearing to give birth and rebirth to godly children who will establish the will of God in the human heart and prepare men and women to enter the Kingdom of God at the end of the age.

V Conclusion

> My love and compassion for the struggling infant brought me strength. I really pushed, as agonizing as it was. Then came, the thrust and then the cry: 'Congratulations, Mummy', said the doctor to me. Tears of joy and wonder rolled down my face.[43]

That is the continuation of the testimony of the birth of life used at the beginning of this article. It is considered suitable also as the conclusion to a paper, which has argued that feminist theology is valid and necessary. The phrase, 'saved by childbearing', has been subjected to some exegesis and hermeneutics. The paper has also contended that childbearing is vital to womanhood, to society, to the church and to the Kingdom of God. It is not just a biological activity; it is eminently social and spiritual.[44]

While women should be encouraged to aspire and excel in economic and political development of a society, it should not be at the expense of motherhood. Since childbearing is so significant, it ought to be an integral part of the agenda of feminist theology, social concerns and ministerial actions.

As a practical theological undertaking, the author is appreciative of the roles wives and mother play. The paper implores women to continue to push, push and push for birth and rebirth. Holistic childbearing is the hope of creation, the continuation of the human race, the social development of the human community and the evangelization of the world. Women will find joy, satisfaction and fulfilment in life now through motherhood. God will congratulate them for it. They will be 'saved through childbearing'.

42 J. E. Colwell, 'Sin', *New Dictionary of Theology*, 641.

43 Emiola Nihinlola, *The Fullness of Redemption* (Ibadan: Sceptre Prints, 2004), 37-39.

44 Ladokun, 'The Birth of Life', 141.

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Can We Measure the Success and Effectiveness of Entrepreneurial Church Planting?

Samuel Lee

1 Introduction

The growth of the church in the Global North has been accompanied by a commitment to share the gospel with those beyond its national borders. The approach used in missions was a direct reflection of the dominant understanding of what the church's mission was, the understanding of the culture of the targeted groups and the policy of sending the best representatives of the gospel. Social, economic and technological advancements, combined with the emergence of a global society, have resulted in changes in the northern churches and in their missions program. Additionally, missions is no longer the domain only of western nations due to the rise of southern Christianity as a powerful religious force in the twenty-first century.[1] Southern Christianity has begun to challenge the more complacent definition of many western nations regarding 'how to care for my neighbour'.

Missions have matured to where a lost soul is seen in a larger context. This results in a greater appreciation of the circumstances of people on the other side of the world and a fuller realization of who my neighbour is and how I need to care for my neighbour. Contemporary missions, regardless of the sending country, often include socio-economic dimensions.

One application of the socio-economic aspect is Entrepreneurial Church Planting (ECP),[2] which uses business entrepreneurs and clergy members to launch spiritually and economically integrated communities of faith as illustrated by the Redeemer Community Church and Dayspring Technologies in San Francisco, California. (These en-

1 Philip Jenkins, *Next Christendom : The Coming of Global Christianity* (Oxford University Press, 2002), 1.

2 Entrepreneurial church planting (ECP) is an umbrella term describing the birth and growth of the new expressions of churches by using entrepreneurial approaches. It goes under various designations of 'fresh expressions of church', 'organic church', 'liquid church', 'tentmaking', 'business as mission', and 'missional communities'.

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terprises will be discussed later in this paper.) In some cases, ECP suggests that one outgrowth of the business is a church plant. In other cases, ECP shows that a church is started first and it helps to set up a business. Either the church or the business may come first and still be appropriately designated as an ECP.

Simply put, ECP is the intersection of entrepreneurship and church planting. By combining entrepreneurship and church planting, ECP has sought to reach the unchurched and dechurched by creating 'Third Space'.[3] 'Third Space', a relatively new concept, refers to implementing ventures of creative neutral spaces, such as a café, that are more inviting to strangers than traditional ecclesiological models and are used for bringing the gospel to people.

While it may be conceptually inviting for spiritual and business forces to co-mingle in reaching the lost, dechurched, and unchurched, activities need to be evaluated as to whether they are accomplishing the goals of the Great Commission (reconciliation), the Creation Commission (stewardship), and the great commandment (transformation). In a world that measures success economically, how is success being measured in ECP endeavours? In-depth study is needed now to consider outcomes relative to goals.

To that end, I want to ascertain: 1) how practitioners of ECP activities define success, 2) how they measure the success and performance of ECP activities, and 3) how do the measurements help them achieve their initial objectives.

II Entrepreneurial Church Planting (ECP)

Church-planting efforts combined with a business model have taken various forms throughout history. A brief investigation into the diverse Christian traditions illuminates this point—for example, one could consider Paul's tent making, the Nestorians, the Moravian Missions and the Basel Mission. Though history offers a basis for the melding of a church-plant with a business venture, there are fewer contemporary examples of viable businesses combined with intentional, effective church planting.

Globally, the ECP movement is now an emerging phenomenon with examples appearing in Asia, Africa, Latin America, North America, and Europe. While the greatest flowering of this enterprise has been in Britain and the United States, by integrating business and church planting, ECP has served as a revitalizing force for churches and whole denominations throughout the world, including missions.

One of the main appeals of this strategy is that it incorporates a broad approach to include those who are unreached and those outside the church. No longer do missions want to create 'rice' Christians, but to provide a culturally sensitive economic and social environment to nurture nascent Christians, and to reach people who mistrust older, traditional western evangelical approaches.

Just as many American churches

3 David E. Fitch, *The Great Giveaway : Reclaiming the Mission of the Church from Big Business, Parachurch Organizations, Psychotherapy, Consumer Capitalism, and Other Modern Maladies* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2005), 63.

have attempted to reshape ecclesiology through socio-economic engagements by integrating business and church planting as illustrated by bi-vocational ministers, Business as Mission practitioners,[4] and fresh expressions of church entrepreneurs,[5] mission organizations have sought outreach opportunities with spiritual, developmental, and social dimensions.

The additional appeal of ECP in foreign contexts is the creation of communities for seekers and/or converts. In situations where conversion causes ostracism, the community provides both an economic and a social home. Furthermore, foreign governments are open to business opportunities that are inherent in ECP activities. In less developed countries, economic opportunities for the disenfranchised are welcomed.

However, consideration of ECP also demonstrates that a combination of business and church planting has not always been productive. A focus on multiplying profits reduces the attention to church planting, produces a poor witness, and results in a decline in spiritual interest.[6] In contrast, focusing primarily upon church planting results in a secular-sacred division that consecrates the church-plant and sees the commercial side as an unavoidable vice, thus resulting in financial drain. In this way, planting a church combined with operating viable for-profit business presents significant challenges, especially when the creation of a spiritual community is also a desired end.

In view of these advantages and disadvantages of ECP, evaluation becomes necessary. What thwarts assessment of ECP is the difficulty of measuring its effectiveness. Those who use ECP as their mission model typically utilize business metrics or mission metrics. However, few, if any, of the commonly recognized metrics measure the multidimensional goal of the Great Commission, the Creation Commission, and the Great Commandment.

ECP has been implemented in enough places to make it time to evaluate this strategy more thoroughly and determine its effectiveness. Given the time required and money invested to find appropriate people with the needed skill sets, language study, time to identify good locations, obtain government permits, do demographic research of the target community, etc., we need to use strategies that are known to be effective.

How, then, can we assess the effectiveness of ECP? A tremendous number of books and articles have been written about various theological aspects of ECP, but fewer have tackled the problems of identifying what constitues effectiveness. To address the issues of determining when success and effectivness have been achieved, it is important to consider what has

4 The models of Business as Mission (BAM) utilize business to fulfill the Great Commission and are focused on setting up businesses among unreached people groups.

5 A fresh expression of church is defined as 'a new gathering or network that engages mainly with people who have never been to church'. http://www.freshexpressions.org.uk/about/whatis

6 Tom A. Steffen and Mike Barnett, *Business as Mission : From Impoverished to Empowered / Edited by Tom Steffen & Mike Barnett*, Evangelical Missiological Society Series: No. 14 (Pasadena, Calif. : William Carey Library, c2006., 2006), 167–180.

been written about the goals of ECP and what suggestions have been drawn from actual measures of ECP.

Thus, drawing on written reviews and a case study approach, this study investigates a definition of goals for ECP activities and the process of identifying concepts to measure ECP outcomes. Based on this, my research will attempt to identify what factors result in economic sustainability and church planting and what effectiveness in ECP looks like.

The argument of this paper is that we can measure the success and effectiveness of entrepreneurial church planting, and that rather than measuring success or effectiveness economically or spiritually, ECP success and effectiveness should be gauged on the grounds of holistic transformation. It is to these issues that we now turn.

III Three Models of ECP

A review of relevant literature identified three models: 1) 'Business for saving souls and planting the church', 2) 'Business for human development', and 3) 'Business for holistic transformation'.[7] These models aid in pointing to the goals of ECP. Below I will sketch out these three models

1. 'Business for Saving Souls and Planting the Church' model

The 'Business for saving souls and planting the church' model[8] represents the Tent-Making movement. This missionary model was originally inspired by the examples of Paul, Aquila and Priscilla, and came into the scholarly spotlight by the late 1980s. Based on Paul's mission strategy, Christians used their professional (business) skills to establish a business as a means of contact with locals and eventually plant a church.

This model permits access to countries where traditional missionaries are denied entry. One early example would be the Nestorians in the sixth century who financially supported themselves through business and planted churches,[9] and another would be the Moravian Missions and the Basel Mission Trading Company.[10] In 1985, the Lausanne Tentmaking Statement was created and recognized the role of Christian lay people.[11] Since then, many mission agencies have used the 'Tent-making' model.

In recent years, this approach is becoming less viable as foreign governments continue to deport business men/women who are not involved in actual businesses or who seek to hide

7 Stephen B. Bevans and Roger Schroeder, *Constants in Context: A Theology of Mission for Today*, American Society of Missiology Series: No. 30 (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2004), 35–72.

8 Here 'saving souls' refers to personal conversion to Christ Jesus. See Dana Robert's book, *Christian Mission* (Chichester: Wiley, 2009), 90, and Andrew Walls, *Missionary Movement in Christian History* (Maryknoll, Orbis, 1996), 43-54.

9 Samuel H. Moffett, *A History of Christianity in Asia / Samuel Hugh Moffett* (Maryknoll, N.Y. : Orbis Books, 1998-1998), 29.

10 William John Danker, *Profit for the Lord : Economic Activities in Moravian Missions and the Basel Mission Trading Company*, Christian World Mission Books (Grand Rapids : Eerdmans, [1971], 1971), 32.

11 The Lausanne Tentmaking Statement is available at http://www.globalopps.org/lausanne.htm.

their church planting activity. So we see church planting as nested within business activity.

The significant characteristic of the Tent-making movement is that it is a church-centred view. For tentmakers, business is understood as a significant part of the church planting strategy. The ultimate goal remains church planting but business is seen as one step or stage toward this objective. This long-held approach understands the church as the origin and goal of mission. The church-centred approach sought to extend the church and to expand the gospel message specifically to non-Christian lands, often referred to as mission fields.[12]

Personal conversion and a viable indigenous church planting movement were regarded as the goals and metrics of tent-making endeavours.[13] Tentmakers place a high premium on the importance of helping others to develop a personal relationship with Jesus and with other Christians. They have focused upon evangelistic labour or the realization of the Great Commission by means of reconciliation. As a result, many tent-making ministers use spiritual metrics of success: (1) how many people have heard the Good News, (2) how many people have been converted, (3) how many have joined the church, and (4) how many converts have been discipled.[14]

However, the last is emphasized less. One of the reasons is that many ministers focus on membership (quantity-oriented metric) rather than discipleship (quality-oriented metric), which is one core of Jesus's Great Commission to his disciples (Mt 28:19).

The danger with the tent-making approach is that it is less holistic due to a failure to adequately address structural problems and social justice concerns in the larger society where the activity is located. Furthermore, this view does not appreciate the world as the place where God is active. The world degenerated into 'a sort of ecclesiastical training-ground'[15] and was defined as 'not-yet-church, already-church, still-church and no-longer-church'.[16]

Finally, this view might impede work performance because work itself is seen only as a means to an end; thus, there is less motivation to do one's work with excellence as a means in and of itself to honour God. This false distinction has historically had a deep impact on Christian views of wealth, faith, economics, and mission.

2. 'Business for Human Development' model

In the latter half of the twentieth cen-

12 Lalsangkima Pachuau, 'Engaging the "Other" in a Pluralistic World: Toward a Subaltern Hermeneutics of Christian Mission', *Studies in World Christianity* 8, no. 1 (January 1, 2002): 74.

13 Ralph D. Winter and Bruce A. Koch, 'Finishing the Task: The Unreached Peoples Challenge', *International Journal of Frontier Missions* 16 (April 1999): 71–72.

14 Steven L. Rundle, 'Does Donor Support Help or Hinder Business as Mission Practitioners? An Empirical Assessment', *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 38, no. 1 (January 2014): 24–25.

15 Johannes Christiaan Hoekendijk, 'The Church in Missionary Thinking', *International Review of Mission* 41, no. 163 (July 1, 1952), 324.

16 Hoekendijk, 'The Church in Missionary Thinking', 324.

tury, 'Business for saving souls and planting the church' model joined company with the 'Business for human development' model. During this time, the concept of *missio Dei* began to gain acceptance. Since the Willingen Conference (1952), the pendulum of theological understanding of Christian mission has swung from the church-centred view to the theocentric view of mission.

In the *missio Dei* concept, mission is no longer subject to the church. Mission has its source in the Triune God. The church's mission is to participate in the mission of the Triune God. The church is viewed as an instrument for God's universal mission. Mission becomes the church's reason for being.

However, interpretation of the theocentric conceptualization of mission has varied. On one side, some proposed that even though the church should be neither the starting point nor the goal of mission, the church, as a foretaste of the kingdom is the agent of God's mission. On the other hand, others supporting the world-centred view of mission argued that the true context for mission was the world, not the church. So the correct sequence is kingdom-gospel-apostolate-world. Consequently, the church and the kingdom of God were viewed as divorced from each other in ecumenical circles.

Alongside this ecumenical mission thinking, the concept of 'Business as Mission' (BAM) came on the scene, espousing similar views. BAM has been broadly defined as business ventures led by Christians that are for-profit and are intentionally designated to be 'used as an instrument of God's mission to the world'.[17] Particularly in less developed and least-reached countries, which are often hungry for business acumen and earning potential as well as jobs, BAM's unique approach has created a door for missions.

Many BAM practitioners understood that the world was regarded as the locus of God's mission. As a result, the church was increasingly relegated to a marginal position within the BAM community. The theme of humanization and humanitarianism was taken up as its defining word.[18]

Vastly different from tentmakers, some BAM'ers intentionally focus on working through a business and find meaning in what they do. Thus work itself is seen as a calling and BAM'ers describe the economic activities as being missional.

The missional aspect is displayed by practitioners as they become involved with the community where their business is located by undertaking holistic community development such as social and economic transformation. They not only find projects that draw on local strengths to enable people to become financially independent, but they also creatively expose others to the gospel, resulting in financial, social, and spiritual growth. Other BAM'ers seek to model biblical values in the marketplace by focusing on ethical business

17 C. Neal Johnson and Steve Rundle, *Business as Mission : A Comprehensive Guide to Theory and Practice; Foreword by Steve Rundle* (Downers Grove, Ill. : IVP Academic, 2009), 28.

18 James A. Scherer, *Gospel, Church & Kingdom : Comparative Studies in World Mission Theology* (Eugene, OR : Wipf & Stock, 2004), 108.

practices and providing jobs for women and other outcasts.

From these considerations, it can be inferred that most BAM'ers focus first on ensuring the foundation of business effectiveness such as profitability. Miroslav Volf describes it as a 'vocational understanding of work developed within the framework of the doctrine of creation'[19] or stewardship. In other words, BAM practitioners regard church planting as just a part of the larger role of serving the needs of greater human development.

Consequently, most BAM practitioners have a financial focus, emphasizing financial sustainability, profitability, and larger scale operations—the typical financial metrics of success. They mainly adopt existing financial reporting systems[20] such as the ISO 2600, the Global Reporting Initiative, or Global Compact.[21] These standards are focused on measuring economic, social, and environmental goals alone.

One problem in BAM's approach is that it may downplay the importance of the church. The church is relegated from its status as the mystical body of Christ to that of *a* body of Christ, meaning that it is only one of several sacred venues advancing the Kingdom of God. Additionally, the 'Business for human development' view tends to campaign strongly for the status of calling overshadowing the conceptual framework of being a people of God. More specifically, this model so closely identifies one's specific job as one's calling that it may result in identity crisis if, for some reason, one loses one's job or skills, through dismissal, retirement, or medical disability.

3. 'Business for Holistic Transformation' model

In recent years, Volf's pneumatological understanding of work[22] has been influential, resulting in the view that Christian business in partnership with the community of faith can be a means to overcome materialism, individualism, and self-centredness. We find activities that combine lean startup business principles[23] and church planting vision.

19 Most discussions of work in the 'Business for human development' view have tended to focus on seeing work as one's vocation, as one's calling, because most Christians start with the creation account in Genesis where God is seen as at work, and we, as bearers of God's image, are called to work as well. Miroslav Volf, *Work in the Spirit : Toward a Theology of Work* (Eugene, OR : Wipf and Stock, 2001), ix.

20 See Global BAM Think Tank report 2014, which reviews various existing Christian and non-Christian assessment tools, with analysis on what they do, how they do and why they might be helpful, retrieved June 17, 2015, available at http://bamthinktank.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/BMTT-IG-Measuring-BAM-Impact-May-2014.pdf.

21 Cf. http://www.regententrepreneur.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/NamieBimba.pdf.

22 Volf suggests an alternative, a 'pneumatological one developed within the framework of the doctrine of the last things'. Volf, *Work in the Spirit*, ix. He proposes that we frame the way we think about work in terms of the centrality of eschatology in Christian faith, and that we think of work in terms of the Spirit inspiring us in every step of our lives as we walk forward toward the full coming of the Kingdom, the New Creation.

23 Lean start-up, led by Steve Blank and Eric Ries, is a revolutionary methodological shift in entrepreneurial practice that makes starting a business far less risky. Lean start-up

A mounting body of literature is developing regarding 'Business for holistic transformation',[24] categorized by various expressions: 'fresh expressions of church', 'organic church', and 'missional communities'. New contextual churches are freshening the religious landscape of the global North.

One core theological principle of the 'Business for holistic transformation' model is the belief in a 'kingdom-shaped church'. Here the kingdom of God gives rise to the church, which is taken to be the sign of the coming kingdom. The church in the 'Business for holistic transformation' model intends to offer loving relationships—with God and with others, in contrast to the predominate consumer-oriented relationships found in the world and in other models.

So this model pursues on-going contact with potential believers and emphasizes the need to listen to what they are saying. Relationship becomes the central concept, because business and church planting occur within the contexts of relationships in the larger community.

In short, the 'Business for holistic transformation' model recognizes that God's reign in the world is unthinkable without the church,[25] because the church can help build an ethos of mutual civic responsibility and accountable communities of discipleship where the temptations of greed, self-centeredness, and materialism are confronted. Additionally, at the core of the 'Business for holistic transformation' model is a focus on spiritual and economic transformation. Transformation happens as churches are planted and businesses are established that create an environment where people can connect with God, others, and the rest of creation.

However, the risk with the 'Business for holistic transformation' model is that there are differing understandings of God's kingdom. Divergent conceptions of the Kingdom of God have led to differing ideas of the calling of the church.[26] Howard Snyder enumerates eight kingdom models.[27] He emphasizes that models of the kingdom have changed and will change, and that the church, therefore, needs a new kingdom theology for a new millenni-

is unconventional in that it favours experimentation over elaborate planning, customer feedback over intuition, and iterative design over a large development policy. Steve Blank, 'Why the Lean Start-Up Changes Everything', *Harvard Business Review* 91, no. 5 (May 2013): 66. Eric Ries, *The Lean Startup: How Today's Entrepreneurs Use Continuous Innovation to Create Radically Successful Businesses* (New York : Crown Business, 2011).

24 Michael Moynagh, *Church for Every Context : An Introduction to Theology and Practice; with Philip Harrold* (London : SCM, 2012), xx. Michael Volland defines the entrepreneur as follows: 'A visionary who, in partnership with God and others, challenges the status quo by energetically creating and innovating in order to shape something of kingdom value.' Michael Volland, *The Minister as Entrepreneur: Leading and Growing the Church in an Age of Rapid Change* (SPCK, 2015), 3.

25 Charles Edward van Engen, Dean S. Gilliland, and Paul Everett Pierson, *The Good News of the Kingdom : Mission Theology for the Third Millennium* (Maryknoll, N.Y. : Orbis Books, 1993), 73.

26 Howard A. Snyder, *Models of the Kingdom* (Eugene, OR : Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2001), 13–17.

27 Snyder, *Models of the Kingdom*, 18.

um.[28] He presciently remarks that the forces of 'globalization/glocalization' call for a renewed model of the Kingdom of God with regard to ecology and economics.[29]

Thus far, we have reviewed the literature on the business for saving souls and planting the church, the business for human development, and the business for holistic transformation models. A summary of similarities and differences among these three analytical lenses is reflected in Chart 1 on the next page:

If we start at the bottom of Chart 1, the continuum demonstrates graphically the lack of overlap among the different models. While BAM is not totally business-oriented, neither is HT totally transformational in its style and we note the significant gap between BAM and HT. Therefore we cannot equate BAM and HT.

The upper portion of the chart reveals other similarities and differences among the models. We note a similarity between tent-making and BAM with regard to the success metric. Both reduce their assessment to countable elements. Of course, it is not as easy to count souls saved and the number discipled as it is to detect closing a business year in the red or black. However, this approach may miss the intangible element of those in the process of transformation.

Additionally, we see the integrated place of the church in both Tent-making and in Holistic Transformation. While implicit, all three of these models open the door for laity to have a full role in the outreach activities, even to the point of discipling and leading a church.

In sum, the previous discussion has helped us to understand the utility of a joint venture—church planting and a business enterprise. Common to both is the need to reach out to others, and hopefully in so doing, establish relationships with people. However, none of these models indicates how to maintain balance between church planting and business activities. The different goals lead to different outcomes.

To actualize the goals of economic fruitfulness and church planting, we might take into account aspects of all three types. They probably need each other to create a truly novel church that is economically sustainable and to liberate themselves from leaning too closely on a one-sided goal of economic fruitfulness or church planting to the detriment of the other. It is assumed that balance may be achieved by the integration of three theological emphases (the Creation Commission, the Great Commandment, and the Great Commission).

Lest the discussion of ECP remain theological and theoretical, I believe it is important to evaluate the ECP strategy in terms of its ability to combine church planting with economic activities. To accomplish the assessment of ECP, a case study of one business/church planting endeavour was carefully chosen for thorough study. In the section that follows, I will note an effort by one Christian community to practise entrepreneurial church planting.

28 Snyder, *Models of the Kingdom, 133.*

29 Snyder, *Models of the Kingdom*, 140-141.

CHART 1. Comparison of Characteristics of Three ECP Models

Models	Archetype	Orientation	Activity	Success Metric	Problems
Business for Saving Souls & Planting church (Tent-making: TM)	tent-making	church-centred Great Commission Cross-cultural	Christians use a professional skill for job, meet people, plant a church	#hear gospel # saved # discipled	limits God's reach to just the church doesn't deal with structural & social justice issues work as end, not to honour God
Business for Human Development (Business as Mission: BAM)	for profit	theocentric/world-centred Creation Commission (stewardship) Cross-cultural	Create profitable businesses with concern for public corporate responsibility & eco justice	profitability & financial sustainability	church relegated to edge of churches job=calling
Business for Holistic Transformation (Holist Transformation: HT)	sustain business & plant a church	foretaste of Kingdom of God Inter-cultural	Establishing good relationships whether for Business or for the church	sustain financial activities and church and build relationships	how to achieve goal

BAM **HT** **TM**

Business (economic **Transformation (holistic)** **Reconciliation (spiritual)**

IV A Case Study of a ECP Model:

1. Redeemer Community Church & Dayspring Technologies[30]

Dayspring Technologies is a successful web development company with 16 employees and a revenue of $1.7 million. Their clients include International Justice Mission, Mercy Core, and Golden State Warriors. The firm is located in the Bayview-Hunters Point neighbourhood of San Francisco. Bayview-Hunters Point is in the southeast corner of the city where unemployment and households below the national poverty level are nearly double compared with the rest of the city; in this area, the poverty line is $23,000 for a family of four.

Redeemer Community Church is also located in this neighbourhood. Redeemer Church and Dayspring Technologies work together. Initially the two entities wondered what it might look like to share space and seek the welfare of the same local neighbourhood. They moved ahead together, establishing both the church and the business. They share not only a common local address, but also a common desire to be a blessing in the neighbourhood.

Historically, Redeemer Community Church was an outgrowth of Grace Fellowship Community Church. In 2002 a group of people was sent from Grace Fellowship Community Church to plant another church that became Redeemer Community Church led by Danny. Early on, Grace Fellowship Community Church had a non-profit community development program called Grace Urban Ministries in Bayview-Hunters Point.

Danny and Chi-Ming (a member of Grace Fellowship Community Church) were conducting the youth group. They recognized that there was a social and cultural ceiling limiting the goals of these young people. They wanted these teens to go to college and enter into professional jobs. So Redeemer was planted in the Bayview Hunters Point neighbourhood.

Dayspring Technologies was founded by three church members of the Redeemer Community Church (Danny, Chi-Ming, and Alyssa) with a vision of opening up work opportunities to empower and motivate the youth to aspire to higher education and jobs. The collective vision of Dayspring and Redeemer Community Church has been to demonstrate the redemptive qualities of the workplace and economic exchange in order to bear witness to God's work in the world.

How, specifically, did Dayspring and Redeemer Community Church announce the Kingdom of God in the world of the workplace, marketplace, and community?

Let us first consider the workplace. One aspect of a business is determining the level of remuneration of its staff. Dayspring has intentionally organized its salary scale to reflect better a scriptural vision of economic distribution. A policy of a 2:1 employer-to-employee salary scale has been implemented by Dayspring. This policy is referred to as Isaiah 40. Just as Scripture speaks of valleys lifted up and mountains brought low, the Isaiah 40 policy

30 I conducted a semi-structured interview with Danny, the co-founder of Dayspring Technologies and the pastor of the Redeemer Community Church.

smooths the peaks in salaries. They actually discount the high-end salaries and boost the bottom end salaries; this is understood as a means to practise concretely the love of neighbour in the workplace (The Great Commandment).

Another way that Dayspring Technologies bears witness to God's redemption of the workplace is by creating a work environment where people labour with confidence, not needing to expend energy watching their backs for adverse actions of other staff members. Staff comments have consistently pointed out that Dayspring lacks the political environment so common in the working world.

For example, the practice of 'rank and yank' is not found at Dayspring; in the 'rank and yank' workplace structure, all the people on a team are ranked and the bottom 10% are yanked, meaning they are laid off. Dayspring rejected this practice. Of course, Dayspring Technologies pursues excellence, but brutal competition is a mark of the worldly market, not of the kingdom of God.

So what is an alternative workplace vision? A lack of divisiveness generates the feeling that you do not need to stand watch for your own well-being.

Thus far, we have addressed the workplace. Similar ideas of Kingdom-thinking are discovered in the marketplace. Dayspring attempts to embody the gospel through Sabbath remembrance. While the company esteems the value of work, the Sabbath boundary serves to prevent the idolization of labour. In this way, employees are encouraged to spend Sundays with their families and churches, resulting in a more balanced and spiritually vibrant schedule.

To guarantee that the workload stays controlled, they structure their business in a way that attempts to restrict their working hours to 40 hours a week, not requiring staff to work evenings or weekends. This practice also honours God by no one working on the Sabbath. To complement this practice, Dayspring executives are known to turn down some business opportunities in order to protect their staff and prevent over-extending themselves. In this way, an environment of righteousness and justice is cultivated. Thus the gods of produce more, work harder and longer do not determine the principles of this business.

Now that we have examined the relationship between Kingdom values and Dayspring's operations in the workplace and marketplace, we can push the discussion into implications for the broader community. Dayspring has been working in partnership with Redeemer Community Church on the question of how a business and a church could express love to its neighbours in the community.

One of the things they do is through the Neighbour Fund; this is relationship-based investing or relationship-based small business loans. These loans apply the principle of socio-economic reconciliation as a way of bearing witness to the reconciling power of Christ. The loan committee is participatory, meaning that borrowers sit on the committee and recommend loans to be made to other borrowers. They want to break down the barriers that exist between borrower and lender.

A distinctive is that they want borrowers and lenders to become friends. This is done through the sharing of a meal in order to promote an atmos-

phere of camaraderie. Something unique happens as people fellowship around the table. In these ways, Dayspring and Redeemer believe that God is actually at work reconciling all things to himself through Jesus for his Kingdom.

In sum, Dayspring Technologies and Redeemer have reflected the Kingdom of God by embodying redeemed economies such as Isaiah 40 or shared access to the land and resources,[31] creating a supportive environment where people get connected, loved, and reconciled to Jesus and the community of faith so that the Holy Spirit may usher in the coming new creation. This is a unique combination where the Creation Commission, the Great Commission, and the Great Commandment meet for the New Creation.

Accordingly, the case study clearly shows that a combination of business and church planting can provide a way of blessing others, binding people to one another, and eventually to God, in beautiful ways, and, and getting individuals to walk forward toward the full coming of the Kingdom, the New Creation.

2. Outcomes of the Operation of Redeemer Church and Dayspring Technologies

Our case study has provided thus far an account of the establishment and basic operational practices of Redeemer Church and Dayspring Technologies. Now we need to examine these institutions to consider what they have achieved. Insight about their accomplishments came from asking Danny, the co-founder of Dayspring Technologies and the pastor of the Redeemer Community Church five basic questions:

Questions	**Issue Addressed**
What is the primary goal of the ministry of the Redeemer Community Church and Dayspring Technologies?	Goals of the ECP model
With regards to the business enterprise you have established, how do you define success?	Theoretical definition of success along the continuum from business to transformation
How do you measure success?	Operational definition of success of a Kingdom-based business
How do those metrics help you achieve the objectives you set out?	
What kind of story do you want to share with your denomination or friends?	

31 Christopher Wright uses the term, 'Redeemed Economies', in his article entitled '*Biblical Reflections on Land*'. Cf. C. Wright, 'Biblical Reflections on Land', *Evangelical Review of Theology* 17, no. 2 (1993): 161.

Earlier the point was made that the goals and visions associated with kingdom-based activities might drive the outcomes. The goals of Redeemer and Dayspring are to bring glory to God and create a space where people can experience God's kingdom (the New Creation) through relational reconciliation with Jesus Christ (the Great Commission) based on the relational expression of love for God and others (the Great Commandment), occurring in transformed business practices (the Creation Commission). Relational reconciliation refers to restoring relationship to self, to others, to the rest of creation, and to God through Jesus and the church (2 Corinthians 5:18).[32]

The relational expression of love for God and others refers to the action that flows from spiritual reconciliation.[33] When our other relationships have been transformed, what emanates are business practices that reflect our right relationships to creation in stewardship[34] or transformed business practices. Thus we see that the goals of Redeemer and Dayspring Technologies do drive their activities.

With the establishment of goals and activities, it is important to consider their theoretical definition of success. From the beginning it is obvious that the definition of success has been reinvented in their business endeavours. Unlike most church planters, Danny is critical of the thinking that equates the metrics of success (how much, how often, and how many) necessarily with kingdom advancement. Most church planters assume that if they keep an eye on these three analytics, then their business/church plant will be successful. Instead, at Redeemer Church and Dayspring Technologies there is an emphasis on 'faithfulness' and 'blessing'.

Thus we find a greater focus on how peoples' lives are transformed by the integration of the church and business. There is concern to count success as Jesus did: seeing the lost redeemed and transformed. Too often entrepreneurial church planters can have large congregations and even have significant offerings, but there is virtually no impact for the kingdom in the neighbourhoods surrounding the church, as Reggie McNeal points out.[35] However, the laudable intangible indicators of success suggested by transformed lives are not useful when seeking outcomes that can be tracked or counted.

As we move to establish an operational definition of success, the qualitative approach guided by the Holy Spirit manifests itself as Danny elucidates their guiding principles for business assessment.

Our metrics for Dayspring are business metrics [but]… we use them differently. Redeemer and Dayspring operate, using a fourfold relational approach: 1) Are we operating in a way that manifests the love of God? 2) Do

32 Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert, *When Helping Hurts : How to Alleviate Poverty without Hurting the Poor-- and Yourself* (Chicago, Ill. : Moody Publishers, 2009), 75.

33 'The Threefold Call: A Trinitarian and Reformed Theology of Vocation in Response to Volf's "Work in the Spirit"'—ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Full Text—ProQuest, 277, accessed February 14, 2016.

34 'Threefold Call', 283-284.

35 Reggie McNeal, *Missional Renaissance : Changing the Scorecard for the Church* (San Francisco, CA : Jossey-Bass, 2009), xvi–xvii.

our products and services provide healthy benefits to customers, the community at large, and the creation? 3) Are the values of the Kingdom of God reflected in all business procedures (hiring, training, evaluating, rewarding, and dismissing employees)? 4) Are the values of the Kingdom of God present in relationships with suppliers, distributors and contractors?

The common theme found in the four questions Danny gave is relational connections: between *mission Dei* and human participation, between company and the creation, and between business and clients. There is intent to have business practices that reflect the basic relationship with God as they deal with other people and creation.

To take the analysis a step further, what drives their definition of success is relational righteousness where people are transformed through loving relationships with God and others. Relational righteousness is alluded to when Danny spoke about 'work hard', 'be willing to take a lower salary', 'give away 5% of our time', 'pay a living wage', ' a policy of a 2:1 employer-to-employee salary', and 'give away 10% of our net income to the community'. There is a premium on relational righteousness even at the cost of typical profit maximization strategies used by businesses. Yet this business thrives and is able to expand.

More revealing about the significantly different orientation of Dayspring is found in its non-business activities. When asked what story he wants to tell with regards to Dayspring, he responds with 'partnership built with the community'. He then talked about the Neighbour Fund. The expressions, 'partnership to be built up', 'the community is being built up', 'friendships are being formed', 'across racial boundaries' convey the relational connections to the community, especially to the community of faith where trust and cooperation for the common good occur. From these relationships lives are being transformed enabling members to live together well and to stand in solidarity with the people in need.

All things taken together, the answers to the five questions about goals and outcomes make it clear that if a ECP is to be sucessful, entrepreneurial church planters should focus on the relationship between Kingdom values and business operations in the workplace and marketplace, their relational connections with others through Jesus and the church, and their relational righteousness through God and others and for God and others.

3. Discussion

The ultimate goal of the study of Redeemer Church and Dayspring Technologies was to identify factors that distinguished this missional endeavour and then to determine how to measure outcomes. The missional aspect has been considered previously. Based on the preceding discussion we know how Redeemer Church and Dayspring Technologies define success. Following Danny's lead, we use a kingdom-based orientation for a quantifiable assessment of success and effectiveness.

Reflecting on what Danny said about missional activity and success/effectiveness, we note that there are three dimensions to how and what Redeemer Church and Dayspring Technologies do: generate a sense of

belonging or relational connectedness, develop reflected love or relational righteousness, and recognize blessings or relational stewardship of resources.

Three dimensions emerge: belonging, reflected love and blessings. Belonging, a fundamental psychological need, is frequently the starting point for people's entrance into a community. Welcoming others to fulfil the Great Commission requires God's people to have a relationship-building orientation. It is important to understand that belonging is a process, where the degree of interest in becoming a part is key. Therefore it is incumbent on the church and/or business to provide outreach ministries that neighbourhood people define as helpful and desirable.

Next in the process of building a spiritual community is reflected love where the love shown to others begins to be reflected back. In essence, people are being divinely loved into the Kingdom. As people participate in the community of believers they find loving acceptance that, in time, they begin to reciprocate. Reflected love is found in the transition from receiving love to becoming a source of love for others. An ethos of helping each other is created within the community. As reflected love is expressed it can establish the groundwork for reconciliation with God and others, and it fosters the occurrence of divine transformation. The last dimension is blessing or the return that comes from the generation and stewardship of God-given resources.

There is a synergy among these three factors where authentic and healthy relational connectedness requires all three of these elements in order to foster holy interaction. Each component alone is necessary but not sufficient to guarantee success. At times, one component will be more evident or emphasized, but the outcomes being sought require all three factors.

Thus we find that success for ECP may be defined as both establishing a sustainable business and creating spiritual community, or the relationships established with other believers and Jesus. Ideally, within the spiritual community, spiritual transformation occurs so that loving relationships with God and others are established and the transformed themselves become agents of reconciliation. Furthermore, ECP effectiveness should be evaluated on the grounds of holistic transformation rather than simply measuring effectiveness in terms of economic development or just leading people to faith in Christ Jesus.

With our more developed understanding of success and effectiveness, we are now ready to suggest operational variables for the dimensions belonging, reflected love, and blessing as shown in Chart 2 on the next page

Belonging tries to capture a sense of inclusiveness generated by the church and the business towards the residents of the community as evidenced by local residents getting jobs in Dayspring Technologies or increased participation in church-run programs. It is contact that starts the process of reaching people so that in time spiritual reconciliation occurs. The greater the number of different contacts, whether making a prayer request or church attendance, the greater the belongingness. This is not an exhaustive list of possible ways people can 'belong'.

Reflected love happens as people begin to respond to the loving overtures made toward them. Within the neigh-

CHART 2. ECP's Success & Effectiveness Dimensions

Belonging	Reflected Love	Blessing
• Access to ungospel people by providing economic footing (e.g. employment, small loan)	• Greater neighbourliness occurring (e.g. an increase in the sense of responsibility and accountability)	• Relationships-based investing (e.g. or relationship-based small business loans)
• Community people make prayer requests	• Make community a better place (e.g. a decrease in socio-economic problems or immorality)	• Value creation in a responsible relationship between the creation and clients (e.g. corporate social responsibility)
• Requests assistance of ECP (e.g., the woman who needed help packaging her food for the media)	• Vocational stewardship by giving our vocational self to the society and God's mission (e.g. a talent donation, join a neighbourhood project)	• Graduates of job-training program getting full-time work
• Attends different types of meetings	• Mutually giving/sharing	• Local teenager going to community college
• Frequency of meetings	• Faithfulness, diligence, and integrity in business transactions	• People who have experienced reconciliation
• Church attendance/participation in ECP's sponsored activities	• Peace, harmony, and justice through the transformed (when the righteous prosper, the community and society rejoices.)	• Story shared by clients and staff

bourhood, reflected love is like 'playing kindness forward', because as people receive assistance from the church plant, they show kindness to someone else in need. One facet of reflected love is to note how ECP revenues are used to help the lives of others within and outside the community.

Reflected love for an economic activity is the expression of the reign and love of God in its business transactions; it is the faithfulness and diligence exhibited on the part of workers as their loving response. Tabulation of reflected love can occur as people return for additional services, as residents request other types of assistance for the good of the neighbourhood, and as there is evidence that neighbours are helping each other.

The last dimension, blessing, indicates accomplishments and advances realized as the result of having access to ECP. The blessing indicator can be measured in part by things such as stories shared by clients and staff, graduates of job-training programs getting full-time work, local teenagers going to community college, and the experience of reconciliation among different

people. It is through qualitative stories, the level of socio-economic and education participation, and faith in Jesus that one may track the spiritual transformation and blessing in people's lives.

These variables will depend on the type of business established and the various ministries of the church. Ascertaining the number of unemployed who had access to job training and employment coaching, number of jobs created, amount of revenue generated, how money was used, and how resources were stewarded are illustrations of possible variables. What flows through these indicators and the variables used to measure them is the importance of relationships. The variables for each dimension are not tabulated to see if a specific score or number is reached, but they provide a systematic way of assessing what is occurring in both the church and the business.

This brings us to the last topic we want to discuss—how do the measurements help Redeemer Church and Dayspring Technologies achieve their initial objectives? Danny did not have much to say on this point, but scores provide a way of seeing if various programs, whether in the church or the business, have returns and what the returns are relative to last year's. Tracking of outcomes fosters assessment of different ministries. It helps to determine how much use is being made of different services and whether ministry programs need to be improved or replaced. As a community ages, childcare needs may be replaced by needs for tutoring students or organized activities to keep young people away from gangs and drugs.

Another use of scores is to see if there is a progression from belonging to reflected love. Are the people who are involved in activities associated with 'belonging' advancing to demonstrate 'reflected love'? At this juncture, there is need to quantify these activities to see if what we are hypothesizing about the operation of ECP is an accurate description of their actual experience. If the process associated with ECP, for example, works for five years and then ceases to produce additional 'blessings', it is essential to know this. We must not be afraid to scrutinize what we are doing to advance the Kingdom of God.

The danger with creating quantifiable results is that people get obsessed with the numbers and fail to keep the statistics firmly attached to the ministries. Quantification is a tool for good management but can be misused by people who want quick answers and who fail to understand the real focus of ECP. Numbers may also be useful to identify areas of weakness in ECP endeavours that are struggling or not fully developed. It is important that assessment efforts continue in order to understand and actualize the benefits.

V Conclusion: New Age—New Methods

Missions, like many other activities, have fluctuated as theological shifts occurred. Accompanying these changes has been a swing from counting conversions to demonstrating financial stewardship. Besides the change in theological tilt, global changes have also affected missions. One steady force in the face of change has been the call of the great commission.

While this call has been a continous

theme, what constitutes the great commission has changed from conversion, sometimes achieved in culturally insensitive ways, to conern about the entire individual—spiritual, physical and social—in culturally appropriate ways. The response to the call has continued, but in different forms. At the convergence of theology, global restrictions, and Spirit-guided response, we see the emergence of church/business endeavors.

What has guided the evaluation of the church/business approach in this paper is a concern for stewardship. Whatever mission strategy is used, fruitfulness must be achieved and at a reasonable cost, ie, good stewardship in operation. A current example of a fruitful entrepreneurial church planting (ECP) model is Redeemer Community Church and Dayspring Technologies. Careful examination of this enterprise was done to identify salient characteristics of effectiveness, and three emergent dimensions were identified—belonging, reflected love, and blessings. Common to all three was a relational aspect.

The relational view of ECP to address the three commissions offers a corrective to the tension between business (economics) and ministry (church planting). These three dimensions identified from qualitative study of one ECP need to be tested more thoroughly. However, on a practical note, this case study provides substantiation that Kingdom-based business is economically viable.

For practitioners of ECP, the study of Redeemer Church and Dayspring Technologies reveals the possibility of developing measures of success—not just simple quantifialble metrics but also ways to assess holistic transformation. We cannot be content with measures that poorly capture the processes at work in ECP. Perhaps more careful study of ECPs in operation and less theorizing is needed at this time. To further the Great Commission requires time-consuming case studies.

What becomes clear is that there is not one way for an ECP to operate. The emphasis on relationships permits diverse paths to achieve the ultimate goal of kingdom-based business done as church planting. There is no single effective model for ECP ministry that fits all communities. Instead, relational cooperation opens up the opportunity for neighborhood contextualization in terms of ECP ministry.

Those who use ECP need to look beyond business outcomes or aspects of running a church to outcomes of kingdom transformation. In the process of kingdom transformation as the precursor to the new creation, there should eventually be large scale growth beyond the individual; the scope of attention must be broadened to include the community and society with its structural operations.

We need to introduce and maintain Kingdom culture within our own sphere of influence as participants of *missio Dei*. It is additionally incumbent on us to show others the operation of Kingdom culture in our communities.

ERT (2016) 40:4, 346-355

The use of Sūra 3:64 in interfaith appeals: dialogue or da'wa?

Gordon Nickel

1 'A Common Word'

During the first decade of the 21st century, one of the most highly publicized events in Christian-Muslim encounter was the release of the Muslim statement, 'A Common Word between Us and You'. The statement was posted on the internet by the Jordanian Royal Aal al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought on October 13, 2007,[1] and quickly became the centrepiece of a flourishing discussion among Christian leaders in the West.[2]

'A Common Word' appeals to Christians on the basis of a claim of what Christian and Muslim faith have in common. In seeking to establish that the common belief is love for God and the neighbour, the Muslim statement appeals to both Christian and Muslim scripture. One of the key texts brought into use from the Qur'an is Sūra 3, verse 64.[3] The verse is quoted in full in the document's opening 'Summary and Abridgement', and again at the start of its appeal section. Both passages add free exegesis from the authors. The verse appears a third time in the document's final call to Christians to 'come together with us on the common essentials of our two religions':

Say: 'People of the Book! Come now

1 'A Common Word between Us and You', The Royal Aal al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought, Jordan, 2007, viewed 27 November 2015, http://www.acommonword.com/the-acw-document/.

2 One of the best known of these is the response of the Yale Center for Faith and Culture, 'Loving God and Neighbor Together: A Christian Response to "A Common Word between Us and You"', October 12, 2007, viewed 28 November 2015, http://www.acommonword.com/loving-god-and-neighbor-together-a-christian-response-to-a-common-word-between-us-and-you/.

3 Michael Nazir-Ali called Sura 3:64 the 'centre-piece' of the statement's argument. 'Lingering questions about the Muslim letter', *The Church of England Newspaper*, October 25, 2007, viewed 27 November 2015, http://anglicanmainstream.org/lingering-questions-about-the-muslim-letter-bishop-nazir-ali/.

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to a word common between us and you, that we serve none but Allah, and that we associate not aught with Him, and do not some of us take others as Lords, apart from Allah.' And if they turn their backs, say: 'Bear witness that we are Muslims.'[4]

II Sūra 3, verse 64 in Context

Several prominent responses to 'A Common Word' seem to have shown little interest in the question of how Qur'ānic passages used in the statement have been understood by Muslims. Yet this would seem to be an essential component of becoming familiar with meanings and intentions in dialogue with Muslims. For most Muslims, the Qur'ān comes along with a tradition about how it is to be understood. This is especially important for the 'Common Word' statement, because the Aal al-Bayt Institute represents Islamic Traditionalism, not Modernism or Islamism.[5] The document itself signals this orthodox reflex when it brings in the classical exegete al-Tabarī (d. 923/310)[6] to help explain the meaning of Sura 3:64.[7]

The principle that Qur'ānic texts come together with a tradition of interpretation is further articulated in another 2007 publication of the Aal al-Bayt Institute. Often misunderstandings about the Qur'an can be easily cleared up by referring to the classical and recognized Qur'anic commentaries, such as those of al-Tabari (*Jami' al-bayan 'an ta'wil ayat al-Qur'an*), Fakhr al-Din al-Razi (*Mafatih al-Ghayb*, or *al-Tafsir al-Kabir*), Ibn Kathir (*Tafsir Ibn Kathir*), al-Qurtubi (*al-Jami' li-ahkam al-Qur'an*), al-Baydawi (*Tafsir al-Baydawi*), al-Zamakhshari (*al-Kashshaf 'an Haqa'iq al-Tanzil*), and many others who are well known to the scholarly tradition, and which are our starting point.[8]

This short essay takes the question of the meaning of Sūra 3:64 into the classical Muslim commentaries recommended by the Aal al-Bayt Institute as supplying clear understandings of the Qur'ān. Among the many interesting details in these explanations, attention will be focused on how traditional Muslim tafsīr has characterized the terms of the interfaith encounter to which commentators understand the verse to

4 Translations from the Qur'ān, unless otherwise indicated, are those of Arthur Arberry, *The Koran Interpreted* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1960). Here and throughout this study I have put 'Allah' in place of Arberry's 'God', because neither the context of Sūra 3:64 nor the Islamic interpretive tradition on the verse indicates a generic understanding of 'God'. In fact, this would seem to be one of the main points of Sūra 3:64 as well as of many other verses in the Qur'ān.

5 Jon Hoover, 'A Common Word: More positive and open, yet mainstream and orthodox', *Theological Review*, vol. 30, 2009, 50-77, here 55. Jon Hoover (53-57) explains that one of the reasons for the organized effort behind the 'Common Word' statement was a desire to wrest control of discourse about Islam away from Islamists and Islamic modernists.

6 This indicates the year of al-Tabarī's death in both A.D. and A.H. ('Anno Hegirae'—lunar years dated from the hijra in 622 A.D.).

7 'A Common Word between Us and You', immediately on pages 2-3, and more fully on page 14.

8 Aal al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought, *Jihad and the Islamic Law of War* (Amman, 2007), p. 77, nt. 5.

refer.[9] The subsequent discussion will explore the range of possible Christian responses to 'A Common Word', coming out of a thorough familiarity with the Islamic interpretive tradition on Sūra 3:64.

III Traditional Narrative of the First Recitation of Q 3:64

The 'common word' verse and its Qur'ānic context come together in Muslim thought with a very strong tradition about its so-called 'occasion of revelation'. Muslim commentators are generally agreed that the first eighty or so verses of Sūrat Āl 'Imrān were recited in response to a delegation of Christians who came to Madīna from Najrān.[10] This is the claim of the earliest Muslim biography of Muhammad, the *Sīrat al-nabī* of Ibn Ishāq (d. 767/150).[11] The best-known Muslim work of the 'occasions of revelation' of Qur'ānic verses, the *Asbāb al-nuzūl* of al-Wāhidī (d. 1076/468), supports this dating of the passage.[12] This tradition is also offered by many Muslim commentaries on the Qur'ān, including the earliest complete extant commentary, the *Tafsīr* of Muqātil ibn Sulaymān (d. 767/150).[13]

Ibn Ishāq enclosed the entire text of Āl 'Imrān 1-64 in a narrative about the encounter of Muhammad with the Najrān Christians. The Christians, writes Ibn Ishāq, attempt to make a case for the deity of Jesus to Muhammad. They confess, 'he is Allah', 'he is the son of Allah', and 'he is the third of three'. Muhammad commands the Christians to 'submit'. At this point, according to Ibn Ishāq, Allah sends down the first 80 verses of Āl 'Imrān.[14] Many Muslim commentators on the Qur'ān offered the story of the delegation of Christians from Najrān closer to their explanations of Sūra 3:64. Muqātil began his narrative of the Najrān visit at verse 59 and continued it through his interpretation of verse 64. His interpretation of these six verses could be said to be completely within the narrative. For Muqātil, the antagonists were the Christians until verse 65, where he turned abruptly to include the leading Jews of Madīna.

The traditional narrative of the visit of the Christians from Najrān is that a delegation comes to Madīna from the Yemen to make terms with Muhammad when his conquest of the Arabian Peninsula seems unavoidable.[15] The Christians explain to Muhammad their

9 Greater detail on the Islamic interpretive tradition on Sūra 3:64, as well as on the context of the verse, is provided in Gordon Nickel, '"A Common Word" in Context: Toward the roots of polemics between Christians and Muslims in Early Islam', *Collectanea Christiana Orientalia*, vol. 6, 2009, pp. 167-200.

10 Mahmoud M. Ayoub, *The Qur'an and Its Interpreters*, Vol. II, *The House of 'Imrān*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), 1.

11 Ibn Isḥāq, *Sīrat al-nabī*, ed. Muḥammad Muhīyā al-Dīn 'Abd al-Hamīd, ed. (Cairo: Maktaba Muḥammad 'Alī Sabīh wa Awlād, 1963), II:415.

12 Abū al-Hasan al-Nīsābūrī al-Wāhidī, Asbā b al-nuzūl, (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilimiyya, 2006), 50.

13 *Tafsīr Muqātil ibn Sulaymān*, ed. Abd Allāh Mahmūd Shihāta (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Ta'rīkh al-'Arabiyya, 2002), I:261.

14 Ibn Ishāq, II: 414-415.

15 Ibn Ishāq, II:412-422. English translation Alfred Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1955), 270-277.

belief in the deity of Jesus, and Muhammad denies their claims. At the end of Muḥammad's recitation of Sūra 3:1-64, according to Ibn Ishāq, Allah commands Muhammad to challenge the Christians to mutual invocation of a curse (*mulā'ana*).[16] The Christians discuss the matter among themselves and decide not to participate in the cursing ceremony. Instead they leave Muḥammad in his religion and return to Najrān to practise their own religion.[17]

IV Interpretations during the early Muslim Centuries

The great Muslim commentators of the Islamic interpretive tradition had much to say about Sūrat Āl 'Imrān in general, as well as about Sūra 3:64 in particular. As noted above, Muqātil interpreted Sūra 3:64 in the midst of his narrative about the delegation of Christians from Najrān. In the verse immediately preceding, Muqātil understood the Christians to be 'the workers of corruption' (*mufsidūn*); he completed the scriptural phrase by adding '…in the earth through rebellion' (*al-ma'āsī*).[18]

These strongly negative descriptions connected in the mind of Muqātil to the Christian refusal in the story to give up their belief in the deity of Jesus and accept *tawhīd*. When he came to Sūra 3:64, the exegete understood 'a word common' (*kalimatin sawā'in*) to mean 'a word of justice (*'adl*)'.[19] On the phrase, 'and do not some of us take others as Lords, apart from Allah', Muqātil explained, 'Because [the Christians] took 'īsā as a lord'.[20] 'If they turn' means 'if they reject (*abā*) *tawhīd*'.

Al-Tabarī, the first of the great Muslim exegetes of the classical period, signalled his approach to Sūra 3:64 already at the beginning of his comments on the third *sūra*. He wrote that the message of the verse applies to the Christians of Najrān as well as to any other people 'who share in their rejection of faith (*kufr*) in Allah by taking another being beside Him as a lord and a god and a deity (*ma'būd*)'.[21]

At the end of the third Islamic century, al-Ṭabarī knew traditions which connected Sūra 3:64 with the Jews of Madīna, as well as traditions which identified the Christians from Najrān.[22] al-Tabarī concluded that the verse concerns the 'people of two books', because both the people of the Torah and

16 Ibn Ishāq, II:422. Widely known in Muslim tradition as the mubāhala. R. Strothmann, 'Die Mubāhala in Tradition und Liturgie', *Der Islam*, (1957), 33:5-29.

17 Ibn Ishāq, II:422. The earliest Muslim sources offer a diversity of details of the discussion which occurs among the Najrān Christians in response to Muhammad's mubāhala challenge. See Gordon Nickel, '"We Will Make Peace With You": The Christians of Najrān in Muqātil's Tafsīr', *Collectanea Christiana Orientalia*, (2006) 3:171-188.

18 Plural of ma'siya. The verb 'asā carries the sense of disobedience, rebellion, opposition and resistance. (Edward William Lane, *An Arabic-English Lexicon: Derived from the best and most copious Eastern sources* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1874), book I, part 5:2069).

19 Muqātil, I:281. The noun 'adl can have a number of other senses, including equity, rectitude, equivalence, and balance. Lane, Book I, 5:1974.

20 Muqātil, I:281.

21 al-Ṭabarī, VI:151.

22 al-Tabarī, VI:483-5.

the people of the Gospel were intended by this call.[23] From the expression 'a word common (*sawā'*)', al-Tabarī understood a 'just (*'adl*)' word.[24]

al-Ṭabarī's discussion of theological issues begins at the start of his comments on the verse and continues throughout. The 'just word' that the verse is referring to is that 'we declare Allah to be one, and not worship other than him, and remain free from every deity except him, and not associate anything with him.' In his preliminary paraphrase of 'we do not take one another as lords', he wrote, 'we do not owe obedience to one another, by which we would defy (*ma'āsī*) Allah, and magnify [another] by worshipping him in the way the Lord is worshipped.'[25]

To support his point, al-Tabarī brought in a cross reference from Sūra 9:31: 'They have taken their rabbis and their monks as lords apart from Allah, and the Messiah, Mary's son—and they were commanded to serve but One God; there is no god but He; glory be to Him, above that they associate.' By quoting this verse in connection with Sūra 3:64, al-Tabarī made explicit that he had in mind not only religious leaders, but also Jesus. He transmitted a tradition that through such worship, Jews and Christians commit acts of disobedience (*ma'siya*) against Allah.[26] His concerns, and those of his authorities, are that no other being except Allah be obeyed, bowed down to, worshipped, or prayed to.[27] What the opponents are 'turning away from' is the oneness (*tawhīd*) of Allah, and loyal worship of him.

al-Zamakhsharī (d. 538 A.H./1144 A.D.) was another major Muslim exegete who understood Sūra 3:64 to be addressed to 'the people of the two books'—the delegation of Christians from Najrān and the Jews of Madīna.[28] The expression, 'common between us and you', he took to mean 'on the same level (*mustawiya*) between us and you', concerning which the Qur'ān, Torah and Gospel do not disagree. This 'word', wrote al-Zamakhsharī, is then explained by the rest of the verse. He immediately wrote that the call in these words means that 'we not say that Ezra is the son of Allah or that the Messiah is the son of Allah'.

Here the exegete is using the wording of Sūra 9:30, a verse which strongly assails Jews and Christians for making these confessions. Neither Ezra nor the Messiah may be called the son of Allah, 'because each of them is a human being (*bashar*) like us'.[29] al-Zamakhsharī's concern was wrong authority and obedience: he wrote that the verse is a call to not obey the rabbis in their 'innovations of prohibition and permission without recourse to what Allah has prescribed'.[30]

23 al-Tabarī, VI:485.

24 al-Tabarī, VI:483, 486, 487.

25 al-Tabarī, VI:483.

26 al-Tabarī, VI:488, trad. 7200. The term ma'siya also carries the sense of 'insubordination, refractoriness; insurrection, revolt, sedition'. Hans Wehr, *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic* (4th edition) (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1979), 723.

27 al-Ṭabarī, VI:488 (obey, worship, pray) & 489 (bow down).

28 Abū al-Qāsim Jār Allāh Mahmūd ibn 'Umar al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf 'an haqā'iq al-tanzīl wa 'uyūn al-aqāwīl fī wujūh al-ta'wīl* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilimiyya, 2006), I:363.

29 al-Zamakhsharī, I:364.

30 al-Zamakhsharī, I:364.

In support of his argument al-Zamakhsharī then quoted Sura 9:31, with its specification of taking rabbis, monks or the Messiah as lords. He apparently agreed with the claim of Muqātil and al-Tabarī that the Christian confession of Messiah as Lord clashes with the worship of one God.

V Letter to the Byzantine Emperor

Born at the opposite end of the Muslim Empire, the Spanish exegete al-Qurtubī (d. 1272/671) seemed interested mainly in the legal implications of Sūra 3:64.[31] He mentioned that the verse had been connected with a document (*kitāb*) which Muhammad is reported to have sent to the Byzantine emperor Heraclius.[32] Though this story is not cited in the commentaries surveyed to this point, it is offered as a *hadīth* in the *kitāb al-tafsīr* in the collection of al-Bukhārī.[33] The letter, according to al-Qurtubī, contains a charge to 'the mighty one of Rome' to submit and embrace Islam. 'Then Allah would grant you a double reward. But if you turn away, you will have to bear the sin (*ithm*) of the *Arīsiyyīn*.'[34] Following this charge, the text of Sūra 3:64 is included in the letter.[35]

In his explanation of the phrase, 'and do not some of us take others as Lords, apart from Allah', al-Qurtubī seemed concerned about the foundation of authority for law. '[This phrase] means that we not follow them in making lawful or unlawful except what Allah has made lawful.'[36] The exegete brought in Sūra 9:31 for cross reference: 'They have taken their rabbis and their monks as lords apart from God….' The Jews and Christians gave their rabbis and monks the same status as their Lord in accepting their prohibitions and sanctions when Allah had neither forbidden nor permitted these.[37] Apart from Allah, wrote al-Qurtubī, people must not take anyone as lord, 'not Jesus and not Ezra and not the angels' (which connects partly to Sūra 9:30). These have no status to determine law, 'because they are human (*bashar*) like us'.[38]

VI Meaning and Response

A survey of other traditional interpretations of Sūra 3:64 reveals a remarkable consensus among Muslim exegetes during the formative and classical periods of Islam that the verse and its Qur'ānic context were to be understood as part of a polemical challenge to non-Muslims. All of the commentaries, from the earliest in existence through to the present day,[39] understand Q 3:64 to be addressed to people who have a false concept of deity. They

31 al-Qurtubī, IV:105-107.

32 al-Qurtubī, IV:105.

33 Muhammad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn al-Mughīra al-Bukhārī, *Sahīh al-Bukhārī* (Cairo: Mustafā al-Bābī al-Halabī wa Awlād, 1926), *kitāb al-tafsīr*.

34 al-Qurtubī, IV:105-106.

35 al-Qurtubī, IV:106.

36 al-Qurtubī, IV:106.

37 al-Qurtubī, IV:106.

38 al-Qurtubī, IV:107.

39 The direction of interpretation of 3:64 in popular modern Muslim commentaries is indicated in Gordon Nickel, '"A Common Word" in Qur'ānic Context and Commentary', The Centre for Islamic Studies & Muslim-Christian Relations, *Occasional Paper* no. 9, August 2009, 13.

perceive the challenge of Sūra 3:64 to be a call to the Muslim concept of deity, summarized by the term *tawhīd*.

None of the Muslim commentators surveyed in this study—and recommended by the Aal al-Bayt Institute—understood the expression *sawā'* in Q 3:64 to refer to a theological concept held 'in common' by Muslims, Christians and Jews. Some of the exegetes saw the verse to be part of an exemplary argument for the Muslim view of Jesus. However, two of the commentators took the verse in a political direction. By bringing in the story of a letter sent by Muhammad to the Byzantine emperor Heraclius, al-Qurtubi and also Ibn Kathīr appear to have associated Sūra 3:64 with military negotiations related to the expansion of the Muslim Empire.[40]

These findings raise two questions related to the meaning of 'A Common Word' and an appropriate response to it: What does the 'Common Word' document mean when it makes prominent use of Sūra 3:64? How are Christians to respond authentically to the document knowing the Islamic interpretive tradition on this verse?

The Aal al-Bayt Institute has stated that the Islamic interpretive tradition represented by the commentaries examined in this study is the 'starting point' for a clear understanding of the Qur'ān.[41] How then are non-Muslims to understand the use of Sūra 3:64 in the 'Common Word' appeal? To assume that the Aal al-Bayt scholars were not familiar with the interpretive tradition on Sūra 3:64 seems problematic and possibly insulting. That they did indeed know the tradition is suggested by their reference to al-Ṭabarī's interpretation of Sūra 3:64 within the document.[42]

The Aal al-Bayt Institute is Traditionalist by its own self-identification, and the larger project of which 'A Common Word' is a part seeks to reassert the priority of traditionalist scholarly authority.[43] On the other hand, for non-Muslims to assume that the statement's authors are simply taking a 'Protestant' or post-modern freedom to interpret the verse in a new way seems unhelpful—this freedom is exactly what traditionalist Muslims repudiate.

Christians who are familiar with the Islamic interpretive tradition described in this essay will wonder about the prominence of Sūra 3:64 in the Muslim appeal. This could lead to a wide range of responses. To interact vigorously with the content of 'A Common Word' seems to suit the spirit of the classical commentaries on Sūra 3:64, as well as the story which Muslim exegetes have indicated as its 'occasion of revelation'. It must be noted that medieval commentators did not understand making a strong theological case to be an act of disrespect toward the partner in the dialogue. In fact, al-Rāzī seems to have seen the content of Sūra 3:64 and the strength of Muḥammad's theological argument to be proofs of re-

40 On the story of Muḥammad's letter and its meaning, see Gordon Nickel, 'Conquest and Controversy: Intertwined themes in the Islamic interpretive tradition', *Numen*, (2011)58:232-258.

41 *Jihad and the Islamic Law of War*, 77, nt. 5.

42 'A Common Word between Us and You', p. 14.

43 Hoover, 'A Common Word', 55-57.

spect for Christians.[44]

VII Possible Christian Responses

One possible response to 'A Common Word'—on the basis of its use of Sūra 3:64—would be to treat the entire document with suspicion. The Barnabas Fund drew attention to the prominence of Sūra 3:64, described traditional Muslim understandings of the verse, and characterized the letter as a classic expression of Islamic mission (*da'wa*).[45]

Another possibility would be to respond to an undercurrent in 'A Common Word'—neither hidden nor explicitly declared—of a dictation of the terms of the dialogue. Michael Nazir-Ali, for example, found the document to be calling for dialogue on the basis of the Muslim concept of the unity of God. The document implies that Christians have compromised their monotheism, said Nazir-Ali, by referring to verses which have traditionally been understood to deny Christian beliefs about Jesus. Nazir-Ali rightly pointed out that Sūra 3:64 has been associated with Sūra 9:30-31 in the Islamic interpretive tradition—verses which explicitly criticize Christians for confessing Jesus as Son of God and Lord. He called for 'mutual witness and learning' in place of the 'one-way street' he perceived in the Muslim appeal.[46]

In a similar response to Nazir-Ali's, Jon Hoover wrote that even apart from its use of Sūra 3:64, 'A Common Word' strikes an overall tone of what he calls 'the inclusive supremacy of Islam'.[47] The Muslim document in fact appeals to Christians to change the way they conceive their faith, but not in the traditional way of simply calling Christian faith false. Rather, 'A Common Word' does this 'obliquely' by classifying central aspects of Christian faith as 'formal' rather than essential.[48] But the document does not address, and certainly does not countenance, essential differences between the two faiths. Hoover suggested that participants in the 'Common Word' discussions at least acknowledge the difficulty of this 'supremacy' approach so that the conversation can move ahead meaningfully.

With the interpretive tradition of Sūra 3:64 in mind, some Christians have also sought to respond to the perceived polemical challenge in 'A Common Word' by affirming the truth of the gospel. The response of the World Evangelical Alliance, after expressing gratitude for the Muslim initiative, acknowledged the call to Christians in the document 'to become Muslims', then responded in kind. 'May we…invite you to put your faith in God, who forgives our opposition to him and sin

44 al-Rāzī, vol. VIII, pp. 85-86. One wonders whether at least some of the traditionalist authors of 'A Common Word' were not anticipating a more vigorous response from Christians.

45 Barnabas Fund, 'Response to open letter and call from Muslim religious leaders to Christian leaders', 13 October 2007, viewed 27 November 2015, http://www.quranandinjil.org/downloads_files/Response_to_open_letter_and_call_from_Muslim_religious_leaders_to_Christian_leaders_13_October_2007.pdf.

46 Nazir-Ali, 'Lingering questions about the Muslim letter'.

47 Hoover, 'A Common Word', 76.

48 Hoover, 'A Common Word', 73, referring to 'A Common Word', 13.

through what his son Jesus Christ did for us at the cross?'[49]

Along with this, a Christian response may want to question and perhaps challenge the use of scripture in other parts of the document. This naturally leads to a questioning of the document's claim to common beliefs, built as it is upon its treatment of those scriptures. It seems remarkable that several prominent responses to 'A Common Word' apparently declined to probe the statement's claim that love of God and neighbour is a central theme in Islam—especially considering that there is no command in the Qur'ān to love either God or people, and that the verses incidentally referring to human love for God are limited to a maximum of five.[50] Approaching the mild end of the spectrum of possible responses might be an affirmation of the Muslim statement's indication of love as a central theme in Christianity and a request to Muslims to seek to understand Christian meanings. Beirut New Testament professor Johnny Awad wrote that when 'A Common Word' claims that Muslims and Christians share a belief in love for God and love for neighbour, Christians must be clear about who they believe God to be, and what they mean by divine love.

Awad quoted Hebrews 1:1-4 and concluded that from a Christian perspective, '*I come to know God as He revealed Himself in Jesus Christ, not through the commandment or through a text*.'[51] At the heart of God's self-revelation in Jesus, wrote Awad, is the redemptive death and resurrection of Jesus. '*The cross and resurrection reveal the Love of God for us, and consequently the knowledge that God is Love*.'[52] Further, Awad explained that people are to love their neighbour, which in the teaching of Jesus extends to the enemy, '*because we were loved by God when we were still enemies of God*'.[53] Awad based his statement on Romans 5:6, 8 & 10:

> …When we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly….But God demonstrates his love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us…. For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!

Fully appreciative of the Muslim initiative, Awad invited the writers of 'A Common Word' to put aside Muslim preconceptions and to begin to look at Christianity the way Christians understand it.

49 'We Too Want to Live in Love, Peace, Freedom and Justice', p. 2, viewed 27 November 2015, http://www.acommonword.com/lib/downloads/We_Too_Want_to_Live_in_Love_Peace_Freedom_and_Justice.pdf.

50 A careful survey of the Qur'ānic vocabulary of love is Gordon Nickel, 'The Language of Love in Qur'ān and Gospel', in *Sacred Text: Explorations in Lexicography*, eds. Juan Pedro Monferrer-Sala and Angel Urban (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2009), pp. 229-235.

51 Johnny B. Awad, 'Who is My God and Who is My neighbor? A Response to "A Common Word Between Us and You"', *Theological Review*, (2009), 30:81. (Italics Awad's.)

52 Awad, 'Who is My God', 82. (Italics Awad's.)

53 Awad, 'Who is My God', 86. (Italics Awad's).

VIII Greater Honesty and Effectiveness in Dialogue

Christian responses which have found ambiguity in 'A Common Word' and have raised questions about meanings and intentions should not automatically be seen as contrary to the goal of authentic dialogue. As Michael Nazir-Ali suggested, 'The letter writers are theologically serious and Christians owe it to them to respond with equal seriousness.'[54] On the wider phenomenon of interfaith dialogue, both Christians and Muslims have criticized some official statements and gatherings as not actually representing orthodox believers in either Christianity or Islam, and thus not addressing the important differences between the two faiths.[55]

Lamin Sanneh has further suggested that the separation of dialogue from witness by some leaders in the West has cut off important dimensions which a missionary tradition can contribute. 'Witness would demand making an effort to understand and be understood by others, with persuasion the rule in intercultural relations.'[56] Seen in this way, some of the strongest interrogative responses to 'A Common Word' may actually facilitate interfaith mutuality more effectively.

Christians seek to abide by the exhortation: *'If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone' (Romans 12:18).* Whenever and wherever Christians fail to obey this command in relationship with Muslims, there should be apology and repentance. But beyond even peaceful coexistence is the peace of the gospel, which comes through the death and resurrection of Jesus. *'He himself is our peace' (Ephesians 2:14)*. The peace which reconciles people to God and to each other comes *'through his blood, shed on the cross' (Colossians 2:20).*

When Christians put gospel witness to the side, even for the goals of friendly relations and interfaith dialogue, they risk losing the only message which can lead to true peace with God and neighbour. A commitment to gospel peace cannot mean abandoning the truths of the gospel upon which peace is built. Therefore, coming out of a familiarity with the Islamic interpretive tradition, a reasonable and appropriate Christian response to 'A Common Word' could include a combination of components: an expression of gratitude to the Aal al-Bayt Institute for taking the initiative; a respect for the partner in the dialogue; a return query concerning meanings and intentions; a lively loyalty to Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour; and a freedom to affirm the gospel distinctives which are essential to biblical faith.

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54 Nazir-Ali, Lingering questions about the Muslim letter'.

55 One charge against dialogue, as Lamin Sanneh has described it, is 'attempting to create a speculative syncretism in order to undermine faith in the interests of interfaith harmony'. *Piety & Power: Muslims and Christians in West Africa* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996), pp. 6-12, here p. 6.

56 Sanneh, *Piety & Power: Muslims and Christians in West Africa* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996), 9.

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Three Horizons for Theology

Klaus Bockmuehl

WHY DO THEOLOGY? To which end, and for what purpose does one teach and study theology?

In a time which questions the past and all traditions that are thoughtlessly inherited, and in a time that endeavours to live rationally, one needs to have reason for doing theology. There are enough people around who challenge theology as unnecessary, or even illegitimate; as immaterial, irrelevant, unproductive, or as 'mere theory'. What is theology for? would be a question naturally asked e.g. by all who have imbibed America's spirit of pragmatism. Often, those who do theology have themselves little theoretical clarity about their purposes and horizons. (If they had this clarity, it would much more visibly influence their everyday work.)

The answer to these questions lies in a rediscovery and recapitulation of theology's intrinsic purposes and horizons. Theology does not rest in itself, it does not hold its meaning in itself. It receives its dignity from its points of reference.

Using a term from recent philosophical anthropology, we might speak of theology's 'eccentric' (ex-centric) existence, i.e. as an entity that has its centre outside itself. Christians are to 'no longer live for themselves' (2 Cor 5:15)—how would something not be determinative for Christian theology which characterizes the Christian life as a whole?

The problem arises from the tension inherent in theology's position: it has to *acquire* knowledge and then to dispense it, i.e., to serve with it, to apply that knowledge. It is a dialectic of take and give, of collecting and dispensing, of theory and practice, truth and love—another of those cases where you need to have both, two times one hundred per cent.

As fallible human beings, we never find that easy. Nevertheless, the concept of teaching contains already, structurally, the two sides of collecting and dispensing, taking in and giving out, inasmuch as teaching itself presupposes learning. Christian theology in its very nature addresses itself to people, i.e., to a horizon and purpose beyond itself.

I Theology's Horizon: The Church

The horizon of theology that comes to mind most immediately is the church. Theology is to serve the church, to help towards the edification of the 'Temple

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This is a re-print of an article first published in our issue of January 1981 (11:1), pages 5-20. At the time, the author, Professor Klaus Bockmuehl, (D Theol, Basel) was professor of Systematic Theology at Regent College, Vancouver, Canada. Bockmuehl, a former chaplain and parish minister, had also served on the faculty of St Chrischona Seminary, Basel, and was a member of the WEA Theological Commission 1976-1980.

of God' which is made up of human beings. Theology serves to expand and constantly to restore that building, the church.

One may see this perhaps under the image of St. Francis' reconstructing a small dilapidated chapel outside the city of Assisi, originally dedicated to the delivery from the plague. This was the first step which St. Francis of Assisi chose to take after his conversion in order to demonstrate his love of God.

Or one might compare it to the more elaborate masons' guild who work towards the completion of a cathedral but continue all the time with the work of restoration that never comes to an end with such a large structure, especially today when industry's emissions of acid smoke attack and corrode the building material.

The church is never established once and for all. This is obvious in view of the ever-flowing stream of generations of humanity. The people of God are under the charge 'that we should not hide the things that we have heard and known, that our fathers have told us, but tell the coming generation of the glorious deeds of the Lord and his might and the wonderful works that he has done' (Ps 74:3f.).

This then is the horizon of theology: the future life of the church; to present each generation anew with the evidence of God's grace and glory. Therefore theology must always become contemporary, although it has its fundaments and its basic content, its 'dogma' in the past. Dogma, i.e., that which is to be taught, is for us not just a collection of doctrinal propositions, but primarily the facts of the history of salvation.

Paul, in his letter to the Philippians, has given us a handy and concise formula for these aspects of service, which theology must adopt: it is committed to 'the defence and confirmation of the gospel' (Phil 1:7). That includes defence: the theologian will in part resemble a watchdog who defends the flock, or at least detects, engages, perhaps unmasks the assailant. This represents the task of apologetics. For a variety of reasons, that today is a difficult and unpleasant task. But in principle, the church is always, as it were, moving in hostile territory where the duties of reconnaissance and defence are indispensable.

Using a reference that has often been pondered in the history of Christian doctrine, we might say that theology, serving the church, in its own ways continues Christ's threefold work, his prophetic, priestly, and royal offices: the prophetic office in the task of teaching, the priestly office defined as 'presenting every man mature in Christ' (Col 1:28), and the royal office, not in the sense of dominion (Mt 20:20), *not* according to the human adage, 'Knowledge is power', but in the Old Testament sense of a king's task of shepherding and service to the people—in a word, *pastoral* work.

Teaching, nurturing, shepherding and defending the church: this is the continuation of Christ's own work. This was at first the work of the apostle, summed up by Paul in the words, 'my concern for all the churches' (2 Cor 11:28). It is then also an attitude and ethos which the theologian must follow. If we pray for the church with the words of the Psalmist: 'O God, see and have regard for this vine and the vineyard which your right hand has planted' (Ps 80:14f.), we must also

be ready to be employed by God in the respective work of cultivation in God's plantation.

Some of us indeed need a new dedication and commitment to the church as such. This applies in two ways: one, that we distinguish between the 'macro-' and the 'micro-' aspect of the church (as they speak of macro- and micro-economics). We must learn to concern ourselves both with the present and with the prospects of the whole of Christianity ('my concern for all the churches'), the macro-aspect, and with the welfare of our immediate fellow-Christian or our own congregation, the micro-aspect.

Secondly, commitment to the life of the church may mean that we put its welfare and prosperity before all other considerations. If we all now apply ourselves to social ethics: to the poor, to race relations, and to the problems of peace, who will make the well-being of the 'vineyard' their overarching purpose?

Clearly, theology is the maid-servant of the church, and those are mistaken who pursue theology as an end in itself or feel responsible only to a community of scholars. If it should come to pass that we become estranged from this first horizon of theology, the commitment to the church, we might at least begin to recover ground by permitting this horizon to form and determine our prayer, our *prayer* of intercession.

II Theology's Horizon: Humanity

Christian theology has a commitment to a second horizon, i.e. to humanity. Its purpose here is the physical and spiritual sustainment of humanity as God's creation.

This can be seen in at least three directions. One is the basic work of the sustainment of the lives of people in times of material need. In Scripture, the symbolic figure for this kind of work is Joseph in Egypt, Joseph the Provider who understands his commission as: 'God has sent me … to preserve life …, to keep alive many survivors', through a period of utter poverty and starvation (Gen 45:5–7).

Theology's task, then, is to teach a householder-ethic, to keep this horizon of preserving life in mind all the time and to inspire and train those people who are meant to take practical responsibility in this way.

Second, this programme of physical preservation has its counterpart in the realm of the moral and spiritual. Theology mediates what sometimes has been called the 'civilizing effect of the gospel'. This comes to pass primarily through the proclamation of the commandments. Their work is the civilization and ordering of the wild and untamed drives and inclinations of humanity. We can think of the moral education of humanity as cultivating of some acreage or even as opening up a whole continent. It takes the form of 'forays into the primeval forest', the creation of clearances which are then tilled and cultivated to bring produce and fruit in the sustainment of social life.

In his attempt to prove the non-existence of God, John Wisdom, the British agnostic, devised the intriguing analogy of a clearing in the jungle, with nicely laid-out garden beds, but where you were never able to see the gardener, nor ever to trap him—perhaps by night, through spread-out wires or

some means—proving in effect that there could not be a gardener at all.

The British philosopher, A. J. Ayer, chose a very pertinent and meaningful image. The world, human society and civilization especially, indeed is similar to such an opening in the midst of nature seen as a vast, unchartable forest. (The image, by the way, also intimates that the question of how order in the midst of chaos and wilderness could have come about, whether by chance or not, i.e. the teleological argument for the existence of God, can never come to rest!)

However, not only is the *development* of human life and culture a task of moral education in the beginning: civilization and culture need *continued* care and maintenance; they must constantly be defended against the pressure of the surrounding jungle of moral anarchism and chaos. Of this battle in defence of civilized human existence against the destructive forces in human nature the Spanish philosopher Jose Ortega y Gasset said, 'Rest and relax for a moment, and the jungle creeps in'. There can be no culture or civilization without a moral and spiritual structure that is constantly serviced.

Theology has this task of teaching and maintaining God's creational ordinances and commandments and so helping to fulfil God's cultural commission to sustain human life. Without this ongoing work, nations will sink into godlessness, anarchy, and self-destruction. At the same time, this means setting up the presupposition for the fulfilment of Christ's great commission.

The third contribution of theology towards the preservation of culture and human existence lies in the practical presentation of regenerate men and women who have a distinct and regenerating effect on the life of society also. Again here, theology must teach the macro- *and* the micro-aspect of the Christian commitment to the sustainment of humanity, to mankind as much as to the man who fell among the robbers.

The physical and moral sustainment of *humanity* is not a horizon of theology to which evangelicals relate easily. Sometimes their general attitude is not dissimilar to the mediaeval lifestyle of withdrawal and contemplation of another world. Even when their interest is directed to the world we are living in, evangelicals tend to concentrate on and limit their loyalty to church or chapel.

Such attitude tends to be little concerned with the question, 'Where is humanity going?' and dispenses itself from the household-ethos laid out earlier. Sometimes, therefore, one has to look to some of the mainline churches to find a place where the sustainment of creation and compassion for the large flock of sheep without a shepherd find a denominational homestead.

In a dramatic way, shortly before the outbreak of World War II, evangelicals were challenged to recover this wider horizon of the biblical householder ethic. In a memorable speech given in Sweden in 1938, Frank N. D. Buchman, the founder of the Oxford Group movement, challenged his listeners to go beyond their established interests. Some wished to see their own lives changed, he said. That was good and indeed necessary. Some hoped to learn how to change others. Very good also. Some were looking out for a revival. Even better! But then there was a fourth level of concern, namely the

question: how can a crumbling civilization be saved?

This is where evangelicals sometimes find it difficult to follow. It is conceivable that in the summer of 1938, some people would have made fun of the phrase, 'to save a crumbling civilization', because they could not perceive a threat to society of that magnitude. Worse, some evangelicals might have said to themselves as a matter of principle: 'What do I care? I hold no brief for saving civilization. It is going to crumble anyway.'

Less than a year later World War II had begun. In its course, it brought untold death and suffering to many nations, not least to God's own people of Israel. I wonder whether evangelicals looking at World War II and the Holocaust really mean to shrug their shoulders and say: 'What do you expect? That is the lot of fallen humanity'.

Since the end of World War II, we have seen western civilization, i.e. the civilization of those nations that received the gospel, crumble in yet other ways: in the breakdown of its moral structure and the consequent misery of large numbers of human beings—the destruction of family life for millions, a tidal wave of dissolution of marriages, of cruelty and crime, of annihilation of unborn children. The one thing still missing to date is the logical end of it all: civil war and general anarchy. Again, should all that suffering, borne by guilty and innocent alike, as the outcome of man's rebellion against God, leave the Christian unperturbed and merely evoke a scolding, 'I told you so'?!

Theology does have an immediate correlation to the well-being of humanity, because the latter directly corresponds to the observation of the divine ordinance for creation and the blessing coming with it. 'To save a crumbling civilization' means nothing else than to go back to the Ten Commandments and especially the First, and to teach nations respectively.

In addition, theology—through the church—owes the world the proclamation of the gospel, the implementation of the Great Commission, making disciples of all nations. It is not without relevance that Frank Buchman expressed concern for the survival of civilization after he had spoken about personal change. He envisaged no prospect of saving humanity without the concrete conversion of at least a creative minority.

This exactly fits the Old Testament principle of the ten just people for the sake of whose presence a city may be spared. Abraham for one prayed to this extent, pleading for the salvation of his city. Christians should do no less than that. They have been expressly taught to make 'requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving for everyone—especially for kings and all those in authority …' (1 Tim 2:1f). This prayer is the beginning of the exercise of Christian concern for humanity.

III Theology's Horizon: God

We have reminded ourselves that the life of the church must be the horizon of theology. We have pointed to the existence of humanity as a second horizon of theology. The third emphasis must be on God as the horizon of theology.

This can easily seem to be a truism: is not God the object of theology anyway? Indeed, but that definition does not safeguard theology against exam-

ining God just like a flower or a stone or a corpse.

If God is truly the horizon of theology, then theology in itself must be divine service, service of God. If it is true that the First Commandment is the basic presupposition of all theology in the biblical mode, then the first petition of the Lord's prayer, 'Hallowed be your name', must be theology's primary intent. Theology must become *doxology*, glorification of God. Psalm 71:14, 'I will yet add to all your praise', must be its watchword.

Christian theology will therefore always include a spiritual commitment. In the last analysis, a formula like 'Theology and Spirituality' ought to be a tautology, saying the same thing twice over: theology already includes spirituality, inasmuch as it is doxology, praise of God. It is surely essential to have courses on Christian spirituality. However, spirituality cannot be seen merely as the topic of a special lecture course as an appendix to the theological curriculum, just as academic excellence cannot be the subject of a particular class. Both academic excellence and spirituality are part of, and must permeate, the whole of theology.

What we are looking at, theology and doxology, can be further described under two aspects, one internal and the other external.

The internal aspect is best expressed by saying that theology has the *love of God* as its presupposition and its aim. Theology must always take to heart the words of blessing in the Anglican Order of Communion: 'The peace of God … keep your hearts and minds in the *knowledge and love* of God and of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.'

'Knowledge and love of God' is the proper biblical rendering of that term borrowed from the Greek, 'theology'. Whoever preaches the First Commandment, the foundational principle of theology, will also have to look towards its positive complement, the commandment, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment' (Mt 22:37f.). In doing theology, love of God then is the true corollary of knowing God. It is the proper safeguard against dealing with God as with a dead object, an attitude that we can otherwise never be sure to avoid.

What is love of God? It is not the mystical fusion between man and godhead, a process in which man thinks he can enthusiastically surpass—and master—that which the Bible teaches. On the other hand, love of God overcomes the distance of servanthood as others have described the God-relationship. It is neither merger nor distance; therefore Scripture speaks of Christians as 'children of God'. Love of God is like the trusting and obedient love children might have towards their parents.

Love also means friendship. Love of God includes identifying with God's concerns (something that theology as mere knowledge of God again does not guarantee). This is well expressed in the lines of Manfred Siebald, a Christian singer popular in Europe: 'I will rejoice when people speak well of you, and will be sad, when someone scoffs and jeers.' Or, with other words from the same source: theology, when it loves God, will 'penetrate the world and bring it back to God'.

Such love of God is the basic presupposition of Christian theology.

The Old Testament already indicates: Knowledge comes through communion. Love of God is therefore the precondition of true knowledge of God. The best model for love of God we have is in Jesus as, e.g., the Gospel of John depicts him. His is not a sentimental but a determined love, comprising utter trust, unity of mind, obedience, and a commitment to loyalty, come rain or shine.

Jesus expects the same from his disciples. The question in John 20, 'Do you love me?', seems to define the one and only condition for working in Christ's kingdom. It addresses the theologian, too. It is by far not taken seriously enough in today's theology; the same is true of the commission in the same chapter, 'Feed my sheep'.

However, love of God, where it comes about, is a gift from God (Rom 5:5); it must first of all be received. Therefore we can safely say: all theological endeavour worth its salt will have to begin with a prayer of supplication—for the Holy Spirit who creates the love of God in a person's heart. That is the beginning of theology.

Love of God is not only the prerequisite, it is also the end and target of theology; theology's task is above all to promote, inspire, encourage, uphold and strengthen love of God in people. In all its labour, theology is to work towards the goal that people love God with all their heart. 'That is the first and greatest commandment', and at the same time it fulfils the actual purpose of the divine work of salvation.

If, then, love of God is both the presupposition and the aim of theology, we are facing a sequence of 'loving God—knowing God—loving God', from love to love, which matches the same formula for faith in Romans 1:17.

Concerning this, Protestant theology has a long way to catch up. In Protestantism, we are faced with a tradition of disregard for, if not discrimination against, love for God, and the virtual reduction of our God-relationship to the attitude of faith. Probably this represents a reaction to the wrong place that love of God was given in the mediaeval doctrine of salvation.

The Catholic church taught that faith alone did not save, but only a faith characterized by love (*fides caritate formata*). That, of course, smacked of works-righteousness and was rejected outright by the Reformers. However, there is yet a whole life to be lived on the basis of justification by faith alone, and it is a life of love for God and neighbour. To separate love from faith would be nothing but another example of elevating a negative reaction into a positive proposition—which is at best but a dim reflection of the truth.

There may yet be another reason for the lack of an attitude of worship and love of God in theology, the destructive consequences of which are incalculable. The problem is that theology has long been taught merely as a ministry of knowledge, hardly ever as a service of love. That is a Greek inheritance. 'Greeks sought after wisdom' (1 Cor 1:22). St Paul and St John, however, united truth and love, and in so doing separated Christianity from the Greek mentality.

Even beyond that necessary correction of theory, what is practically needed in theology today, is more eagerness and determination for the glory of God, so that we earnestly seek God's honour in theology, church, and national life. There seem to be far too few people

who pursue such purpose single-mindedly, even if they still go about it in a somewhat dilettante way. Both among the old and the young there is too little zeal for God today.

Theology is doxology. Love of God speaks: 'I will yet add to all your praise' (Ps 71:14). This leads to the second, i.e., the *external* aspect mentioned. If theology is essentially praise of God, it must have the immediate effect of *proclamation* of God's glory. This is something that we are more easily aware of. It is theology's natural desire and horizon to 'proclaim and publish' (Jonah 3:7) the honour of God, until 'the whole earth be filled with his glory, Amen and Amen' (Ps 72:19).

When the psalmist proclaims, 'All the earth shall worship you and sing praises to you; they shall sing praises to your name' (Ps 66:4), then that is still in the future, and on the horizon. Pointing the way towards it today, however, is the task of theology.

IV The Three Horizons: Inter-Relations

In enumerating three horizons for theology, we have spoken first of the church, second of humanity, and third of God. This sequence was prompted by the degree to which people might habitually connect theology with any of these horizons. The proper order would of course be first God, second the church, and third humanity.

If we list them in this order, and so put 'love of God' in first place, we will see behind the three horizons of theology Christ's *'Double Commandment of Love'*—love of God and love of neighbour—thereby dividing the second commandment according to the biblical procedure into love of (Christian) brother and love of neighbour. In a nutshell, then, it can be said that *theology must do its work in fulfilment of the 'Double Commandment of Love'*.

The two sides of this 'Double Commandment' are closely interrelated, in the sense that whosoever loves God will necessarily become a benefactor of people. One thinks of Psalm 84:5f., Israel's pilgrimage psalm: 'Blessed are those whose strength is in you (O Lord), in whose heart are the highways to Zion. As they go through the valley of Baca (misery, a desolate place), they make it a place of springs.'

Those who find in God the source of their strength and the goal of their journey, then begin to create new prospects for life even under adverse conditions, create springs, and oases in a desert, and establish 'sanctuaries', both places of worship and places of refuge in the torrents of history, for those generations of humanity that seemed to be bereft of grace.

To turn a dry and dismal situation into 'a place of springs' is a task of spiritual as well as material dimensions. Where there is love of God, everything is set up for bringing about the benefit for people, too. On the other hand, not much substantial welfare work can be expected, where the premise of faith and friendship with God is missing.

It is, moreover, the natural thing that all three horizons be kept in mind simultaneously. Perhaps it does not even take separate acts to address them all, if we do theology in a truly biblical fashion. As an analogy, the great spiritual oratorios, those by Johann Sebastian Bach among others, the Christmas oratorio, or the St. Matthew Passion, seem to serve all three

horizons: they glorify God, they contain spiritual edification and instruction for the believer, but in addition they obviously have a generally civilizing effect.

I wonder whether the same cannot also be said about the great cathedrals and their sculptures, friezes and paintings—that is, wherever art is used to enhance the communication of the gospel. Theology's work is not dissimilar to this, and also alike in its manifold effects.

Theology can be like the building of a cathedral or the composition of an oratorio. More often, it will perhaps be like the ongoing, more humble work of restoration of the chapel that has suffered from corrosion and neglect over time or the present-day performance of an oratorio created in the past. Both, however, the original and the reproduction, have an intrinsic dignity, even if they mean toil and labour, because of the majesty and magnitude of the object implied.

God, church, and humanity are the three indispensable horizons of theology. Let me underline this with a further reference. That threesome seems to have impressed itself on a medieval monastic author (published under the name of St. Bernard) even as he planned to write otherwise. In a treatise on 'How to Live Well', this author has an extended chapter, arguing the superiority of the contemplative life of the monk and the nun in the monastery over the active life of the working man and woman in the world. These latter live '*in mola*', in the mill (taken from Mt 24:48)—really a treadmill!—whereas monk and nun are '*in sinu*', in Abraham's bosom, in the bliss with God (taken from Lk 16:22).

Of course, the author does not fail to exploit the pericope of Martha and Mary for his purpose. The monk and nun, sitting at the feet of Jesus, like Mary have chosen the one thing necessary. Suddenly, however, the author becomes aware of a third position that needs looking after: the one '*in agro*', the priest, in the field, where the task is, as it were, the continuation of the work of Christ himself, sowing the Word of God into the field of humanity ('the field is the world', Mt 13:37)—the proclamation of the Word, making disciples of all nations.

Our monastic author then acknowledges the existence of three modes of life: life in the world, in the church, and in missions, and with God, although he, of course, attaches different value to them. Also, in his time he felt that the three lifestyles were cast into three different groups of people: the workaday layman in the 'mill', the parish priest in the 'field', and the monk in the presence of God through contemplation.

The Reformation, reverting to the New Testament, attempted to show that fundamentally all three modes of life are both the privilege and duty of *every* Christian: to work under the cultural commission of the Creator, to fulfil the Great Commission of the Saviour, *and* to experience the fellowship of the Holy Spirit with God the Father and his Son, Jesus Christ. And they all three have their own intrinsic value respectively.

Thus, likewise, theology must be committed to three horizons of the Christian: to God, church, and humanity.

V Opposition: Secularism

If the commitment of theology is, as has been said, rightly represented by the Psalmist's prayer, 'I will yet add to all your praise', then theology must always find itself in opposition to and combat with another form of commitment, dedicated to the pursuit of a quite different horizon. For the resolve, 'I will yet add to all your praise', is the direct antithesis to *secularism* and human autonomy. This is the attitude of Prometheus, the ancient rebel of Greek mythology, who rejects the idea of submission to God, and wants to be the Creator of his own world, collecting all the praise for himself.

Secularism, the philosophy of human self-rule and self-development, may perhaps welcome theology's concern for humanity. It will sometimes even allow for theology's occupation with the church, as some sub-division of humanity. In the manner in which secularism does at times respect ethnic diversity, it might concede a breathing space or a niche of existence for the church on the grounds of the preservation of folklore.

There is some of this sentiment around today in the more enlightened universities and in liberal governments. However, secularism will never be reconciled to theology's first horizon, the primacy and kingship of God, because it is in itself the very negation of the same, and the solemn confession of man's autonomy and omnipotence.

Insofar as theology's first horizon, the kingship and honour of God, is the strength and inspiration of its two other horizons, the denial of that first horizon would quickly make theology useless also in its intended service to church and humanity. It would become the salt that 'is good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men' (Mt 5:13). This description fits a theology that has forgotten God. For theology, therefore, along with its first horizon, God, the two other horizons also are at stake. This means, essentially, that there cannot be a partial union of theology with secularism.

In the eternal confrontation of these two competitors our own age seems to present the picture of an overall advance of secularism. Indeed, in terms of the success of its propaganda and of its actual accumulation of power, the advance of secularism is as real, manifold, cunning, and seemingly irresistible as was Hitler's advance and expansion in Europe in the years before World War II. Those who early on studied the nature of this phenomenon felt stunned and helpless year after year, when he landed one scoop after the other, and one territory after the other fell into the orbit of the dictator.

Secularism, the system that rejects or ignores the sovereignty of God, has been similarly successful in our time. God has allowed its advance. One is reminded of Psalm 74:15, 'You broke open fountains and brooks; you dried up mighty rivers'. Such can be said also of periods in the spiritual history of humanity, and of Christianity in the West: rivers of spiritual life, once mighty, have dried up under the scorching breach of secularism.

The history of Israel presents us with striking analogies to the spiritual crises of our time. Does not the psalmist's wailing over Israel as God's vineyard also apply to some contemporary churches: 'Why have you broken down its wall so that all who pass along the way pluck its fruit … and ravage it?'

(Ps 80:12; cf. 79:1). This image seems to fit some Protestant churches which were planted and 'took deep root and filled the land' (Ps 80:9) after the Reformation, but are now stripped and torn up by every bypasser—i.e., by all the philosophical and ideological fashions that come and go, by existentialism, sociologism, psychologism, group dynamics, anarchism, diverse political programmes, etc.

It is ever so absurd that the church, vehicle and representative of the divine doctrine of salvation, should welcome and submit itself to all these secular programmes of salvation—for such they all are. Man cannot avoid producing his own myths of salvation once he has rejected the biblical gospel. The irony and tragic paradox in today's church is that we apparently prefer to listen to worldly prophets and obtain our revelations from paganism.

In addition, the cry, 'O God, heathen have come into your inheritance' (Ps 79:1) seems to be the proper description of the advancement of secularism *within theology* itself. Originally, the plan was to be the reverse: 'He [God] apportioned the nations for a possession and settled the tribes of Israel in their houses' (Ps 78:55). That was to be the analogy to the relationship e.g. between theology and philosophy: existing thought concepts were to be made serviceable to theology and thus to the people of God.

As an aside: this indeed is a task of continuing relevance for theology. 'Freedom of theology from philosophy'—that popular slogan can only mean theology's supremacy, not the annihilation or ignoring of philosophy. Theology will utilize elements of the form, but not the contents, the creeds and confessions of philosophy.

Theology, like all our thinking, is embedded in language and terminology. Nevertheless, who rules over whom, who determines policy and direction, and who are the free citizens, who are the 'hewers of wood and drawers of water', ought to be established clearly between theology and philosophy. Therefore there is no such thing as an 'absolute' theology which would not make use of existing thought-forms, categories, and concepts.

Who serves whom? At present, theology serves far too often as lackey and train-bearer of secularist philosophies, paying homage, burning incense to the idols of public opinion that are intellectually in fashion at any moment. Whenever theology becomes a fellow-traveller in the parade of the *saeculum*, an alienation from its own true God must quietly have taken place before, a period of attempted self-sufficiency, self-rule, self-confidence, self-service.

At one point, there must have been a deliberate stop to listening to God's Word, followed by an effort to construe the highest good from below, with existing materials and thus in a syncretistic manner. From there it is only a short road to the new subservience to idolatry.

Whom does theology serve? That is the key problem. Its solution will have far reaching consequences either way. The decomposition of theology and church, i.e., of the temple as the place where God's praise should have its dwelling, will mean that other fields of human valuation, literature, economics, must also decay because the centre is no longer intact.

VI Conclusion: What Is To Be Done?

'Why do the nations conspire and the peoples plot in vain … against the Lord and his anointed?' (Ps 2:1). It somehow seems to be 'normal' that God is surrounded by human enmity. How should it be easier for theology? In the midst of secularism, theology must stand up for the hallowing of God's name. Its task is to announce God ever anew to an ungodly and godless generation. And perhaps it will fall to our lot, where circumstances demand it, to even announce God afresh to theology.

In a situation characterized by the advance of secularism, love of God and the First Commandment need to be given new emphasis. Some try to evade this confrontation. They endeavour to keep the salt pure by separating it from the earth. Christ, however, called his disciples to be 'salt of the world'. That clearly is a paradox, a forceful conjunction of two antithetical elements. Christ's disciples are to be 'in the world, but not of the world'. The same goes for theology. The best service that it can give to the world is the unabated proclamation of God's law and gospel.

This is something that neither the withdrawers nor the Christian advocates of accommodation or submission to the spirit of the age seem to understand. If the people of God are to 'live in their houses' (Ps 78:55), i.e., if the truth of the gospel is to find a home in the houses of the heathen, then the solution of the Rechabites (Jer 35) imitated by some evangelicals today, i.e., to culturally and intellectually live in tents next door to society, cannot be the way. We find ourselves with the task of steering straight through between withdrawal and surrender to secularism. This course must determine the solution of all individual problems, from epistemology to ethics.

Here we get into the question of appropriate strategy. If we compare the advance of secularism in the church with a tidal wave or flash flood then the task is to recover lost territory. We will need to build dykes, to 'draw a line'. That looks like defensive action. However, the Dutch have shown us that building dykes (e.g. the great closing dykes in the north and west of Holland) can very well be a means of offensive.

We sometimes may need, in our individual lives as well as in the lives of churches or nations, a fundamental decision comparable to building a dyke, behind which we can then begin to wrestle patches and sections of 'polder' land from the sea, winning fertile acreage, positively cultivating new life under the protection of a basic refusal.

How does all this apply today? What does 'I will yet add to all your praise' mean in our generation? It would mean the emergence, in the remaining two decades of this century, of new spiritual power centres, of movements of concentration towards the love of God and praise of God, in the sense of the three first petitions of the Lord's Prayer. There have been such 'nodal points' before in history, periods of intensification of awareness of, and commitment to, God. We should strive for such a development in our own generation.

A word of warning: to bring humanity back to God and to turn theology God-ward again, or at least to incorporate a public alternative to secularism—this is not necessarily identical with evangelicalism. Admittedly there are valuable points and possessions in

this camp. However, there can also be among evangelicals, both quite unregenerate stubbornness and incompetence regarding some of the relevant issues. Conversion to God is never the same as conversion to a peculiar ecclesiastical party or denomination.

We are after all a re-Christianization of theology. Again, this is not a matter of the spirit of a certain locale which was traditionally associated with renewal. Also, it is not a matter of a particular kind of language. Indeed, how difficult is it even to utter ten coherent sentences towards this concern with some degree of force and authority! It is always difficult to spell out a vision. What it takes, is a continuous, qualitative, spiritual change in our theological work. And that can begin anywhere.

One needs to be thankful for all that has already been given to us. In addition, one would dearly invite everybody who shares the vision, wherever he or she may come from, to help to point out the way to a renewal of theology.

There is one final concern which, if we didn't notice it for ourselves, the psalms quoted would quickly call to our attention. It refers to the basic problem, even the paradox of theology:—i.e., entrusting to human hands a divine task. We are faced with human incapacity for the task of theology, speaking of God.

One becomes conscious of this problem only when one understands what theology truly is. As long as we think of theology in terms of religious anthropology, or of the history, psychology, sociology, phenomenology, of religion, we are on relatively safe ground—because we are dealing with nothing but ourselves. As soon, however, as we have to understand and speak the things of *God*, we are incompetent, as incompetent as any other human being. It takes a cleansing of our lips (Is 6); it takes an act of forgiveness on God's part (Ps 78:38ff.) to establish and restore theology to its proper position and so to its three horizons of commitment.

It also takes an act of God to bring about another nodal point in history when his truth prevails again over human's lies and rebellion, and when he himself, now seemingly distant, as well as the distant church, distant humanity, and our distant neighbour come into focus again.

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Rethinking Secularism

Craig Calhoun, Mark Juergensmeyer, Jonathan VanAntwerpen (eds.)

Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011
978-0-19-979668-7
Pb, pp 310, Index.

Reviewed by Jim Harries, Kenya

Religion is back on the agenda, our authors tell us. The secularist thesis that was constructed to show that people did not need religion is now being dismantled (270). Even the advocacy and valuation of rationality depends on 'higher order values' (19). Religion having become a social fact may be problematic for Europeans who are foundationally averse to it in the name of secularism. Theological language has become offensive, especially to Europeans. Disciplines, like that of international relations, having been developed prior to the re-realisation of the necessary prominence of religion in human living, have ended up with unrealistic representations of contemporary life.

In important ways, it is only notions of secularism that have resulted in the development of the concept of religion in the West. Western understandings of 'religion' are that it is something which is in juxtaposition to secularism. When non-western 'religion' is explored, it is invariably found to be less narrow. Despite the narrowness and lack of spread

of their belief that the transcendental is optional, secularists consider themselves to be the most advanced people in the world. Secularists laugh at others' beliefs. Because attempts at imposing secularism prompt fundamentalist movements to protect their culture/religion, secularism has become a source of conflict. Especially because religion and culture are inseparable; remove religion from human society and everything else stays the same, is evidentially incorrect.

Globally the term 'secular' can mean many different things. Whereas western secularism considers itself to have done away with the need for religion, the Chinese endeavour to destroy 'religions' in the name of secularism. Indians, on the other hand, use the secular to modernise other 'religions'. In India, secularism is to be rehabilitated. It deals with what is objectionable in religion. It should tolerate religions, while maintaining a principled distance from them. So also religions need to tolerate the secular. Similarly, in the case of Indonesia where not becoming an Islamic state is enabled by an adherence to an adaptation of western secularism.

One of the great troubling and disputed (by some) 'secrets' of secularism is the fact that it actually developed in Christian history and theology. Secularism arose from western efforts at developing a Christian order, we are told. It 'emerged first as a theological category of Western Christendom that has no equivalent in other religious traditions or even in Eastern Christianity'(56). Western secularism has clear roots in belief in a transcendent being. Hence it is a kind of 'alternative religion'.

Concealing its roots in transcendent belief has been perhaps its master stroke, but also a great deception. This issue is particularly sensitive when Muslims and other people who do not have a Christian history are encouraged to draw on the benefits of a secular ideology—one which is rooted in a transcendence that is apparently at odds with their own traditions. Presupposing that it stands in contrast to a religion that is of the nature of Western Christianity makes the application of secularism to non-western contexts complicated and confusing. How can there be 'values without theology'? Science has become a god.

Missionaries who have gone to the majority world and who have been honest about the origins of their values, have at times been seen as enemies of secular progress. Asia is not as secular as the west thinks, we are told: Asians are 'all things to all people' (256), i.e. religious with a secular veneer. It is imperialism that has forced a misleading appearance of secularism onto non-western people.

All in all this book promotes a very enlightening view of a global force (secularism) that seems to have pitched itself against Christian belief. In a sense, secularism is a (heretical) branch of Christianity, we discover. There are many versions of secularism. It is not western secularism that has spread around the world. It is adaptations of western secularism that fill in some ways parallel roles in different parts of the world. Although our authors do not categorically state this; it is challenging to consider in the light of their analysis how secularism's *usefulness* points to the truth of the Christian gospel from which it emerged.

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Forsaken: The Trinity and the Cross, and Why it Matters
Thomas H. McCall

Downers Grove (IL): InterVarsity Press, 2012
ISBN 978-0-8308-3958-2
Pb, pp171.

Reviewed by Thomas Schirrmacher, Executive Chair of the WEA Theological Commission

This book poses the following questions with respect to the cry of 'My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?', which Jesus made upon the cross: Did God the Father kill his Son? What happened to the Trinity on the Cross? Was the Trinity broken or ruptured at that moment?

Thomas H. McCall, Associate Professor of Biblical and Systematic Theology at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, seeks to justify the traditional view that reigned until the beginning of the 20th century. That view said that the Trinity was never interrupted and that the separation from God had to do only with the human nature of Christ. Furthermore, he seeks to defend this view over against the predominant understanding held at the present time.

Above all, he investigates Jürgen Moltmann's view which has strongly influenced the theology of all denominations. According to Moltmann's view, everything can be understood only in light of his idea of contradiction, such that God is revealed only as God when God's forsakenness reveals what happened on the cross (15-18). God becomes the enemy of God, and God's fatherhood and Jesus' state of being a son temporarily die. The Trinitarian relationship has to be broken for God to truly be God. This is simultaneously the heart of so-called 'Social Trinitarianism'.

McCall investigates this view from passages within both OT and NT, as well as from the perspective of Church History. He comes to the conclusion that Jesus was never separated from the Father in terms of his divinity. However, with respect to his humanity, he experienced alienation from God coming from sin; we cannot interpret his cry literally, as Moltmann does, but rather understand it as part of what was quoted from Psalm 22.

In the second chapter, McCall turns to the doctrine of 'impassability'. This is traditionally rendered as the 'Leidensunfähigkeit Gottes' in German (literal translation: God's inability to suffer), which is quite inappropriate. The teaching of the ancient church is morally objectionable for Moltmann and his successors. In his defence of the classical view (67-73), McCall emphasizes with the words of Richard A. Muller that the exclusion of suffering never meant an exclusion of feelings in themselves ('the exclusion of "passions" from the divine being never implied the absence of affections', 68) What is not involved is the stoic 'apatheia'. To be sure, it is a question of God's care, love, goodness, and compassion. Perfect loves demands, however, that God not be subject to emotional swings such as we experience as people, and according to which he would love us more at certain times and less at other times. Rather, God's emotions remain the same and are reliable. Additionally, McCall differentiates, along the lines of St. Thomas Aquinas, that Jesus suffered with respect to his human nature and not with respect to his divine nature.

What should one think of the book? McCall's defence of the classical view is welcomed, since it is arguably still held

by the silent majority and yet seldom soundly justified. This classical view has been lost more ecclesio-politically than exegetically and doctrinally. What McCall says about Jesus' cry from the cross is very conclusive and well documented. McCall also repeatedly goes into the complementarity of God's love and anger and sees the two jointly. Love, however, is superordinate.

One could have wished for a better exegetical foundation for his view of 'impassability,' such as for instance that provided by Norman Geisler in his *Systematic Theology* (2:112-136) with the utmost simplicity. Indeed, McCall quotes the important defences of the classical position, for instance Paul L. Gavrilyuk's *The Suffering of the Impassible God*, in a presentation of the view held by the Church Fathers, Richard E. Creel's *Divine Impassibility* from a philosophical viewpoint, and Thomas G. Weinandy's *Does God suffer?* from the theological viewpoint. The enormous spectrum of opinions can be seen there, whereby there is naturally still plenty of room available for contributions to be made.

Where McCall is very successful is in clearly setting forth the idea that the question he addresses from Mark 15:34 counts as one of the central and basic decisions to be made with respect to doctrine. Moreover, it is much too often deemed to have already been completely sorted out.

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Openness Unhindered: Further Thoughts of an Unlikely Convert, on Sexual Identity and Union with Christ

Rosaria Champagne Butterfield

Pittsburgh: Crown & Covenant Publications, 2015
ISBN 978-1-884527-99-9
Pb, pp 206, endnotes, recommended reading list.

Reviewed by Don McLellan, Malyon College, Brisbane, Australia.

This is one of those books one wishes everyone would read. Many of us in the evangelical camp find ourselves perplexed over the LGBT issue, which is so pervasive that we don't need to spell out what those letters stand for. Until recently the evangelical stance was clear cut. We stood with the Catholic Church in the belief that homosexuality is anathema. But, with the adjustment of medical science to the view that it is not a pathology, along with the massive social pressures exerted by the LGBT lobby, there are prominent and influential conservative Christians who have wavered. It is not surprising therefore that many people in our churches are also wavering.

Worldly wisdom has it that no one can control their sexual orientation, and Butterfield thankfully avoids any trite response to this. Rather, she expresses a very clear understanding of what it means to be a fallen human being, and what God's solution to that problem is. With great erudition and quite profound theology, Butterfield gives an inspiring account of how she has dealt with her same sex orientation over the past fifteen years. She is now married, and with

her pastor husband has four adopted children.

Butterfield was a tenured professor of English at the prestigious Syracuse University in New York. She was also an atheist LGBT activist, involved in demonstrations and putting pressure on society, while living in a series of lesbian relationships. She tells the story of her conversion in an earlier short book, *The Secret Thoughts of an Unlikely Convert*, and provides a brief summary of its contents in the present work. Her journey into Christian faith began when a Christian neighbour and his wife befriended her, not with an evangelistic agenda, but simply because they saw a woman who needed friends.

In *Openness*, Butterfield traces her difficult journey of coming to terms with God's judgment, not specifically on her homosexuality but on the blanket sin of pride, by which she elevated herself over the God who is revealed in the Bible. She traces how she came eventually to understand redemption; how she embraced justification by faith; and then how she began to endure the hard and long process of sanctification which, as she rightly and openly affirms, is not yet complete.

Openness does not supply an 'Aha!' answer to the gay lobby—to say so would be disrespectful of Butterfield's viewpoint and her purpose in writing this book. Its appeal is not merely that it tells of a woman who escaped her lesbian past, but that her struggles with sin are so ordinary, so like the struggles of the rest of us. While her personal weakness inclines her to homosexuality, all of us have weaknesses on which temptations play. Butterfield is able to describe, in terms that sinners of all sorts can relate to, how the redeeming power of the blood of Christ, and the gentle and firm ministry of the 'Spirit of Holiness', have taught her to live in purity and grace, in the 'no condemnation' of which Paul speaks in Romans 8:1, all in a perfectly normal and healthy heterosexual marriage. She has come to understand Reformed theology with remarkable insights, and her clear descriptions of what Christians need to do, no matter what their weaknesses, expounds biblical teaching with great force.

Butterfield sees homosexual orientation, not as a sin more nasty than others, but as one evidence among many that we live in a fallen world. She asserts tellingly, '…homosexual lust is a sin, but so is heterosexual lust and *homophobia.* It is sinful to write people off because they sin in ways that offend you' (32). She knows and accepts that psychotherapy has nothing to offer to any who seek deliverance from its practices. Rather, escaping from every form of sinful practice is a journey of body, soul, and spirit under the sanctifying ministry of the Spirit. This is her journey, and it resonates deeply with me, an elderly heterosexual male, whose temptations may have been different but whose God is still leading on in the never ending journey of sanctification.

One can also see the sovereign hand of God in Butterfield's background, because she experienced in the LGBT community something that she later saw to be a pale reflection, if not a parody, of the true nature and purpose of the church. On my first reading I felt that her closing foray into ecclesiology seemed like an unnecessary addendum to this book, but it really is an essential part of the story. Butterfield makes it plain that her supportive church community has been indispensable to her progress and growth as a Christian, and she unconsciously challenges all of us to make sure our church environment is

accepting but redemptive, empathic but sanctifying, so that men and women who struggle with all manner of temptation can find true *koinonia*.

This book is easy to read, as one would expect of the work of a former English professor, but its strength is profoundly theological in its explication of repentance, justification, sanctification, and ecclesiology. I would give it to any struggling Christian, no matter what their sexual orientation, to show how our God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, can change a life.

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Culture of Shame/Culture of Guilt: Applying the Word of God in Different Situations

Thomas Schirrmacher

Bonn, Germany: Culture and Science Publication. World of Theology Series 6, 2013
ISBN 978-3-86269-044-2
Pb., pp 77, bibliog., index.

Reviewed by Tony Waters, California State University.

The dichotomy between the 'culture of shame,' and the 'culture of guilt' is an old distinction, dating back to anthropologist Margaret Mead's studies in the South Pacific, and particularly to Ruth Benedict's (1946) classic *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* written about Japan. There, the distinction between individualism (associated with 'western' guilt), and collectivism (associated with eastern 'shame/honour') are highlighted. Benedict wrote that Japan is a 'shame' oriented country in which individual identity is subsumed to the collective goals and honour of the group, and postulated that European cultures, especially her own United States, is a 'guilt' oriented culture in which individual internal regulation of behaviour is more important.

The classic distinction between guilt and shame in contemporary anthropology has been subsumed in recent decades as the 'culture enterprise' focuses more on issues like social inequality, subaltern studies, gender, and other issues which put the power relations described by Karl Marx, Edward Said, and Eric Wolf, at its centre. Perhaps it takes someone from outside of cultural anthropology—and the theologian Schirrmacher certainly qualifies as an outsider—to help right the boat and return cultural anthropology to the classic cultural question of guilt and shame.

Schirrmacher revives classic questions about what guilt and shame are by asking essentially two questions from an explicitly Christian theological perspective. First he asks, to what degree is Christian Scripture shame or guilt oriented? Second he asks what this means for Christian missionaries from the west (where presumably there is primarily a culture of guilt), who preach the gospel in places in Asia, Africa, and elsewhere, oriented toward shame and honour?

As a theologian, Schirrmacher starts with Christian Scripture. There, he finds that the Bible reflects both a shame and guilt orientation, as well as both individualism and collectivism. This Schirrmacher finds most generally in the commandment to love, which reflects a 'complementary alliance between orientations of shame and guilt… The commandment to love equally targets disgrace as it does unrighteousness,' because it is both an internal feeling, and also one that is expressed only in community with others. And of course it is at this point that Schirrmacher slips

beyond the dualistic East-West dichotomy of Benedict *et al*., and points out that *neither* individual nor society is the standard for human life created by God.

So in Scripture, the individual is important, but so are the communities composed of covenants with God. In other words, 'individual and community' and 'guilt and shame' are not an either or choice for God, only for Benedict, classical anthropology, and perhaps too often western missionaries preaching in Asia and Africa. Thus, while the two concepts may be useful analytically, a false dilemma is also created. Schirrmacher emphasizes that according to Christian scripture, human dignity is neither shame nor guilt oriented—you need to be a strong individual like the apostle Paul and therefore have some orientation toward the internal regulation of guilt. But at the same time human dignity demands that the covenants that are the collective life binding humans to each other and God are sustained.

From Schirrmacher's biblical perspective, Scripture does reflect a shame culture, or guilt culture, even if different cultures may tend toward one or the other. Still, though, the problem for evangelists of European-style Christianity is how to bridge this divide. Cultural orientation, be it shame or guilt, is so deeply embedded in cultural *habitus* that few are aware of their own biases. And indeed, there are at least 500 years of modern European missions to Asia, Africa, and elsewhere that are witness to the limitations of applying a guilt-oriented cultural *habitus* indiscriminately. Emphasizing feelings of personal guilt in cultures where family, honour, and shame are more central is likely to be difficult at best—and as Schirrmacher emphasizes, not necessarily very biblical either.

In anthropology itself, the shame/guilt dichotomy has of course been passé for some decades—there is far more interest in issues of power, consumption, race, and gender than abstractions of the cultural *habitus*. What Schirrmacher does with this book though, is to remind anthropologists of the utility of the distinction. Schirrmacher's writing very clearly develops thoughts and ideas that are important for understanding different *cultural* orientation whether in the context of Christian evangelism, or cultural anthropology. For that matter, I think his nuance can be adapted in ways that help us to understand the more general spread of globalized culture, be its origins in European religious traditions, Eastern religious traditions, or for that matter modern Korean pop culture. The tension between guilt and shame is still an important distinction—it is just a matter of how it will be expressed.

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The Analogy of Faith: The Quest for God's Speakability

Archie J. Spencer

(Strategic Initiatives in Evangelical Theology)

Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, Intervarsity Press, 2015
Pb, pp 444, bibl. Indices
ISBN 978-0-8308-4068-7

Reviewed by Raymond J. Laird, Centre for Early Christian Studies, Australian Catholic University, Brisbane, Australia

The author, Assistant Professor Archie Spencer, commences his final chapter, 'Conclusions' of this book with these words: 'This study was undertaken with a view to establishing the possibility of theology along the lines of a deepened

understanding of the Christological content of the analogy of faith.' (385). In the view of this reviewer, he has been quite successful. He certainly set himself a massive task, beginning with the Ancient Greeks and working meticulously through a line of significant theologians spanning two millennia. Starting with a glimpse of the Pre-Socratics, he begins in earnest with the philosophers of Greece—Aristotle and Plato.

He then discusses the channels of their ideas to later generations, particularly the Neoplatonists whose adopted metaphysics influenced Christian theologians, especially Augustine, and then, following Augustine's lead, Thomas Aquinas and later medieval theologians. Spencer points out that the result of this adaptation was the emergence of a host of analogies and ontologies, all based on the cause-effect-resemblance (CER) model. Spencer searches out the weaknesses and danger in these metaphysical models, making the point that a metaphysical basis is counter-productive as it works on a model that reduces God to equality with humanity.

Leaving this long and important discussion which has implications for Catholic theology, Spencer moves into the modern era with a favourable analysis of Karl Barth's theology, along with an even more favourable discussion on Eberhard Jüngel, an interpreter of Barth. Here the focus is moved from metaphysics to revelation, to the central testimony of the Christian scriptures, namely the revelation of God in Jesus Christ. The book ends with Spencer's own presentation of an analogy of faith, an attempt to improve upon Barth and Jüngel, a very worthwhile effort that appears to be successful. Spencer is aware that he has not produced the last word on the issue, but he has provided a solid base upon which others may build.

The amount of close reading that Spencer has had to absorb and critique to produce this work is testimony of a fine and focused mind. For confirmation, one may turn to the bibliography which contains more than 400 items. The indices include a long list of names mentioned in the book, and a subject index with 15 packed columns of great value, and a Scripture index with chapter and verse details for references from eight Old Testament books, three Apocrypha sources, and eleven New Testament books, altogether a total of 276 biblical references. Obviously the author is thorough in every way, and that, it must be said, includes his analyses.

This book should be studied by every theologian, seminary student, and indeed all in the higher levels of Christian leadership in teaching ministries. For some it may be hard work, but the issue this book addresses is of utmost importance for the people and churches of the Christian faith and their strength and relevance in facing the forces that challenge their authenticity, and for the health of their inner life. I cannot commend this book too highly. It belongs in the category of one of those books that Alexander Whyte, the great Scottish preacher, and from 1909 Principal and Professor of New Testament Literature at New College, Edinburgh, had in mind when he encouraged his students to 'sell their beds and buy their books'. The reader will not have to pay the price of a bed for this volume, but it might steal some hours of sleep—still an investment well worth the price.

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Der Koran und die Genealogie des Islam

Reinhard Schulze

Basel: Schwabe Verlag, 2015
(Schwabe Interdisziplinär 6)
ISBN 978-3-7965-3365-5
Hardcover, pp 677, bibliog., index, illus.

Reviewed by Heiko Wenzel, Freie Theologische Hochschule Giessen, Germany

Der Koran und die Genealogie des Islam is an interesting book for those who seek to reflect on and discuss the early years of Islam and their connection to its subsequent history. It is a compendium for stimulating discussions and frequently surprising answers. Anybody who seeks easy answers might get frustrated when reading this book. Time to reflect on these early years as well as on modern and postmodern western assumptions in approaching these questions is necessary for appreciating the broadness and density of the questions raised and the discussions presented.

Whoever dares to engage this book and gets involved in the pertinent problems on which Reinhard Schulze elaborates will think differently about Islam and its early years (and their significance) afterwards. This will be true not only about Islam and its early years, but perhaps more significantly the attitude required in approaching these questions will have changed. Whether these changes are appreciated or not is of secondary importance. Schulze challenges widespread assumptions, attitudes and perspectives, even though (or because?) several of his answers require additional discussions and even though (and definitely because) some of his questions must be discussed.

Schulze's study addresses many important questions like the reflection on modern assumption in studying (and in particular in defining) religion (9-41), the relationship between religion and the question of origin (43-107) or his focus on describing the development of religion with processes of distinguishing (109-181). These methodological reflections find their application in distinguishing cultic orders and the order of truth (183-244), in the Qur'anic way of talking about the divine (245-322), in the relationship between 'the Lord of the world(s)' and the Meccan cult (323-415), in anthropological reflections (417-482) and in discussing the relationship between the cult and the world (483-564).

One important aspect of Schulze's book is that it challenges the widespread perspective that Islam can be reduced to the Qur'an and to Muhammad and that later developments must be measured against this definition of Islam. These theories of origin build on modern assumptions of describing and structuring the world and probably most importantly on the perspective that this modern way is the 'norm' for describing human existence in our days and in days past.

Schulze seeks to replace these theories of origin with his focus on development: 'In light of the assumption that "Islam" is a normative term in modern days, I do not ask "What *is* Islam" but "How did Islam originate?", how did it *become*.' (17; here and elsewhere my translations). This approach avoids 'definitions' and focuses on 'genealogies'. In drawing on Nietzsches' 'Genealogy of Morals' and Foucault's explanation of genealogy as 'disclosing discourses as a specific entanglement of forming knowledge and power structures in the semantic field "religion"' (110-111), Schulze does not want to turn the tree upside down. Rather, he denies origin as a

foundation for describing religion and its significance. His concern for development leads to a focus on describing the processes of distinguishing key terms: symbolic/emotional, sacred/profane, transcendent/immanent, religious/secular and axiological/nomological.

These key terms can offer a first glance at Schulze's approach, but his detailed and at times complex way of arguing his case deserves a case-by-case discussion of noteworthy aspects which cannot be done in this short review. A short glance at the discussion on the relationship between the cult and the world (483-564) may suffice and offers an idea of the ramifications and limitations of his approach.

Nowadays, many describe Islam as a political religion or as a mixture of religion and state. Schulze's discussion challenges many assumptions that come along with these statements—for example, that the oath of allegiance (*bai'a*) binds the early Muslims to Muhammad's rule. Rather, Schulze argues that the oath expresses allegiance within and for the cultic community (522). Moreover, for Muhammad's time the reign belongs to Allah not to Muhammad (526). In addition, Schulze emphasizes that the society in Medina was a 'complex network of autonomous, genealogically defined alliances (…) which is organized in a new way along the lines of the cultic community' (545). In light of these aspects and other observations, Schulze concludes that Islam cannot be described as a political religion from its very beginning (560). Rather, (the idea of) political Islam is 'the result of a long historical process in modern times' (563).

Regardless of how convincing each single argument may be, Schulze's discussions shed noteworthy and valuable light on the widespread statements of 'Islam as a political religion'. It is not necessary to share Schulze's assumptions (which for the most part are clearly established and make his argument comprehensible) or his conclusion to appreciate his discussions. His way of challenging widespread opinions and of stimulating ongoing reflections make this book a valuable contribution to the contemporary study of Islam.

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The Jihad of Jesus: The Sacred Nonviolent Struggle for Justice

Dave Andrews

Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2015
ISBN 978-1-4982-1774-3
Pb., pp xviii + 173, bibliog., illus.

Reviewed by Boris Paschke, Evangelische Theologische Faculteit, Leuven, Belgium.

In the preface to the present book, its author Dave Andrews (Brisbane/Australia) who is, among other things, a teacher at *Christian Heritage College* (CHC) and a member of the *Australian Muslim Advocates for the Rights of All Humanity* (AMARAH) explains: 'I simply write this as a Christian, in conversation with Muslim friends, seeking to find a way we can struggle for love and justice that is true to the best in our traditions' (xv). Without doubt, this pacific concern of Andrews is commendable. This being stressed, the remainder of this review will focus on the book which consists of a short 'Introduction' (1), two parts (3-78; 79-163) with three chapters each, and a bibliography (165-173).

In the 'Introduction', Andrews adopts Diane Morgan's definition of jihād (cf. *Essential Islam* [Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2010], 87) as a basis for his book: The Arabic word jihād means 'struggle'. Jihād can take the form of

a non-violent inner spiritual struggle ('greater jihād') and an outer physical struggle ('lesser jihād') that can be violent or non-violent. As the sub-title of his book specifies, Andrews understands the jihād he attributes to Jesus in terms of a non-violent jihād.

In 'Part One', Andrews provides an overview of the violence that has been committed in the name of Christianity (e.g., crusades; inquisition) and Islam (e.g., military conquests; continuous wars between Sunnites and Shiites; modern terrorism of al-Qaeda and ISIS). In 'Part Two', Andrews then presents what he calls the jihād of Jesus (or Īsā, as he is called in the Qur'ān) as a promising way to stop the violence. Andrews considers Jesus the 'common ground' (105) on which Christians and Muslims can engage in fruitful conversation with each other: 'I have written the following observations based on those views of *Isa* or Jesus that both the Qur'an and the *Injil* or the Gospels … have in common' (105). According to Andrews, 'Jesus was not a re-active violent revolutionary but a pro-active nonviolent revolutionary—an extraordinary prophetic, compassionate activist who embodied the original jihad of nonviolent struggle for inspirational personal growth and transformational social change' (115-116). Andrews concludes by stressing that 'it is so important for Christians and Muslims to practice the radical, alternative, participatory, empowering, nonviolent *jihad* of Jesus' (163).

Unfortunately, it now needs to be demonstrated that Andrews' book contains seven serious weaknesses. First, in general, it is too dependent on secondary literature while neglecting primary sources. Second, the overview of the violence committed in the name of Christianity and Islam is, as Andrews himself concedes, superficial: 'I will not attempt to present a detailed account' (5). For example, Amin Maalouf's seminal monograph *Les croisades vues par les Arabes* (Paris: Jean-Claude Lattès, 1983) is absent from Andrews' account.

Third, in emphasizing the non-violent and minimizing the violent character of jihād (101), Andrews differs from several eminent Islamic Studies scholars like, for instance, Émile Tyan who states: 'In law, according to general doctrine and in historical tradition, the *djihād* consists of military action with the object of the expansion of Islam and, if need be, of its defense' (s.v. 'Djihād', *The Encylopaedia of Islam*, vol. 2 [Leiden: Brill, 1965], 538).

Fourth, Andrews explains his book's catchy, provocative, and misleading title by stating: 'I contend you cannot rightly pursue *jihad* without Jesus, or rightly pursue Jesus without *jihad*' (xv). However, from historical, biblical, and qur'ānic perspectives, an association of Jesus with jihād is not as self-evident as Andrews would have it. From both a historical and a Christian perspective, an association of Jesus with jihād is anachronistic and impossible because this Arabic/Muslim concept did not yet exist in the first century C.E. when Jesus lived and when the Greek Gospels of the New Testament were written. Further, an investigation of the forty-one occurrences of the Arabic root *j-h-d* in the Qur'ān does not yield any association of jihād with Īsā (cf. *Comparative Concordance to the Bible and the Qur'an in Arabic* [CCBQ-5; International Seminar for Oriental Studies (ISOS), 1997], 3477-3482).

Fifth, according to Andrews, the biblical teaching on Jesus is in agreement with sūras 4:171 and 5:116-117 that deny Jesus's (claim to) divinity. Andrews declares: 'I am one of the "People of the

Scripture," and I would say *the Scriptures are pretty clear. Isa never asked anyone to worship him. Jesus or Isa's preferred self-reference was not the "Son of God," but the "Son of Man"'* (107; italics in the original). However, the Gospels contain several passages where Jesus (a) claims to be God (Mk 2:1-12; Jn 5:18; 8:58; 10:30-33); (b) requires to be honoured/worshipped to the same extent as God the Father (Jn 5:23); and (c) is (and accepts to be) worshipped as God (Jn 20:28; cf. Lk 24:52).

Sixth, Andrews correctly stresses that at large, the ministry of Jesus had a non-violent character. However, in spite of his claim to focus on Jesus as 'common ground' of Christians and Muslims, Andrews does not provide any 'proof text' from the Qur'ān, but refers only to the New Testament in this regard. Further, Andrews does not succeed in satisfactorily explaining those New Testament texts that present Jesus as acting violently. For example, Andrews' statement, 'He [Jesus] drove the rip-off merchants out of the temple, using a whip on the animals, but *not* on the people (John 2:15)' (115) is not backed up by the respective Johannine verse on which J.H. Bernard even comments: 'It would seem that the whip was used on the owners of the cattle as well as on the sheep and oxen' (*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to St. John*, vol. I [Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1928], 90).

Seventh, the book contains various factual inaccuracies. For example, by quoting Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, Andrews repeatedly expresses the idea that "the very word '*Islam*' (from the Arabic *silm*) means 'peace'" (92, 99, 101). Actually, however, the word islām rather means "submission." Further, islām did not originate in Medina (27), but in Mecca.

In sum, while being motivated by an irenic concern of crucial importance and global relevance, Andrews' book lacks academic depth and rigour.

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The History of Theological Education, Justo L. Gonzâlez, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2015, ISBN: 978-1-4267-8191-9, Pb., pp. xi + 155, index.

Reviewed by Amos Yong, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California, USA.

Justo Gonzâlez has been writing historical theology (and more) for decades and this master narrator here applies his well-honed skills to unfolding the story of theological education—2000 years in under 140 pages. The history is also divided into sixteen chapters, which will lead mathematicians to conclude that these are bite-sized chunks of less then ten pages per chapter on the average. And even beyond the fact that Gonzâlez's prose is eminently accessible despite packing in a ton into each paragraph, there are brief summaries at the end of each chapter that, when combined and read together, could well serve as a modest dictionary article on the topic.

The book, originating at two separate lecture series, was motivated originally by the conviction that theological education is at the heart of the church's work, but that its professionalized format forged over the last few centuries is in crisis and thus needs to be reconsidered in historical perspective and in conversation with ecclesial and other developments in order to chart a more sustainable future. The last two chapters thus suggest some constructive ways forward. Evangelicals in global context will be well informed by this work for the ongoing task at hand.

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