Apologetics

APOLOGETICS

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Contents

Editorial

W. Madison Grace II

In Peter's first epistle, he states, "but in your hearts regard Christ the Lord as holy, ready at any time to give a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you" (1 Pet 3:15, CSB). From the earliest time of the history of Christianity, there has been an active work in offering an apologia, a defense, for the faith. We not only find this with Peter and other New Testament authors, but we also find this defending the faith a practice of the church. From the second-century Apologists to the Medieval thinkers like Thomas Aquinas and even to the twentieth century's C.S. Lewis, Christians have been offering reasoned responses for the beliefs that they hold to be true. Sometimes this is within the community of believers and sometimes this is presented externally to those outside of the church. Either way, there is a great tradition of apologetics in church history. Today we can find apologetics being practiced from local church youth Bible studies to church pulpits and to academic lectures. On a variety of levels of thought, Christians are engaging in providing reasoned thoughts for their faith—or doing apologetics.

At Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and Scarborough College, we are greatly interested in the work of apologetics. Not only do we offer a variety of graduate degrees in philosophy and apologetics, but we also have built a strong philosophy department that is interested in the field of Christian apologetics. This present volume of the Southwestern Journal of Theology is in response to the growing interest in these programs and the exceptional work of our faculty. Highlighted within this issue are some of our philosophy faculty as well as work from other scholars who are in this field of study.

In the articles that follow, one will find works that address a variety of ideas and questions. We begin with Paul Gould addressing the question of the origin of the universe and argues that "God is the best explanation." We proceed to Ross Inman's engagement with the argument for atheism utilizing the concept of divine hiddenness. Following this article is a work on the history of apologetics by Timothy McGrew of Western Michigan University illustrating that the work of apologetics has continued through Christian history. Keith Loftin's article next addresses the argument that human persons are only physical beings and argues against the belief called "physicalism." Finally, Travis Dickinson addresses the role and use of evidence in regard to Christian belief.

These articles are diverse in subject matter but are unified in addressing a variety of important questions pertaining to the field of apologetics as well as the nature of Christian belief. As always, following our articles are a variety of book reviews pertaining to a variety of fields, from biblical studies to philosophy and apologetics.

God, *Atheism, and the Origins Debate*

Paul M. Gould
President of the Two Tasks Institute

Twenty-first century Western culture is post-secular. Religion did not go away, as sociologists at the end of the twentieth century predicted.[1] For the Christian, this sociological fact might be welcomed as good news. But the devil is in the details, as they say. While people within the West are largely post-secular, the elites within the West—i.e., those who possess symbolic, cultural, and political power to shape culture and define reality—are overwhelmingly secular.[2] As a result, the world is perceived by many people, including many religious people, as disenchanted. The world is no longer seen in its proper light; it is no longer seen as sacred or full of deep mystery and beauty and goodness. Given this now dominant way of perceiving the world, not only is unbelief possible, belief in God is more difficult too.[3]

One area where traditional Christian belief has become more difficult in this day and age is in the area of human sexuality. Beginning with the advent of the Sexual Revolution in the 1960s, homosexuality, transgenderism, pornography, same-sex marriage, and sexual promiscuity have gone from aberrant to normative at breakneck speed. As the culture goes, unfortunately, so goes many within the church too.[4]

It is easy to think that we must simply assert traditional Christian views more often or louder, and Christians will fall into line. While clear and consistent Christian teaching on human sexuality is necessary, by itself, this will not fix the problem. The problem runs deeper. Traditional views on human sexuality no longer seem *plausible* or *desirable* to many Christians.[5] And this, I submit, is because the deeper issue is *metaphysical*. What is needed, as Rod Dreher has recently argued, is a "cosmological response" to

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[1] Douglas Jacobsen and Rhonda Hustedt Jacobsen, "Postsecular American: A New Context for Higher Education," *The American University in a Postsecular Age*, ed. Douglas Jacobsen and Rhonda Hustedt Jacobsen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 10.

[2] See James Davison Hunter, *To Change the World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), where it is argued that elites and the institutions they inhabit are the ones who get to shape culture and define reality.

[3] This is one of the points made by Charles Taylor in his mammoth *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007).

[4] See e.g., David Kinnaman and Gabe Lyons, *Unchristian* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 46–48.

[5] For an excellent book that addresses the plausibility problem with respect to the question of homosexuality, see Ed Shaw, *Same-Sex Attraction and the Church* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2015).

the Sexual Revolution.[6] Sexual autonomy is "not only morally wrong, but a metaphysical falsehood."[7]

What is the metaphysical falsehood that undergirds the Sexual Revolution? The falsehood has to do with the nature and origin of the cosmos itself. For the purveyor of disenchantment, there is no sacred order to things. Fundamental reality is just elementary particles and forces. Everything else is derivative at best or illusion at worst. Consider the words of theoretical physicist and atheist Sean Carroll:

> Categories such as "male" and "female" are human inventions— stories we tell because it helps us make sense of our world. The basic stuff of reality is quantum wave function, or a collection of particles and forces—whatever the fundamental stuff turns out to be. Everything else is overlay.[8]

In other words, according to Carroll, there are no *essences* in the world—no ways things are, no natures—just particles in motion. Thus, there is no essence to gender, marriage, sexuality, or human flourishing. Everything besides fundamental physics is just "socially constructed . . . ways we talk about the world."[9] Many in the West, including many within the church, view the world basically the same way as Carroll. The metaphysical falsehood then, embraced by Carroll and unwittingly or not by many others, is the rejection of *essentialism*.

Carroll rightly notes that "Religious doctrine is the wellspring of essentialism."[10] No God, then no essences. As the Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor puts it, "The entire ethical stance of moderns supposes and follows on from the death of God (and of course, of the meaningful cosmos)."[11] If we want to help others see the plausibility and desirability of traditional Christian teaching on human sexuality, we must do more than simply report the rightness or wrongness of various ethical acts. Rather, we must also embed our ethics in ontology, which means we must face the question of cosmology. We must go back to the beginning—the wellspring—and determine whether or not there is in fact a sacred order of things. As Francis Schaeffer famously writes, "Everything goes back to the beginning. . . . Everything begins with the kind of God who is 'there.' This is the beginning and apex of the whole, and everything flows from this in a non-contradictory way."[12] What we have then in this age of disenchantment, is a battle over beginnings. At the most basic level, bedrock reality is either divine (as theists

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[6] Rod Dreher, *The Benedict Option* (New York: Sentinel, 2017), 216.

[7] Dreher, *The Benedict Option*, 201.

[8] Sean Carroll, *The Big Picture* (New York: Dutton, 2017), 142.

[9] Carroll, *The Big Picture*.

[10] Carroll, *The Big Picture*, 141.

[11] Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 588, quoted in Dreher, *The Benedict Option*, 203.

[12] Francis A. Schaeffer, *Escape From Reason* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1968), 25.

argue) and the world came into being through another, or it is fundamental particles and forces (as atheists argue) and the world has always existed in one physical state or another.

If Christians are ever to make progress—within the church, within culture—in advancing biblical views on meaning, purpose, human flourishing, and value (human sexuality was just the foil to illustrate the deeper problem facing Christians in an age of disenchantment), we (i) must see reality once again in its proper light—as sacred, as gift from a creator—and (ii) invite others to see reality as sacred also.

In what follows, as an aid toward this goal of seeing and showing the sacred order of things, I shall argue that God is the best explanation for the origin of the universe, life, species, and humans. With respect to each origin question, I shall summarize the current "state of play" with respect to the evidence and show how theism explains the evidence better than atheism. The upshot is this: We will have four independent lines of evidence in support of a theistic origin of all things. Thus, "if God exists" and "if God exists, then essences exist," then it follows logically (and inescapably) that essences exist too.[13] In other words, if God exists, we have good reasons to think there is an essence to marriage, gender, human sexuality, human flourishing, and more. We also will be equipped to offer a "cosmological response" to the ills of our age. We begin with the origin of the universe.

The Origin of the Universe

In the *Timaeus* Plato asks whether the universe began or always existed. His answer is that the universe had a temporal origin. His reason for thinking the universe came into being a finite time ago is metaphysical rather than physical: "[the universe] is visible, tangible and corporeal, and all such things are perceptible by the senses, and . . . perceptible things . . . come into being and are generated."[14] For Plato, reality can be carved into two basic domains: the eternal and unchanging realm of immaterial Forms and the temporal and changing realm of physical things. The eternal is apprehended by reason whereas the temporal is apprehended by sense perception. Since the universe

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[13] I assume without argument the truth of "if God exists, then essences exist." I realize that this assumption is controversial, even among theists. It could be that God and a sacred order exist without essences, as the theistic nominalist might argue. It could be that God exists yet there is neither a sacred order of things nor essences in the world. While both options are possible, I think the burden of proof lies on those theists who endorse these options for at least two reasons. First, for most of the Christian tradition (especially prior to Darwin), belief in a sacred order and essences was the norm. Second, a *prima facie* reading of Scripture seems to presuppose essences (e.g., Genesis 1 and its "kind" language, the incarnation and Christ's taking on a human nature, etc.). For an excellent and highly sophisticated attempt to ground modal truths, including essentialist facts, in God's nature and intentions without appeal to this-worldly essences, see Brian Leftow, *God and Necessity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

[14] Plato, *Timaeus*, 28b, in *Timaeus and Critias*, trans. Desmond Lee and T.K. Johansen (New York: Penguin), 18–19.

is perceptible and full of corporeal (and changing) bodies, it belongs to the realm of becoming. The universe began to exist. But, argues Plato, "everything that becomes must do so owing to some cause; for nothing can come to be without a cause."[15] Hence, it follows that the universe has a cause. We have in Plato's *Timaeus* an early articulation of an influential form of the cosmological argument for God's existence, an argument that had profound influence on early and medieval Christian, Jewish, and Muslim thought.[16]

The argument from the temporal origin of the universe to God, called the Kalam cosmological argument (KCA), can be formulated as follows:

1. Whatever begins to exist has a cause.
2. The universe began to exist.

Therefore,

3. The universe has a cause.

While the KCA played a prominent role in the debate over God's existence in the Middle Ages, it fell out of favor, along with all versions of the cosmological argument (e.g., the Leibnizian and Thomistic versions) in the modern era following Kant's famous critique of natural theology.[17] Twentieth-century advances in cosmology have led to the resurgence of the KCA in recent years, most notably in the works of the philosopher William Lane Craig.[18]

Like Plato, we can give philosophical reasons supporting premise 2. The philosophical arguments do not hinge on the distinction between the eternal and unchanging and temporal and changing, however, but involve the notion of infinity. If the universe were eternal, the global causal structure of reality would involve an actually infinite temporal regress of physical events. But, it is argued, actual infinities of physical events are impossible. Moreover, even if they were possible, such infinite temporal regresses could never be "traversed" such that we could arrive at the present moment. Since we have arrived at the present moment, it follows that the universe is not past eternal.[19] While these philosophical arguments are important, for many

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[15] Plato, *Timaeus*, 28a.

[16] For a discussion of the argument in its historical context, see William Lane Craig, *The Cosmological Argument from Plato to Leibniz* (London: Macmillian, 1980).

[17] See Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Werner S. Pluhar (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1996), 578–608.

[18] For Craig's most recent articulation and defense of the Kalam cosmological argument, see William Lane Craig and James D. Sinclair, "The Kalam Cosmological Argument," in *The Blackwell Companion to Natural Theology*, ed. William Lane Craig and J.P. Moreland (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2012), 101–201.

[19] For more on the "argument from the impossibility of an actual infinite" and the "argument from the impossibility of the formation of an actual infinite by successive addition," see Craig and Sinclair, "The Kalam Cosmological Argument," 103–25.

(especially those less philosophically inclined), the most impressive evidence in support of a temporal universe comes from science.

Well into the twentieth century, scientific consensus held that the universe was static and eternal. This picture began to crumble with Einstein's 1917 Theory of General Relativity, which seemed to imply an expanding universe. If, however, the universe is expanding, then the universe has a history. Moreover, by extrapolating back in time, we arrive at a temporal boundary to the universe. In other words, if the universe is expanding, it has a temporal beginning. To avoid the unwanted implication, Einstein regrettably introduced a "fudge factor" into his gravitational field equations.[20] Others such as the mathematician Alexander Friedmann and the astronomer Georges Lemaître, building on Einstein's General Relativity, independently formulated the field equations to reveal an expanding universe.[21]

Empirical evidence for an expanding universe was first discovered in 1929 by Edwin Hubble. Looking through the telescope at Mount Wilson observatory, Hubble noted that light from distant stars, which travels to us in electromagnetic waves, had shifted to the red end of the visible wave spectrum. Redshift occurs when a light source is moving away from a stationary observer. Thus, the discovery of redshift provided empirical confirmation of an expanding universe, a predication that was made on theoretical grounds years earlier by Friedmann and Lemaître.

As a result of Hubble's discovery and additional empirical discoveries such as the presence of microwave background radiation throughout the universe and the abundance of light elements at early stages in the history of the universe, the Big Bang Model became, by the mid-1960s, the new orthodoxy.[22] According to the Big Bang Model, all matter, energy, time, and space came into being 13.72 billion years ago out of an initial cosmic singularity.[23] This singularity represents the boundary of the physical universe, a state of infinite density equivalent to nothing! For the theist, the Big Bang is the creation event: God created *ex nihilo* the visible universe just as Genesis 1:1 and Hebrews 11:3 proclaim.

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[20] Craig and Sinclair, "The Kalam Cosmological Argument," 125.

[21] Craig and Sinclair, "The Kalam Cosmological Argument,"125.

[22] For a nice summary of how microwave background radiation and the abundance of light elements support a Big Bang universe, see Gerald Rau, *Mapping the Origin Debate: Six Models of the Beginning of Everything* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2012), 59–72. While aspects of the standard Big Bang Model have subsequently been adjusted (e.g., it is now thought that the early universe briefly experienced inflation and is also currently accelerating, whereas the standard model predicts a constant expansion of the universe throughout its history), the model still upholds a finite universe with a temporal beginning.

[23] Young Earth Creationists will argue that the universe appears 13.72 billion years old, but in fact is 6,000–10,000 years old. The debate over the age of the earth is an "in-house" debate among Christians, a debate I shall side-step in this paper. The salient point is this: Whatever the age of the universe, it is finite. For more on how Young Earth Creationists interpret the evidence of an old universe as apparent, see Rau, *Mapping the Origin Debate*, 73–80.

The atheist, on the other hand, must get rid of the singularity in order to avoid the unwanted theistic implication of a universe coming to be out of nothing. A popular move is to argue that our universe is part of an eternal multiverse. If so, then the singularity that represents the origin of *this* universe is not the first state of physical reality itself. The problem for beginningless models of the universe is that they either are physically implausible (e.g., appealing to cyclical or imaginary time or notions such as infinite contraction) or fail to remove the singularity.[24] For example, on one currently popular multiverse model, the *eternal inflationary model*, physical reality is pervaded by an inflation field that is forever expanding. Our universe came into being as one domain within the inflation field underwent rapid expansion. This rapid expansion caused the temperature of the domain space to decrease, spawning a "droplet universe."[25] Since inflation is eternal, droplet universes are continually being produced, perhaps as many as 100^{500} universes if coupled with string theory.[26] The problem with this model is that research has demonstrated that any inflationary multiverse model capable of explaining this universe must also have a beginning.[27] After surveying prominent non-standard models in cosmology on offer, William Lane Craig summarizes, "The history of twentieth century cosmogony has, in one sense, been a series of failed attempts to craft acceptable non-standard models of the expanding universe in such a way as to avert the absolute beginning predicted by the Standard Model."[28] There are good reasons, coming from philosophy and science, to think the universe began a finite time ago and that the cosmic singularity "cannot be a physical porthole to some previous universe."[29]

Premise 1 of the KCA seems impeccable, confirmed everyday by experience and scientific practice. Still, even here, atheists press. For example, in his book *A Universe from Nothing*, the physicist Lawrence Krauss audaciously argues that the universe spontaneously came into being out of nothing.[30] If correct, we have a counter-example that renders premise 1 false. Is Krauss correct in thinking the universe came into being uncaused out of nothing? As it turns out, Krauss's "nothing" is not nothing. Rather, it is the *quantum vacuum*—a physical state that has properties and obeys physical laws. The quantum state is not nothing, it is something! Thus, even if the uni-

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[24] For the details, see Craig and Sinclair, "The Kalam Cosmological Argument," 131–82.

[25] Timothy O'Connor, *Theism and Ultimate Explanation: The Necessary Shape of Contingency* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 106.

[26] Jeffrey Koperski, *The Physics of Theism: God, Physics, and the Philosophy of Science* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2015), 88.

[27] Jeff Zweerink, "Multiverse," in *Dictionary of Christianity and Science*, ed. Paul Copan, Tremper Longman III, Christopher L. Reese, and Michael G. Strauss (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017), 456.

[28] William Lane Craig, *Reasonable Faith*, 3rd ed. (Wheaton: Crossway, 2008), 139.

[29] Koperski, *The Physics of Theism*, 86.

[30] Lawrence M. Krauss, *A Universe from Nothing: Why There is Something Rather Than Nothing* (New York, NY: Atria, 2012).

verse could come into being via a quantum fluctuation of a quantum vacuum state—a questionable thesis in its own right—it does not follow that the universe came into being uncaused out of nothing.[31] Quantum fluctuations of quantum vacuum states are not genuine counter-examples to the truth of premise 1.

It seems that premises 1 and 2 are more plausible than their denials. In other words, we have good reasons to think premises 1 and 2 true. Since the argument is deductively valid such that the conclusion is logically inescapable given its premises, we have a sound argument for a first cause of the universe. While questions remain about the nature of the first cause, importantly, naturalism is ruled out. This first cause must be non-physical since "prior" to the Big Bang there was no physical reality. Moreover, this first cause must be uncaused since otherwise it too would need a cause for its existence. Finally, given the exquisitely fine-tuned universe for life (more below), we have reason to think this immaterial, uncaused being is a personal agent.[32] While we do not yet have the fully determinate God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Jesus, we do have a transcendent being consistent with the God of the Bible. Further details about the identity of this first cause will be filled in as we consider the evidence for the origin of life, species, and humanity.

The Origin of Life

Life is at once awe-inspiring and mysterious. Yet, the purveyors of disenchantment would have us believe there is nothing special to see here. According to Carroll, life is just "a set of things happening . . . a way of talking about a particular sequence of events taking place among atoms and molecules arranged in the right way."[33] Life itself is in constant flux. If anything ought to move us to awe and wonder, it is the staggering *diversity* of life that has arisen naturalistically by Darwinian natural selection![34] Life itself just happens. We will come to the question of the amazing diversity of life shortly. In this section, we shall consider the question of life's origin.

There is broad scientific consensus that the question of how life began remains unsolved. This does not mean God has anything to do with it, however. Carroll is representative of the hopeful optimism of many scientists in the academy:

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[31] For a nice overview of the conceptual and empirical problems with a physical universe beginning out of some preexisting quantum vacuum state, see Erica W. Carlson, "Quantum Vacuum State," in *Dictionary of Christianity and Science*, 555.

[32] Philosopher Timothy O'Connor thinks the evidence from fine-tuning is most helpful in sorting out the identity of the first cause. See his *Theism and Ultimate Explanation*, 109–10.

[33] Carroll, *The Big Picture*, 219.

[34] Doug Axe, *Undeniable: How Biology Confirms Our Intuition* (New York: HarperOne, 2016), 75.

There is no reason to think that we won't be able to figure out how life started. No serious scientist working on the origin of life, even those who are personally religious, points to some particular process and says, "Here is the step where we need to invoke the presence of a nonphysical life-force, or some element of supernatural intervention." There is a strong conviction that understanding abiogenesis is a matter of solving puzzles within the known laws of nature, not calling for help from outside of them.[35]

This hopeful optimism is unwarranted. Life is too complex, the time frame too short, and the early earth too hostile for it to have arisen by chance or physical necessity or a combination of the two.

First, consider the time frame available for life to have originated on earth through gradual naturalistic processes. The scientific consensus is that the earth formed about 4.5 billion years ago.[36] For the first quarter to half-billion years, the earth's crust was too hot to support life. Minerals have been dated to around 4.2 billion years old, thus it is reasonable to think the earth was sufficiently cooled roughly around that time to support the formation of life.[37] Until recently, the oldest widely accepted evidence of life—a strand of fossilized Stromatolites from the Pilbara region of western Australia—dates to 3.48 billion years ago.[38] This means that the amount of time for life to develop on earth is roughly 720 million years. Geologically speaking, this is a very short amount of time for life—given life's complexity (see below)—to arise via unguided and blind naturalistic processes. Interestingly, in a newly exposed outcrop of rocks in Greenland, scientists have discovered an even older set of Stromatolites dating 3.7 billion years ago.[39] While the viability of this evidence is still being assessed, if these new discoveries are in fact the earliest traces of life, the time frame for life's appearance on earth shrinks by 220 million years. Either way, in geological time, life, including all the macromolecules necessary for life—DNA, RNA, proteins, metabolic systems, etc.—developed virtually overnight.[40]

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[35] Carroll, *The Big Picture*, 270.

[36] Of course, if the universe is young (roughly 10,000 years old), these numbers are wildly inflated.

[37] Rau, *Mapping the Origins Debate*, 83.

[38] M.R. Walter, R. Buick, and J.S.R. Dunlop, "Stromatolites 3,400–3,500 Myr old from the North Pole area, Western Australia," *Nature* 284 (03 April 1980): 443–45.

[39] Allen P. Nutman, Vickie C. Bennett, Clark R.L. Friend, Martin J. Van Kranendonk, and Allan R. Chivas, "Rapid emergence of life shown by discovery of 3,700-million-year-old microbial structures," *Nature* 537 (22 September 2016): 535–38.

[40] David Klinghoffer, "Greenland Fossils, Earth's Oldest, Pose an Evolutionary Dilemma," *Evolution News & Science Today*, September 1, 2016, https://evolutionnews.org/2016/09/greenland_fossi/. The situation might be much worse for the naturalist. The earth was heavily bombarded by asteroids from 4.1 billion to 3.8 billion years ago. If life could not evolve until the Heavy Bombardment period was finished, then the window for life to appear by unguided processes is even smaller—100 million years.

Second, we might ask, where on earth did life begin? Ever since Darwin postulated his "warm pond" as the place where carbon and hydrogen and free energy mixed together at just the right time and in just the right way to form proteins and other microscopic parts of the cell, scientists have postulated various terrestrial locations as suitable environments for this prebiotic soup. The current proposals on offer include deep sea vents, the edge of the ocean, the atmosphere, and the surface of clays.[41] Some scientists, including Francis Crick, the co-discoverer of DNA, and Stephen Hawking, the brilliant Cambridge theoretical physicist, think that life originated in space and was transported to the earth either by asteroids or by other intelligent beings.[42] This latter option, called panspermia, simply pushes the question back: if life didn't originate on earth, how did it originate in space (or on some other suitable planet)? More to the point: there is no evidence of biological life beyond earth, simple, complex, or intelligent (nor could DNA—or other macromolecules—survive the cold temperatures on its journey, however long, through space). Even if a suitable place on the earth could be identified for the appearance of life, many problems remain, including the problem of how cells—the basic unit of life—could ever evolve by unguided naturalistic processes. It is to this last problem, the issue of the complexity of life, to which we now turn.

Once thought to be relatively simple, we now know the cell is a "functionally coherent whole"[43] with many sub-systems that themselves are functionally coherent assemblies that work together to perform all the processes of life including reproduction, growth, compartmentalization, and metabolism. As Gerald Rau explains, "the cell is a highly complex integrated system, with molecular machinery as sophisticated as any human factory."[44] Cells are composed of proteins and other microscopic parts. Proteins, in turn, are built out of complex chains of amino acids. If the sequence of amino acids (there are twenty *kinds* of amino acids) along a protein chain has the right properties, the whole chain folds to form a three-dimensional object. The shape of this newly folded object is crucial to its function. The shape of proteins is specified by the sequence of amino acids, and the sequence of amino acids is determined by the genetic code. Genes are regions of chromosomes found within a cell that are themselves long molecules of double-stranded DNA, molecules made up of four *kinds* of nucleotide bases that are well suited for the storage and transmission of information.

The magnitude of information contained in a living organism is mind-boggling. The number of base pairs of DNA required to produce

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[41] Rau, *Mapping the Origins Debate*, 84.

[42] For a transcript of a lecture by Stephen Hawking on the origin of life from outer space, see "Life in the Universe," http://www.hawking.org.uk/life-in-the-universe.html.

[43] Doug Axe describes functional coherence as "the hierarchical arrangement of parts needed for anything to produce a high-level function—each part contributing in a coordinated way to the whole." Axe, *Undeniable*, 144.

[44] Rau, *Mapping the Origins Debate*, 88.

the necessary proteins for life in the most basic single-celled organism is estimated to be between 318,000 and 562,000.[45] More complex life requires millions and millions of base pairs to code all the necessary proteins for life (e.g., the human genome contains over 3 billion base pairs of DNA). The question that origin of life researchers need to answer is this: How did the first cell acquire the genes—the information content within DNA—necessary for life in the first place? Our intuition, as biologist Doug Axe points out, is that the cell (including its sub-components) must be designed; such complexity and ingenuity could never be produced by chance nor physical necessity.[46] Still, intuitions can differ. It would be better if there was an argument to show that something as complex as a cell could not appear through unguided naturalistic processes.

In the last few decades, intelligent design theorists have proposed empirical criteria as markers of design. The mathematician and philosopher of science William Dembski argues that objects or processes containing "specified complexity" cannot be the product of chance or necessity.[47] Likewise, Lehigh University biochemist Michael Behe has argued that there are biological organisms found in nature that are "irreducibly complex" such that they could never appear by step-wise evolutionary processes.[48] Even more recently, Doug Axe, through his research on proteins, has argued that it is physically impossible for life to have evolved via accidental and unguided processes.

Axe's research has demonstrated the extreme rarity of functional proteins: for every good protein sequence, there are 10^{74} possible bad ones![49] Given the fact, as argued by biologist Michael Denton, that there are no more than 10^{40} possible proteins that could have ever existed on earth since its formation, "it becomes increasingly unlikely that any functional proteins could ever have been discovered by chance on earth."[50] Of course, generating a functional protein out of a prebiotic soup requires other steps and component parts that make the odds even more fantastic. Stephen C. Meyer puts it this way:

> This calculation can be made by multiplying the three independent probabilities by one another: the probability of incorporating only peptide bonds (1 in 10^{45}), the probability of incorporating only left-handed amino acids (1 in 10^{45}), and the probability of

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[45] Stephen C. Meyer, *Darwin's Doubt: The Explosive Origin of Animal Life and the Case for Intelligent Design* (New York: HarperOne, 2013), 163.

[46] Axe, *Undeniable*, 30.

[47] See e.g., William Dembski, *Intelligent Design: The Bridge between Science and Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1999).

[48] Michael Behe, *Darwin's Black Box: The Biochemical Challenge to Evolution* (New York: The Free Press, 2006).

[49] Axe, *Undeniable*, 57.

[50] Michael Denton, *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis* (London: Burnett Books, 1985), 323; quoted in Axe, *Undeniable*, 31.

achieving correct amino-acid sequencing (using Axe's 1 in 10^{74} estimate). Making that calculation (multiplying the separate probabilities by adding their exponents: $10^{45+45+74}$) gives a dramatic answer. The odds of getting even one functional protein of modest length (150 amino acids) by chance from prebiotic soup is no better than 1 chance in 10^{164}.[51]

How are we to make sense of 1 chance in 10^{164}? According to Axe, such a number is fantastically big, a number that exceeds 100 digits in length and is therefore so big that it is "beyond physical representation."[52] In other words, fantastically big numbers represent physical impossibilities.[53] Therefore, it is physically impossible for one functional protein to arise by chance (or necessity or a combination of the two) from a prebiotic soup, let alone the kind of information and complexity necessary for a single-celled life. The conclusion is inescapable: life could not have happened by accident. Life is the result of design.

The Origin of Species

Since Darwin's 1859 release of *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection*, evolution has become the dominant explanation for the diversity of life on earth. Again, Sean Carroll is representative of those in the academy, effectively marginalizing all who would challenge the grand Darwinian story with the claim that "Essentially every working professional biologist accepts the basic explanation provided by Darwin for the existence of complex structures in biological organisms."[54] The basic idea is that there is an unbroken chain of living organisms from simple to complex, all of which share a common ancestor in the first single-celled organism that emerged out of Darwin's prebiotic soup over three billion years ago. "Evolution," writes Carroll, "is the idea that provides the bridge from abiogenesis to the grand pageant of life."[55] The evidence during Darwin's day came primarily from paleontology. Today, given the advent of genetics in the twentieth century, biological evolutionists focus on the genome and the idea that evolution works by selecting advantageous mutations in genes of organisms that are conducive to survival.[56]

[51] Stephen C. Meyer, *Signature in the Cell: DNA and the Evidence for Intelligent Design* (New York: HarperOne, 2009), 212.

[52] Axe, *Undeniable*, 126. It is beyond physical representation because there are only 10^{80} atoms in the universe. Thus, a single 80-character line of text would suffice to write out the number of atoms in the universe, and the total number of physical events over the universe's history would only require another half line (10^{116}). Axe, *Undeniable*, 125.

[53] Axe, *Undeniable*, 132–34.

[54] Carroll, *The Big Picture*, 226.

[55] Carroll, *The Big Picture*, 273.

[56] Rau, *Mapping the Origins Debate*, 102. While the standard neo-Darwinian picture—natural selection by means of random mutations—is the dominant evolutionary theory, an increasing number of biologists today are calling it into question. As Meyer notes, "the

There are two features of the fossil record that are in need of expla-nation.[57] First, species exhibit no substantial change during their time on earth, looking pretty much the same wherever they are found. Second, vari-ous species appear abruptly without transitional forms. These two features of the fossil record—stasis and sudden appearance—are hard to explain on the Darwinian story.[58] Darwin's commitment to the gradual development of new complex biological life entails that there are "innumerable interme-diate links" between the earlier and later species.[59] We would expect then the existence of these transitional links to be recorded in the fossil record. Instead—during Darwin's time as well as today—there are essentially no transitional species in the fossil record between major groups of animals.[60] Darwin recognized the gap in the geological record as "the most obvious and gravest objection" to his theory.[61]

This gap, according to Darwin, results from the imperfection of the fossil record.[62] Is the fossil record imperfect? In other words, of all the known species that have existed or do exist, how many are recorded within the fossil record? If we can answer that question, we can get a sense of how represen-tative—how perfect or imperfect—the fossil record actually is. As it turns out, the fossil record is representative of the different types of organisms that have existed or do exist. To cite one example, consider:

> among 43 known living orders of terrestrial vertebrates (the level of classification just below classes and phyla), 42 have been found as fossils. Thus, 98 percent of extant terrestrial vertebrates at that level of classification were fossilized. It is therefore a good bet

technical literature in biology is now replete with world-class biologists routinely expressing doubts about various aspects of neo-Darwinian theory," Meyer, *Darwin's Doubt*, x. However, expressions of doubt are welcomed as long as the proposed fix is squarely within the naturalist and materialist camp. If the proposed fix to the theory invokes intelligent design, the view is uniformly ridiculed as religion masquerading as science. For more, see also Axe, *Undeniable*, 215–34.

[57] Stephen Jay Gould, "Evolution's Erratic Pace," *Natural History* 86, no. 5 (May 1977): 12–16.

[58] Of particular interest is the fact that every major group of organisms from every kingdom appears in the fossil record suddenly and without evolutionary precursors in a mys-terious event known as the "Cambrian explosion" approximately 540 million years ago. For more, see Rau, *Mapping the Origins Debate*, 106.

[59] Charles Darwin, *On the Origin of Species* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 279.

[60] While there have been a number of intermediate species proposed, such as the Archaeopteryx or the duck-billed, these oddities tend to fall within one category or another rather than an intermediate between two categories. William Dembski and Jonathan Wells, *The Design of Life* (Dallas: Foundation for Thought and Ethics, 2008), 62. At the level of phyla there are no known intermediates. See Rau, *Mapping the Origins Debate*, 106.

[61] Darwin, *On the Origin of Species*, 280.

[62] "The explanation lies, as I believe, in the extreme imperfection of the geological record," Darwin, *On the Origin of Species*, 280.

that if there were other orders of terrestrial vertebrates, they too would have been fossilized.[63]

After surveying additional evidence at more specific levels of classification, evidence that confirms that the fossil record is a faithful preserver of the kinds of organisms that have existed and do exist, William Dembski and Jonathan Wells conclude, "The absence from the fossil record of transitional forms connecting organisms at higher levels of classification is therefore evidence that no such transitional forms ever existed in the first place."[64]

Interestingly, some Paleontologists argue that we should not expect to find transitional forms in the fossil record. Darwin's mistake was in thinking evolution is gradual. Instead, evolution is "jerky." The idea that evolution is jerky was originally proposed in 1972 by Niles Eldredge and Stephen Jay Gould.[65] In this story, species evolve in rapid bursts within isolated populations. The transitional species that did exist are too few and too short-lived to have been recorded in the fossil record. As such, we would expect a gappy record. The fact that the fossil record *is* gappy provides evidence, according to Eldredge and Gould, of "punctuated equilibrium."

The main problem with punctuated equilibrium is that there is no known material mechanism that accounts for the sudden bursts of evolutionary change that the theory predicts. Instead, the theory appears to be an *ad hoc* attempt to explain recalcitrant facts that suggest design. If God exists, however, we have a non-*ad hoc* explanation for the origin of species: complex biological life is the result of an intelligent designer. In theism, life itself as well as the diversity of life reveal the creativity and goodness of God.

The fossil record points to a deeper problem, a problem that has become more acute for the grand evolutionary story ever since James Watson and Francis Crick discovered in 1953 the information-rich character of life embedded within the double helix of DNA. Advances in molecular biology over the last half century have cast doubts on whether mutation and selection are powerful enough mechanisms to account for the diversity of life, especially given the functional information present within all forms of life. The fundamental problem for the neo-Darwinist, as Stephen C. Meyer puts it, "is the problem of the origin of new biological information."[66] The problem, simply stated, is that the mechanism of natural selection acting upon random mutations cannot produce the kind of information necessary to build new animal forms.

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[63] Dembski and Wells, *The Design of Life*, 70.

[64] Dembski and Wells, *The Design of Life*, 71.

[65] Niles Eldredge and Stephen Jay Gould, "Punctuated Equilibria: An Alternative to Phyletic Gradualism," In *Models in Paleobiology*, ed. T.J.M. Schopf (San Francisco: Freeman, Cooper, and Co., 1972).

[66] Meyer, *Darwin's Doubt*, ix.

The neo-Darwinian story of how new species evolve is as follows.[67] New species require new body plans. New body plans require new cell types. New cell types require new kinds of (functional) proteins. New kinds of (functional) proteins require new genetic information. New genetic information is generated by random, unguided, mutations occurring in existing organisms. Mutations that contribute to the survival of an organism are passed on via natural selection to the next generation. Over time, as beneficial changes accumulate, a population changes and new species evolve.

There are two problems with this neo-Darwinian story of how species evolve. First, natural selection can only act upon already existing organisms and thus has no power to invent new species. Rather, selection can only preserve innovations within existing species. Doug Axe dubs this inability of natural selection to create new species as the "gaping hole" in evolutionary theory.[68] Selection is an "aimless wanderer, incapable of inventing."[69] As the Dutch botanist Hugo De Vries colorfully describes this gaping hole in his 1904 book, *Species and Varieties: Their Origin by Mutation*, "Natural selection may explain the *survival* of the fittest, but it cannot explain the *arrival* of the fittest."[70] The power of inventing must lie elsewhere. This leads to the second problem.

The accidental invention of new functional proteins by random mutation is highly unlikely.[71] Recent studies in protein science have shown the extreme rarity of arrangements of DNA bases capable of generating new *functional* proteins. Summarizing the work of Doug Axe, Stephen C. Meyer writes,

> [Axe's] experiments revealed that, for every DNA sequence that generates a short *functional* protein fold of just 150 amino acids in length, there are ten to the seventy-seventh power *non*functional combinations—ten to the seventy-seventh amino acid

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[67] Stephen C. Meyer, "Neo-Darwinism and the Origin of Biological Form and Information," in *Theistic Evolution: A Scientific, Philosophical, and Theological Critique*, eds. J.P. Moreland, Stephen C. Meyer, Christopher Shaw, Ann K. Gauger, and Wayne Grudem (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017), 111–12.

[68] Axe, *Undeniable*, 97. As Axe summarizes, "Evolutionary theory ascribes inventive power to natural selection alone. However, because selection can only home in on the fitness signal from an invention after that invention already exists, it can't actually invent."

[69] Axe, *Undeniable*, 103.

[70] Hugo De Vries, *Species and Varieties: Their Origin by Mutation* (Chicago: Open Court, 1904), 4; quoted in Axe, *Undeniable*, 220.

[71] While I need not argue for the stronger claim here, Doug Axe, as discussed in the section on the "Origin of Life," argues that accidental invention by random mutation is physically impossible. See Axe, *Undeniable*.

arrangements—that will not fold into a stable three-dimensional protein structure capable of performing a biological function.[72]

It is highly unlikely, then, that random genetic mutations would accidentally stumble upon a new DNA sequence that codes for a single new functional protein, let alone the *many* new functional proteins needed to generate new body plans and new species. How unlikely? Consider, during the entire 3.5 billion-year history of life on earth, "only ten to the fortieth individual organisms have ever lived—meaning that at most [there are] ten to the fortieth power [of opportunities to generate and pass on new gene sequences]. Yet ten to the fortieth power represents only a small fraction of ten to the seventy-seventh power—only one ten trillion, trillion, trillionth, or $1/10^{37}$ to be exact."[73] The implication, according to Meyer: "it follows that it is overwhelmingly *more likely than not* that a random mutational search would have *failed* to produce even one new functional (information-rich) DNA sequence and protein in the entire history of life on Earth."[74] Since every living organism represents a complex functional whole, it is vastly more probable that each new species is the product of intelligence. As Axe summarizes, "Each and every new form of life must therefore be a masterful invention in its own right, embodying its own distinctive version of functional coherence at the very highest level."[75] Theism, and not naturalism—along with its grand evolutionary story—offers the best explanation for the origin of novel biological species.

The Origin of Humans

According to the Hebrew Scriptures, God made man "and crowned him with glory and honor" (Ps 8:5, CSB). As divine image-bearers, man is unique among all living organisms (Gen 1:26). The honor and glory of man manifests itself in the human ability for language, art, and morality. This traditional theistic perspective on humans is sharply contrasted with the message from (atheistic) Darwinian science.[76] Again, Sean Carroll is

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[72] In the Origin of Life section, the 10^{74} number was used to specify the ratio of functional to nonfunctional proteins of any length. The 10^{77} number used here is for the ratio of functional to nonfunctional proteins of 150 amino acids in length. Stephen C. Meyer, "Neo-Darwinism and the Origin of Biological Form and Information," in *Theistic Evolution*, 116. See the original results in Douglas Axe, "Estimating the Prevalence of Protein Sequences Adopting Functional Enzyme Folds," *Journal of Molecular Biology* 341 (2004): 1295–1315.

[73] Meyer, "Neo-Darwinism and the Origin of Biological Form and Information," 117.

[74] Meyer, "Neo-Darwinism and the Origin of Biological Form and Information," 118.

[75] Axe, *Undeniable*, 184.

[76] There are, of course, theistic evolutionists who think that evolution is sufficient to explain the origin of humans and that humans are unique and special, created (via evolution) by God. It is beyond the scope of this essay to assess the merits of theistic evolution. In this essay, I am concerned with the question of whether naturalism (and atheism) has the resources to explain the origin of the universe, life, species, and humans. For those theistic evolutionists who accept the full-blown evolutionary story, including the common ancestry thesis and the

representative: "We humans are blobs of organized mud….Cosmically speaking, there's no indication that we matter at all."[77] Still, a balm is often offered too, "The universe is not a miracle…. We are the miracle, we human beings. Not a break-the-laws-of-physics kind of miracle; a miracle in that it is wondrous and amazing how such complex, aware, creative, caring creatures could have arisen in perfect accordance with those laws."[78] It is indeed a bit of a miracle, as Carroll puts it, if the laws of nature alone could produce something as "wondrous and amazing" as human beings. But is it true? Can purely naturalistic processes and events account for the origin of humans?

The two main areas of debate regarding the physical evidence for the origin of humans are fossils and the genetic similarities between apes and humans.[79] We consider the fossil evidence first. Despite bold public announcements from time to time from news or science sources that a "missing link" between apes and humans has been discovered, the evidence from fossils does not support Darwinian predictions. In reality, the hominin fossil record is fragmentary and sparse, revealing "a dramatic discontinuity between ape-like and human-like forms" and the sudden appearance of human-like fossils in the record "without clear evolutionary precursors."[80] How sparse and fragmentary is the hominin fossil record? Gerald Rau summarizes, "All together there are perhaps a few thousand fossils identified as human or human-like, most represented by only a few fragments of bones."[81] Consider the much-celebrated australopithecine fossil known as Lucy. Long described as a bipedal ape-like creature, and thus an ideal precursor to humans, significant doubts have been raised about whether she was in fact bipedal, a single individual, or human-like at all.[82] As the senior editor of *Science* magazine, Stella Hurtley, writes, "Our genus *Homo* is thought to have evolved a little more than 2 million years ago from the earlier hominid *Australopithecus*. But there are few fossils that provide detailed information on this transition."[83] The fossil record does not reveal a well-documented and continuous transition between apes and humans. Rather, it reveals the sudden appearance of distinct body plans without an evolutionary pathway.

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blind-watchmaker thesis (that evolution is unguided), my critique will apply with equal force, however. For more on theistic evolution, see Moreland, Meyer, Shaw, Gauger, and Grudem, eds., *Theistic Evolution*. See also Matthew Barrett and Ardel B. Caneday, eds., *Four Views on the Historical Adam* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013).

[77] Carroll, *The Big Picture*, 3, 49.

[78] Carroll, *The Big Picture*, 431.

[79] Rau, *Mapping the Origins Debate*, 130.

[80] Casey Luskin, "Missing Transitions: Human Origins and the Fossil Record," in Moreland, Meyer, Shaw, Gauger, and Grudem, eds., *Theistic Evolution*, 438–39.

[81] Rau, *Mapping the Origins Debate*, 133.

[82] Casey Luskin, "Missing Transitions: Human Origins and the Fossil Record," in Moreland, Meyer, Shaw, Gauger, and Grudem, eds., *Theistic Evolution*, 450–55.

[83] Stella Hurtley, "From *Australopithecus* to *Homo*," *Science* 328 (April 9, 2010): 133; quoted in Casey Luskin, "Missing Transitions: Human Origins and the Fossil Record," in Moreland, Meyer, Shaw, Gauger, and Grudem, eds., *Theistic Evolution*, 467.

Regarding genetics, it is widely reported that the human genome is roughly 98.5% identical to the chimp genome. This is taken as evidence that humans share a common ancestry with chimps. There are at least two reasons to resist this conclusion, however. First, the differences are larger and more significant than typically reported. Second, there is not enough time for the species-specific genes to have evolved by the mutation/selection process. Not all sections of the human and chimp genome match up perfectly for the simple reason that the human genome contains roughly 3 billion base pairs whereas the chimp genome has 2.7 billion.[84] In sections that do match, there are about 35 million base pair substitutions, which results in a difference between the two genomes of 1.23% (hence the widely reported figure of roughly 1.5%).[85] But, there are other differences between the human and chimp DNA that are relevant: in addition to the 10% difference in total base pairs, there are also differences in the number and location of repeating genetic elements, differences in the Y chromosomes of chimpanzee and human males, and copy number variations among protein-coding genes.[86] All told, according to Gauger et al., "there is at least a 5 percent difference in our DNA."[87] Importantly, even when the DNA of humans and chimps match, the *use* is often different. For example, humans and chimps share 99.4% of genes that code for protein.[88] However, there is a 20% difference in how the genes express themselves (e.g., making different amounts or different kinds of proteins, influencing the activity of neighbor genes, etc.), even though they have the same DNA sequence.[89]

Regarding the problem of time, consider that, of the 20,000 human genes, there are anywhere from 60–600 human-specific genes.[90] It is worth asking, how could even one novel gene, let alone 60 or 600, evolve by the mutation/selection process within the usual evolutionary time frame of roughly 6 million years? Given typical assumptions about mutation rates, population size, and generational time, population geneticists estimate that it would take between 1.5 million years to 6 million years to get a single mutation in a DNA binding site—let alone a novel gene.[91] If two mutations are needed, the estimated time increases to between 84 and 216 million years![92] The problem is much worse, of course, for mutations are rarely beneficial.

[84] Rau, *Mapping the Origins Debate*, 138.

[85] Rau, *Mapping the Origins Debate*, 139.

[86] Ann K. Gauger, Ola Hossjer, and Colin R. Reeves, "Evidence for Human Uniqueness," in Moreland, Meyer, Shaw, Gauger, and Grudem, eds., *Theistic Evolution*, 480–82.

[87] Gauger, Hossjer, and Reeves, "Evidence for Human Uniqueness," 481.

[88] Rau, *Mapping the Origins Debate*, 139.

[89] Rau, *Mapping the Origins Debate*, 139. For more on how human DNA is used differently that chimp DNA, see Gauger, Hossjer, and Reeves, "Evidence for Human Uniqueness," 482–91.

[90] Gauger, Hossjer, and Reeves, "Evidence for Human Uniqueness," 482.

[91] Gauger, Hossjer, and Reeves, "Evidence for Human Uniqueness," 495.

[92] Gauger, Hossjer, and Reeves, "Evidence for Human Uniqueness," 495.

Still, the overall point should be obvious: there is simply not enough time for evolution to do the work required to explain the origin of humans.

We have considered the physical evidence and seen, contrary to the scientific consensus, a consensus driven by materialism, reductionism, and (often) naturalism and atheism, that it does not support evolution. Rather, the fossil and genetic evidence point to a unique human origin best explained by a designer. We have not, however, considered the full scope of the evidence, which includes aspects of human existence, as C. John Collins notes, "that are *universally* human and that are *uniquely* human."[93] When we add the evidence from human morality and rationality, the credence for a theistic account of human origins only increases.[94]

Conclusion

I have argued that God is the best explanation for the origin of the universe, life, species, and humans. Atheism and her cohorts—naturalism, reductionism, materialism, nihilism, constructivism, etc.—are weak reeds on which to stand. The claim that Darwinian evolution is incontestable or overwhelming is hardly the case. The opposite, in fact, is true. The question of origins points to God and a sacred order. The universe has meaning because it is the product of an intentional agent who has invested it with order and function. This metaphysical fact—the fact of God's existence and his creative activity—provides the foundation for a deeper response to the ills of our age, for it provides resources to appeal to "essences" and "ways things ought to be."

[93] C. John Collins, "A Historical Adam: Old-Earth Creation View," in Matthew Barrett and Ardel B. Caneday, eds., *Four Views on the Historical Adam*, 165.

[94] For an excellent summary of the moral argument for God and the argument from reason to God, see the essays by Mark D. Linville and Victor Reppert, respectively, in William Lane Craig and J.P. Moreland, eds., *The Blackwell Companion to Natural Theology*.

Beholding the Face of a Hidden God: Assessing the Argument from Divine Hiddenness for Atheism

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Truly, you are a God who hides himself . . .—Is. 45:15 (NASB)

If God is all-loving and desires a relationship with human beings, why isn't God's existence more obvious to both believers and non-believers alike? Why does the evidence for his existence remain ambiguous and inconclusive to so many? Some philosophers have taken the hiddenness or elusiveness of the divine presence in the world as positive evidence that a perfectly loving God does not exist. With respect to the hiddenness of God, *absence of evidence for God is evidence of God's absence.*

More than anyone in the last twenty years, philosopher J.L. Schellenberg has pressed the argument against the existence of a perfectly loving God from the phenomenon of divine hiddenness.[1] If an all-loving God existed and created us to be in relationship with Him, then we would expect that He provide the necessary conditions for believing in Him, namely *clear* and *decisive* evidence that He is, in fact, there. The mere fact that persons can maintain reasonable non-belief in the existence of God suggests the lack of such evidence, and thereby the non-existence of a perfectly loving God.

My aim here is to introduce the reader to the philosophical discussion surrounding the argument for atheism from divine hiddenness. As the literature on divine hiddenness is wide-ranging, my aim here is only to offer a sampling of the various theistic responses and counter responses to the argument, along with some thoughts on the relevant strengths and weaknesses of the replies available to the theist.

1. The Evidential Problem Stated

For our purposes going forward, it will be helpful to have before us a formalized statement of the argument from divine hiddenness for atheism. I will work with the rather straightforward formulation of Schellenberg's argument from divine hiddenness as follows:

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[1] See J.L. Schellenberg, *The Hiddenness Argument: Philosophy's New Challenge to Belief in God* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).

1. If God exists, he is perfectly loving.
2. If a perfectly loving God exists, reasonable non-belief does not occur.
3. Reasonable non-belief does occur.
4. Therefore, no perfectly loving God exists.
5. Therefore, God does not exist.[2]

Premise 1 makes it evident that the argument is aimed at a *certain kind of God*, namely the Judeo-Christian concept of God as a morally perfect being; whatever else might characterize the divine attribute of omnibenevolence, it is certainly nothing less than God's willing the good of each and every one of His creatures.

The key premises of the argument are 2 and 3. Presumably, part of Schellenberg's justification for premise 3 rests on what he takes to be his *own* reasonable non-belief in the existence of God. But one can easily generalize to include what appear to be well-informed and intellectually responsible atheists or agnostics who maintain their non-belief in light of the evidence for God's existence. To Schellenberg, it's simply obvious that the world consists of at least *some* non-belief that is reasonable or rational.

Turning to premise 2, Schellenberg argues that even the theist ought to find it unobjectionable. The force of premise 2 turns on the idea that a perfectly loving God—a God who wills the good for his creatures—would provide sufficient evidence for belief in His existence to all persons who are willing and able to form such a belief.

According to the Christian scheme, loving union with God is the *summum bonum* of human existence, the highest good that constitutes human well-being and flourishing in this life and the life to come. And surely the theist and non-theist alike will affirm that being related to God in this way is not possible unless a person first believes *that God exists*. If God is truly perfectly loving, then it seems reasonable to think that he will aim to do whatever is necessary to bring His creatures into a position where the conditions for such a relationship are realized. It seems reasonable to think that if a perfectly loving God exists, then He would ensure that no one would fail to believe that He exists on the basis of insufficient evidence; God would, at the very least, do what is minimally necessary for creatures to enjoy a loving relationship with Him and therein to achieve their highest or ultimate good in both this life and the next.

2. An Excursus on Epistemic Defeaters

Before we delve into the fine-grained details of the major theistic responses to the argument from divine hiddenness, it will be helpful to take

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[2] J.L. Schellenberg, *Divine Hiddenness and Human Reason* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993), 83.

a moment to paint with a broad brush and get before us some important concepts in epistemology, concepts that will help us get clear on the various options available to the theist in response to the argument from hiddenness.

One's belief in the truth of propositions as mundane as "Joe had coffee this morning" or "South Bend is colder than San Diego" often acquire what philosophers call "epistemic defeaters," that is, evidence that prevents one's belief from being rationally justified—epistemically "up to snuff," we might say. There are two kinds of epistemic defeaters that will be relevant to getting a handle on the different types of theistic strategies in responding to the argument from divine hiddenness.

We can begin by distinguishing between a *rebutting* and an *undercutting* defeater for one's belief in some proposition P, say *that all of the apples in the basket are red*. Suppose you have good epistemic grounds for believing P. Your epistemic grounds for believing P may take a variety of forms, whether *perceptual experience* (you may have a direct perceptual experience of the basket of apples in front of you), *memory* (you may remember inspecting the basket at one time and discovering that all of the apples were red), or even reliable *testimony* (you've been told on good authority that all of the apples in the basket are red).

On the one hand, P can acquire a *rebutting defeater*, that is, evidence for supposing that your belief that P is false. So suppose that upon forming the belief that all of the apples in the basket are red on the basis of reliable testimony, you decide to inspect the basket firsthand, only to discover three green apples buried at the bottom of the basket; in this case, you have acquired a reason to think that your belief is false; your belief that "all of the apples in the basket are red" has acquired a rebutting defeater.

On the other hand, beliefs can also acquire what are called *undercutting defeaters* in the following sense. Suppose one day, while sorting apples in the factory adjacent to the apple farm, you form the belief that P—"that all of the apples in the basket are red"—on the grounds of perceptual experience; your reason for believing P is grounded in your directly perceiving that all of the apples in the basket are red. But suppose that after forming this belief, you learn that John, your fellow employee who is known for playing practical jokes on the job, is working the same shift as you. In particular, you learn that John has rigged the lighting directly over the basket of apples such that they are all being illuminated by a red light. In such a case, your particular evidence in support of P, namely the evidence given in your perceptual experience, has acquired an undercutting defeater. Upon learning of John's scheme, you do not thereby acquire evidence for thinking that your belief in P is false (a rebutting defeater), rather, you acquire evidence for thinking that your grounds for believing P have been undercut.

With the above distinction between rebutting and undercutting defeaters in hand, we are now in a position to unpack the two overarching theistic strategies in approaching the argument from divine hiddenness. In the most general of terms, there are two broad strategies available to the the-

ist in response to the argument above, what I will call the "rebutting strate-gies" and the "undercutting strategies." Rebutting strategies aim to provide *rebutting defeaters* for the truth of one of the premises of the argument, most likely 2 or 3; that is to say, positive reasons for thinking that either premise 2 or 3 is false.

By contrast, an undercutting strategy embraces a more modest aim in that it offers an *undercutting defeater* for the truth of one of the premises of the argument. This strategy claims *not* that we have positive reason to reject one of the premises, but rather, that *we have no good reason to accept* one of the premises of the argument from divine hiddenness. Just like your ratio-nal justification (via perception) for believing "that all of the apples in the basket are red" was undercut by your learning that the basket of apples was illumined by a red light, so too the atheist's justification for affirming one of the premises of the argument can acquire an undercutting defeater in a way that we will examine in more detail below.

In what follows, my aim is to offer a sampling of the central theistic re-plies to the argument from divine hiddenness in favor of atheism, along with what I take to be their dialectical strengths and weaknesses. While each the-istic response to the argument has its relevant strengths and weaknesses, the theist has good grounds for affirming that divine hiddenness fails to justify atheism. Let us turn to examine the various forms of each strategy in turn.

3. Rebutting Strategies

Rebutting Strategy #1: The Way of Counterbalancing Evidence

The rebutting strategy has taken a variety of forms in the philosophical literature on divine hiddenness. The first rebutting strategy on offer sets its sights on premise 3: *that reasonable non-belief occurs*. This particular rebutting strategy claims that in so far as we have reasonable grounds for thinking that a certain kind of God exists from arguments stemming from natural theol-ogy, we therein have positive reasons for thinking that premise 3 is false. Call this particular rebutting strategy *the way of counterbalancing evidence*.

The theist who attempts to rebut premise 3 via *the way of counterbalanc-ing evidence* argues from the truth of premise 2 above as follows:

2. If a perfectly loving God exists, then reasonable non-belief does not occur.

The proponent of *the way of counterbalancing evidence* will then offer rational justification for belief in a perfectly loving God, in either the form of com-municable or incommunicable evidence.[3]

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[3] Here I borrow the terminology of "communicable" and "incommunicable" evidence from Michael Murray, *Nature Red in Tooth and Claw: Theism and the Problem of Animal Suffering* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 22–23, a distinction that largely corre-sponds to John Wesley's distinction between "external" and "internal" evidence for Christianity.

Take first the notion of *communicable evidence*, evidential factors that can be straightforwardly shared with the objector that are subject to direct intellectual evaluation. Traditionally, communicable evidence for theism has taken the form of theistic arguments (e.g., cosmological, teleological, ontological, moral) for the existence of a necessary, supremely powerful, intelligent, benevolent creator. *Incommunicable evidence* for theism, by contrast, consists of evidential factors that are incapable of being directly shared and subject to direct intellectual evaluation. Traditionally, the primary form of incommunicable evidence in support of theism has taken the form of the internal witness of the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:16). As a form of divine testimony, the internal witness of the Holy Spirit is a genuine form of testimonial evidence that can evidentially support theism, even if it is a form of non-transferable evidence that is incapable of being shared with another individual. The proponent of *the way of counterbalancing evidence* argues that both forms of evidence can converge to justify the premise that:

6. A perfectly loving God exists.

From the truth of 2 and 6, the proponent of *the way of counterbalancing evidence* concludes:

7. Therefore, reasonable non-belief does *not* occur.

Premise 7 entails the denial of premise 3 in so far as it claims that reasonable non-belief in the existence of God does not occur.

The force of this particular rebutting strategy turns on the plausibility of the claim that the communicable and incommunicable evidence for God's existence is conclusive in such a way that renders all non-belief in the existence of God *irrational*; any non-belief in the world is the result of irrationality in so far as it amounts to the failure to believe in the face of decisive and compelling evidence for theism.

What, then, of *the way of counterbalancing evidence* as a rebutting defeater for premise 3 of the argument from hiddenness? For one, the strategy requires the weight of the communicable evidence in the form of theistic arguments to decisively outweigh the empirical evidence in favor of what appear to be genuine cases of reasonable non-belief. For this reason, some theists and non-theists alike will find this too strong a route in response to the problem; perhaps we ought to take seriously the appearance of reasonable non-belief, cases where intellectually responsible atheists or agnostics are aware of the available evidence for God and yet maintain their non-belief in light of what they take to be cogent rejoinders to the theistic arguments.

See Albert C. Outler, ed. *John Wesley*, A Library of Protestant Thought (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), 192–93.

In short, the defender of *the way of counterbalancing evidence* proposes that the communicable and incommunicable evidence in support of the premise:

6. A perfectly loving God exists.

is sufficiently weighty to counterbalance the evidence in favor of the premise:

3. Reasonable non-belief does occur.

Here one's assessment of *the way of counterbalancing evidence* will no doubt rest on one's views concerning the cumulative evidential force of the theistic arguments as well as the evidential value of the inner witness of the Holy Spirit. For theists who are inclined to think that arguments for the existence of God can deliver *rationally compelling* grounds in favor of premise 6, *the way of counterbalancing evidence* offers a concise rebutting defeater to premise 3 of the argument from divine hiddenness. But while many Christian philosophers would be quick to affirm that theistic arguments make it *rational* to be a theist in light of the evidence, few would (in my estimation) claim that such arguments *rationally compel* belief in the existence of God so as to rule out rational non-belief as a responsible intellectual option.

Moreover, some might argue that *the way of counterbalancing evidence* carries little dialectical force as a response to the atheist in so far as it rests entirely on either the cogency of the arguments for God's existence (which are widely contested by both theist and atheist alike) as well as the evidential force of the incommunicable evidence of the internal witness of the Holy Spirit. And perhaps no one who is not already convinced of the success of the theistic arguments or who lacks the inner witness of the Holy Spirit will grant that premise 6 is more plausible than premise 3. We have, then, a dialectical standoff in so far as the responsible atheist will find premise 3 more plausible than premise 6, namely as a result of his or her own rational non-belief in light of what they take to be inconclusive communicable and incommunicable evidence for theism. If the aim of the theist is to simply maintain the rationality of theism in the face of divine hiddenness, then the way of counterbalancing evidence provides a straightforward rebutting defeater of the argument from divine hiddenness against theism. If, however, the aim of the theist is to *persuade* the atheist that the argument from divine hiddenness is an unsuccessful argument for atheism, it may be wise for the theist to consider looking to an alternative strategy in responding to the argument above.

Rebutting Strategy #2: The Way of Malfunction

This leads nicely into our second rebutting strategy, what I will call *the way of malfunction*. This response maintains that while God has indeed provided his creatures with clear and sufficient evidence of his existence (Rom

1:19–20), it is only due to the pervasive influence of moral and spiritual corruption that creatures are, to a certain extent, blind to the evidence God has provided in nature and conscience (Rom 1:18–23). The claim here is to underscore what theologians have called *the noetic effects of sin*: that *cognitive* failure with respect to a certain domain of knowledge (particularly knowledge of God) is or can be directly linked to a certain degree of moral or spiritual failure, whether the failure in question is inherited from one's first human ancestors or is the result of one's own moral choices.

As a result, this rebutting strategy aims to provide reason to think that it's false that reasonable non-belief occurs; as with the previous strategy above, this route maintains that *all* non-belief is *unreasonable*, but explains this fact in terms of cognitive faculties that are malfunctioning due to the presence of moral and spiritual corruption. Alvin Plantinga states and defends this view nicely:

> The most serious noetic effects of sin have to do with our knowledge of God. Were it not for sin and its effects, God's presence and glory would be as obvious and uncontroversial to us all as the presence of other minds, physical objects, and the past. Like any cognitive process, however, the *sensus divinitatis* [the sense of the divine in humans] can malfunction; as a result of sin, it has indeed been damaged.[4]

Proponents of the way of malfunction are keen to cite Romans 1:18–21 in support of the idea that moral and spiritual corruption can have cognitive consequences on one's ability to appreciate the evidence for God from nature:

> The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened (NIV).

What are we to make of *the way of malfunction* as a rebutting strategy against premise 3 of the argument from divine hiddenness? First of all, note that the strategy aims to be comprehensive in the following twofold manner. First, *all* non-belief is unreasonable or irrational; there are *no* instances of reasonable non-belief. Second, the *single* source of all non-belief is cogni-

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[4] Alvin Plantinga, *Warranted Christian Belief* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 214.

tive malfunction due to pervasive moral and spiritual corruption. Here we might ask, as we did with *the way of counterbalancing evidence*, what are we to make of what appear to be intellectually responsible and properly informed non-believers who remain rationally unmoved by the evidence for God? Is their non-belief in the existence of God ultimately the product of moral and spiritual rebellion against God? Are all atheists and agnostics in the grip of self-deception regarding the existence of God due to their moral and spiritual corruption?

The plausibility of *the way of malfunction* as a *stand-alone* rebutting strategy hinges on the tenability of tracing *all* non-belief in the existence of God to cognitive malfunction due to the presence of moral or spiritual corruption. But some theists see this as too tall an order.[5] Some, like Chad Meister, argue that saddling Romans 1:18–21 with the universal claim that *all* non-belief is unreasonable and ultimately motivated by moral and spiritual rebellion against God is exegetically unwarranted. At most, Meister argues, it seems that the passage warrants only the claim that *some* non-belief is ultimately the product of such corruption; there is, says Meister, little textual grounds for interpreting the above passage as saying that the class of spiritually corrupt non-believers must be coextensive with the class of those spiritually corrupt non-believers who, *in virtue of their corruption*, go on to suppress the evidence for God.

Be that as it may, the general insights undergirding *the way of malfunction* need to be taken seriously by the theist as a response to the argument from divine hiddenness. Scripture is unequivocally clear that certain cases of non-belief are the direct result of willful suppression or ignorance of the evidence for God that is clearly perceived in the created order.

Rebutting Strategy #3: The Way of Defence

Our third and final rebutting strategy takes aim at premise 2—*that if a perfectly loving God exists, then reasonable non-belief does not occur*—and sets out to identify *possible* reasons God might have for creating a world in which reasonable non-belief occurs. Call this rebutting strategy *the way of defence*. A "defence" is a philosophical term of art that stems from discussions of the various problems of evil and divine hiddenness in the philosophical literature. In the context of the argument from divine hiddenness, a philosophical defence offered on behalf of the theist aims to describe *a possible way the world could be* that includes both the existence of God and the existence of reasonable non-belief, a way the world could be *that is true for all we know*, one that we are in no position to rule out.

Note first that the theist who adopts *the way of defence* will take issue with Schellenberg's initial formulation of the argument from divine hiddenness above. Premise 2 of the original formulation of the argument—*that if*

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[5] See Chad Meister, "Evil and the Hiddenness of God," In *God and Evil: The Case for God in a World Filled with Pain*, ed. Chad Meister and James K. Dew Jr. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2013), 143–44.

a perfectly loving God exists, reasonable non-belief does not occur—assumes that God could not possibly have morally sufficient reasons to allow reasonable non-belief, an assumption that is rejected by the theist who adopts *the way of defence*. Thus, premise 2 ought to be replaced with the more cautious 2*:

> 2* If a perfectly loving God exists, reasonable non-belief does not occur, *unless God has a morally sufficient reason to permit its occurrence*.

Altering premise 2 to 2* requires us to revise premise 3 of the argument to the following:

> 3* (a) Reasonable non-belief occurs, and (b) at least some of it occurs for no good reason.

Premise 3* is the crux of the revised argument from divine hiddenness, and it is 3*b in particular that the proponent of the way of defence finds objectionable. In arguing for the truth of premise 3*, the atheist is saddled with the burden of showing not only that reasonable non-belief occurs, but also that God has no morally sufficient reasons for permitting reasonable non-belief; a tall order indeed!

There are two general versions of *the way of defence* in response to premise 3*b in the literature on divine hiddenness. The first claims that God's morally sufficient reasons for allowing reasonable non-belief center on goods that aim to benefit *his creatures* in some way or other. The second claims that God's morally sufficient reasons may perhaps center on goods internal *to God Himself*; that God's reasons for His hiddenness and silence might be a function of His personality and perhaps His preferred mode of interaction with human creatures.

So what possible reasons might God have for creating a world in which reasonable non-belief occurs, reasons that might be God's actual reasons, *for all we know*? I will begin by laying out the various theistic defences that aim to identify some creaturely good that God's hiddenness might aim to achieve.

Improper-Response Defence

To begin, some philosophers have argued that, for all we know, continual overt manifestations of God's presence in the world—manifestations that constituted conclusive evidence in favor of the existence of God—might actually *frustrate* or *undermine* God's relational aims for his creatures. If so, then God has a morally sufficient reason to refrain from revealing Himself in such a manner to such individuals. Call this the *improper-response defence*.

The idea behind the *improper-response defence* is that for all we know, for some individuals, if God were to provide conclusive evidence of his existence to such individuals, they might come to *resent* God and His overt self-advertisements. For such individuals, Peter van Inwagen asks:

Is it not possible that grains of sand bearing the legend "Made by God" (or articulate thunder or a rearrangement of the stars bearing a similar message) would simply raise such emotional barriers, such waves of sullen resentment among the self-deceived, that there would be no hope of their eventually coming to perceive the power and deity of God in the ordinary, everyday operations of the things he has made?[6]

Along similar lines, Paul Moser has argued that perhaps God remains hidden to certain individuals on the grounds that a failure to do so might prevent them from coming to know God *in the proper way*.[7] Moser distinguishes between *propositional* and *filial* knowledge of God. Propositional knowledge of God is merely knowledge that the proposition *that God exists* is true; filial knowledge, on the other hand, takes as its object another *person*, in this case God Himself, and consists in "humbly, faithfully, and lovingly standing in a child-parent, or *filial*, relationship to God as one's righteously gracious Father."[8] Propositional and filial knowledge *per se* are clearly distinct concepts. Analogously, few would deny that my knowledge of the truth of the proposition *that Suzanne Inman exists* (my wife) is clearly different from my knowledge of *Suzanne Inman* herself (the person).

And just as it would be absurd to say that the proper aim of a marital relationship is mere propositional knowledge *that* one's spouse exists, so too it would be absurd to claim that God's aim in creating humans is for them to acquire mere propositional knowledge *that* God exists. After all, even Scripture itself emphasizes the fact that mere belief in God's existence is a far cry from what God intends for his creatures: "You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder!" (Jas 2:19, cf. Heb 11:6, ESV). Consequently, given God's specific creative aim of a loving, filial relationship with humanity, it is misplaced to expect that God provide only the sort of evidence of His existence that results in mere propositional knowledge *that* God exists. Thus, for all we know, God might have good reason to withhold overt evidence of his existence from some creatures in so far as his failing to do so would elicit a negative response and thus *impede* the prospects of entering into a loving relationship with such creatures.

One standard objection of the *improper-response defence* is to argue that there simply *are* no such individuals who would respond negatively to God in the face of overt evidence of his existence. But this is very strong claim indeed! The objection is committed to the following rather implausible claim: that *all actual reasonable non-believers* would respond positively to God, were

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[6] Peter van Inwagen, *The Problem of Evil* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 151.

[7] Paul Moser, "Reorienting Religious Epistemology: Cognitive Grace, Filial Knowledge, and Gethsemane Struggle" in *For Faith and Clarity: Philosophical Contributions to Christian Theology*, ed. James Beilby (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2006).

[8] Moser, "Reorienting Religious Epistemology," 75.

they to encounter overt and decisive evidence for God's existence. Yet for non-believers who are more than explicit that they don't *want* there to be a God, such a sweeping, universal claim seems patently false. Take, for example, the following words of Thomas Nagel, one of the most influential philosophers writing today:

> In speaking of the fear of religion, I don't mean to refer to the entirely reasonable hostility toward certain established religions and religious institutions, in virtue of their objectionable moral doctrines, social policies, and political influence. Nor am I referring to the association of many religious beliefs with superstition and the acceptance of evident empirical falsehoods. I am talking about something much deeper—namely, the fear of religion itself. I speak from experience, being strongly subject to this fear myself: I want atheism to be true and am made uneasy by the fact that some of the most intelligent and well-informed people I know are religious believers. It isn't just that I don't believe in God and, naturally, hope that I'm right in my belief. It's that I hope there is no God! I don't want there to be a God; I don't want the universe to be like that. . . . My guess is that this cosmic authority problem is not a rare condition and that it is responsible for much of the scientism and reductionism of our time.[9]

If Nagel is correct in his assessment that his "cosmic authority problem" is likely shared by a great many of his contemporaries, then the claim that all current reasonable non-believers would in fact positively respond to God if presented with decisive evidence for God looks rather dim.

Second, some theists have argued that the *improper-response defence* is incomplete as a rebutting strategy against 3*b. While it may be plausible to think that not *every* reasonable non-believer would respond *positively* to overt evidence for God, the *improper-response defence*, as a *stand-alone* strategy against premise 3*b, commits the theist to a similar, equally implausible claim: that *all actual reasonable non-believers* would respond *negatively* to overt evidence for God's existence.

To suffice as a *stand-alone* rebutting defeater to 3*b, the proponent of the *improper-response defence* must say that (for all we know), God's reason for remaining hidden from reasonable non-believers is that *all* of them would respond *negatively* to overt and conclusive evidence for God's existence. Again, we need not deny that *some* reasonable non-believers—say the Nagel-type who repeatedly affirm that they don't *want* God to exist—would respond negatively to overt evidence for God. But must the theist take this line with respect to *all* reasonable non-believers, and thereby rule out a class of reasonable non-believers (however small) who would respond positively to such evidence? Unless one is ready to endorse such a sweeping claim, the

[9] Thomas Nagel, *The Last Word* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 130–31.

theist will need to supplement the *improper-response defence* with another strategy against the argument from divine hiddenness.

Another objection to the *improper-response defence*, at least the version advanced by Paul Moser, is that it pushes the problem of hiddenness up a notch without solving it: why does God remain elusive and hidden from non-believers who, by all appearances, *earnestly* and *genuinely* seek for filial knowledge of God and yet fail to attain neither it nor propositional knowledge of God? Even granting that we ought not expect God to promote mere propositional knowledge of God *on its own*, the question arises as to why God hasn't yet bestowed filial knowledge on non-believers who, by all appearances, seem to be genuinely open and receptive to a filial relationship with God? Here the theist might dig in her heels and argue that in this case in particular, appearances are deceptive; no non-believer actively and earnestly seeks for God on their own (Rom 3:11). What grounds does the atheist have for believing that there actually *are* non-believers who earnestly seek for filial knowledge and friendship with God and fail to attain it? In fact, certain passages of Scripture seem to preclude the existence of such individuals (e.g., Matt 7:7).

But Moser has argued that even *if* the theist grants that there are reasonable non-believers who diligently seek for a filial knowledge of God to no avail, we have absolutely no way of knowing that such knowledge is not *forthcoming* at some time in the future. And even if we grant the force of this particular objection to the *improper-response defence*, it fails to provide evidence for atheism; only a "temporary agnosticism"—agnosticism for the time being—seems warranted.

Freedom-Defence

Yet another common variant of *the way of defence* against premise 3*b claims that overt manifestations of the divine presence may, for all we know, pose a significant threat to free creature's ability to exercise morally significant freedom. Call this the *freedom-defence* against 3*b. More specifically, the *freedom-defence* argues that divine hiddenness may be a necessary condition for a world containing human creatures that possess the kind of freedom and integrity that is pertinent to the moral life, one that involves the freedom to choose between both good and bad courses of action.

Michael Murray and David Taylor advocate the *freedom-defence* and argue that if God were not hidden to a certain extent, then his existence would pose an immanent threat to our ability to exercise morally significant freedom.[10] In particular, our being powerfully aware of God's existence would *coerce* us into submitting to His moral imperatives for our lives. Hence our ability to choose either *in accordance with* or *against* God's moral impera-

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[10] Michael Murray and David Taylor, "Hiddenness," in *The Routledge Companion to Philosophy of Religion*, 2nd ed., ed. Chad Meister and Paul Copan (New York: Routledge: 2013), 368–77.

tives would be obliterated along with our ability to freely choose to develop a moral character of a particular kind. In the words of Murray and Taylor:

> If God were to make his existence clearly and powerfully known to us, the impact would be no less than the moral patrolman. If we knew that God was there, watching over us continuously, all incentives to choose evil would be lost along with our ability to choose between good and evil actions. Our moral free choice would have been eliminated. Some have argued that this need to prevent pervasive coercion is one reason why God must remain hidden, at least to the extent that his existence is not as obvious as a patrol car following us on the highway.[11]

Consider a non-theological example of this idea at work. Those of us whose childhoods were marked by a seemingly endless string of sibling rivalries are all too aware of the disagreement, expressions of self-will, and coercion that define these early childhood relationships. Of course, any good parent would want their children to *freely* choose to not engage in such behavior with their siblings. But suppose that an overbearing parent, upon the slightest sign of sibling rivalry, made their presence overwhelmingly evident to their children on such occasions. Surely the presence of the parent would constitute a significant threat to the children's ability to *freely* refrain from engaging in ill behavior toward their siblings; it is not unreasonable, then, to suppose that in order for the children to have the ability to exercise morally significant freedom regarding whether to engage or not engage in such behavior, the parent must keep a certain "epistemic distance" in such situations.

What are we to make of the *freedom-defence* against premise 3*b? Note first that the defence presupposes the following exclusive disjunction: *either God would be hidden, or morally significant freedom in responding to God would be lost.* But why think this is true? We can certainly admit that *some* striking manifestations of the divine presence would be so overwhelming as to preclude any free or meaningful response to God. But must *all* cases of divine disclosure be freedom-precluding in this sense? Could not God be less elusive than He is at present, yet in such a way that keeps the morally significant freedom of creatures intact? As it stands, the proponent of the *freedom-defence* needs to give further justification in support of the above exclusive disjunction.

More importantly, the *freedom-defence* is problematic in so far as it implies that believers in God—in so far as they have a clear knowledge of God's existence—are incapable of exercising morally significant freedom, that is, the ability to choose between morally relevant alternatives. Recall that according to Murray and Taylor, "if we knew that God was there, watching over us continuously, all incentives to choose evil would be lost along with our ability to choose between good and evil actions. Our moral free choice

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[11] Murray and Taylor, "Hiddenness," 375.

would have been eliminated."[12] But certainly believers in God *do* know that God is there, watching over them continuously. And yet few would want to claim that knowledge of this fact eliminates the morally significant freedom of the faithful, understood as their ability to choose between morally relevant alternatives as noted by Murray. In so far as the *freedom-defence* is inconsistent with other beliefs held by many theists, namely that believers in God have the ability to choose between good and bad courses of action, we have reason to think that the *freedom-defence* fails as a rebutting strategy against premise 3*b.

Divine Personality Defence

The above variants of *the way of defence* aim to identify some *creaturely good* (or the prevention of a certain creaturely evil) that divine hiddenness aims to secure, whether the creature's having a proper or filial knowledge of God or the good of morally significant freedom. Here I want to briefly consider the second general *way of defence* that claims that God's morally sufficient reasons for allowing reasonable non-belief might be internal *to God Himself*; that is, while God does indeed have morally sufficient reasons for remaining hidden or elusive (thereby allowing for reasonable non-belief), such reasons are independent of (though not in violation of) the good of His creatures.

Michael Rea has defended the intriguing claim that divine hiddenness and divine silence may, for all we know, be an expression of God's personality and thus a great good in its own right.[13] Divine silence may be the triune God's preferred mode of interaction with His creatures. In fact, the Scriptures teach that God not only intentionally withholds revelatory light from individuals who are unrepentant and prideful (Matt 11:25), but He actively opposes or resists those who are steeped in pride and conceit (Prov 3:34; 1 Cor 1:19-27; Jas 4:6; 1 Pet 5:5). In so far as it is a great good in its own right for God to live out his personality in a way that He sees fit, God has a morally sufficient reason for permitting reasonable non-belief in the world. Call this *the divine personality defence*.

Recall that the argument from divine hiddenness above gets its traction from the idea that if a perfectly loving God exists and desires a relationship with us, He would ensure that no one would fail to believe that He exists on the basis of insufficient evidence. We can hear the complaints of the atheist undergirding the argument: *What kind of loving Father remains intentionally silent and hidden in the face of the son or daughter who is actively seeking him out, especially when the ultimate well-being of the child depends on their finding Him? If God truly cares about the eternal destiny of humanity, why doesn't he come out of hiding and conclusively reveal his existence once and for all?*

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[12] Murray and Taylor, "Hiddenness," 375.

[13] Michael Rea, "Divine Hiddenness, Divine Silence," in *Philosophy of Religion: An Anthology*, 6th ed., ed. L. Pojman and M. Rea (Boston: Wadsworth/Cengage, 2012), 266–75.

According to Rea, this line of reasoning embodies a particular *interpretation* of the hiddenness or silence of God: that such behavior stems from *divine indifference* to humanity's plight. But as Rea emphasizes, silence between persons must always be interpreted in light of the background assumptions concerning the beliefs, desires, motives, cultural norms, and overall personality of the persons in question. Rea offers the following example:

> You're on a first date. After a while you notice that you've been doing almost all the talking. You start asking questions to draw her out, but her answers are brief, and the silences in between grow longer and longer. You spend the entire ride home without saying a word. Does she hate you? Does she find you boring? Have you offended her? Or is she just rude? As it happens, she just arrived in the United States and was raised with the view that if you really want to win a man over, you should be quiet and let him do all the talking. Does that information affect your interpretation?[14]

The proper interpretation of *human* silence, then, requires a host of information about the beliefs, character, and personality of the person in question. And if we often misinterpret *human* silence in the above manner, how much more is it hasty to interpret divine silence as indicating a lack of love or care for His creatures given His utter transcendence?

According to *the divine personality defence*, general divine silence may, for all we know, be simply an expression of God's preferred mode of interaction with human creatures and need not be interpreted as divine *indifference*, *absence,* or *lack of love*. And in so far as God's acting out his own personality "serves the good that comes of the most perfect and beautiful person in the universe expressing himself in the way he sees fit," it constitutes a morally sufficient reason for God's continuing to allow the existence of reasonable non-belief.

The objector, no doubt, will retort that God's interacting with His creatures in this manner is morally unjustified (i.e., does not constitute a morally sufficient reason for remaining hidden) given the fact that the eternal destiny of his creatures hangs in the balance. A God who stands by in cold silence while his creatures perish for their lack of knowledge of His existence is less like a perfectly loving being and more like the inattentive father who neglects his children on the grounds that his personality is such that he's "just not good with kids." While Rea has responded to this charge, plausibly so in my opinion, an exhaustive treatment of *the divine personality defence* and its accompanying objections is beyond our scope here. At the very least, this response to divine hiddenness merits a closer look from both theist and non-theist alike.

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[14] Rea, "Divine Hiddenness, Divine Silence," 272.

4. Undercutting Strategy

Let me turn now to the second broad theistic strategy that aims to undermine the argument from divine hiddenness in favor of atheism. Recall that we've been considering various *rebutting strategies* against the argument from divine hiddenness, strategies that aim to provide positive reason to think that at least one premise of the argument is false. I'd now like to turn to consider an *undercutting strategy* that sets its sights on premise 3*b of the revised argument from hiddenness, *that at least some reasonable non-belief occurs for no good reason.*

We can start by asking: How does the atheist go about justifying the claim that for at least some reasonable non-belief, God has no morally sufficient reason for allowing it to occur? Presumably, the atheist moves from considering actual cases of reasonable non-belief (perhaps her own), fails to conceive of any morally sufficient reasons for such cases, and thus concludes that there are no such reasons. Hence, the atheist justifies the fact that there are no good reasons for at least some cases of reasonable non-belief from the fact that *she cannot conceive of any such reasons*; she has inquired long and hard concerning some possible compensating good to which reasonable non-belief might contribute, but has come up empty-handed. The inference from one's failing to conceive of any morally sufficient reasons for phenomenon *x* (whether horrendous evil or divine hiddenness) to, therefore, there are no morally sufficient reasons for phenomenon *x,* has come to called a "noseeum inference" in the philosophical literature: *because we can't see or conceive of the reasons for permitting x, they must not be there.*[15]

The undercutting strategy in response to the argument from divine hiddenness I want to consider mirrors a well-known strategy in responding to the evidential argument from evil known as "skeptical theism."[16] While there are more or less skeptical forms of skeptical theism, I'll focus on a common core shared by all varieties of skeptical theism: what I will call *the way of inscrutability. The way of inscrutability* provides an undercutting defeater for the atheist's noseeum inference in support of 3*b.

As an undercutting strategy, *the way of inscrutability* argues that the noseeum inference used to justify premise 3*b is illegitimate. The reason: it *assumes* that we have good reason to think that we are in an epistemic position to discern God's reasons for allowing reasonable non-belief if they *were* there. Yet on the standard theistic assumption of the utter immensity of God's knowledge and goodness, as well as the finitude of human cognitive and moral faculties, such an assumption is misplaced.

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[15] The genealogy of the term "noseeum" traces back to Stephen Wykstra, "Rowe's Noseeum Arguments from Evil," in *The Evidential Argument From Evil*, ed. Daniel Howard-Snyder (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1996), 12650.

[16] As we will see, skeptical theists are not skeptical of theism but rather of the following inference: *because we can't see or conceive of God's reasons for permitting x, they must not be there.*

In general, the theist who opts for *the way of inscrutability* argues that since God's morally sufficient reasons for allowing reasonable non-belief would be *inscrutable* if they existed, it is unreasonable to rely on our finite cognitive faculties to justify the claim that *there are no such reasons*. In the same way that I acquire an undercutting defeater for my reasons for believing *that all of the apples in the basket are red* once I learn that the basket is illumined by a red light, so too the atheist acquires an undercutting defeater for their reason for affirming that there are no good reasons for reasonable non-belief, once they take seriously the immensity of the divine nature and the finitude of human cognition. Consequently, premise 3*b remains unjustified, and the argument from hiddenness is unsound.

The way of inscrutability differs from *the way of defence* in that the latter attempts to argue against the truth of 3*b by considering possible goods that might, for all we know, result from God's allowing reasonable non-belief to occur. *The way of inscrutability*, on the other hand, argues that *we have no good reason to think* that we are in an epistemic position to judge whether or not 3*b is true.

The cogency of *the way of inscrutability* rests on its challenge to the noseeum inference used to justify premise 3*b. It is widely assumed in the philosophical literature that not *all* noseeum inferences are objectionable. For instance, borrowing an example from Michael Murray, it seems reasonable to infer, after a thorough and careful inspection of my refrigerator, that since I can't see any milk in the refrigerator, that *therefore,* there *is* no milk in the refrigerator.[17]

However, there are other noseeum inferences that strike us as objectionable. Consider the following example that is, once again, borrowed from Murray. You take a seat in the doctor's office and roll up your sleeve in preparation for your annual flu shot. The doctor removes the protective sleeve of the needle and, just as she is about to inject you with it, drops it on the floor and the needle rolls underneath the hospital bed; the doctor thumbs around for a few seconds looking for the needle, finds it, and attempts to inject you once more. Just before the needle reaches your arm, you protest, "Wait, isn't the needle contaminated after being on the floor?" The doctor takes the needle to better lighting, takes a long hard look at the surface of the needle, and says, "As I've examined the needle closely to the best of my ability and don't see any germs on it, it's likely that there aren't any germs on it." The doctor has made a noseeum inference, and a *bad* one at that.

The above two cases—the case of the milk in the fridge and the germs on the needle—bring to light two important conditions that need to be satisfied in order to have an *unobjectionable* or *proper* noseeum inference:

> *Right Location*: one must have good reason to think that one is looking for *x* in the right location.

[17] Michael Muray, *Nature Red in Tooth and Claw: Theism and the Problem of Animal Suffering* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

Expectation: one must have good reason to think that one would see (discern, grasp, conceive, etc.) *x* if it really were there.

The case of the milk in the fridge meets both the *Right Location* and the *Expectation* condition; we have good reason to think that if there were a leftover carton of milk, it would be likely in the fridge and nowhere else, and we would expect to detect the milk if it were really there; a carton of milk is the sort of thing you would expect to see by inspection. The case of the germs on the needle, on the other hand, fails the *Expectation* condition: as micro-organisms, germs are not the sorts of things you would reasonably expect to detect by inspection with the naked eye.

Analogously, *the way of inscrutability* argues that the noseeum inference used to justify premise 3*b—*that at least some reasonable non-belief occurs for no good reason*—arguably fails both the *Right Location* and the *Expectation* condition. Is it reasonable for the atheist to expect that she would discern God's morally sufficient reasons for permitting reasonable non-belief if they were really there? It depends. It depends whether or not one thinks that the atheist's noseeum inference is more like the one in the case of the milk in the fridge or more like the one in the case of the germs on the needle.

Proponents of *the way of inscrutability* argue that, given the kind of being God would be if He existed, the atheist's inference is more like the noseeum inference made by the doctor concerning germs on the needle. That is, the reasoning used to justify the premise *that there are no good reasons for God's allowing reasonable non-belief* is objectionable in so far as it fails the *Expectation* condition; just as there is no reason to think that the doctor would find what she was looking for—germs on the needle—by way of un-aided human perception, so too there is no reason to think that the atheist would find what she is looking for—God's reasons for allowing reasonable non-belief—by way of her finite cognitive faculties. If this line of reasoning is correct, then the atheist's justification for premise 3*b is undercut and the argument from divine hiddenness is unsound.

Conclusion

In summary, we have explored two broad theistic strategies in respond-ing to the argument from divine hiddenness against the existence of a per-fectly loving God: what I referred to as *rebutting* and *undercutting* strategies. We looked at three rebutting strategies aimed at either premise 2 or 3 of the argument—*the way of counterbalancing evidence*, *the way of malfunction*, and *the way of defence*—as well as the relevant strengths and weakness of each. Under *the way of defence* we highlighted two general types of defences: those that claim that God's morally sufficient reasons for allowing reasonable non-belief center on goods that aim to benefit his creatures in particular (*improper response defense* and the *freedom-defence*), and those that claim such reasons *are internal to God Himself* (the *divine personality defence*). Finally, we looked at an undercutting strategy I called *the way of inscrutability*, which aims to

undercut the atheist's reasons for affirming premise 3*b: that at least some reasonable non-belief occurs for no good reason.

Note that the theist need not rest entirely on a *single* strategy when objecting to the argument from divine hiddenness. For instance, the theist might consider combining several of the above rebutting strategies, such as the *way of counterbalancing evidence* with the *way of malfunction*; or perhaps the *improper response defence* with the *divine personality defence*, as a way of mutually reinforcing one another where each is weak.

Whether the theist combines multiple rebutting strategies or rests her case entirely on *the way of inscrutability* as a way of undercutting the argument from divine hiddenness, she has ample resources to resist the claim that divine hiddenness is positive evidence for atheism.

The Forgotten Legacy

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The strength indeed of the Infidel is in our weakness and folly; and it is our groundless fears which make him formidable. For, the truth is, that against the substance of Christianity itself, as distinguished from human perversions of it, modern Infidelity—however it may boast of new discoveries—has nothing more to say, than has been said and refuted a thousand times.

—Richard Whately, *Cautions for the Times*

Tolle lege.

—Augustine, *Confessions*

Even an inquiry into the literature of theology discloses the fact that apologetics is a subject with a long history. But in the contemporary training of seminarians, that history is often presented in a severely truncated form. Because there are some notable early apologies by Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, and Aristides, and because Origen responded to Celsus and Eusebius responded to Porphyry, the casual inquirer is apt to classify the literature of apologetics as a subset of the patristic literature and then to bracket it with a wry mental note: *Remember to turn to this stuff if the Quartodeciman controversy ever flares up again.*

I aim in this essay to counteract that misperception by surveying a few representative works from the history of apologetics that deserve to be rediscovered and indicating some points where they are particularly relevant to contemporary discussions.

To ensure that the list does not merely tantalize, I have restricted myself to works in English, most or all of them readily available online. In an effort to provide something that will be of interest even to scholars, I have deliberately passed over a few great works, such as Butler's *Analogy of Religion*, that receive more than a passing notice in Avery Dulles's *History of Apologetics*.[1] If this overview persuades even a few readers to take up and read some of these forgotten works, it will have done what I intended.

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[1] Avery Dulles, *A History of Apologetics* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1999). Dulles's work, originally published in 1971, is spotty and deeply idiosyncratic. With respect to the Anglophone literature at least, someone needs to start afresh and do the job properly.

Dialogues

The dialogue format, made famous by Plato and employed by early Christian writers such as Justin Martyr, Minucius Felix, Adamantius, and Augustine of Hippo provides a natural medium for the give and take of apologetic argument. Probably the best-known contemporary works of apologetics in this genre are the Socratic dialogues of Peter Kreeft. But the history of apologetics in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries boasts several valuable dialogues that merit rediscovery.

George Berkeley, the Anglican Bishop of Cloyne, is chiefly remembered today for his vigorous defense of a form of idealism in the early 1700s; and as idealism is making a modest comeback in philosophical circles, readers with a strong interest in metaphysics and epistemology are likely to think of him in that connection. But he was also a vigorous apologist writing at the height of the Deist controversy. During an unexpected three-year stay in Rhode Island, where he found himself semi-stranded when the promised financial backing for his project of founding a missionary college in Bermuda fell through, he penned *Alciphron: or, the Minute Philosopher*, a dialogue with four principal characters, two Christian and two skeptical. Of the antagonists, Alciphron, both in his ideas and in his manner, largely represents the deism of the Earl of Shaftesbury and also sometimes retails the arguments of Matthew Tindal; Lysicles, more hardened and less given to rhetorical flourishes, presents many of the arguments of Anthony Collins and Bernard Mandeville.

Because Berkeley ranges over so many of the writings of the deists, his work is an especially useful source to demonstrate how frequently the arguments and techniques of contemporary atheists were anticipated during the deist controversy. Here, for example, from the Sixth Dialogue, is an exchange on the evidence for miracles:

> *Alc.* Miracles, indeed, would prove something. But what proof have we of these miracles?

> *Cri.* Proof of the same kind that we have or can have of any facts done a great way off, and a long time ago. We have authentic accounts transmitted down to us from eye-witnesses, whom we cannot conceive tempted to impose upon us by any human motive whatsoever; inasmuch as they acted therein contrary to their interests, their prejudices, and the very principles in which they had been nursed and educated. These accounts were confirmed by the unparalleled subversion of the city of Jerusalem, and the dispersion of the Jewish nation, which is a standing testimony to the truth of the gospel, particularly of the predictions of our blessed Saviour. These accounts, within less than a century, were spread throughout the world, and believed by great num-

bers of people. These same accounts were committed to writing, translated into several languages, and handed down with the same respect and consent of Christians in the most distant churches.[2]

Confronted with the sort of evidence we would expect to have if the events had actually taken place more or less as narrated, Alciphron appeals to what we should today call the telephone game argument:

> Do you not see, said Alciphron, staring full at Crito, that all this hangs by tradition? And tradition, take my word for it, gives but a weak hold: it is a chain, whereof the first links may be stronger than steel, and yet the last weak as wax, and as brittle as glass. Imagine a picture copied successively by a hundred painters, one from another; how like must the last copy be to the original! How lively and distinct will an image be, after a hundred reflections between two parallel mirrors! Thus like and thus lively do I think a faint vanishing tradition, at the end of sixteen or seventeen hundred years. Some men have a false heart, others a wrong head; and, where both are true, the memory may be treacherous. Hence there is still something added, something omitted, and something varied from the truth: and the sum of many such additions, deductions, and alterations accumulated for several ages do, at the foot of the account, make quite another thing.[3]

Crito is, however, unimpressed, and he attacks the argument at the point where a long chain of borrowing is supposed to have intervened, invoking the age of Codex Alexandrinus:

> *Cri.* Ancient facts we may know by tradition, oral or written: and this latter we may divide into two kinds, private and public, as writings are kept in the hands of particular men, or recorded in public archives. Now, all these three sorts of tradition, for aught I can see, concur to attest the genuine antiquity of the gospels. And they are strengthened by collateral evidence from rites instituted, festivals observed, and monuments erected by ancient Christians, such as churches, baptisteries, and sepulchres. Now, allowing your objection holds against oral tradition, singly taken, yet I can think it no such difficult thing to transcribe faithfully. And things once committed to writing are secure from slips of memory, and may with common care be preserved entire so long as the manuscript lasts: and this experience shews may be above two thousand years. The Alexandrine manuscript is allowed to

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[2] George Berkeley, *Alciphron*, in A.C. Fraser, ed., *The Works of George Berkeley, D.D.*, vol. 2 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1871), 223–24.

[3] Berkeley, *Alciphron,* 224.

be above twelve hundred years old; and it is highly probable there were then extant copies four hundred years old. A tradition, therefore, of above sixteen hundred years old need have only two or three links in its chain. And these links, notwithstanding that great length of time, may be very sound and entire. Since no reasonable man will deny, that an ancient manuscript may be of much the same credit now as when it was first written. We have it on good authority, and it seems probable, that the primitive Christians were careful to transcribe copies of the gospels and epistles for their private use; and that other copies were preserved as public records, in the several churches throughout the world; and that portions thereof were constantly read in their assemblies. Can more be said to prove the writings of classic authors, or ancient records of any kind authentic?[4]

Alciphron is out of his depth here, so he resorts to a distinction between arguments that silence and those that convince:

Alciphron, addressing his discourse to Euphranor, said—It is one thing to silence an adversary, and another to convince him. What do you think, Euphranor?

Euph. Doubtless, it is.

Alc. But what I want is to be convinced.

Euph. That point is not so clear.[5]

A bit further on in the same Dialogue, Alciphron complains that the canon of the New Testament was not settled until hundreds of years after the books were written; and "what was uncertain in the primitive times cannot be undoubted in the subsequent." Euphranor, before answering, asks for some clarification of the argument:

Euph. I should be glad to conceive your meaning clearly before I return an answer. It seems to me this objection of yours supposeth that where a tradition hath been constant and undisputed, such tradition may be admitted as a proof, but that where the tradition is defective, the proof must be so too. Is this your meaning?

Alc. It is.[6]

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[4] Berkeley, *Alciphron*, 224–25.
[5] Berkeley, *Alciphron*, 225.
[6] Berkeley, *Alciphron*, 227.

The opposing argument having been stated plainly, Berkeley's protagonist does not undertake to argue for the genuineness of every book of the New Testament but rather reverses the charge, pointing out what such reasoning implies regarding the Gospels and the letters of Paul, which were at that time universally accepted as genuine:

> *Euph*. Consequently the Gospels, and Epistles of St. Paul, which were universally received in the beginning, and never since doubted of by the Church, must, notwithstanding this objection, be in reason admitted for genuine. And, if these books contain, as they really do, all those points that come into controversy between you and me, what need I dispute with you about the authority of some other books of the New Testament, which came later to be generally known and received in the Church? If a man assent to the undisputed books, he is no longer an infidel; though he should not hold the Revelations, or the Epistle of St. James or Jude, or the latter of St. Peter, or the two last of St. John to be canonical. The additional authority of these portions of Holy Scripture may have its weight in particular controversies between Christians, but can add nothing to arguments against an infidel as such. Wherefore, though I believe good reasons may be assigned for receiving these books, yet these reasons seem now beside our purpose. When you are a Christian it will be then time enough to argue this point. And you will be the nearer being so, if the way be shortened by omitting it for the present.[7]

The canny skeptic now shifts his ground to a recognizably modern position and raises the specter of wholesale forgery:

> *Alc*. Not so near neither as you perhaps imagine: for, notwithstanding all the fair and plausible things you may say about tradition, when I consider the spirit of forgery which reigned in the primitive times, and reflect on the several Gospels, Acts, and Epistles, attributed to the apostles, which yet are acknowledged to be spurious, I confess I cannot help suspecting the whole.[8]

But Euphranor charges him with the use of an inconsistent set of standards:

> *Euph*. Tell me, Alciphron, do you suspect all Plato's writings for spurious, because the *Dialogue upon Death*, for instance, is allowed to be so? Or will you admit none of Tully's writings to be genuine, because Sigonius imposed a book of his own writing

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[7] Berkeley, *Alciphron*, 227–28.
[8] Berkeley, *Alciphron*, 228.

for Tully's treatise *De Consolatione*, and the imposture passed for some time on the world?

Alc. Suppose I admit for the works of Tully and Plato those that commonly pass for such. What then?

Euph. Why then I would fain know whether it be equal and impartial in a free-thinker, to measure the credibility of profane and sacred books by a different rule. Let us know upon what foot we Christians are to argue with minute philosophers; whether we may be allowed the benefit of common maxims in logic and criticism? If we may, be pleased to assign a reason why supposititious writings, which in the style and manner and matter bear visible marks of imposture, and have accordingly been rejected by the Church, can be made an argument against those which have been universally received, and handed down by an unanimous constant tradition. There have been in all ages, and in all great societies of men many capricious, vain, or wicked impostors, who for different ends have abused the world by spurious writings, and created work for critics both in profane and sacred learning. And it would seem as silly to reject the true writings of profane authors for the sake of the spurious, as it would seem unreasonable to suppose, that among the heretics and several sects of Christians there should be none capable of the like imposture.[9]

At this point, Alciphron changes the subject again and begins objecting to divine inspiration.

Writing seventy years after the publication of *Alciphron*, Timothy Dwight calls the work "a store-house, whence many succeeding writers have drawn their materials, and their arguments. . . . The reasoning is clear, sound, and conclusive; and has never been answered." Dwight was in a position to know, for he leaned heavily on the best work of the previous century in his strenuous and largely successful endeavor to combat the rampant infidelity he found when he assumed the presidency of Yale.[10]

Berkeley's performance in *Alciphron* garnered praise outside of academic circles. The poet Elizabeth Rowe, in correspondence with the Countess of Hertford in 1732, thanked her friend warmly for sending a copy of the book:

You have given me a real and extensive satisfaction, by the book you sent me. I read it with a secret gratitude to the author, as being a benefactor to mankind, in endeavouring to secure their highest interest; nothing can be writ with more argument and

[9] Berkeley, *Alciphron*, 228–29.
[10] See Charles Beecher, ed., *Autobiography, Correspondence, etc. of Lyman Beecher, vol. 1* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1864), 43–44.

vivacity, nor more seasonably, in this juncture of apostacy from
the Christian religion.[11]

If there were nothing more of interest in *Alciphron* than a demon-
stration that the arguments and rhetorical techniques of some popular
contemporary atheists have not changed in the intervening three centuries,
that would be ground enough for recommending it. But on a closer read-
ing, there is more. Consider this comment by Euphranor, from the Sixth
Dialogue, where Alciphron has just waved aside any appeal to the argument
from fulfilled prophecy by declining to look into the matter:

> *Euph*. To an extraordinary genius, who sees things with half an
> eye, I know not what to say. But for the rest of mankind, one
> would think it very rash in them to conclude, without much and
> exact inquiry, on the unsafe side of a question which concerns
> their chief interest.[12]

This light comment contains the seed of an important point that Joseph
Butler would develop fully a few years later in *The Analogy of Religion*. The
fact that much is at stake for someone who rejects Christianity is presented
as a motivation, not to *believe* in it—that would be more along the lines of
Pascal's famous wager—but to *inquire* into it carefully. The realization that it
may be true, and that if it *were* true it would be of overwhelming importance,
places a sincere inquirer under certain obligations. Here is a forgotten line of
argument that we would do well to recover.

Berkeley's friend and contemporary Thomas Sherlock, the Anglican
Bishop of London, had contributed a dialogue of his own to the deist con-
troversy just a few years earlier. His engaging book, titled *The Trial of the
Witnesses of Resurrection*, is framed as a friendly debate among some lawyers
who were discussing the merits of Thomas Woolston's *Six Discourses on the
Miracles of Our Lord*.[13] Woolston had been convicted and sentenced on a
charge of blasphemy for publishing these *Discourses*. Although the clergy
were divided regarding the propriety of taking him to court, it was plain
enough from the manner in which Woolston wrote that he was trying to
cause offense.

Sherlock wastes no time on the subject of Woolston's trial. Instead, he
develops an argument between two of the lawyer friends on the question of
whether (as Woolston urges) the apostles were guilty of giving false witness
in the matter of the resurrection of Jesus. Mr. A, who agrees to take up the

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[11] See *The Works of Mrs. Elizabeth Rowe*, vol. 4 (London: John & Arthur Arch, 1796),
171. The end of the previous letter identifies the book in question as Berkeley's *Alciphron*.

[12] Berkeley, *Alciphron*, 260.

[13] Thomas Sherlock, *The Tryal of the Witnesses of the Resurrection*, 4th ed. (London: J.
Roberts, 1729). Here and elsewhere I have silently modernized Sherlock's spelling and capi-
talization, following later editions. Woolston's *Discourses* appeared over the course of several
years from 1727–29 and were printed in London for the author.

role of counsel for the prosecution, lays out Woolston's arguments with some vigor, adding certain criticisms derived from the writings of Anthony Collins along the way. Mr. B, as counsel for the defense, addresses each of those arguments and makes the case for the veracity and integrity of the witnesses.

Woolston's arguments, rather like those of popular atheism today, range from the specious to the preposterous, and Mr. B has no difficulty obtaining a verdict of "not guilty" on behalf of the apostles. There is enough substance to the case for the defense to warrant a reading of the work today, particularly on points about the mismatch between Jewish expectations of a messiah and Jesus' actual teaching and actions. Mr. B first quotes a passage on the issue from "a friend of the gentleman's," Anthony Collins:

> It must be difficult, if not impossible, to introduce among men (who in all civiliz'd countries are bred up in the belief of some Reveal'd Religion) a Reveal'd Religion wholly new, or such as has no reference to a preceding One: For that would be to combat all men on too many respects, and not to proceed on a sufficient number of principles necessary to be assented to by those on whom the first impressions of a new Religion are propos'd to be made.[14]

Sherlock's protagonist then proceeds to turn this point into a serious concession on behalf of Christianity:

> You see now the reason of the necessity of this foundation: it is, that the new teacher may have the advantage of old popular opinions, and fix himself on the prejudices of the people. Had Christ any such advantages? or did he seek any such? The people expected a victorious prince; he told them they were mistaken: they held as sacred the traditions of the elders; he told them those traditions made the law of God of none effect: they valued themselves for being the peculiar people of God; he told them, that people from all quarters of the world should be the people of God, and sit down with *Abraham, Isaac,* and *Jacob,* in the kingdom: they thought God could be worshipped only at *Jerusalem;* he told them God might and should be worshipped every where: they were superstitious in the observance of the Sabbath; he, according to their reckoning, broke it frequently: in a word, their washings of hand and posts, their superstitious distinctions of meats, their prayers in public, their villanies in secret, were all reproved, exposed, and condemned by him; and the cry ran strongly against him, that he came to destroy the Law

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[14] Anthony Collins, *A Discourse of the Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion* (London: n.p., 1724), 23–24.

and the Prophets. And now, sir, what advantage had Christ, of your common and necessary foundation?[15]

But there is more to Sherlock's performance than just a trenchant refutation of perennial objections. Consider this claim from a recent work by the philosopher Robert Fogelin, defending David Hume's argument in "Of Miracles" against criticisms leveled by John Earman and David Johnson:[16]

> Part 1 [of Hume's essay] invokes the principle that the extreme improbability of an event's occurring itself provides grounds for calling into question the legitimacy of the testimony presented in its behalf. When the occurrence of the event is highly improbable, the standards of scrutiny rise and the challenge becomes correspondingly more forceful. Given this principle, we are *entitled* to apply very high (ultrahigh) standards to the testimony intended to establish the occurrence of a miracle. This is a key move, because it shows that Hume is not simply being arbitrary or prejudiced in insisting that the standards appropriate for evaluating testimony in behalf of miracles are much higher than the standards we normally apply in evaluating testimony.[17]

The interesting point is that Sherlock's protagonist had already anticipated this move two decades before Hume's famous essay was published—and responded to it. First, Mr. A presents the criticism in words that afford a startling anticipation of Hume:

> [A]lthough in common life we act in a thousand instances upon the faith and credit of human testimony; yet the reason for so doing is not the same in the case before us. In common affairs, where nothing is asserted but what is probable and possible, and according to the usual course of nature, a reasonable degree of evidence ought to determine every man. For the very probability or possibility of the thing is a support to the evidence; and in such cases we have no doubt but a man's senses qualify him to be a witness. But when the thing testified is contrary to the order of nature, and, at first sight at least, impossible, what evidence can be sufficient to overturn the constant evidence of nature, which she gives us in the constant and regular method of her operations? If a man tells me he has been in France, I ought to give a reason for not believing him; but if he tells me he comes

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[15] Sherlock, *The Tryal of the Witnesses of the Resurrection*, 25–26.

[16] John Earman, *Hume's Abject Failure* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); David Johnson, *Hume, Holism and Miracles* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1999).

[17] Robert Fogelin, *A Defense of Hume on Miracles* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 30–31.

from the grave, what reason can he give why I should believe him?[18]

And then, a few pages further on, Mr. B offers a rejoinder:

> A man rising from the grave is an object of sense, and can give the same evidence of his being alive, as any other man in the world can give. So that a resurrection considered only as a fact to be proved by evidence, is a plain case; it requires no greater ability in the witnesses, than that they be able to distinguish between a man dead and a man alive, a point in which I believe every man living thinks himself a judge.

> I do allow that this case, and others of like nature, require more evidence to give them credit than ordinary cases do. You may therefore require more evidence in these, than in other cases; but it is absurd to say that such cases admit no evidence, when the things in question are quite manifestly objects of sense.[19]

So Fogelin's advocacy notwithstanding, the idea of taking antecedent improbability into account can hardly be considered to be Hume's original contribution to the discussion of reported miracles. It was already circulating before Hume was out of his teens, and the reply Sherlock gives to it has lost nothing of its cogency.

Berkeley and Sherlock are far from the only ones to have written apologetic dialogues. Charles Leslie cast his favorite argument against the deists into a dialogue, and the work was still being reprinted a century after his death.[20] Philip Skelton wrote a two-volume survey of the objections of a whole range of deists—Herbert of Cherbury, the Earl of Shaftesbury, Hobbes, Toland, Tindal, Collins, Mandeville, Woolston, Dodwell, Morgan, Chubb, and more—as a dialogue.[21] Henry Rogers produced an entire novel as a rejoinder to a skeptical book written by Cardinal Newman's brother Francis.[22] Henry Huckin reworked Butler's *Analogy of Religion* into dialogue form in order to render the argument clearer and increase its audience.[23] Robert Morehead took up the dialogue form in order to answer the arguments against natural theology that Hume had propounded posthumously

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[18] Sherlock, *The Tryal of the Witnesses of the Resurrection*, 58.

[19] Sherlock, *The Tryal of the Witnesses of the Resurrection*, 55.

[20] Charles Leslie, *The Truth of Christianity Demonstrated* (London: F.C. & J. Rivington, 1820).

[21] Philip Skelton, *Deism Revealed*, 2nd ed. (London: A. Millar, 1751).

[22] Henry Rogers, *The Eclipse of Faith*, 3rd ed. (London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1853). The work is a response to Francis William Newman, *The Phases of Faith* (London: John Chapman, 1850).

[23] Henry Robert Huckin, *The Analogy of Religion* (London: Christian Evidence Committee, 1873).

in his own *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*.[24] A Bishop in India who modestly withheld his name wrote a series of dialogues between a Christian and an earnest Hindu who desires to know the grounds of Christian belief.[25] Anyone interested in pursuing this vein of the literature of Christian evidences will not lack for material.

Satires

Part of what makes the dialogues of Sherlock and Berkeley worth reading is their willingness to do a bit of rhetorical skewering of their dialectical foes. But some authors have gone a good deal further. The literature of apologetics boasts a number of fine satires that pursue a single idea—usually the application of some set of skeptical ideas to a secular historical topic—with hilarious results.

The best-known apologetic satire is undoubtedly Richard Whately's *Historic Doubts relative to Napoleon Buonaparte*.[26] This amusing work, first published in 1819, was provoked by an article in the *Edinburgh Review* praising Hume's essay on miracles as "a work abounding in maxims of great use in the conduct of life."[27] Whately sets out, with frequent ironic tips of the hat to Hume, to show just how "useful" they really are. He argues that the exploits attributed to Napoleon Buonaparte are not credible, despite the overwhelming testimony to them, because of their many improbabilities. Rather than believe them to be true, he professes to prefer the hypothesis that Napoleon is a fictional creation of the British government designed to promote national unity and frighten ordinary citizens into paying their taxes. Whately pursues the subject so adroitly that some of his readers actually believed the book to be a serious argument for universal skepticism—a fact that afforded him considerable amusement.

A few examples will give the flavor of his approach better than any mere summary could. Our sources of information regarding the supposed exploits of Napoleon are, Whately argues, mostly hearsay, as most people derive their information on the subject from newspaper reports. But newspapers notoriously copy from one another. (Here Whately subjoins in a footnote a quotation from Laplace regarding the diminution of testimony through a long chain by multiplying probabilities, a favorite argument of contemporary skeptics as well.)

[24] Robert Morehead, *Dialogues on Natural and Revealed Religion* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1880).

[25] Anonymous, *The Inquiries of Ramchandra* (Calcutta: Oxford Mission, 1882); see especially dialogue XI.

[26] Richard Whately, *Historic Doubts Relative to Napoleon Buonaparte*, 11th ed. (Andover: Warren F. Draper, 1874).

[27] *Edinburgh Review* 23 (1814): 320–40. The piece, a review of Laplace's *Essai Philosophique sur les Probabilites* (1814), was published anonymously.

Even aside from the worry of copying, newspaper editors

profess to refer to the authority of certain "private correspon-
dents" abroad; *who* these correspondents are, what means *they*
have of obtaining information, or whether they exist at all, we
have no way of ascertaining.[28]

The parallel to a popular criticism of the Gospels as sources of infor-
mation is plain. We do not (allegedly) know who these writers were, we do
not know what their sources of information might have been, and aside from
all that, who knows what an editor may have done with the original reports
he was given?

But Whately is only warming up. The reports we have, whatever their
provenance, are wildly contradictory. The discordance and mutual contradic-
tions of these witnesses, he writes, are

such as would alone throw a considerable shade of doubt over
their testimony. It is not in minute circumstances alone that
the discrepancy appears, such as might be expected to appear
in a narrative substantially true; but in very great and leading
transactions, and such as are very intimately connected with the
supposed hero. For instance, it is by no means agreed whether
Buonaparte led in person the celebrated charge over the bridge
of Lodi, (for *celebrated* it certainly is, as well as the siege of Troy,
whether either event ever really took place or no,) or was safe in
the rear, while Augereau performed the exploit. The same doubt
hangs over the charge of the French cavalry at Waterloo. . . . In
the accounts that are the extant of the battle itself, published by
persons professing to have been present, the reader will find that
there is a discrepancy of *three or four hours* as to the time when the
battle began!—a battle, be it remembered, not fought with jav-
elins and arrows, like those of the ancients, in which one part of a
large army might be engaged, whilst a distant portion of the same
army knew nothing of it; but a battle commencing (if indeed it
were ever fought at all) with the *firing of cannon*, which, would
have announced pretty loudly what was going on.[29]

And beyond such discrepancies between sources, the whole story of Napo-
leon even from any one source is full of incongruities and implausibilities.

All the events are great, and splendid, and marvellous; great
armies,—great victories,—great frosts,—great reverses,—"hair-
breadth' scapes,"—empires subverted in a few days; everything

[28] Whately, *Historic Doubts Relative to Napoleon Buonaparte*, 13–14.
[29] Whately, *Historic Doubts Relative to Napoleon Buonaparte*, 16–17.

happened in defiance of political calculations, and in opposition to the *experience* of past times; everything upon that grand scale, so common in epic poetry, so rare in real life; and thus calculated to strike the imagination of the vulgar, and to remind the sober-thinking few of the Arabian Nights. Every event, too, has that *roundness* and completeness which is so characteristic of fiction; nothing is done by halves; we have *complete* victories,—*total* over-throws, *entire* subversion of empires,—*perfect* reestablishments of them,—crowded upon us in rapid succession. To enumerate the improbabilities of each of the several parts of this history, would fill volumes; but they are so fresh in every one's memory, that there is no need of such a detail. Let any judicious man, not igno-rant of history and of human nature, revolve them in his mind, and consider how far they are conformable to experience, our best and only sure guide.[30]

In a fine twist toward the end of his satire, Whately draws the reader's attention to the peculiar focus on one *nationality* in the legend of Napoleon.

Buonaparte prevailed over all the hostile States in turn, *except England;* in the zenith of his power, his fleets were swept from the sea, *by England;* his troops always defeat an equal, and frequently even a superior number of those of any other nation, *except the English;* and with them it is just the reverse; twice, and twice only, he is personally engaged against an *English commander*, and both times he is totally defeated—at Acre, and at Waterloo; and to crown all, *England* finally crushes this tremendous power, which had so long kept the continent in subjection or in alarm, and to the *English* he surrenders himself prisoner! Thoroughly national, to be sure! It *may* be all very true; but I would only ask, *if* a story *had* been fabricated for the express purpose of amusing the English nation, could it have been contrived more ingeniously? It would do admirably for an epic poem; and, indeed, bears a considerable resemblance to the Iliad and the Æneid; in which Achilles and the Greeks, Æneas and the Trojans (the ancestors of the Romans), are so studiously held up to admiration.[31]

This passage is amusing enough, but the best part comes in a foot-note in which Whately quotes from the second part of Hume's essay "Of Miracles": "The wise lend a very academic faith to every report which favours the passion of the reporter, whether it magnifies his *country*, his family, or himself." So much for the credibility of *English* sources on this subject!

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[30] Whately, *Historic Doubts Relative to Napoleon Buonaparte*, 23.
[31] Whately, *Historic Doubts Relative to Napoleon Buonaparte*, 32.

Whately's *jeu d'esprit* ran through fourteen editions in his own lifetime, and his manner of illustrating the folly of Hume's principles inspired other authors to take up the same weapons. On the other side of the Atlantic, Charles Hudson, a minister, statesman, and historian, produced an American satire framed as a discussion of the variations in the accounts of the first battle of the Revolutionary War.[32]

Hudson takes on the persona of a religious skeptic who wishes to commend to his Christian readers the principles of Hume's philosophy, and most particularly the principle that "experience is the only sure guide to reasoning concerning matters of fact." Where, then, does that principle lead us when we apply it to the story of the battle of Bunker's Hill and the burning of Charlestown? Most of his readers have seen Charlestown often enough, but they have never seen it in flames. "If we rely upon our own experience," he concludes, "the matter is decided at once; and decided against the commonly received opinion."[33] It is true that there are still alive at the time of writing a few individuals who profess to be eyewitnesses of the events of the 17th of June, 1775.

> But what is our experience in relation to human testimony? We know that most men may easily be deceived, and that there are not wanting those who will willingly deceive others. We must bear in mind, that we have the experience of ninety-nine to one against this pretended battle; and that the experience of the ninety-nine is uniform, whereas the experience of the one is variable. The few who profess to have seen the battle, will themselves allow that they have visited this famous spot at other times, and have not beheld anything like what appeared to their vision on that day. Their experience of the battle, therefore, is not only contrary to the experience of others, but contrary to their own experience at all other times.[34]

Besides this point, the few who claim to be eyewitnesses are by this time "old, superannuated men" whose memories are hardly to be trusted. By such means, Hudson's skeptic attempts to undermine the force of testimony for an historical event that is supposed to have occurred only once.

The witnesses, moreover, are not to be trusted, for they doubtless gained reputation and status, and perhaps also pensions, for their claims to have been at Bunker's Hill on that day. The events to which they bear testimony are improbable—Hudson adduces elementary failures in military strategy on both the American and the British sides—and the testimony itself in some

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[32] Charles Hudson, *Doubts Concerning the Battle of Bunker's Hill* (Boston and Cambridge: James Munroe and Co., 1857). The work first appeared in the pages of the *Christian Examiner* for March 1846.

[33] Hudson, *Doubts Concerning the Battle of Bunker's Hill*, 11–12.

[34] Hudson, *Doubts Concerning the Battle of Bunker's Hill*, 12–13.

respects is flatly contradictory. Even the public monument commemorating the event gives it the lie, for it is erected, not on Bunker's Hill, but on Breed's Hill.

When we take all of these improbabilities and contradictions together, and we recall Hume's dictum that when the event itself is improbable, it requires a greater degree of evidence to sustain it, we are moved to inquire about alternative explanations. Hudson's skeptic suggests that the exigencies of the British occupation of Boston called forth an ingenious Yankee trick:

> May we not, therefore, safely infer, that some knowing one, judging rightly of the effect that such a battle would have upon the Colonies generally, invented this story in order to bring aid from abroad, and to show the people that England was determined to reduce them to vassalage by fire and sword?[35]

After a good deal more of this sort of argument by insinuation and selective invocation of high standards of evidence, Hudson's skeptic proposes a dilemma.

> If we follow Hume, we shall unsettle the faith of thousands, and destroy all confidence in history; and if we adhere to the common opinion of the events of June 17th, 1775, we assail the great logician, draw upon ourselves the charge of being credulous, and are justly exposed to the sneers of all unbelievers; . . . Moreover, we shall, in such case, be required to believe not only in the battle of Bunker's Hill, but in other events recorded in history. We shall also be compelled to believe in the events recorded in the Scriptures, and to receive the precepts of Christ and his Apostles, which have always been found to be troublesome . . .[36]

With that confession, the skeptic's mask of impartiality slips, and he begins to make excuses for not reading the literature of the evidences of Christianity. Nathaniel Lardner's *Credibility*, he explains, is too long, as is William Paley's *Evidences*, and Joseph Butler's *Analogy of Religion* would require "more study and thought than most of us wish to bestow upon that subject."[37] Gilbert West's work on the resurrection "is a small book, but exceedingly difficult to answer," George Lyttelton's apologetic study of the conversion of St. Paul "has so perplexed me, that I have resolved never to

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[35] Hudson, *Doubts Concerning the Battle of Bunker's Hill*, 23.

[36] Hudson, *Doubts Concerning the Battle of Bunker's Hill*, 35–36.

[37] Hudson, *Doubts Concerning the Battle of Bunker's Hill*, 36. The references are to Nathaniel Lardner, *Credibility of the Gospel History*, 17 vols. (1727–55), collected and published in the first five volumes of Andrew Kippis, ed., *The Works of the Rev. Nathaniel Lardner* (London: Joseph Ogle Robinson, 1829); William Paley, *A View of the Evidences of Christianity*, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (London: R. Faulder, 1794); and Joseph Butler, *The Analogy of Religion* (Dublin: J. Jones, 1736).

attempt to read it again," and even Charles Leslie's *Short and Easy Method with the Deists* "is far too *long* and *hard* for me to answer."[38] It is far simpler to take a "short and easy" method of avoiding these detailed arguments altogether, a method we may find in "the talismanic reply of Mr. Hume—*The experience of the world is against it.*"[39]

Where Whately and Hudson direct their fire against the skeptical principles of David Hume, Oliver Price Buel targets an outgrowth of that skepticism in the form of German biblical criticism of the late 19th century.[40] In particular, Buel fixes his sights on T.H. Huxley, the noted British comparative anatomist, who retailed the arguments of David Friedrich Strauss and of the Tübingen school of Biblical Criticism in various journal articles. Huxley, who coined the word "agnosticism" to describe his own position toward the existence of God, had a sharp pen, and his sardonic wit and scientific credentials carried rhetorical weight even when he was writing well outside the field of his own professional expertise. A collection of his articles originally published in *The Nineteenth Century* is the focus of Buel's satire.[41]

Unlike Whately and Hudson, who adopted a narrative voice of one contemporary with their readers, Buel's persona is a skeptic from the thirty-seventh century. Looking back on the history of the American Civil War from a distance of eighteen centuries, he professes surprise at the fact that there are still people in his own time who take the narratives of that era more or less at face value. How can they have forgotten the lessons of the great German theologians, who taught the methods for dissolving all historical records into a shapeless puddle of doubt? And so the skeptic stakes out his contrary claim:

> [C]ritics of the thirty-seventh century are better qualified to pass upon the truth of the popular story of Abraham Lincoln, and the authenticity, competency, and credibility of such narratives as Greeley's "American Conflict" and Grant's "Personal Memoirs," than were those living in the twentieth or in the latter part of the nineteenth century.[42]

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[38] Hudson, *Doubts Concerning the Battle of Bunker's Hill*, 36-37. Here the references are to Gilbert West, *Observations on the History and Evidences of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ*, 4th ed. (London: R. Dodsley, 1749); George Lyttleton, *Observations on the Conversion and Apostleship of St. Paul* (London: R. Dodsley, 1747); and Charles Leslie, *A Short and Easie Method with the Deists*, 8th ed. (London: J. Applebee, 1723).

[39] Hudson, *Doubts Concerning the Battle of Bunker's Hill*, 37.

[40] Oliver Price Buel, *The Abraham Lincoln Myth* (New York: The Mascot Publishing Co., 1894). The first installment of this satire originally appeared in *The Catholic World* 58 (November, 1893): 254-63. The second installment (December, 1893) is attributed to "Bocardo Bramantip, Huxleyan Professor of Dialectics in the University of Congo" and purports to be reprinted from "The Thirty-seventh Century Magazine, April, A.D. 3663."

[41] Thomas Henry Huxley, *Essays Upon Some Controverted Questions* (New York: D. Appleton, 1892).

[42] Buel, *The Abraham Lincoln Myth*, 27.

About the marvelous stories that have grown up around Abraham Lincoln, Buel's skeptic says that they are nothing more than the outgrowth of the sort of hero worship we see in the tales of Robin Hood, King Arthur, and Don Quixote. Of such stories he says, quoting Huxley on miracles, "If one is false all may be false."[43] In an age of dispassionate criticism and scientific thought, we no longer give credit to tales that are in any way exceptional. Our own present experience is the measure of all that we may accept in the records of the past; and if, in the thirty-seventh century, we see nothing of a career like that of Abraham Lincoln, then we may justly conclude that it is improbable and incredible that it occurred in the nineteenth. For that is the principle by which "our agnostic predecessors in the nineteenth century made short work of the Gospels."[44]

But Buel's futuristic freethinker reserves his most vigorous attack for the alleged Emancipation Proclamation, and he marshals six lines of argument designed to discredit the story that any such document ever existed. First, the autograph of that hypothetical document has disappeared, and the oldest copies available to our thirty-seventh century historian are from between three and six centuries after the fact. In such an interval, he says (quoting Huxley), "there is no telling what additions and alterations and interpolations may have been made."[45]

Second, the *groundwork* (Buel's skeptic borrows the term from Huxley, who uses it in his description of the four Gospels) for the story of the Emancipation Proclamation consists mainly in newspaper accounts of the day, and such accounts—*quelle horreur!*—were *anonymous*.[46] Thus Buel tips his hat to Whately's earlier satire while skewering Huxley.

Third, the story of the Emancipation Proclamation "is wholly irreconcilable with the Constitution of the United States."[47] Article 10 of the Constitution reserves to the states or the people any powers not specifically enumerated; and the power to emancipate slaves is nowhere to be found within the Constitution. Lincoln himself, barely four months before he supposedly issued that proclamation, said that his object was to save the Union "under the Constitution," and it is therefore clear that so principled a man as Lincoln is supposed to have been could not have proposed to do what he is supposed to have done.[48]

Fourth, the Thirteenth Amendment, ratified in 1865, explicitly frees the slaves. But if there had been an Emancipation Proclamation, what need or purpose could such an amendment have served? To the response that the

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[43] Buel, *The Abraham Lincoln Myth*, 29–30, quoting Huxley, *Essays Upon Some Controverted Questions*, 374.

[44] Buel, *The Abraham Lincoln Myth*, 32.

[45] Buel, *The Abraham Lincoln Myth*, 47, quoting Huxley, *Essays Upon Some Controverted Questions*, 265.

[46] Buel, *The Abraham Lincoln Myth*, 48–49.

[47] Buel, *The Abraham Lincoln Myth*, 50.

[48] Buel, *The Abraham Lincoln Myth*, 53, quoting Lincoln's letter to Greeley of August 22, 1862.

Emancipation Proclamation was supposed to have freed only slaves in the Confederate states, Buel's skeptic replies that those were the vast majority of the slaves, and it is hardly credible that the institution could have lived on within the Union more than a year after it had been abolished throughout the Confederacy.

Fifth, there is a weighty argument from silence against the Emancipation Proclamation. For Ulysses Grant, in his two volumes of memoirs, never mentions such a proclamation. How could a Union general and close personal friend of Lincoln, in a work published within a quarter of a century of that event, possibly fail to mention it, had it occurred? His memoirs are comprehensive and detailed, and they treat not only of military matters but also of political history and particularly of the slavery question. It is unthinkable that he could have failed to mention the proclamation, had it been given; and it is equally unthinkable that he could have been unaware of it. Therefore, the Emancipation Proclamation did not happen.

It is true that we have other accounts of the Civil War that *do* mention the proclamation. But if Professor Huxley was entitled to give preference to one Gospel over another, and to treat everything omitted by that Gospel but included in others as fictional, then a thirty-seventh century historian might claim the right to do the same with nineteenth-century documents.[49]

Sixth, there are *discrepancies* in the various narratives of the Civil War. Now in the story of the Gadarene demoniac, the fact that Mark and Luke mention only one possessed man, while Matthew mentions two, is a sufficient ground for Professor Huxley to call the whole thing into question.[50] Therefore, discrepancies in the stories may be taken equally well to invalidate accounts of events in America in the nineteenth century. Buel's skeptic does pause to quote, with some bafflement, a passage from an eminent authority on the law of evidence:

> It has been well remarked by a great observer, that "the usual character of human testimony is substantial truth under circumstantial variety." It so rarely happens that witnesses of the same transaction perfectly and entirely agree in all points connected with it, that an entire and complete coincidence in every particular, so far from strengthening their credit, not unfrequently engenders a suspicion of practice and concert.[51]

[49] Buel, *The Abraham Lincoln Myth*, 61–64. Compare Huxley, *Essays Upon Some Controverted Questions*, 324-35, regarding the omission of the Sermon on the Mount from Mark's Gospel.

[50] See Huxley, *Essays Upon Some Controverted Questions*, 345–49, and note the emphasis he places on this point on page 347: "The most unabashed of reconcilers can not well say that one man is the same as two, or two as one; . . ."

[51] Buel, *The Abraham Lincoln Myth*, 75. The passage may be found in Thomas Starkie, *A Practical Treatise of the Law of Evidence* (London: J. & W.T. Clarke, 1833), 488, though Buel quotes it from a different edition. The "great observer" Starkie quotes is William Paley, who makes this remark in his *View of the Evidences of Christianity* (op. cit. in note 37), 2:289.

But such a lax view of discrepancies simply will not allow the skeptic to do his job. "It is fortunate for the 'higher historical criticism'," Buel's skeptic observes, "that it knows nothing of legal rules of evidence."[52]

I have restricted this discussion of the forgotten apologetic literature to just two genres, and within those genres, I have described only a few illustrative works. But the literature also contains forgotten works of many other types: sermons, lectures, textbooks, correspondence, rejoinders to particular skeptical works, surveys of controversies that spanned more than one generation, novels, poems, and even the libretto to a famous oratorio. Nearly all of these works have lain unread for a century or more, perhaps because contemporary scholars have assumed, as I once did, that they contain nothing but the cold ashes of debates that have burned out long ago. That is a fair characterization of some of them. But others contain insights and arguments like live coals, wanting only a fresh breeze to fan them into open flame. The exploration of our forgotten legacy is just beginning.[53]

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[52] Buel, *The Abraham Lincoln Myth*, 77.

Souls and Christian Eschatology:
A Critique of Christian Physicalism

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The Definition of Chalcedon enjoins us to confess that Jesus Christ is "perfect" both in deity and human-ness, and that he is "actually God and actually man, with a rational soul and a body. He is of the same reality … as we ourselves as far as his human-ness is concerned; thus like us in all respects, sin only excepted."[1] Such a confession intertwines subtle but important Christological and anthropological questions. We are prompted to consider, for example, the nature of the Incarnation, as well as the death and Resurrection of Christ.[2] But these considerations cannot be isolated from such anthropological questions as, What does it mean to be human? What *is* a human: a soul, a soul and body, or simply a body with a brain?

Regarding the composition of human beings, most thinkers—Christian and non-Christian alike—traditionally have held that a human person is a unity of two distinct entities: one physical (the body) and one immaterial (the soul). It is generally acknowledged that the historic position of Christendom is (some sort of) "dualism," that is, the view that human persons are composites of body and soul such that it is possible for them to survive the separation of the soul from the body. So Augustine: "the soul is united to the body in the unity of the person. . . . For, if the soul is not mistaken about its nature, it grasps that it is incorporeal."[3] "It must necessarily be allowed that the principle of intellectual operation," agrees Aquinas, "which we call the soul of a man, is a principle both incorporeal and subsistent."[4] The Westminster Confession of Faith (1646) distinguishes sharply between body and soul:

> The bodies of men, after death, return to dust, and see corruption; but their souls (which neither die nor sleep), having an immor-

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[1] "The Definition of Chalcedon," in *Creeds of the Churches*, 3rd ed., ed. John H. Leith (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1982), 35–36.

[2] Oliver Crisp offers a lucid discussion of these questions in a Christological context in his *God Incarnate: Explorations in Christology* (New York: T&T Clark, 2009), 137–54.

[3] Augustine, *Letters 100–155*, trans. Roland Teske, S.J. (New York: New City Press, 2003), 137.11. See also Bruno Niederbacher, "The Human Soul: Augustine's Case for Soul-Body Dualism," in *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine*, 2nd ed., ed. David Vincent Meconi and Eleonore Stump (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 125–41.

[4] Thomas Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica*, in *Introduction to St. Thomas Aquinas*, ed. Anton C. Pegis (New York: Random House, 1948), q. 75, a. 2.

tal subsistence, immediately return to God who gave them. The
souls of the righteous . . . are received in the highest heavens,
where they behold the face of God in light and glory, waiting for
the full redemption of their bodies: and the souls of the wicked
are cast into hell, where they remain . . . reserved to the judgment
of the great day. Besides these two places for souls separated from
their bodies, the Scripture acknowledgeth none.[5]

For his part, Calvin likewise affirms "that man consists of a soul and
a body," where "soul" refers to "an immortal yet created essence, which is
[man's] nobler part."[6] Whether because it is taken as the straightforward
teaching of Scripture, as being entailed by doctrinal commitments, or simply
as the common-sense account of one's irreducible first-person point of view,
soul-body dualism remains the prevailing view in the Christian tradition.[7]
And yet dualism increasingly is being rejected by the unlikeliest of scholars:
Christian scholars.

A growing number of Christian scholars, including theologians,
philosophers, and exegetes, a group collectively referred to as "Chris-
tian physicalists," are adopting the claim that humans are wholly physical
beings. Although they preserve the belief that God is non-physical, Chris-
tian physicalists argue that human beings neither possess nor are identical
to non-physical souls. But is such a position viable as a distinctly *Christian*
anthropology? After expanding our understanding of the notion of "phys-
icalism," I shall focus our attention on its dominant expressions amongst
Christian physicalists, before ultimately arguing that each expression fails to
account for certain fundamental Christian doctrines. For this reason, I argue,
Christian physicalism ought to be rejected as an unsuitable anthropology for
Christians.

Physicalism

The term "physicalism" can be a slippery one. In some usages it refers
to the thesis that there is no entity in existence that is not a purely physi-
cal entity, a gloss perhaps more suitably labeled "global physicalism." We
are not presently interested in global physicalism. Our interest, rather, is
"physicalism" intended as a certain ontology of human persons, including

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[5] "The Westminster Confession of Faith (1646)," in *Creeds of the Churches*, 228.

[6] John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, vol. 1, trans. Ford Lewis Battles, ed.
John T. McNeill (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2011), 1.15.2 (cf. 1.15.6).

[7] Further examples abound. Paul L. Gavrilyuk demonstrates the dominance of anthro-
pological dualism amongst the Patristics in his "The Incorporeality of the Soul in Patristic
Thought," in *Christian Physicalism? Philosophical Theological Criticisms*, ed. R. Keith Loftin and
Joshua R. Farris (New York: Lexington Books, 2017), 1–26. See also John W. Cooper, "Scrip-
ture and Philosophy on the Unity of Body and Soul: An Integrative Method for Theological
Anthropology," in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Theological Anthropology*, ed. Joshua R.
Farris and Charles Taliaferro (New York: Routledge, 2015), 27–42.

their consciousness. Against the backdrop of naturalism's strengthening influence, the twentieth century saw dualism widely replaced by views of human persons as wholly physical beings. This trend has found its stride in the present century, as physical science increasingly is regarded as trumping other disciplines in the search for knowledge.[8] This is particularly evident in the influence exerted by neuroscientific claims that functions and features of human persons traditionally attributed to immaterial souls are explainable entirely in terms of the physical brain/body. As Nancey Murphy, a Christian theologian at Fuller Theological Seminary, writes: "Science has provided a massive amount of evidence suggesting that we need not postulate the existence of an entity such as a soul or mind in order to explain life and consciousness."[9] Thus, in Murphy's estimation, "all of the functions once attributed to the soul (perception, reason, emotion, moral awareness, even religious experience) are yielding to brain studies."[10] Daniel Dennett, himself having no interest in theology, is customarily forthright on this score:

> This fundamentally antiscientific stance of dualism is, to my mind, its most disqualifying feature, and is the reason why . . . I adopt the apparently dogmatic rule that dualism is to be avoided *at all costs*. It is not that I think I can give a knock-down proof that dualism, in all its forms, is false or incoherent, but that, given the way dualism wallows in mystery, *accepting dualism is giving up*.[11]

While the truth of these claims may be dubious, they do reveal the perception that neuroscience has displaced belief in the soul in favor of physicalism.

Surveying the Physicalist Landscape

While all physicalists agree in denying that human persons are (or have) substantial, immaterial souls, it is far trickier to find a widely-satis-factory articulation of just what *is* physicalism. This is largely the focus of Daniel Stoljar's influential book *Physicalism*.[12] Although sympathetic to the view, Stoljar is convinced "that there is no thesis of physicalism that is both

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[8] David Papineau presents a helpful explanation of this phenomenon in "The Rise of Physicalism," in *Physicalism and Its Discontents*, ed. Carl Gillett and Barry Loewer (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 3–36.

[9] Nancey Murphy, "Human Nature: Historical, Scientific and Religious Issues," in *Whatever Happened to the Soul?* ed. Warren S. Brown, Nancey Murphy, and H. Newton Malony (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998), 18.

[10] Nancey Murphy, "Natural Science," in *The Oxford Handbook of Systematic Theology*, ed. John Webster, Kathryn Tanner, and Iain Torrance (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 556.

[11] Daniel Dennett, *Consciousness Explained* (New York: Back Bay, 1991), 37.

[12] Daniel Stoljar, *Physicalism* (New York: Routledge, 2010). Marc Cortez summa-rizes some of these same difficulties in his *Embodied Souls, Ensouled Bodies: An Exercise in*

true and deserving of the name," a circumstance due in no small part to the difficulty of specifying just what it is to be *physical*.[13] For present purposes, it will be adequate to point to paradigm cases of physical objects—rocks or atoms, for example—and say that *being physical* is *being like one of these*. Happily, there is sufficient agreement amongst physicalists about human persons to adopt the following as a working definition: physicalism is the thesis that all features (e.g., bicuspids, biceps, and brains) and functions (whether mental, physical, or spiritual) of human beings can be fully accounted for in terms of the physical (or microphysical).[14] And this, of course, spells the wholesale rejection of dualism.

Reductive Physicalism

Broadly speaking, physicalist views divide into two categories: reductive and non-reductive versions. The former, sometimes also referred to as the "identity theory," is best understood as claiming that mental states (that is, states such as *being in pain* or *intending to read Aristotle* or *believing that Samwise was the real hero*) are *identical* to or *reduce* to brain states/processes.[15] In other words, reductionists tend to hold that talk of mental or psychological states will (eventually) reduce to talk of physics. As Paul Churchland puts it:

> The red surface of an apple does not *look* like a matrix of molecules reflecting photons at certain critical wave-lengths, but that is what it is. The sound of a flute does not *sound* like a sinusoidal compression wave train in the atmosphere, but that is what it is. The warmth of the summer air does not *feel* like the mean kinetic energy of millions of tiny molecules, but that is what it is. If one's pains and hopes and beliefs do not introspectively seem like electrochemical states in a neural network, that may be only because our faculty of introspection, like our other senses, is not sufficiently penetrating to reveal such hidden details.[16]

Christological Anthropology and Its Significance for the Mind/Body Debate (New York: T&T Clark, 2008), 116ff.

[13] Stoljar, *Physicalism*, 90. See also his "Two Conceptions of the Physical," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 62/2 (March 2001): 253–81. Cf. Jaegwon Kim, *Physicalism, or Something Near Enough* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), 33.

[14] We might follow Geoffrey Maddell in his understanding of the word "physical." He writes: "there is a notion of the physical which seems reasonably clear: what is physical is that which the physical sciences recognise to be such, and that in turn suggests a view of the universe as consisting of assemblies of elementary particles, a view which the great majority of those who call themselves materialists operate with." Geoffrey Maddell, *Mind & Materialism* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1988), 5.

[15] Or, as Jaegwon Kim puts it, "reductive physicalism defends the position that mental properties are reducible to, and therefore can be identified with, physical properties." Jaegwon Kim, *Philosophy of Mind*, 3rd ed. (Boulder, CO: Westview, 2011), 57.

[16] Paul Churchland, *Matter and Consciousness*, rev. ed. (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1988), 15.

This is so, it is held, despite the *appearance* that some mental states transcend or "break free" of the physical; if we can gain exhaustive knowledge of Paul's physical properties, then we shall have everything we need in order to have exhaustive knowledge of Paul's mental properties. Thus, as D.M. Armstrong summarizes,

> What does modern science have to say about the nature of man? . . . I think it is true to say that one view is steadily gaining ground, so that it bids fair to become established scientific doctrine. This is the view that we can give a complete account of man *in purely physico-chemical terms* . . . I think it is fair to say that those scientists who still reject the physico-chemical account of man do so primarily for philosophical, or moral, or religious reasons, and only secondarily, and half-heartedly, for reasons of scientific detail. . . .
>
> For me, then, and for many philosophers who think like me, the moral is clear. We must try to work out an account of the nature of mind which is compatible with the view that man is nothing but a physico-chemical mechanism.[17]

To be clear, there are disagreements amongst reductive physicalists—including, for example, whether or not mental states should (or even can) be reduced to behaviors, and whether every *type* of mental state can be identified with some *type* of brain state.[18]

Christian physicalists overwhelmingly have rejected the reductive version(s) of physicalism, and this for various reasons. Nancey Murphy writes that she rejects the "contemporary philosophical views that say that the person is 'nothing but' a body," desiring instead to "explain how we can claim that we *are* our bodies, yet without denying the 'higher' capacities that we think of as being essential for our humanness: rationality, emotion, morality, free will, and, most important, the capacity to be in relationship with God."[19] Murphy's desire to preserve these essential capacities is well-placed, it seems to me, since they are needed for even a minimalist Christianity to be true. One must *freely trust Christ* and *believe Jesus is truly God*, after all. Moreover, Christian physicalists are doubtlessly keen to avoid the hard problem of accounting for the *qualia* (that is, the "what it is like" texture or quality) of our conscious experiences. The idea is that when I have a certain experi-

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[17] D.M. Armstrong, "The Nature of Mind," in *Readings in Philosophy of Psychology*, vol. 1, ed. Ned Block (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980), 191.

[18] Some of these are explored in E.J. Lowe, *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Mind* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), chapter three. Philosophers customarily distinguish between general sorts of things (types) and particular/concrete instances thereof (tokens), such as baseball games and game seven of the 2016 World Series.

[19] Nancey Murphy, "Human Nature: Historical, Scientific, and Religious Issues," in *Whatever Happened to the Soul? Scientific and Theological Portraits of Human Nature*, 2.

ence—watching my son take his first steps, say—there is a subjective quality to my experience for which no amount of third-person (viz., physical) data can account.[20] Any third-person observer will note the expression on my face and adjudge correctly that I am a happy and proud daddy, but I and I alone have unique access to knowing *what it is like* for me to watch my son take his first steps. The concern to preserve a meaningful distinction between non-physical mental properties and physical properties (of the brain) is widely shared amongst Christian physicalists, and indeed it is largely the attempt to address this concern that motivates their rejection of reductive physicalism in favor of non-reductive physicalism.

Non-Reductive Physicalism

Whereas reductive physicalists insist that all mental states are identical to or reduce to brain states/processes, non-reductive physicalists seek to preserve mental states as features (viz., properties or functions) of human persons that do not reduce ontologically to anything physical (such as brain states/processes). As one proponent of this view, Kevin Corcoran, puts it: "if something does not so much as have a capacity for intentional states, it seems equally obvious that that thing is not a candidate for personhood. So if a being lacks a capacity for intentional states, then that being, whatever it is, is not a person."[21] It therefore is not the case, on this view, that Paul's being in love is ontologically identical to or reducible to any electro-chemical brain property, although it *is* the case that Paul's mental state of *being in love* reduces to some token physical state (perhaps some arrangement or relations between Paul's various physical properties). In short, most non-reductive physicalists hold that specific *types* of mental states do not generally reduce to specific *types* of physical states, although every *token* mental state reduces to some *token* physical state. A significant motivation for this position is the desire to deny that all experiences of pain, for example, are reducible to some specific physico-chemical brain state. It seems that both Paul and Paul's dog Rover can both experience the same type of pain experience, but they are plainly not experiencing the same type of physico-chemical brain states! There is considerable variety among non-reductive physicalists when it comes to specifying just what is the relationship between Paul's "mental" state and Paul's "physical" state(s).[22]

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[20] This sort of problem is developed in Howard Robinson, "Qualia, Qualities, and Our Conception of the Physical World," in *After Physicalism*, ed. Benedikt Paul Göcke (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2012), 231–63. See also Frank Jackson's "Epiphenomenal Qualia," *Philosophical Quarterly* 32 (1982): 127–36.

[21] Kevin Corcoran, "The Constitution View of Persons," in *In Search of the Soul*, ed. Joel B. Green and Stuart L. Palmer (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2005), 160.

[22] The two most dominant conceptions of this relationship are that one's mental states either *supervene* on one's physical properties or that one's mental states are such in virtue of their *function* in human life. These views are helpfully introduced in William Jaworski, *Philosophy of Mind: A Comprehensive Introduction* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), chapter six;

Christian Physicalism

With a working knowledge of the difference between reductive and non-reductive physicalism in hand, let us turn our attention to "Christian physicalism" (CP). Now, CP is not to be understood as a third variety of physicalism beyond the reductive and non-reductive versions. It is perhaps best to think of CP as a family of views, all of which both claim Christian doctrine and deny that human persons are (or have) substantial, immaterial souls. Although he does not employ the "CP" label, New Testament scholar Joel Green, himself a Christian physicalist, expresses the latter shared commitment clearly:

> Various forms of *monism* defended among Christians require no second, metaphysical entity, such as a soul or spirit, to account for human capacities and distinctives, while insisting that human behavior cannot be explained exhaustively with recourse to genetics or neuroscience. Using various models, the monists with whom I am concerned argue that the phenomenological experiences that we label "soul" [*sic*] are neither reducible to brain activity nor evidence of a substantial, ontological entity such as a "soul," but rather represent essential aspects or capacities of the self.[23]

Thus, CP may be understood as the conjunction of Christian theological commitment and non-reductive physicalism regarding human persons. To my knowledge, all Christian physicalists opt for a non-reductive version of physicalism.

Constitutionalism

Amidst the numerous ontologies of human persons championed within the CP camp, two views (currently) stand out as dominant: the constitution view and animalism. It is important to note that neither view attempts to be a distinctly Christian anthropology *per se*; plenty of constitutionalists and animalists have no interest in Christian theological commitment.

Amongst adherents of the constitution view (also called simply "constitutionalism"), the contributions of Lynne Rudder Baker have outstripped those of her fellow Christian physicalists. Beginning with her 1995 article "Need A Christian be a Mind/Body Dualist?" Baker has argued "that what we now know about nature renders untenable the idea of a human person as

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and James D. Madden, *Mind, Matter & Nature: A Thomist Proposal for the Philosophy of Mind* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2013), chapter four.

[23] Joel B. Green, *Body, Soul and Human Life: The Nature of Humanity in the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 31. Green elaborates his stance in "Why the *Imago Dei* Should Not Be Identified with the Soul," in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Theological Anthropology*, 179–90.

consisting, even in part, of an immaterial soul."[24] Baker argues in *Persons and Bodies: A Constitution View* that one is a "human" in virtue of being constituted by a human body, and one is a "person" in virtue (essentially) of having the capacity for the first-person perspective.[25] In short, human persons are constituted by their physical bodies but nevertheless are not *identical* to them. Kevin Corcoran likewise advocates the constitution view in his *Rethinking Human Nature: A Christian Materialist Alternative to the Soul*,[26] and his edited 2001 volume *Soul, Body, and Survival: Essays on the Metaphysics of Human Persons* is among the most frequently cited works in the literature.[27]

What, according to constitutionalists, is meant by the "first-person perspective"? As Baker explains it, "the first-person perspective is a very peculiar ability that all and only persons have. It is the ability to think of oneself without the use of any name, description or demonstrative; it is the ability to conceive of oneself as oneself, from the inside, as it were."[28] So, the first-person perspective is neither a mental state nor a mere point-of-view (which non-personal things, such as Fido the dog, have) but rather a certain capacity, namely the capacity to conceive of oneself *as oneself*. On the constitution view, this capacity is sufficient for being a person; being a person is not a matter of being made of certain "stuff" or of having or being any type of body. As Corcoran explains:

> In the case of persons and bodies, if every property had by the one is had by the other, then the English words *person* and *body* are two terms that refer to a single thing, like Superman and Clark Kent refer to the same guy. But if one has a property lacked by the other, or vice versa, then persons and bodies are *not* identical. Are persons and bodies identical? Are there properties had by persons that are lacked by bodies or had by bodies that are lacked by persons? I believe there are.[29]

Thus, on the constitution view, there is at least one property had by the human person Paul that is not had by Paul's physical body. Moreover, as

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[24] Lynne Rudder Baker, "Need A Christian be a Mind/Body Dualist?" *Faith and Philosophy* 12/4 (1995): 502.

[25] Lynne Rudder Baker, *Persons and Bodies: A Constitution View* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000). Baker summarizes her view and addresses some objections in "Materialism with a Human Face," in *Soul, Body, and Survival*, ed. Kevin Corcoran (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001) as well as in "Christian Materialism in a Scientific Age," *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 70/1 (2011): 47–59.

[26] Kevin Corcoran, *Rethinking Human Nature: A Christian Materialist Alternative to the Soul* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2006).

[27] Kevin Corcoran, ed., *Soul, Body, and Survival: Essays on the Metaphysics of Human Persons* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001).

[28] Lynne Rudder Baker, *The Metaphysics of Everyday Life: An Essay in Practical Realism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 69. Cf. Corcoran, *Rethinking Human Nature*, 50f.

[29] Corcoran, *Rethinking Human Nature*, 49.

Baker correctly observes, "a molecule-for-molecule qualitative duplicate of you would not be you, and would not have your first-person perspective. She would start out with a first-person perspective that was qualitatively just like yours; but the qualitative indistinguishability would be short-lived, as you and your duplicate looked out on the room from different perspectives."[30] So far as it is described here, the dualist may find aspects to admire about the constitutionalist's view of persons, but what makes the constitution view a *physicalist* view is its claim that one is a "human" because of being constituted by a human body.

"Constitution" is a relational term. What does it mean to be "constituted by" something? Consider the common example of a plaster statuette—say, the plaster statuette of Shakespeare before me in my office. Baker and Corcoran will want to distinguish between the *statuette* and the *plaster* on the grounds that, although they are co-spatial, the two are not identical: if we place my Shakespeare statuette into a sealed container and crush it into a thousand pieces, then, although the statuette of Shakespeare is destroyed, the plaster itself remains. The idea is that just because the plaster constitutes the Shakespeare statuette, the plaster is nevertheless neither a part of nor identical to the Shakespeare statuette.[31]

Christian physicalists who are constitutionalists understand the relation between the physical body (or physical organism or living animal) that constitutes me and the human person that *is* me in a way similar to how the plaster relates to the statuette of Shakespeare—although the statuette of Shakespeare is not, of course, a human person. The statuette of Shakespeare weighs three pounds precisely because it stands in the *constituted by* relation to a three-pound lump of plaster, and the statuette of Shakespeare will continue to have that property until it ceases to be related constitutionally to the lump of plaster. Once again: the physical body that constitutes me and the human person that *is* me are not to be thought identical, not least because the body that constitutes me does not have my first-person perspective.

Animalism

Amongst proponents of animalism, Peter van Inwagen and Trenton Merricks have made notable contributions to the Christian physicalist literature. For their part, animalists reject the constitution view's underlying account of material constitution, holding instead that a person *just is* a human organism: "animalism says that each of us is numerically identical with an animal: there is a certain organism, and you and it are one and the

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[30] Baker, *The Metaphysics of Everyday Life*, 69–70.
[31] Baker, *The Metaphysics of Everyday Life*, 32ff and Corcoran, *Rethinking Human Nature*, 66.

same."[32] The idea is that a human person is one and the same thing as an animal of the *human* kind.

In differentiating animalism and constitutionalism, it will be helpful to think about the different "persistence conditions" for personal identity operative within each. This highlights an important point of departure between the two. When contemplating the notion of personal identity, consider the question "In virtue of what may we assert that the Keith who's typing this article (on 26 January 2018) is identical to the Keith who was married thirteen years ago (on 11 December 2004)?" What are the conditions, in other words, that must be met in order to explain the persistence of Keith's identity over the years? To be clear, we're interested in knowing how *Keith on 11 December 2004* is numerically one and the same as (and not simply *qualitatively* indistinguishable from) *Keith on 26 January 2018*. In a word, we're interested in token-identity. The answer(s) to this question are called "persistence conditions."[33]

Whereas the constitution view understands the physical body (or physical organism or living animal) that constitutes me and the human person that *is* me in a way similar to how the plaster relates to the statuette of Shakespeare, animalists demur. On the constitution view, "I" shall continue in existence just so long as *my* first-person perspective is exemplified. Animalists, on the other hand, will insist that "my" persistence conditions are entirely a biological matter: whatever else the view entails, it is not possible for a human person to exist without his or her physical body.[34]

Focusing on its claim of biological continuity will allow us to pinpoint an important feature of animalism. In the animalist's estimation, what is it that makes one human organism the same organism at a later time? It cannot be (on pain of raising the specter of mereological essentialism) the physical stuff comprising the organism, since a human organism is constantly losing and gaining parts over time through mitosis and other such events. By way of response, animalists typically point to an underlying biological process called "Life." It is the persistence of this process, it is claimed, that does the trick. Life is the "self-organizing biological event that maintains the organism's complex internal structure" amidst the perpetual need to "take in new particles, reconfigure and assimilate them into its living fabric, and expel those that are no longer useful to it."[35] In other words, what makes an organism at one time identical to an organism at a later time is the fact that each is "caught up in" the same Life: so long as the same biological event of Life

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[32] Eric T. Olson, *What Are We? A Study in Personal Ontology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 24. The edited collection *Animalism: New Essays on Persons, Animals, and Identity*, ed. Stephan Blatti and Paul F. Snowdon (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016) develops and critiques the animalist view.

[33] Michael Rea, *Metaphysics: The Basics* (New York: Routledge, 2014), 103.

[34] This "biological approach" is considered in Andrew M. Bailey's "Animalism," *Philosophy Compass* 10 (2015): 867–83.

[35] Olsen, *What Are We?* 28.

continues, the organism "Keith" persists.[36] If Keith at December of 2004 is caught up in one Life but Keith at January of 2018 is caught up in a different Life, then we are not talking about numerically identical Keiths. The big question for animalism, then, is whether the various activities comprising the "Life" process can, in fact, continue over time. However, as Brandon Rickabaugh has pointed out,

> A life is an event composed of a collection of separate relation instances and atomic parts, and as parts are replaced, so are the relation instances. Because of this inherent process, a life at $t1$ is not numerically identical to a life at $t2$. Although the relation types and part types may remain, the specific relation tokens and part tokens are expelled and replaced. That is, the life at $t2$ might have the same type of structure and same type of parts as the life at $t1$, although the life at $t2$ does not have the numerically identical structure or the numerically identical parts as the life at $t1$. The life just is this storm of parts and relation instances. It isn't as if there is some fundamental thing that has various separable parts and relation instances. A life just is the storm, the collection of parts and relations. The result is that a life does not endure.[37]

What this means is that, on animalism, the Life of Keith at December of 2004 involves biological relations of the same *type* as the Life of Keith at January of 2018 along with biological materials (the "stuff") of the same *type*. The particular *tokens* of biological material and the particular *tokens* of biological relations comprising the Life of Keith at December of 2004 are not the same as those comprising the Life of Keith at January of 2018, with the consequence that the "Life" of the former Keith simply cannot furnish any persistence conditions involving the latter Keith.

Christian Physicalism, the Intermediate State, and Resurrection

Christians traditionally are committed to belief both in a post-mortem intermediate state and the bodily resurrection of the dead. Although these are theologically rich doctrines, involving far more than the mere continuation of existence, it will be sufficient for our purposes to take these as jointly affirming that numerically one and the same person:

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[36] Olsen, *What Are We?* 29. R.T. Mullins and I discuss this in our "Physicalism, Divine Eternality, and Life Everlasting," in *Christian Physicalism?* 108–12.

[37] Brandon Rickabaugh, 9ff, of "An Enduring Problem for Animalism," presented at the Perspectives on the First-Person Pronoun "I": Looking at Metaphysics, Linguistics and Neuroscience, at Durham University (Durham, England) May 16 to May 18, 2014. Available online at www.brandonrickabaugh.com.

1. Exists as physically embodied at time t_1
2. Following physical death, exists as disembodied from $t_2\ldots t_\phi$
3. Following t_ϕ and bodily resurrection, exists (thereafter) as embodied, where one's resurrection body is numerically identical to one's pre-mortem body

To be clear, 3 should not be taken as asserting that the continuation of one's personal identity depends upon one's resurrection body being numerically identical to one's pre-mortem body. (Whether that is the case or not simply is not in view here.) It is traditionally the case, though, that it has been held that one's resurrection body is numerically identical to one's pre-mortem body (not least because this is the pattern set by Christ's experience in the Resurrection, as the apostle Paul discusses in 1 Corinthians 15:20–49). This does not mean that one's resurrection body has the exact same physical or mirco-physical parts as one's pre-mortem body. One's pre-mortem body is numerically identical with itself over time, but obviously does not share the same physical or micro-physical parts over time, after all. At any rate, biblical and theological explications of the above doctrines are plentiful, and we will proceed on the assumption that each is well-established.[38] Given their deep roots in the Christian tradition, we should be reluctant to abandon belief in these doctrines. Thus, I suggest that if one's anthropology cannot account for belief both in a post-mortem intermediate state and the bodily resurrection of the dead, then, to that extent, one's anthropology cannot be countenanced an acceptably *Christian* anthropology.[39]

Christian physicalists, of course, cannot affirm 2 in any literal sense. Acknowledging this, Nancey Murphy writes:

> All that physicalist anthropology strictly *requires* . . . are one or two adjustments: one needs to give up or finesse the doctrine of the intermediate state if that has been an important part of one's tradition. It can be finessed by calling into question the meaningfulness of putting the experiences of those who are with God on an earthly timeline. One needs also to understand resurrection differently: not re-clothing of a "naked" soul with a (new) body, but rather restoring the whole person to life—a new transformed kind of life.[40]

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[38] See, for example, N.T. Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003), 82–84, 130ff, 190–206; John W. Cooper, *Body, Soul & Life Everlasting*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), *passim*; Millard Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 3rd. ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013), 1077–1100.

[39] To be clear, I am not arguing that CP is false by way of *assuming* there is an intermediate state of disembodied experience. The claim, rather, is that given the deeply rooted status of these doctrines within Christian theological tradition, the incompatibility of CP with these doctrines is sufficient grounds for rejecting CP.

[40] Nancey Murphy, *Bodies and Souls, or Spirited Bodies?* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 23.

Setting aside the red herrings that are Murphy's mention of "putting" believers who are in the intermediate state "on an earthly timeline" and her seeming implication that the traditional view of resurrection denies restoration of "the whole person" to a truly "transformed kind of life," one is keenly interested in what "adjustments" to these doctrines are on offer from Christian physicalists. Whatever adjustments are offered, it is important to notice that they are offered as revisions of the traditional Christian commitment to a literal state of disembodied existence, throughout which a person's numerical identity is preserved, following their physical death until the point of bodily resurrection. John Cooper is surely correct in concluding that "if it is false that the soul—the essential person or self—can survive separation from the body, if human beings are monistic or ontologically holistic beings, then this eschatological scenario [viz., 2 above] is a flat impossibility."[41]

On the other hand—and to their credit—Christian physicalists do tend to view the Christian doctrine of resurrection as a test case for their views. Baker has addressed the doctrine of resurrection in conjunction with the constitution view in several places.[42] Kevin Corcoran has, as well.[43] On the constitution view, in order to exist as a human person, one must be constituted by a body—but it is not necessary that any particular person be constituted by any particular body; constitution does not, recall, equate to identity. Now, it is integral to the Christian understanding that it must be one and the same person who lives on earth (first as a sinner, then as one redeemed by Christ) who then persists through the intermediate state and who later experiences bodily resurrection. If numerical identity is not so preserved, after all, then none of those who populate the eschatological "final state" (that is, all those who experience bodily resurrection) will be redeemed sinners. Indeed, such a denial would seem to controvert the Christian hope of salvation, in that the *Keith who accepts Christ as his Savior in 1988* would cease existing at physical death and be replaced by the qualitatively similar but not numerically identical *Keith who has a resurrection body and enjoys the final state with God.*[44] If such a conclusion is to be avoided, the constitutionalist must explain how *Keith who accepts Christ as his Savior in 1988*'s first-person perspective continues to be exemplified between his ceasing to be constituted by his earthly/physical body (at physical death) and "his" coming to be constituted by his resurrection body. In reply, Baker suggests that "there is no intermediate state, but that [Keith] (temporarily) *does not exist in the interim.*"[45] The idea, she explains, is that at resurrection "God reassembles the atoms that constituted

[41] Cooper, *Body, Soul & Life Everlasting*, 105.

[42] See Lynne Rudder Baker, "Material Persons and the Doctrine of Resurrection," *Faith and Philosophy* 18/2 (2001): 151–67; and Lynne Rudder Baker, "Persons and the Metaphysics of Resurrection," *Religious Studies* 43/3 (2007): 333–48, and her "Christian Materialism in a Scientific Age."

[43] "Constitution, Resurrection, and Relationality," in *Personal Identity and Resurrection: How Do We Survive Our Death?* ed. Georg Gasser (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010), 191–206.

[44] Here, Baker would agree. Cf. "Persons and the Metaphysics of Resurrection," 339.

[45] Baker, "Need A Christian be a Mind/Body Dualist?," 499 (emphasis added).

[Keith] and restores the relationships that they bore to one another during [Keith's] natural life, and thereby 're-creates' [Keith] . . . During the time that [Keith] does not exist, some of [Keith's] atoms still do, and they provide the basis for [Keith's] resurrection body to be a continuant of [Keith's] biological body."[46] Such a re-interpretation of the Christian understanding invites more than a few questions, and we may well ask how it is that this view avoids the above concern and guarantees Keith's numerical identity. In addressing this, Baker avers that "there is no informative non-circular answer to the question: 'In virtue of what do person P1 at t_1 and person P2 at t_2 have the same first-person perspective over time?' It is just a primitive, un-analysable fact that some future person is I; but there is a fact of the matter nonetheless."[47] One may well regard this claim as somewhat unsatisfying, however, especially in light of Baker's further appeal that God may simply "decree" that a given resurrection (that is, a *new*) body have earthly-Keith's first-person perspective, there being little explanatory recourse other than asserting that God miraculously makes it so.[48]

In claiming that a human person *just is* a biological animal, and that it is not possible for one to exist without one's body, animalists face the same difficult questions regarding these doctrinal considerations. In considering the implications of animalism for the resurrection, Peter van Inwagen long has argued that, upon death, God may well replace one's corpse (or at least the "core person") with a simulacrum in order to preserve one's existence—that is, the animal and its particular Life and biological parts with their particular structure—for future resurrection.[49] The idea is that, at one's physical death, God literally replaces one's corpse so that what is buried is a simulacrum, allowing God to whisk one away for preservation till one is re-started or re-constituted or restored to life. This move is essential for van Inwagen, since if a person's body ceases to exist (dead bodies deteriorate, after all) then that person ceases to exist.[50] But as is frequently observed, it is difficult to see how one's earthly/biological body could be identical to a resurrection body. This is because, given that one's earthly/biological body is corruptible and that resurrection bodies are not corruptible, the fact that whatever is corruptible is *essentially* corruptible implies that one's earthly/biological body

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[46] Baker, "Need A Christian be a Mind/Body Dualist?," 499.

[47] Baker, "Persons and the Metaphysics of Resurrection," 345. She says much the same thing in "Need A Christian be a Mind/Body Dualist?" 499.

[48] Beyond its incompatibility with Christian doctrine, the constitution view is subject to formidable philosophical objections. See especially Ross D. Inman's "Against Constitutionalism," in *The Blackwell Companion to Substance Dualism*, ed. Jonathan J. Loose, Angus J.L. Menuge, and J.P. Moreland (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2018).

[49] Peter van Inwagen, "The Possibility of Resurrection," *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 9/2 (1978): 114–21. Van Inwagen further develops this in "Dualism and Materialism: Jerusalem and Athens?" *Faith and Philosophy* 12/4 (1995): 474–88.

[50] It is significant that van Inwagen objects even to property dualism. See his "A Materialist Ontology of the Human Person," in *Persons: Human and Divine*, ed. Peter van Inwagen and Dean Zimmerman (Oxford: Clarendon, 2007), 213–15.

cannot be(come) identical to a resurrection body.[51] Beyond this, van Inwagen's account faces insuperable theological difficulties surrounding Holy Saturday, as Jason McMartin has shown.[52] For his part, Trenton Merricks is well-known for denying there are any criteria for identity over time,[53] yet he insists on the resurrection of one's numerically identical body: "if you are not numerically identical with a person who exists in Heaven in the distant future, then you do not have immortality—so bodily identity is crucial to resurrection."[54] According to Merricks, physicalism can make the best sense of this, for "life after death and resurrection are, for physical organisms like us, one and the same thing."[55] However, as was argued above, the "Life" of a given person at t_1 simply cannot furnish any persistence conditions involving the same person at a later time, and thus animalism is no more successful than the constitution view in sustaining the traditional Christian commitment to the intermediate state and bodily resurrection.[56]

[51] Baker, "Persons and the Metaphysics of Resurrection," 342.

[52] Jason McMartin, "Holy Saturday and Christian Theological Anthropology," in *Christian Physicalism?*, 124–25. Similar Christological difficulties for animalists are raised in Luke Van Horn, "Merricks's Soulless Savior," *Faith and Philosophy* 27/3 (July 2010): 330–41.

[53] Trenton Merricks, "There Are No Criteria of Identity Over Time," *Noûs* 32 (1998): 106–4.

[54] Trenton Merricks, "The Resurrection of the Body and the Life Everlasting," in *Reason for the Hope Within*, ed. Michael J. Murray (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 268.

[55] Merricks, "The Resurrection of the Body and the Life Everlasting," 283. Merricks further considers these matters in his "How To Live Forever without Saving Your Soul: Physicalism and Immortality," in *Soul, Body, and Survival*.

[56] I should like to acknowledge my thanks to John M. DePoe for his valuable feedback on an earlier draft of this article.

The Role of Evidence for Christian Belief

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Faith and evidence have, at times, had a tenuous relationship in the history of Christian thought. It has not been uncommon for Christians to take a rather low view of evidence as it relates to the faith. Evidence may of course play a role in one's coming to Christian faith, on this sort of view, but it is often thought to be an incidental and non-necessary one. Recently, *evidentialism*, the view that the epistemic status[1] of one's belief is wholly a matter of the evidence one has, has been making a comeback as a general epistemology. But evidentialism as a religious epistemology[2] remains largely unexplored. The thesis of this paper is that evidence, understood broadly, is necessary, and when had in a sufficiently high degree, is sufficient for rational Christian belief.[3]

Faith and Reason

Discussions about evidence and the role it plays in our Christian beliefs is a modern one. There is a much more ancient discussion about the relationship between faith and reason.[4] There are some, like Tertullian, who claimed the Christian faith was absurd and reason was irrelevant for arriving at faith.[5] There are others, such as Augustine, who see a more or less significant role for reason to play.[6]

The problem with this historical discussion is that the term "reason" is often used in a variety of ways without its precise meaning being made

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[1] By "epistemic status," I mean the reasons one has in holding a belief.

[2] Religious epistemology is the area in philosophy that considers the epistemology of having the knowledge of God and other religious claims. If one considers what it means to claim to *know* Christianity is true, one is doing religious epistemology.

[3] It is important to note this is a condition only on *rational* Christian belief, not necessarily a condition on Christian belief *per se*. So I'm not weighing in on what it takes to be saved, only on what it takes to hold rationally to Christian beliefs.

[4] For a good introduction to the topic, see Paul Helm, ed., *Faith and Reason* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

[5] In his *Prescription Against Heretics*, Tertullian famously asked rhetorically, "What has Athens to do with Jerusalem?" He also claimed, "I believe because it is absurd." Though there is perhaps some inconsistency to Tertullian's project, he is widely cited as thinking Christian faith is above and, in some ways, against human reason.

[6] See Augustine's *On Christian Doctrine* for a discussion of the role of pagan thinking for interpreting Scripture.

clear. Sometimes the term seems to refer only to Greek philosophy or philosophical views that are traceable to the Greek philosophers. Here one is not rejecting reason *per se*, but the philosophical views (and extrapolations) of Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus, et al. At other times, it seems "reason" refers just to the deliverances of the empirical senses. Here when one is rejecting reason, one is, in effect, rejecting the experiences of the five senses as not necessary, or perhaps not even relevant for faith. This person may emphasize that "faith is . . . the evidence of things not seen" (Heb 11:1, NKJV). But whether we agree with these understandings of reason, the point is they are idiosyncratic. It will prove very helpful to get specific about how to understand reason to see its role in Christian belief. The view defended below is broadminded about evidence. Roughly speaking, anything that indicates the truth of one's belief will, for me, count as evidence.

Authority Issues

One driving factor for why the relationship between faith and reason has been tenuous is because Christians are extremely wary of holding anything as an authority over faith, and especially holding anything as having authority over Scripture. As Robertson McQuilkin has said:

> Since God is the author, the Bible is authoritative. It is absolute in its authority for human thought and behavior . . . For Christ and the apostles, to quote the Bible was to settle an issue.[7]

This, on my view, is absolutely true. But we should notice this is true *for* Christ and the apostles. This is also true for us who are evangelicals (and especially Baptists!), but this, it seems, is because of certain epistemic commitments already in place. The Bible is decidedly not seen as authoritative to those who do not believe God is its principal author. For the unbeliever, to merely quote the Bible is not to settle virtually any issue. There is, it seems, an epistemological need to come to know that Scripture is the authoritative word of God and this is logically prior to Scripture operating as an authority in our lives.

Let's be clear. The Bible has authority because of its divine source. Full stop. This fact gives it its ontological status *as divine revelation*. Just because one may not recognize it as divinely authoritative, it doesn't follow that it is not authoritative (denying the police officer's authority as he or she writes you a ticket also isn't going to work out well!). However, unless one comes to concede its authority (i.e., come to the belief that it is authoritative), it will not, for one, be authoritative for one, or at least function in an authoritative way in one's life. Again, coming to the belief that it is authoritative is simply recognizing the authority it already has.

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[7] Robertson McQuilkin, *Understanding and Applying the Bible* (Chicago: Moody, 1992), 20.

What does it mean to say that Scripture is authoritative? Roughly speaking, Christians appeal to Scripture as a normative standard for how we should live and what we should believe. Minimally, this means if one of our beliefs is out of step with Scripture, then so much the worse for our belief. For many Christians, the authority of Scripture goes even further than the mere need of consistency. We all have views about a variety of things that Scripture doesn't directly address. That is, we make claims about, say, political issues, auto mechanics, football, chemistry, mathematics, bioethical issues, good career paths, etc., that are not *directly* addressed by Scripture. Can Scripture play an authoritative role in these areas? Yes! In sorting out one's views, the Christian ought to be able to ground his or her view in the worldview Scripture provides. Scripture may not weigh in on a certain bio-ethical issues such as, say, human cloning. But it does provide a framework and worldview for thinking through and forming one's belief about this bio-ethical issue. So the view is, our belief shouldn't only be merely consistent with Scripture, but it should be grounded in the Christian worldview derived from Scripture.

But recognizing that Scripture is authoritative in this way does not fall out of the sky. People who believe that Scripture is authoritative seem to do so because they have *reasons* to believe it is the Word of God. That is, there is an epistemology that goes into us recognizing Scripture as a supreme authority.

Not everyone agrees. Wayne Grudem has said:

> Since the words of Scripture are "self-attesting," they cannot be "proved" to be God's words by appeal to any higher authority. If we make our ultimate appeal, for example, to human logic or to scientific truth to prove that the Bible is God's Word, then we assume the thing to which we appeal to be a higher authority than God's words and one that is more true or more reliable. Therefore, the ultimate authority by which Scripture is shown to be God's words must be Scripture itself.[8]

Though it is not an uncommon phrase, it seems difficult to know exactly what is meant by thinking of Scripture as "self-attesting." Grudem himself goes on to explain this as the persuasiveness of Scripture in the actual experience of life. He clarifies, "the Bible will be seen to be fully in accord with all that we know about the world around us, about ourselves, and about God."[9] But if this is right, then it is not self-attesting; at least, not purely self-attesting. The world around us seems to be, in his description, attesting to its truth. That is, we are using the world around us, at least in part, to know that Scripture is true. But Grudem's argument was that if we appeal to some-

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[8] Wayne Grudem, *Bible Doctrine: Essential Teachings of the Christian Faith* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999), 37.

[9] Grudem, *Bible Doctrine*, 38.

thing outside of Scripture, then we make that thing a higher authority. Why doesn't the accordance with the world around us become a higher authority than Scripture? He says:

> This is not to say that our knowledge of the world around us serves as a higher authority than Scripture, but rather that such knowledge, if it is correct knowledge, continues to give greater and greater assurance and deeper conviction that the Bible is the only truly ultimate authority.[10]

I would agree. But saying this seems to be inconsistent with what he said above about Scripture's being simply self-attesting. It looks like he is suggesting here that we can appeal to the knowledge of the world in order to come to know that Scripture is our authority. This seems to concede that something can play an epistemological role in believing and recognizing a thing's authority without itself becoming the ultimate authority. That is, evidence and reason can point us to Scripture's ultimate authority, given its ontological status, without usurping the authority of Scripture.

Take, as an analogy, our U.S. legal code.[11] There are laws we, as citizens, are obliged to obey. But in order for the U.S. law code to play that authoritative role for us, we have an epistemological need. We must, by some means, come to *know* what the U.S. legal code is. It's also possible that there would be a variety of imposter law codes that all lay claim to being the U.S. legal code. This makes our epistemological need even more pronounced. We need to know whether one set of laws is authentic vis-à-vis other sets of laws. These are all epistemological issues that are logically prior to us recognizing the U.S. legal code authority for us. Now let's say I go to someone whom I have good reason to believe is an authority on U.S. law and she identifies a series of volumes entitled *The Code of Law of United States of America* (abbreviated *United States Code* or *U.S.C.*) as the U.S. legal code. For the sake of argument, let's assume that I'm rational in believing the testimony of this expert. On the basis of her testimony, I thereby have reasons to believe the *U.S.C.* is binding law on me as a citizen of the U.S. But notice, by appealing to the expert, I don't thereby make her or her testimony my ultimate authority. Her testimony is simply an epistemological reason for thinking that the *U.S.C.* should be recognized as my legal authority.

Likewise, Scripture is, for Christians, a supreme authority. But the epistemological issue we face is what we do when the question is "Is the Bible a supreme authority?" or "Is the Bible the Word of God?" This question, it seems, can't be answered merely by looking to the claims of Scripture attesting to this fact, at least not without vicious circularity. To avoid circularity, we'll need to use reasons and evidence to come to the belief that Scripture

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[10] Grudem, *Bible Doctrine*, 39.
[11] This example is really only a loose analogy since the authority had by U.S. law is fundamentally different from the authority of Scripture.

is authoritative. The point of the example above is that our coming to know that Scripture is God's revealed word doesn't take away from its authority in our lives. Once we come to know that it is God's word, then we recognize and submit to its authority (again, the authority it possessed all along).

Consider another example. Suppose Al is standing before a complete library of the world's great religious texts. The Bible is there alongside the Quran, the Bhagavad Gita, Book of Mormon, the Upanishads, etc. Let's assume, for the sake of argument, that each of these claim, in effect, to be divine revelation. Standing there before all of these options, how could Al decide which one is correct? It can't be the mere fact that the Bible claims to be God's word. This is because, again, they all make this claim. How is Al going to decide? Let's suppose someone, whom Al has reason to think is trustworthy, tells him that the Bible is God's divine word. Al now has one (i.e., a preacher) testifying to the Word of God (Rom 10:14). Let's also suppose the Holy Spirit stirs in Al's spirit, confirming that the Bible is God's divine word. In this, Al hears and recognizes the voice of God (John 10:27). Al now, it seems, has epistemological reason to think the Bible is God's authoritative word. Though Al now has reasons to believe, he can and should improve the epistemic status of his belief. He can engage in an intentional study of the text itself and begin to see how Scripture accords with the world. He will also no doubt notice the consistency and harmony of the message throughout the biblical text. Let's also suppose he begins to read Scripture as a guide and, as he internalizes its claims, it begins to change his heart and life. Al now possesses an even stronger epistemological basis for his belief in Scripture's authority.

He might also turn to topics in apologetics related to the authenticity and authority of Scripture.[12] Many people do not avail themselves of this material, but I would suggest it can be quite helpful for further expanding the epistemological basis of our belief. One should come away with the distinct impression from this study that this is no ordinary book. None of this, as I've argued, should take away from the authority of Scripture. Indeed, one has reason upon reason to yield one's life to its authority.

Many don't think of the preacher or the Holy Spirit as providing epistemological reasons. But it is unclear why we shouldn't. Many will appeal to the testimony of others that they heard and what the Holy Spirit was doing in their hearts in the process of coming to believe. Again, I am employing a notion of reason in an extremely broad sense. This, as I shall argue, is as it should be. As knowing subjects, we use a great variety of facts to ground our beliefs epistemically, especially when they are as important as the beliefs of the Christian faith. In the next section, I will characterize reasons as evidence and defend an evidentialist epistemology.

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[12] See Steven B. Cowan and Terry L. Wilder, *In Defense of the Bible: A Comprehensive Apologetic for the Authority of Scripture* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2013).

Evidentialism

In the contemporary epistemological literature, the term "evidence" is a more specific notion than the term "reason." The term "reason" is used in many different ways, some of which are not epistemic. For example, one may use the term "reason" to mean the causal reasons for one's beliefs. Take, for example, the following sentence: "The reason Smith believes he's being followed is a chemical imbalance in his brain." Here, the reason is the *cause* of the belief, but it isn't an epistemic reason. For something to be epistemic, it has to do with the rational justification of the belief. Said differently, for a reason to be epistemic, the reason puts the believer in a good position to believe truly. If Smith is delusional in thinking he is being followed, then he may lack any reason to believe it is true despite the fact that there is a causal reason for his belief (i.e., the chemical imbalance).

The term "evidence," by contrast, seems to always connote something epistemic and always truth-connected. Jaegwon Kim has said:

> the concept of evidence is inseparable from that of justification. When we talk of "evidence" in an epistemological sense we are talking about justification: one thing is "evidence" for another just in case the first tends to enhance the reasonableness or justification of the second. And such evidential relations hold in part because of the "contents" of the items involved, not merely because of the causal or nomological connections between them.[13]

When one has evidence for a belief, one necessarily has a reason for thinking one's belief is true no matter how the belief was caused. As Kevin McCain says, "evidence is good reasons that are indicative of the truth concerning the proposition that is the object of the doxastic attitude."[14] McCain's statement is a mouthful, but it makes clear the relation of evidence to truth.

There is a growing number of philosophers who see the epistemic status of one's belief as entirely a matter of one's evidence. This view has come to be known as *evidentialism*. The philosophers who coined the term and who are still the most widely read defenders of evidentialism are Earl Conee and Richard Feldman. They characterize evidentialism with the following thesis that they call EJ:

> EJ: Doxastic attitude D toward proposition p is epistemically justified for S at t if and only if having D toward p fits the evidence S has at t.[15]

[13] Jaegwon Kim, "What is Naturalized Epistemology?" in James Tomberlin, ed., *Philosophical Perspectives 2, Epistemology* (Atascadero, CA: Ridgeview, 1988), 390.

[14] Kevin McCain, *Evidentialism and Epistemic Justification* (New York: Routledge, 2014), 10. The term "doxastic attitude" is a more technical way to speak of a belief.

[15] Earl Conee and Richard Feldman, *Evidentialism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 83.

They go on to give three examples illustrating this thesis:

> [Case 1] . . . when a physiologically normal person under ordinary circumstances looks at a plush green lawn that is directly in front of him in broad daylight, believing that there is something green before him is the attitude toward this proposition that fits his evidence. That is why the belief is epistemically justified.[16]

> [Case 2] . . . suspension of judgment is the fitting attitude for each of us toward the proposition that an even number of ducks exists, since our evidence makes it equally likely that the number is odd.[17]

> [Case 3] . . . when it comes to the proposition that sugar is sour, our gustatory experience makes disbelief the fitting attitude. Such experiential evidence epistemically justifies disbelief.[18]

Generally speaking, evidentialists have characterized evidentialism as a supervenience thesis. That is, the epistemic status of one's belief supervenes on the evidence one has. This has the upshot of making the epistemic status of a belief an objective feature of one's evidence since if any two individuals are identical in terms of the evidence they possess, then the epistemic status of their beliefs is likewise identical.[19]

The Evidentialist Intuition

There exists a very basic evidentialist intuition that makes sense of much of our inquiry. In fact, Conee and Feldman admit being amazed that anyone would deny the general thesis of evidentialism when they first started their work on the view.[20] The fact is, when we reflect and evaluate what we should or should not believe, we look to the evidence. When we find there is no good evidence for a belief, we tend to drop the belief. Or if, it turns out, there is good evidence after all, we change our mind and believe. In fact, we will believe things for which we have evidence even if we wished it wasn't true. And we will sometimes give our very lives to things we believe, especially when there is strong evidence in its favor. In short, evidence plays a crucial role for our inquiries, especially in the formation and evaluation of our beliefs. Although John Locke does not use the term evidence, he is often cited as an early proponent of evidentialism. Locke once said:

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[16] Conee and Feldman, *Evidentialism*, 83.
[17] Conee and Feldman, *Evidentialism*, 83.
[18] Conee and Feldman, *Evidentialism*, 83–84.
[19] See "Internalism Defended" for a discussion. Conee and Feldman, *Evidentialism*, 53–82.
[20] Conee and Feldman, *Evidentialism*, 1.

He that believes, without having any reason for believing, may be in love with his own fancies; but neither seeks truth as he ought, nor pays the obedience due his maker, who would have him use those discerning faculties he has given him, to keep him out of the mistake and error.[21]

Perhaps the most famous maxim related to the importance of evidence is W.K. Clifford's. He said, "it is wrong always, everywhere, and for anyone, to believe anything upon insufficient evidence."[22] Clifford's claim seems to make believing without evidence a moral wrong. Not everyone agrees that there's a specific *moral* obligation to believe on the basis of evidence. But the general sentiment is that proper belief formation is based on good evidence.

Trent Dougherty has made the point that it is very difficult to avoid the use of evidence even if we are not evidentialists. He says:

Evidence, it seems, is a central concern of epistemology. There are a number of reasons why this is so. First, consider this. If reliabilism were true and you wanted to know if the new health care bill was going to be good or bad, what would you do to find out? If contextualism were true, and you wanted to know if a prospective neighborhood was safe, what would you do? If some kind of virtue epistemology were true, and you wanted to know whether diet soda caused cancer, what would you do? In all cases, the answer is obvious: you'd seek out evidence.[23]

We might add to this that if one wished to critique evidentialism, one would also have to proffer evidence against the view. This unavoidability of the use of evidence seems to, at best, betray the prime importance of evidence in adjudicating these sorts of issues and, at worst, suggests that to deny evidentialism is self-refuting. It looks as if one must use evidentialist considerations in order to reject the view. Evidentialism is plausible, on its face, given that it seems practically unavoidable and it makes sense of our epistemic appeals to evidence.

Having Evidence

One of the biggest issues facing the evidentialist is what it means to say that "S has evidence." It can't be that some evidence merely exists. It must be that the believing subject *has* that evidence. It seems most plausible to understand the *having of evidence* as being aware of some fact that makes the

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[21] John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. A.C. Fraser (New York; Dover, 1959), IV.xvii. 24, 413–14.

[22] W.K. Clifford, "The Ethics of Belief," in *Lectures and Essays*, ed. L. Stephen and F. Pollock (London: Macmillan, 1886), 346.

[23] Trent Dougherty, ed., *Evidentialism and Its Discontents* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 2.

belief we hold rational. The idea is that it is not enough for a subject to have a belief that has something going for it, in an epistemic sense. One must be, in some sense, aware of this epistemic virtue. If the believing subject is unaware of what the belief has going for it, then, from one's subjective perspective, the belief's being epistemically virtuous will be merely accidental and will provide no rational justification. Michael Bergmann explains his understanding of this sort of awareness requirement as follows:

> S's belief B is justified only if (i) there is something, X, that contributes to the justification of B—e.g. evidence for B or a truth-indicator for B or the satisfaction of some necessary condition of B's justification—and (ii) S is aware (or potentially aware) of X.[24]

By having an awareness requirement, this places evidentialism squarely within the broader category of internalism. What is internalism? Robert Audi, in distinguishing the internal, says:

> The internal, in the relevant sense, is what we might call the (internally) *accessible*. . . . The accessible includes what is actually in consciousness—such as thoughts and visual and other sensory impressions . . . To have (internal) access to something is either to have it in consciousness or to be able . . . to become aware of it.[25]

Similarly, Laurence BonJour characterizes internalism as the "idea that the justifying reason for a basic belief, or indeed for any belief, must somehow be cognitively available to the believer himself, within his cognitive grasp or ken."[26] Thus, for our purposes, internalism is the view that one has justification if and only if there are epistemic facts of which one is aware (or potentially aware). Evidentialism then characterizes the relevant epistemic facts of which one is aware as evidence.[27]

The motivating considerations for internalist evidentialism are easily turned into an objection to any view that calls a belief rationally justified, where one is unaware of any evidence of its truth. When so-called externalist theories of justification posit external factors that are, by definition, ones of which the subject is unaware, the evidentialist (and the internalist, in gen-

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[24] Michael Bergmann, *Justification Without Awareness* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 9.

[25] Robert Audi, *Epistemology: A Contemporary Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 1998), 238.

[26] Laurence BonJour, "A Version of Internalist Foundationalism" in Laurence BonJour and Ernest Sosa, *Epistemic Justification: Internalism vs. Externalism, Foundations vs. Virtues* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2003), 24.

[27] An example of an internalist view that is not evidentialist is deontologism, according to which one is justified if and only if one satisfies certain epistemic virtues (or fulfills one's epistemic duties or believes in an epistemically blameless way).

eral) is poised to object that if the person has no idea these external factors obtain, the belief will be from his or her perspective no more reasonable than a stray hunch.

BonJour's case of Norman the Clairvoyant is a paradigmatic objection of this sort. BonJour's primary target was process reliabilism, which says if S's believing p at t results from a reliable cognitive belief-forming process (or set of processes), then S's belief that p at t is justified.[28] After employing various thought experiments involving clairvoyants, BonJour gave the following as a decisive problem for process reliabilist. He says:

> Norman, under certain conditions which usually obtain, is a completely reliable clairvoyant with respect to certain kinds of subject matter. He possesses no evidence or reasons of any kind for or against the general possibility of such a cognitive power or for or against the thesis that he possesses it. One day Norman comes to believe that the President is in New York City, though he has no evidence either for or against this belief. In fact, the belief is true and results from his clairvoyant power under circumstances in which it is completely reliable.[29]

BonJour goes on to make the point that we, as epistemologists, know that the belief has something going for it in the sense that it will non-accidently turn out true (or at least is likely to be true). BonJour says, "But how is this supposed to justify Norman's belief? From his subjective perspective, it *is* an accident that the belief is true."[30] Norman has no reason at all to think his belief has anything at all going for it.

Though BonJour's argument was directed at process reliabilism, it seems easy enough to generalize the point to any purely externalist theory. Bergmann gives a generalization of this sort of objection and calls it the *subject's perspective objection* (hereafter, the SPO). The idea is one points out a way in which a subject may satisfy the proposed conditions of justification and yet fails to possess assurance of what the belief has going for it from the subject's perspective. Bergmann says:

> If the subject holding a belief isn't aware of what that belief has going for it, then she isn't aware of how its status is any different from a stray hunch or an arbitrary conviction. From that we may conclude that from her perspective it is an accident that her belief is true. And that implies that it isn't a justified belief.[31]

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[28] Alvin Goldman, "What Is Justified Belief?" in G.S. Pappas, ed., *Justification and Knowledge* (Dordrecht: Reidel, 1979), 1–25; reprinted in A.I. Goldman, *Reliabilism and Contemporary Epistemology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 29–49.

[29] Laurence BonJour, *The Structure of Empirical Knowledge* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985), 41. BonJour does not in this work identify himself as an evidentialist.

[30] BonJour, *The Structure of Empirical Knowledge*, 43–44.

[31] Bergmann, *Justification Without Awareness*, 12.

Given these considerations, we may say, for any view of justification, if the view calls a belief justified and the subject has no idea from his or her subjective perspective what his or her belief has going for it (i.e., lacks all evidence), then it falls prey to the SPO, and the view should be rejected.[32] This simultaneously provides motivation for internalist evidentialism and an objection to all externalist theories.

But, alas, there is a problem.

Bergmann's Dilemma

Michael Bergmann, who is himself an externalist, has argued that all internalists with an awareness requirement, including the evidentialist as I've defined it, face a dilemma. The internalist must say what sort of awareness is in view when a believing subject is justified. Bergmann says the awareness either "involves *conceiving* of the justification-contributor that is the object of awareness as being in some way relevant to the justification or truth of the belief or it won't."[33] The former is what he calls *strong awareness* and the latter is *weak awareness*. If we imagine a subject who believes that p on the basis of a vivid visual experience, strong awareness would require the subject to not merely be aware of having this experience but to conceive of the experience *as relevant to the truth or justification of the belief that p*. If the subject does not conceive of it in this particular way, then this would be weak awareness.

This is a dilemma. So, according to Bergmann, there are fatal problems for accepting either horn of the dilemma. The consequence for accepting the strong awareness horn is that it leads to a vicious regress, since conceiving of the justification-contributor as relevant to the truth or justification of the relevant belief is itself a judgment that will in turn need to be justified. Said differently, strong awareness requires one to include in the analysis of justification a further judgment. This is because strong awareness requires one to conceive of the justification-contributor as being a particular way, and to conceive is judgmental. But if there is a judgment, then it will itself need to be justified by something further. But if strong awareness is required for every justification-contributor, then there will always be a need for further justification. This would generate an unending regress.

If this were not already problem enough, Bergmann argues that the regress is one of ever-increasing complexity.[34] Since being strongly aware

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[32] It is important to note that there is a modal operator at work in typical SPOs. The claim is that if there is even a *possible* state of affairs such that a subject satisfies all of the proposed conditions of justification and yet fails to be aware of what the belief has going for it, the view is open to this objection.

[33] Bergmann, *Justification Without Awareness*, 13.

[34] Bergmann, *Justification Without Awareness*, 16. The idea is that, on strong awareness, for a belief B to be justified for S, S must conceive of some justification-contributor, X1, as relevant to the truth of B. But in order for the judgment in X1 to be justified, S would have to be strongly aware of some X2 that's relevant to the judgment in X1 that X1 is relevant to B. This will continue to iterate with ever increasing complexity.

involves a judgment that will require further justification, one would also have to be strongly aware of whatever one posits as justification for this judgment. This is a regress that is not stopping, and, as the judgments iterate, what must be justified increases in complexity. This will quickly outstrip human ability to even hold the proposition in one's mind, much less justify it. Thus, the regress is doubly vicious. It is infinite and one of ever-increasing complexity.

Given that this is a significant problem, it is to the other horn we now turn. The consequence for taking the weak awareness horn, according to Bergmann, is that one is no better off than the externalist with respect to the SPO. That is, he claims that unless the subject conceives of the justification-contributor as being epistemically relevant to the belief, then it will be possible to come up with a case where the subject satisfies the proposed conditions of justification and yet, from the subject's perspective, the belief is no better than if it were based on a wishful hunch.

To see this, consider the fact that it is possible for one to be in pain and fail to conceive of the pain-state as relevant to the truth or justification of the belief that one is in pain. If that's right, then one could have no idea the belief has anything going for it even if it happens to be the case one is aware of the pain-state. This might be hard to imagine given the fact that pain often gets our attention. But we should notice that we are all weakly aware of a variety of facts right now that are not, for us, epistemically relevant given that we haven't even noticed them. One should consider a patch of color in the periphery of one's visual field (or the buzzing of lights or of an electrical device), which one has not (until just now) noticed, though it has been there all along as an object of awareness.[35] Bergmann's claim is that one must conceive of these facts (e.g., being in pain or experiencing the buzzing of lights) as relevant to the belief we may form about them (e.g., the belief that I'm in pain or that I'm experiencing the buzzing of lights) for one to be justified in this way. If one doesn't so conceive, then we are not necessarily in positive epistemic situation. We may be no better off than the externalist despite these facts being objects of (weak) awareness.

Thus, the internalist, who only requires weak awareness, likewise falls prey to the SPO. The only way to block the SPO with an awareness requirement, according to Bergmann, is to conceive of the experience as epistemically relevant, but that would put us back on the strong awareness horn of the dilemma. Either way, the internalist with an awareness requirement has a big problem.

Though I do not have the space to give a full articulation of a solution to this problem, I think the way forward is to require the direct awareness (which is a form of weak awareness) of not only an epistemically relevant fact, but also the direct awareness of the epistemic relevance relation that

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[35] Ernest Sosa calls this "experiential awareness." This is when one is aware just in virtue of having an experience. He contrasts experiential awareness with "noticing awareness," which involves constituent belief states. See Sosa and BonJour, *Epistemic Justification*, 120.

holds between the belief and the fact.[36] So in the case of the pain, S must be directly aware of three objects: (1) her belief that she is in pain, (2) the fact of her being in pain and (3) the relation of correspondence that holds between her belief and the fact. Being directly aware of a belief's correspondence with a fact entails the truth of that belief and puts one in an ideal epistemic situation. However, we are not often in that ideal epistemic situation. That is, we are not often directly aware of whether our beliefs stand in the correspondence relation. There are, on my view, other relations of epistemic relevance that make likely our beliefs without entailing their truth. That is, a belief can be made likely by a fact of which one is aware without having to be aware of the truthmaker of the belief. By being directly aware of a belief's likelihood, on the basis of a fact, one is in a positive epistemic position even if one is not in the ideal epistemic situation. There is much work to be done in spelling this view out. The point here is to give a bare bones sketch of what I take would amount to an adequate response to Bergmann's dilemma and make way for an adequate evidentialist theory.

Reformed Epistemology

In philosophical circles, the main alternative to evidentialism, in terms of a religious epistemology, is a view called *reformed epistemology*, defended by one of the most prominent living Christian philosophers, Alvin Plantinga. Reformed epistemology says Christian beliefs can be rational despite the lack of evidence. A belief in God (as an example of a Christian belief) is rational, the reformed epistemologist thinks, when it is produced by a properly functioning cognitive faculty. What cognitive faculty produces the belief in God? Plantinga (after John Calvin) asserts that we have the *sensus divinatatis*, a sense of the divine. He argues that so long as this faculty, in producing this belief, satisfies certain other conditions (e.g., it is functioning according to a design plan that is successfully aimed at truth), then it is a warranted Christian belief.[37]

Plantinga begins his project by recognizing that a common objection to Christian belief is that there is insufficient evidence for these beliefs. Perhaps, so goes the objection, there is some evidence (e.g., theistic arguments) to believe there is a largely uninvolved creator/designer deity. But that is

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[36] Direct awareness is sometimes called "acquaintance." See Ali Hasan and Richard Fumerton, "Knowledge by Acquaintance vs. Description," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2017 Edition), ed. Edward N. Zalta https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2017/entries/knowledge-acquaindescrip/. For a critique of Bergmann's dilemma, see Ali Hasan "Classical Foundationalism and Bergmann's Dilemma," *Journal of Philosophical Research* (2011) 36:391–410; and John Depoe, "Bergmann's Dilemma and Internalism's Escape," *Acta Analytica* 27 no. 4 (2012): 409–23.

[37] Alvin Plantinga, *Knowledge and Christian Belief* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015), 30–44. Plantinga defines "warrant" as the property, enough of which, turns a merely true belief into knowledge. Thus, if rationality and justification find a place in Plantinga's epistemology, it will be in the category of warrant.

not the God of the Bible—not by a long shot. The Christian makes a much stronger claim, and these stronger claims require significantly more evidence than the classical arguments provide. Thus, just as Bertrand Russell is said to have once declared about what he would say if he were to stand before God, the answer: "Not enough evidence."

So the Christian is faced with a decision. If one thinks Christian beliefs are rational, then one must show that Christianity does have sufficient evidence after all, or one should concede that evidence is not necessary for rational Christian belief. The evidentialist of course says it is the former. However, Plantinga concedes the lack of evidence (especially for typical non-academic persons) and, therefore, affirms the latter option.

But Plantinga has to overcome the very plausible intuition that evidence is necessary for rational belief, which I've outlined above. To do so, Plantinga, first of all, zeroes in on how we should think of evidence. When pressed to offer the evidence one has for his or her beliefs, one will typically present an argument. This provides, what Plantinga calls, "propositional evidence" in that an argument will be a series of stated propositions.[38] He goes on:

> But obviously you can't have propositional evidence for everything you believe. Every train of argument will have to start somewhere, and the ultimate premises from which it starts will not themselves be believed on the evidential basis of other propositions; they will have to be accepted in the *basic* way, that is, not on the evidential basis of other beliefs.[39]

Plantinga claims that evidentialism seems to assume what's known as *classical foundationalism*. The classical foundationalist says a belief is rational if and only if it is properly basic or it is inferred from something properly basic. What is it for a belief to be properly basic? A properly basic belief is one whose epistemic support is not some other belief from which it was inferred. Rather, as Plantinga says, a proposition is properly basic, for a person S, if and only if it is held by S with certainty, in either being self-evident for S or incorrigible for S.[40] A self-evident belief is one in which we can simply "see" the truth of a claim because of understanding the claim. Examples would be simple mathematical and logical claims. When one understands the relevant concepts involved in, say, "2+3=5" or in "it's not the case that (A and not-A)," one can just see that these are necessarily true. They are self-evident.

An incorrigible belief is one that is directly based on the awareness of one's own mental states. If I believe I am in pain, on the basis of being in

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[38] Plantinga, *Knowledge and Christian Belief*, 13.

[39] Plantinga, *Knowledge and Christian Belief*, 14.

[40] Alvin Plantinga, *Warranted Christian Belief* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 84. He also says "evident to the senses" as a distinct disjunct in this analysis. In *Knowledge and Christian Belief*, however, he subsumes this disjunct into the notion of incorrigibility.

pain, then this is a belief about which I enjoy certainty. Given your subjective access to your pain, it seems very difficult (if possible at all) to be wrong about being in pain. And when I'm having a visual experience as of a tree, I can be certain that I am having a visual experience as of a tree. This isn't to be certain about there being a tree, since this could be a hallucination. However, I am certain about the content of the mental experience given its incorrigibility.

The Christian, beholden to classical foundationalism, has a problem, Plantinga thinks. This is because the claims of Christianity are not, in large measure, self-evident or incorrigible. Thus, for the classical foundationalist, they must be accepted on the basis of more basic propositions that are, at some point, self-evident or incorrigible. But, again, it is not clear this is the case. So if classical foundationalism is true, Christian belief is largely unjustified. If one thinks Christian belief is rationally justified, then Plantinga's argument is that we'll need to look to anti-evidentialist account.

Moreover, Plantinga claims that classical foundationalism (and, thus, evidentialism) is problematic in its own right. He says colorfully:

> But classical foundationalism itself has serious problems. First, it seems to shoot itself in the foot; it is hoist on its own petard; it is in self-referentially hot water. For according to classical foundationalism . . . you are within your epistemic rights in believing a proposition only if you believe it on the evidential basis of propositions that are self-evident or incorrigible.[41]

Classical foundationalism itself, he thinks, is not believed on the basis of propositions that are self-evident or incorrigible. So classical foundationalism should be rejected by its criterion.

Plantinga's next move is to point out that there are a variety of beliefs we commonly take to be rational, but are neither self-evident or incorrigible nor based on anything that is self-evident or incorrigible. These include beliefs about the physical objects in our environment, the states of affairs of our past, the existence of other minds, etc. Though these all fall short of the criterion of the classical foundationalist, they are all seemingly rational. What makes these rational? Plantinga suggests these are rational insofar as they are produced by properly functioning cognitive faculties that are aimed at truth and that operate in appropriate environments. I will spare the reader some of the (well worth reading) technicalities. But the basic move Plantinga makes is that belief in God and the great truths of the gospel are rational like these others not because of the evidence we have, but because there is a belief-producing process that is functioning properly. Why does God not make it such that all of our beliefs are produced by properly functioning faculties? Our problem is our cognitive faculties, including the aforementioned

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[41] Plantinga, *Knowledge and Christian Belief*, 15.

sensus divinatatus, has been marred by the noetic effects of the fall. So we, on our own, don't form Christian beliefs. But there's good news (i.e., the gospel). The Holy Spirit can overcome our damaged state and produce in us Christian beliefs. Plantinga says:

> These beliefs do not come to the Christian just by way of memory, perception, reason, testimony, the *sensus divinitatus*, or any other of the cognitive faculties or processes with which we human beings were originally created; they come instead by way of the work of the Holy Spirit, who gets us to accept, causes us to see the truth of these great truths of the gospel. These beliefs don't come just by way of the normal operation of our natural faculties; they are a supernatural gift.[42]

It is the gift of the Holy Spirit that is designed to produce these sorts of beliefs, and insofar as these beliefs are produced in us in the way Plantinga's account requires, then he claims Christian beliefs are warranted, rational, and justified for us.[43] Though we may often have evidence for these beliefs, the evidence is not necessary for their rationality.

A Critique of Plantinga's Account

In response to Plantinga's influential account, the first thing to point out is that much of his argument turns on whether evidentialism is necessarily tied to classical foundationalism. One could very well concede that he has shown classical foundationalism to be self-defeating, in some sense, but argue that evidentialism does not presuppose classical foundationalism. Most evidentialists these days are, in fact, not classical foundationalists. Many defend what's come to be known as *moderate foundationalism* (or sometimes *modest foundationalism*), according to which a belief may be properly basic without being certain. The moderate foundationalist thinks a properly basic belief can be based on some fact that makes it probably true and, thus, rational to believe. Plantinga's argument doesn't engage this sort of view.

One prominent form of moderate foundationalism makes the seeming state the primary evidential fact upon which we base our beliefs.[44] On this sort of view, if it seems to S that p, then, in the absence of any defeaters to the contrary, S has justification for believing that p. The thought is that when we believe that p, this is often because it seems to us that p. The seeming state is distinct from the belief state since, it is argued, that it can seem to us that p when we don't believe that p. The stick half submerged in water

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[42] Plantinga, *Knowledge and Christian Belief*, 56.
[43] Plantinga, *Knowledge and Christian Belief*, 56.
[44] See Earl Conee, "Seeming Evidence," in Chris Tucker, ed., *Seemings and Justification: New Essays on Dogmatism and Phenomenal Conservatism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

can seem bent even though we may (accurately) believe it is not. So when I look out my office window and I have an experience as of a tree, it seems that there is a tree outside of my window. This seeming state, it is claimed, makes my belief that there is a tree rational. Could I be wrong? Could I be hallucinating the experience? Yes, of course I could be hallucinating, but this fact alone does not make the belief irrational. In fact, even if one is hallucinating this tree-experience, it still seems rational for one to believe on the basis of the seeming experience. The situation changes of course if one were to have reason to believe one is hallucinating. That is, one could have a defeater that would render the belief unjustified. However, the thesis is, in the absence of defeaters, if it seems to one that p, then one is rationally justified in believing that p.

I'm not here endorsing this view, since it is certainly not without its challenges.[45] However, the point is that this is a prominent view that does not require a properly basic belief to be incorrigible or self-evident.

A more fundamental problem with Plantinga's account (and, frankly, all externalist accounts) is that it attempts to secure rationality without securing the subject's assurance. That is, a believing subject can satisfy Plantinga's account and still have no idea what the belief has going for it. This is to raise the SPO. From the subject's perspective, a belief satisfying Plantinga's account can be no different than some blindly irrational conviction.

To see this, consider the following thought experiment. Suppose Jones has a Christian belief at time t but lacks all evidence of any kind for this belief at t. Call this belief C. He believes C, at least at t, *not* on the basis of anyone's testimony, from reading Scripture, or from any kind of apologetic argument. From Jones's perspective, C merely popped into his head, and he is finding himself assenting to it at t. Despite lacking all evidence, let's suppose C is produced by the Holy Spirit and satisfies all of Plantinga's conditions. Keep in mind, one can satisfy Plantinga's conditions without having any evidence at all. Suppose further that Jones, at t, also has the belief that he will compete in the next summer Olympics running the 100-meter dash. The problem with this belief is that Jones is out of shape, middle-aged, and never competed in any athletics before. Call this belief O. O also has no evidence (and, for the sake of the argument, we can suppose Jones does not possess any defeaters at t for the belief that O), but it is caused in Jones by an intense feeling of wishful thinking. As far as Jones is concerned, both of these beliefs, C and O, are equally without internal evidence at t. By hypothesis, C satisfies Plantinga's account. But O, we would all agree, is an epistemically deficient belief. But why should C, especially from the perspective of Jones, not get the same diagnosis? If we are talking about the rationality of Jones, it seems

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[45] On my own view, not just any seeming will do the trick. It can seem to one that one's favorite sports team will win the big game when this is an objectively irrational belief. As I say above, one must be directly aware of the epistemic relation that holds between one's belief and a relevant fact. This state may be phenomenologically characterized as its *epistemically seeming* to S that p.

that both of these beliefs are epistemically deficient despite the different causes of these beliefs. Again, Jones has no idea of anything epistemic going for either belief.

Having a belief produced by the Holy Spirit while at the same time lacking any internal evidence is, to be sure, a highly unusual situation. In fact, my own view is that the Holy Spirit always uses some internal indicator when producing Christian belief. Even though that may be how it goes, the point is that Plantinga's account allows for this sort of hypothetical case. And this makes Plantinga's account fall prey to the SPO and, thus, is unsatisfying as an epistemological account. Plantinga is making a point about a belief's causal origin, the environment, the reliability of the process, etc. But none of these necessarily helps the believing subject unless he or she is aware of these facts. When it comes to epistemology, we want, as believing subjects, some reason to think our beliefs are caused in the appropriate sorts of ways. The fundamental epistemological concern is simply not addressed in Plantinga's account. It is certainly good to have beliefs that are produced in appropriate ways and to be in appropriate environments. It's just not necessarily an epistemological good unless these provide the believing subject evidence for their beliefs.

Christian Belief

If evidentialism is a plausible epistemological theory, then it should, I suggest, apply to Christian belief. In this closing section, I will argue that Christian belief is not fundamentally different from belief, in general. This is something Plantinga and most contemporary epistemologists seem to assume in the area of religious epistemology. If this is right, then we should be evidentialists about Christian belief as well.

Here is the argument:

1. Beliefs, in general, require evidence to be rational.
2. Christian beliefs are not fundamentally different from beliefs in general.
3. Therefore, Christian beliefs require evidence to be rational.

Premise 1 follows from the thesis of evidentialism for which I have argued above. Premise 2 simply says that when we talk about the beliefs we form in assenting to the claims of Christianity, the notion of "belief" is not some unique cognitive state vis-à-vis other beliefs we hold.

We should note that all that is in view, in this discussion of Christian beliefs, is the intellectual assent to the propositions of Christianity. We are not specifically talking about saving faith. Intellectual assent is necessary but not, I'd suggest, sufficient for saving faith. This can be seen in the fact there are very many who assent intellectually to the truths of Christianity but have never entered into a genuine saving relationship with Jesus Christ It seems possible to assent to intellectually, for example, the claim that God exists,

that the Bible is true, and that Jesus rose from the dead, and yet not yield one's life to Christ as Lord. There seem to be very many "religious folks" who are in this precise epistemic situation. They do not have intellectual problems, at least with the broad sweep of the Christian view, but do in fact have a spiritual problem. They may intellectually believe, but even the demons believe, as James tells us, and they shudder (Jas 2:19). These religious folks may believe and may even rationally believe, but they do not know Christ in a saving way. So if the intellectual beliefs of the Christian are not fundamentally different from beliefs in general, then, given premise 1, they need evidence to be held rationally.

What sort of evidence is there for our Christian beliefs? As was mentioned above, Christians will typically source their Christian beliefs in Scripture. Scripture is rightly understood as evidence for the truth of our Christian beliefs. Scripture, it seems to me, is best understood as a kind of divine testimony. Testimonial evidence is a very important form of evidence. We believe many, many things for no other reason than the trusted testimony of others. This includes the testimony of our parents, teachers, friends, authors, and other trusted sources. It is possible to be led astray either intentionally or unintentionally by the testimony of others. But the rational support of testimony all depends on the trustworthiness and accuracy of the one who is testifying. This is why it is so important for Christians to come to see Scripture as divine revelation and rely upon it rather than the testimony of any merely human work. There is no more trustworthy testimony, on the Christian view, than the very words of God.

Other Christian evidences would include such things as direct religious experiences of God, specific answers to specific prayers, and being transformed and seeing others who are transformed by the power of God in our lives. We will also look to history (e.g., in justifying claims about the resurrection), archaeology (e.g., to justify claims about biblical figures, events, and places), philosophy (e.g., to justify claims about the goodness and power of God in the face of evil), and other academic disciplines.

Can those who have never studied academic areas such as theology, history, and philosophy be rational in their Christian beliefs? Do they have good evidence? Yes, it is my view that the Christian believer typically has good reasons for his or her Christian beliefs. Again, seeing Scripture as divine testimony means that the evidence for Christian truths is widely accessible. Young children can read (or be read to) and base their Christian beliefs on this testimonial evidence. This is why it is so important for parents to teach Scripture to their children from a really young age. Becoming familiar with this divine testimony fills out the evidential basis for the child's Christian beliefs. It is also very common for people to have experiences of God in various ways. People may, at a certain point, have doubts about whether Scripture is God's word and whether they should trust their experiences. They may even be faced with evidence that calls these things into question.

In this case, they will need to investigate further, and the more studied areas may prove extremely helpful.

Now, I have argued that Christian beliefs are not fundamentally different from beliefs in general and that they, therefore, require evidence to be believed rationally. But let's be clear. The object of our Christian beliefs is certainly different than regular, everyday beliefs. Indeed, our Christian beliefs are beliefs about the eternal God of the universe and the plan of salvation for those who would place their faith in Christ. They are, in this respect, special—indeed, infinitely so!

Book Reviews

Biblical Studies

Hermeneutics as Apprenticeship: How the Bible Shapes Our Interpretive Habits and Practices. **By David I. Starling. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2016. 256 pages. Paperback, $25.00.**

David Starling, senior lecturer in New Testament and Theology at Morling College (New South Wales, Australia), writes that learning how to interpret the Bible is not like learning a subject such as calculus. It is more like learning a trade. It requires not just textbook methodological rules, but it also involves learning in real-life situations and from others in the Christian community. The Protestant motto *Sola Scriptura* has often been mistaken as a guideless way of interpretation. However, the biblical writers did not leave the Church without guidance on how to interpret. This book focuses on the dynamics of inner-biblical hermeneutics and their significance for Scripture's theological interpretation. Interpreters do not always have to depend on outside sources to learn how to interpret properly. The biblical writers, in many ways, show us how to interpret. Starling exams several biblical books, selecting one key issue of interpretation that arises in it and tracing the interpretive work of the authors. From there he draws implications for biblical interpreters today.

In the first six chapters Starling examines various Old Testament books and the purpose for which they were written. He begins with the Psalms, showing that they do not merely teach precepts and propositions, but their purpose is to teach believers how to sing and pray. The book of Deuteronomy functions as an interpretation of the Law. Ruth provides a narrative for Israel on how to apply the Law. First and Second Chronicles function as an interpretation of biblical history. Wisdom books interpret personal experience in light of Scripture. Zechariah and the prophets' main message of repentance uses the Torah to remind Israel of their covenant with the Lord. Each book's author is demonstrating to Israel how to read and interpret the Bible.

The next eight chapters are an examination of a few New Testament books and how the author's intent is also his hermeneutic. Each author takes the Hebrew Scriptures and interprets them in light of Christ's coming. Matthew details Jesus' authoritative teaching of the Old Testament with an emphasis on obedience. Luke is an announcement of the end of Israel's exile and climax of Israel's history. John's Gospel presents a courtroom scene in which the truth is contested. Israel and the nations are on trial in light of Christ's arrival. First Corinthians shows a way in which to do theology. Paul interprets the Corinthian situation in light of the Old Testament and gospel of Christ. The allegory of Galatians connects biblical narrative to a present situation, discerning implications of the whole biblical story for the shaping of Christian action in the world. The exhortations of Hebrews take all of the words of Scripture as present tense: God speaking today through His previously written Word. First Peter uses the exile motif of the Old Testament and applies it to the believers of his day living in the Roman Empire. Revelation is an encouragement

for believers to make sense of their experience of suffering and persecution, spurring them on to perseverance and in hope. All of the writers are teaching a way of reading the Old Testament.

The key strength of this book is how it balances interpreting the Bible by focusing on the author and utilizing a Christological approach to application. Each biblical author does indeed give clues to how to read and interpret. The New Testament writers give us patterns to follow to understand the Old Testament in light of Christ's appearance. The New Testament is indeed a continuation of Israel's story. Starling does not simply show how to read the Old Testament in light of the New, but he shows how the New Testament should be read in light of the Old. This may be one of the biggest contributions of this book.

The weaknesses of the book are few. His chapter on the book of Revelation does not seem to follow his approaches in the earlier chapters. Starling does say that Revelation is not only a hermeneutical challenge but a hermeneutic itself—John alludes to the Old Testament to spur perseverance and encourage hope. However, is his hermeneutic replicable? It could be, but Starling does not elaborate on this idea.

Overall, *Hermeneutics as Apprenticeship* is a book appropriate in the academy and in the church. Readers will enjoy Starling's insights on the purposes of each analyzed biblical book. Taking the Protestant axiom "Scripture interprets Scripture," Starling applies it in a fresh way that privileges the author's purpose while examining the author's own use of other Scripture. The biblical reader can then join in the interpretive community and learn their practices. The biblical writers were not just teaching lessons but were also teaching hermeneutics. As Starling shows, Christians indeed should be hermeneutical apprentices to the biblical writers.

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Daniel Weaver
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Malachi Then and Now: An Expository Commentary Based on Detailed Exegetical Analysis. **By Allen P. Ross. Wooster, Ohio: Weaver Book Co., 2016. 272 pages. Paperback, $17.99.**

Grammarian and Old Testament scholar Allen Ross has accomplished what he intended (viii–ix): he has written a guide from exegesis of the Hebrew text to exposition in English with application, using Malachi as the text. This approach results in a commentary on the prophetic booklet that falls comfortably within conservative theology. *Malachi Then and Now* could serve as the primary text for Bible students's first exegesis course after completing a full elementary Hebrew text, such as Ross's own. The author has provided readers with parsings, grammatical functions, and lexical information for most of the significant words and phrases in the whole book of Malachi. He has translated every verse and commented on the occasional textual difficulties.

In a way, this book is like the ideal exegetical paper and the ideal homiletic practicum paper, combined and extended to cover all of Malachi. The exceptions to this comparison are easy to identify with the book in hand. First, Ross rarely interacts explicitly with other scholarship in his exegesis. There are limited footnotes and no endnotes, but the reader might notice that Ross is aware of what others have said about the text (e.g., 51 on a theoretical setting of Mal 1:6–14). Second, Ross includes application, but he does not include stories and other illustrations typical of sermons. Someone teaching through Malachi with *Malachi Then and Now* in hand will find

a thorough guide through the meaning of the biblical text with help for structuring sermons and principles for application that need audience-specific examples to connect best with hearers.

A few strong and/or interesting points highlight what characterizes Ross's work. Ross distinguishes between atonement provided by animal sacrifices and that provided by Christ in the New Testament—the former addresses sanctification within the covenant relationship, while the latter includes justification (51, 61n6). Happily, Ross understands Malachi 1:9a ("So now, implore God so that he may be gracious to us.") as the prophet's sincere instruction rather than an ironic quotation from insincere priests. The author also accepts the reference to Levi in Malachi 2:4 as a metonymy, referring to the whole tribe that comes from Levi (75n6, 79). And so, the idyllic priests depicted by metonymy are an unspecified bunch of "early priests" (87). This interpretation affords the prophet more credibility than supposing, with some scholars, that Malachi 2:5–9 drew on a fictitious archetype of a priest. Ross argues that Malachi 2:10–16 regarded marriage as a covenant witnessed by God to fulfill his plan for his people (120–23). Finally, Ross interprets Malachi's eschatology in dialogue with New Testament eschatology, developed around a first and second coming of Jesus the Messiah (see 132–34, 141, 178–81, 191). The book concludes with a summary of Malachi's sections and a discussion of the Christian doctrines derived from Malachi.

John Mark Tittsworth
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Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels. **By Richard B. Hays. Waco: Baylor University Press, 2016. 524 pages. Hardcover, $49.95.**

In *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (Yale University Press, 1989), Richard Hays sought to examine the creative ways that Paul appropriated the Hebrew Scriptures in his letters. In this volume, Hays applies his intertextual approach to a sustained study of the Gospels in order to "open up fruitful lines of inquiry" about these texts (xiii). As in his other works, Hays here seeks to account for both direct citations of Scripture in the Gospels and also the more subtle ways the Gospel authors associate and link their books to the texts, themes, and images of the Hebrew Bible.

Hays contends that "only if we embrace figural interpretation" can we make sense of the Gospel writers' claim that "the Scriptures bear witness to Jesus Christ" (2). By figural interpretation, Hays means "a reading that grasps patterns of correspondence between temporally distinct events, so that these events freshly illuminate each other" (358). Accordingly, the four major chapters of the book examine evidence of this figural Christological interpretation in Mark (chapter one), Matthew (chapter two), Luke (chapter three), and finally John (chapter four). Overall, Hays seeks to demonstrate that each of the Gospel writers employs this shared strategy but does so in unique and distinct ways. Because "figural interpretation" involves both prospective and retrospective elements (reading forward *and* backward), Hays maintains that this reading strategy "creates deep theological coherence within the biblical narrative" and "stands at the heart of the New Testament's message" (3). For Hays, then, the intertextual strategy of the Gospel writers is *perceptive* rather than poorly executed or perfunctory, *figural* rather than finicky or formulaic, and *surprising* rather than spurious.

In a candid preface, Hays details his unexpected battle with pancreatic cancer and also the expedited process that allowed this volume to appear so quickly. Though the final production of the book was abbreviated, the development of his approach and study of the Gospels has been many years in the making. The result is an enriched and thoroughgoing treatment of intertextuality in the four Gospels. Many will disagree with the overall approach or certain aspects of Hays' study. Some might point out the possible pitfalls, for instance, of articulating the "possible pitfalls of Matthew's hermeneutic" (352). Some will also want to root the nature of figural interpretation more firmly in an author's intention rather than a reader's perception. However, all should be thankful that Hays was able to gift the scholarly community with this culmination of his careful reflection on the Gospels and the Hebrew Scriptures. Hays insists that "the thing that matters in the end is the actual *reading* and interpretation of the primary texts" (xvi). This volume provides a host of careful observations that will aid readers of the Gospels in this ever-important task.

Ched Spellman
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The Acts of the Apostles. **By James D.G. Dunn. Reprint. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016. 421 pages. Paperback, $32.00.**

The copyright page notifies the reader that Eerdmans has reproduced the same content as the 1996 Epworth edition, except for newer maps. In the Introduction, Dunn adds just over a page of bibliographic recommendations from 1996 to 2016. Dunn interacts with none of the new recommended works, judging from the appendix. Better said, the newer recommended works do not change how Dunn expounds the book of Acts, because this commentary is the author's own exposition. There are no footnotes or endnotes. Dunn only mentions other works that have shaped his understanding, and Dunn's sharp interest in the book of Acts makes this exposition more engaging than a technical commentary. Scot McKnight, a former student of Dunn's, commends this work to Bible teachers as his own first read when studying Acts.

Dunn addresses the book of Acts as the second of Luke's works, composed according to acceptable conventions for historical works of the first century. Because of these conventions, Luke might omit some traditions for the sake of clarifying theology. For instance, Luke recorded Jesus' ascension as ending the period of physical encounters, but 1 Corinthians 15:5–8 might imply a longer period of appearances (4, 13). Dunn sometimes argues the inverse: Luke included data he found in sources that did not reflect his own views, but he felt compelled to include them. For instance, Dunn considers the Christology of Peter's sermon "primitive" in comparison to Luke's own time (28). Likewise, the prophet Christology of Acts 3 has a "marked primitiveness" to which Luke felt bound when recounting the early days. Therefore, "he [Luke] did not intend the sermon to be a model for preaching in his own day" (43, cf. 99 on 7:54–60). Throughout the work, Dunn maintains this tension between, on the one hand, Luke's freedom to consolidate disparate details into a coherent eschatology (though even this activity has exceptions, like Acts 3:20–21 [47]), and on the other, Luke's obligation to include the earliest Christologies even though Luke himself afforded Jesus a much higher status.

Throughout the commentary, Dunn's reminders that the wonders and zeal depicted in Acts have parallels in the Old Testament (62, cf. Acts 5:1–11 and Lev

10:1–3; 2 Sam 6:6–7) and in other movements (22–23 on Pentecost; 108, 220–21, 259 on exorcisms) are refreshing. In handling Luke's account of Paul's conversion and speeches (e.g., 117–18 on Acts 9; 272–74 on Acts 20), Dunn does not obscure his exposition of Acts even though he extensively constructs pictures of Paul from the epistles. Paul's primary epistles serve as Dunn's standard for evaluating Luke's picture of Paul, and Dunn finds Luke's writings somewhat more credible than other scholars (e.g., Haenchen, Conzelmann, D. Rusam, Th. Phillips, or even Fitzmyer) at times. Finally, Dunn finds Acts 15 compatible with the Pauline letters, even if Luke compressed some informal developments of Jew and Gentile fellowship into the formal apostolic agreement (196–97).

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Comparing Judaism and Christianity: Common Judaism, Paul, and the Inner and the Outer in Ancient Religions. **By E.P. Sanders. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2016. 468 pages. Paperback, $39.00.**

Among his other work, E.P. Sanders has produced three works widely recognized in New Testament studies: *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (1977); *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People* (1983); and *Jesus and Judaism* (1985). Sanders has influenced New Testament studies by bringing Judaism to new light for Christianity with his coinage of "covenantal nomism" to describe the Jews' active participation in the covenant in obedience to righteousness as opposed to the commonly held view that reduces Judaism to mere legalism. Sanders has aimed at understanding Jews and their Judaism. This recent volume entitled *Comparing Judaism and Christianity* is a collection of twenty-two essays that derive from this central thread of Sanders's work.

Worth noting from the onset is that more than half of these essays have been published previously, and ten essays from this collection have only been presented in various papers and lectures. The first essay that serves as the introduction is also entitled "Comparing Judaism and Christianity," an autobiography of what led Sanders to compare the two religions. Without much flare or embellishment, the account stays grounded, revealing how his rather uneventful childhood and education led to some very fortunate encounters with institutions and scholars. These encounters shaped Sanders's love for and understanding of Jewish history and Talmudic studies.

After this introductory essay, the rest of the articles are divided into three parts: "Early Judaism and the Jewish Law"; "Paul, Judaism, and Paulinism"; and "Inner and Outer in the Study of Religion." The first essay of Part I, "The Origins of the Phrase 'Common Judaism,'" gives further thought to covenantal nomism, which depicts the *essence* of Judaism as loyalty to the law for sustaining a covenantal relationship with God. The essay proposes the need to recognize "common Judaism" by emphasizing the essence of practice and belief.

The next essay, "Covenantal Nomism Revisited," states the tenets of covenantal nomism, which includes: (1) God has chosen Israel, (2) God gave the law, which is (3) God's promise to maintain the election of his people, along with (4) the mandate to obey. Sanders places the focus of salvation to be the result of God's mercy rather than human achievement. The next two essays explore similar patterns of Judaism in other Jewish communities, such as the Qumran and synagogue communities in the ancient world.

Part II is an examination of Paul in his beliefs and writings. There are eight essays in this section. The first of these, entitled "The Covenant as a Soteriological Category and the Nature of Salvation in Palestinian and Hellenistic Judaism," shows that all Palestinian Jewish literature, except for IV Ezra, points to membership in the covenant and keeping the law toward salvation. IV Ezra expresses doubt in the covenant's ability to save and sees only a limited few who are saved. In Hellenistic Judaism, there is a more mystical element of Hellenism where salvation is realized through a rite or vision.

The following essay, entitled "God Gave the Law to Condemn," is one that examines providence in Paul's theology and arrives at the conclusion that Paul intentionally "picked on" the law as God's way of condemning the world. The essay "Literary Dependence in Colossians" shows Colossians to be dependent on Paul's authentic letters, especially in the paraenetic material found in Romans and Galatians.

In "Was Paul a Prooftexter?" Sanders shows evidence of Paul's rabbinical training, where memorization was critical for his style of argumentation as an ancient Jew. With the essay "Did Paul Break with Judaism?" Sanders concludes that Paul did not, although he did create a division within Judaism based on the new condition of entry into the in-group through faith in Christ. In "Did Paul's Theology Develop?" Sanders answers with an overwhelming "yes" in the areas of eschatology, inner spiritual life, and suffering/imitation/sharing, particularly in 1 Thessalonians and 1 Corinthians. The essay entitled "Paul's Jewishness" reconstructs Paul's Jewish education. This education focused on memorization, perhaps one reason for Paul's conflating quotations in his writings. In "Jewish Association with Gentiles and Galatians 2:11–14," Sanders investigates Gentile relations with Jews regarding impurity.

Finally, Part III consists of chapters 14–22. These were lectures and presentations covering topics within Judaism and Christianity: fruit, works, tithing, hypocrisy, and inclusion into the inner circles of community.

As Sanders noticed growth in Paul's theology in one of his essays, this collection is also a growth of Sanders's thought on Paul's hermeneutics, training, rearing, and role as a rabbi. The autobiographical essay at the beginning shows the trajectory that views Sanders's work from the standpoint of his training and his desire to uncover the reality of Judaism in Paul's time—that Judaism was not a culture of works-based faith nor a religious institution of legalism. The fruit of Sanders's labor is his handling of primary sources and his honest aim to place Paul in his Jewish surroundings.

Moderate in his theological orientation, Sanders's positions are largely in line with his mainline Protestant background. This most recent essay collection offers a range of ideas to explore Paul's background as a rabbi and his context as a Diaspora Jew, especially considering what Sanders has later coined "common Judaism" in Paul's time.

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The Epistle to the Romans. By Richard N. Longenecker. New International Greek Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016. lxvii + 1,140 pages. Hardcover, $80.00.

In addition to his early Pauline works such as *Paul, Apostle of Liberty* (1964) and *Introducing Romans: Critical Issues in Paul's Most Famous Letter* (2011), Longenecker has now produced this commentary as a capstone to his Pauline and particularly Romans scholarship. Each pericope in this commentary has six components: translation, textual notes, form/structure/setting, exegetical comments, biblical theology, and contextualization for today.

To get a sense of the commentary, this review will focus on Longenecker's discussion of key passages. The righteousness of God in 1:17 speaks of a right legal status before God and also a righteous "ethical quality" (174). Longenecker acknowledges that the New Perspective Movement on Paul led by Sanders, Dunn, and Wright is right about the existence of a theology of grace in Second Temple Judaism. However, Longenecker rejects their argument that covenantal nomism (the observance of the law as a faithful response to God's grace), not legalism (the observance of the law as a means to acquire right standing before God), "dominated the totality of mainline Jewish thought and practice in Paul's day" (365). For Longenecker, Paul actually argued against the legalistic Judaizers, and Luther did not misunderstand Paul. Rather, the New Perspective scholars failed to interpret properly Paul's pejorative phrase "works of the law" in Romans 2:17–3:20a. Regarding the phrase πίστις Χριστοῦ (Rom 3:22, 26), Longenecker adopts "faithfulness of Christ" (subjective genitive) as the right rendering rather than the more traditional "faith in Christ" (objective genitive), despite the relatively short history of such rendering in the history of interpretation. It is disappointing that Longenecker does not discuss exegetically or theologically the imputed righteousness of justification, a crucial doctrinal point for the Reformers.

For Longenecker, Romans 5:1–8:39 is not a passage about sanctification following justification discussed in 1:18–4:25 in a theological sequence. Longenecker does not embrace the traditional Protestant understanding of the twofold structure of Romans 1–8: justification and sanctification. Rather, Romans 1:18–4:25 and 5:1–8:39 are "somewhat parallel lines of thought with differing emphases and different modes of expression: the first in 1:16–4:25 using judicial and forensic language; the second in 5:1–8:39 using relational, personal, and participatory language—though with both sections speaking of much the same things" (539). Romans 5:1–8:39 is Paul's contextualization of the Christian gospel for Gentile Christians who were not familiar with the Jewish "forensic expressions as 'justification,' 'redemption,' and 'propitiation' presented by the Old Testament" (574).

According to Longenecker, the best translation of ἐφ᾽ ᾧ in Romans 5:12 is "with the result that" or "so that" as Joseph Fitzmyer suggested (589). Paul speaks of "two causes, not unrelated" of the fall of every descendant of Adam: Adam's fall providing a "sinful and mortal condition" for his descendants and their own sins (589).

Longenecker argues that it is not right to classify Paul's cry of despair in 7:24 "only in terms of Paul's preconversion or postconversion experiences," since it is "the universal human cry and human call" for rescue from human "hopeless sinfulness" (667–68). This religious despair can be found in any religion but is intensified in Christianity.

Longenecker's inclusivistic soteriology is clearly seen from his exegesis of 9:30–33. God's grace and mercy redeems not only believers in Christ but also "other

'believing' religionists," "identified as 'those of insider movements'" (839). Further-more, in Romans 9–11, Longenecker does not see a Calvinistic understanding of double predestination by which God predestined those who reject his grace in Christ to eternal damnation. According to Longenecker, God sovereignly arranges salvation for certain people on the basis of his divine foreknowledge of their volun-tary response to the gospel. Salvation of "all Israel" in 11:26 refers to the conversion of many, not literally every individual Jew who will be alive at the time of the con-summation of God's salvation.

Regarding Phoebe, Longenecker proposes that she is not merely the carrier of Paul's letter to Christians in Rome but actually "the first commentator to others on Paul's letter to Rome," since her being Paul's patron must have led her to hear directly from Paul about his intentions in Romans and to have "some part in discuss-ing with Paul…at least a few portions of the letter" (1064).

Longenecker's commentary on Romans is a book that every student of Romans must read. Readers will definitely benefit from Longenecker's encyclopedic knowledge of the exegetical and theological history of Romans. One may not agree with him in some exegetical and theological conclusions that he suggests, but one could appreciate his efforts to be fair in evaluating different views and to make the Christian gospel contextualized for its audience today.

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Pauline Churches and Diaspora Jews. **By John M.G. Barclay. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011. Reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016. 454 pages. Softcover, $48.00.**

Pauline Churches and Diaspora Jews is a reprint of an earlier work by Barclay under the same title by Mohr Siebeck in 2011. Other than the occasional cor-rection of typographical errors or updating secondary citation, this work remains unchanged from its original edition (xii–xiii). This volume is a collection of essays by John Barclay centered on the theme of the social setting of Paul. In the first chapter, Barclay says that in this collection of essays, he seeks "to unearth how the 'assemblies' (churches) of 'believers' within Paul's orbit constructed their identity 'in Christ,' using as the chief point of comparison the communities of Jews/Judeans in the Diaspora" (3). He further says that he is attempting to answer four main ques-tions in this book: first, how do Pauline groups compare to Jewish groups in the diaspora; second, how similar are the expressions of identity between Pauline groups and Jewish groups; third, how do Pauline groups maintain their identity despite the low level of outward identity markers; and fourth, how did Jews and Christians interact with Roman power and religion (8).

Part one consists of seven articles under the theme "Pauline Churches and Diaspora Jews" (35). In chapters 2–4, Barclay discusses Paul's use of the law and Jewish social distinctives, and in chapters 3 and 4, he compares them to Paul's near contemporaries, Philo and Josephus. In observance of the law, Paul allows believers latitude in their holding to dietary restrictions and Sabbath requirements but does not allow those ideas to infringe upon the meaning of righteousness, thereby dif-ferentiating Christianity from Judaism. In Paul's hermeneutic, Barclay finds Paul at odds with Philo. Philo allows for allegorical interpretation; Paul's interpretation is eschatological (78). Barclay, further, finds Paul different from Josephus in Paul's

ideal of the community. Josephus holds the Jewish people to the ancient traditions, whereas Paul places his people "paradoxically both within their own cultural traditions and beyond them" (106). In chapter 5, Barclay argues that in terms of money and their meetings, both Jews and early Christians can and should be viewed as associations. In the next two chapters, Barclay discusses apostasy. He makes the case that different groups had different standards for apostasy, and that simply because an individual was seen by one group (or even the theoretical ideal) as an apostate, this does not necessarily mean that every group saw that same individual as such. In the final chapter of this section, Barclay suggests that there were two distinct hostile views of the Jews—one Egyptian and the other Hellenistic.

Part two consists of five chapters under the heading "The Invention of Christian Identity in the Pauline Tradition" (179). In chapter 9, Thessalonica and Corinth are taken as test cases to show that different Pauline groups could, and did, diverge considerably in their identity. He suggests that a main factor in this divergence in the case of Thessalonica and Corinth is the hostility they faced from outsiders. Chapter 10 describes how language shapes identity by taking the term πνευματικός as a test case. Important here is the note: "Language can do more than just 'express' beliefs: it can play a critical role in shaping ideas and identities" (206). Next, a peculiar aspect of early Christian identity is discussed—their (attempted) lack of mourning for the dead. Chapter twelve discusses the household codes in Colossians and shows that they are Christianized by giving a new rationale for following them—devotion to God. The last chapter in this section discusses the Christian ideology of age and shows that, with two exceptions, Christian ideology is in line with the surrounding culture.

The last six chapters are under the heading "Josephus, Paul and Rome" (275). Chapters 14–17 offer postcolonial readings of Josephus. In these, Barclay shows how Josephus, with great rhetorical skill and subtlety, both upholds Roman ideals and undermines them, defending his ancestral, Jewish customs. The last two chapters discuss Paul's interaction with the Imperial cult. It has been fashionable as of late to argue that the Imperial cult was the target for much of Paul's polemic. In dealing with this issue, Barclay critically engages with N.T. Wright's arguments that Paul's theology is set in opposition to Caesar (Barclay engages mainly with Wright's arguments in N.T. Wright, "Paul's Gospel and Caesar's Empire," in *Paul and Politics*, 160–83, ed. Richard A. Horsley [Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2000]; idem, Paul: *Fresh Perspectives* [London: SPCK, 2005]. However, for full citations, see notes 17–74 on pages 368–87.). Through his investigation, Barclay finds that Paul does not engage with the cult specifically.

When reading the essays in this volume, the reader is immersed in the world of Paul and Josephus, as much as a twenty-first century reader can be. Barclay masterfully works well both within the world of the text and that of the archaeologist and social scientist. This gives the work a similar character to Wayne Meeks's seminal work, *The First Urban Christians* (New Haven: Yale University, 1983). Because of Barclay's erudition, *Pauline Churches and Diaspora Jews* should become a standard in the study of Pauline backgrounds and socio-historical interpretation of the New Testament. This new edition is welcome in that it makes this important work more accessible to students of the New Testament.

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Theological Studies

The Soul of Theological Anthropology: A Cartesian Exploration. **By Joshua Farris. New York: Routledge, 2017. 212 pages. Hardcover, $105.00.**

What is human nature according to the Bible? This question is the central question being considered in *The Soul of Theological Anthropology*. Joshua Farris notes that Cartesian Dualism is often said to be unbiblical because of its denigration of the body and preference for the mind. Farris believes such a claim is unwarranted and wishes to defend a Cartesian Substance Dualism as faithful to Scripture. Farris notes that a successful anthropological theory accomplishes the following: (1) accounts for a broad contour of scriptural narrative (like the creeds), (2) accounts for scriptural teaching on the significance of the body and the persistence of human life after death and before resurrection, (3) maintains relational and teleological properties, (4) coheres with science, and (5) provides resources to relate to sin and eschatology (1–2).

Farris begins by arguing that one has direct access to his nature and this access intuitively reveals that he is more than just a body. One persists through time, but his body does not; therefore, it seems that one is not to be identified with his body but with a simple immaterial thing (soul) with complex mental abilities. The most likely metaphysical explanation for this soul is the existence of a personal God who bears marks of similarities with the physical world both as a mind and as the causal agent of the universe's existence (18–21). Human beings are simple souls whose concepts and ability to conceive are tied to his subject-hood. Knowledge and self-consciousness are coterminous, so one co-exists with his thoughts. Material things cannot have concepts nor the persistence conditions for concepts (24–26). Thus, a substance view gives the most adequate understanding of the biblical data on human person-hood. Human beings have the image of God that is sustained in them even after the Fall. This image is the grounds for mankind's purpose (to love and enjoy God forever), but it is in need of repair and restoration. This privation (loss of being) requires an ontic relation to Christ in order to restore the lost being and transform it into something immortal and perfect. All this argumentation implies the existence and endurance of an immaterial substance as the core part of a human person (34–39).

Farris argues for what he calls *Emergent Creationism*: the claim that the soul is created by God in conjunction with the existence of the body so that both body and soul are causally necessary for each other (76). The soul cannot function or come into existence without the body, nor the body without the soul. The soul is created by God, not produced by physical substance, but it is not a special, miraculous event. It is part of the natural, causal workings of the world.

This view is different from pure *Special Creation* theory, where God creates the soul and then attaches it to the body without consideration of the body; however, Farris's view is a form of special creation. This view maintains the goodness of the body as a crucial aspect of Christianity as seen in the doctrines of creation, incarnation, and resurrection. This benefit tends to be lacking in more simplistic substance dualist theories (98–101).

Farris argues that *Emergent Creationism* is consistent with scientific understandings of nature and the body, whereas pure materialist accounts and emergent substance accounts are not. Those theories cannot explain how the mind came into existence, when it came into existence, or how it is related to the body. Farris also argues that *Emergent Creationism* can explain original sin since our physical bodies

are united to Adam's sinful state and our souls emerge with God's help out of that shared physical state. Thus, the soul is vitally connected to the body (and its sinful state) and not just a separate substance. Farris also claims that an interim period of existence between death and resurrection, as taught in Scripture as well as the resurrection itself, naturally implies substance dualism. Lastly, Farris claims that the need for a loss of the corrupt body in order to gain a portion of the beatific vision, as well as resurrection to gain the full vision, as argued by Aquinas, implies a dualist approach. Thus, Cartesian dualism is faithful to the scriptural witness.

The book serves as an adequate defense of the dualist position and makes strong theological arguments for the acceptance of a type of substance dualism by Christians. There are some questions that come to mind when considering Farris's arguments. When God creates the soul out of the body, does the sin nature migrate to the soul or does it only corrupt the body? Further, if the sin nature does affect the soul but does not migrate from the body, does God create a sinful soul? It is not entirely evident where the sin nature resides or its extent in Farris's account. This question extends to the *imago dei* as well. Where does the divine image reside—the body, the soul, both? Does God create the image when he creates the soul, does it migrate from the body, or does the soul lack the image? Farris could argue for something like a migratory stance on each of these issues or that the body's state affects (but does not modify in itself) the functions of the soul. More could be said to flesh out these issues given the uniqueness of each substance and how they connect to each other.

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The Voice of God in the Text of Scripture: Explorations in Constructive Dogmatics. **Edited by Oliver D. Crisp and Fred Sanders. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2016. 208 pages. Paperback, $29.99.**

This book is a collection of essays proceeding from the 2016 Los Angeles Theology Conference on topics related to hearing the voice of God in the text of Scripture. In chapter one, Daniel J. Treier proposes a framework for an "evangelical" (quotation marks are his) dogmatics of Scripture. The argument is that Scripture itself provides the hermeneutic necessary for understanding Scripture and answers objections to its own authority. Scripture provides a "self-presentation" (39). One will find most of what Treier writes agreeable and stimulating as he consistently emphasizes the text of Scripture. His entire framework might be summarized as "the Scriptures are central and essential," and yet he helpfully advances the conversation of formulating a biblical hermeneutic—a hermeneutic not simply applied to the Bible but derived from Scripture as well.

In chapter two, Stephen E. Fowl examines the first five chapters of Hebrews. He rightfully asserts that the Holy Spirit is essential to hearing the voice of God in Scripture (50) and the importance of community (51). His brief discussion on the Old Testament and its relation to Jesus (50–51) is helpful even if too brief. He stresses the role of "tenderheartedness" in hearing (53). Fowl's assessment lets Hebrews ask the questions and give the answers concerning hearing the voice of God in Scripture, an approach that would be valuable if applied to other books. In chapter three, John Goldingay provides five orientations toward the Old Testament that enable one to hear the voice of God: (1) being textual; (2) being historical;

(3) being spiritual; (4) being homiletical; and (5) being submissive. These five would not be novel to most readers, except the homiletical orientation. By "homiletical," Goldingay refers to how God speaks through the liturgy by making new connections between texts that often occur far from each other in the Bible, but are read together in the liturgy. His discussion of the "spiritual" orientation is refreshing to read on an academic level because it is a phenomenon many believers experience.

In chapter four, Amy Plantinga Pauw explores the role of Israel's wisdom literature in not only hearing the voice of God in Scripture but also in nature. She seeks to place Scripture within a larger "economy" of God speaking, a more holistic picture of general and special revelation. Her emphasis on being attentive to the distinct voice of wisdom literature is to be commended. She argues also for "softening" the "hard-and-fast distinction between general and special revelation" (87), noting that Proverbs is similar to Egyptian wisdom literature (general revelation), but Proverbs is also recorded in the Bible (special revelation). She writes, "This direct literary dependence on Egyptian wisdom in the book of Proverbs plays havoc with the traditional theological distinction between general and special revelation" (87).

In chapter five, Myk Habets analyzes Hebrews and claims to discover a "retroactive hermeneutic." His concern is the relationship between the historical and experiential, the text and the Spirit. He is right to stress the role of the Spirit in making the text "active," that is, correctly applicable to a new situation (109). The "retro" is the fixed meaning of the text (108). This hermeneutic does seem to be what Hebrews does with Scripture, hearing God's voice and applying it to new situations. One minor criticism relates to his assertion that the author of Hebrews "cuts behind the human speaker or author of a text, to God, the real speaker" (98). Perhaps it is poor wording but one may ask how, if the text is inspired according to traditional verbal-plenary inspiration (to which Habets appears to adhere), can one so quickly divide the "real" author?

In chapter six, Erin M. Heim approaches the subject metaphors, namely, how to interpret them and their role within theological methodology. She contends that the "knowledge accessible through metaphors is inherently relational" (120). One of Heim's strongest contentions is to let metaphor be metaphor and to resist "translating" metaphor into logical, propositional language (114). In chapter seven, Jason McMartin and Timothy H. Pickavance broach the topic of the voice of God in historical biblical criticism in which they advise what one should do when two equally credible sources disagree, especially those between two people "whom you look to as epistemic guides" (134). Their hypothetical discussion is helpful, providing reasons for suspending judgment. Often pastors and preachers can feel that they must make a decision on an exegetical issue. McMartin and Pickavance provide a third option.

In chapter eight, William J. Abraham dissects postmodernity as the current situation to which Scripture speaks and with which theological method must reckon. His overview is a helpful survey with several pinpoint criticisms of postmodernism. In chapter nine, Daniel D. Lee studies Barth's actualism and Scripture, examining Barth's bridge between biblical and contemporary contexts. Lastly, in chapter ten, Ryan S. Peterson writes about love and the *telos* of Scripture, arguing that Scripture produces love and shapes love (191).

This book is helpful, designed as a survey of various topics concerning the voice of God in the text of Scripture. This collection of essays makes contributions in each of the fields discussed and to constructive dogmatics. Pastors as well as

systematic theologians will benefit from this book, although it can be very technical at points. Overall, the book is a worthy investment.

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Historical Studies

Gregory of Nazianzus. **By Brian Matz. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2016. 208 pages. Paperback, $27.00.**

I was already intrigued by Gregory of Nazianzus before I read this book, and reading it has only increased my interest in him. The organization of the book is simple and clear. The introduction provides a brief biographical sketch of Gregory's life. Matz states the topic of the book as "Gregory's pastoral theology of purification and the extent to which it played a role in shaping his selection and use of Scripture" (5). Chapter one looks at Gregory's work as pastor and theologian. Here, Matz addresses Gregory's baptism, his move from Athens to Nazianzus, his Constantinople ministry, and the theological issues revolving around the Council of Constantinople in 381.

Chapter two focuses on the theme of purification in Gregory's preaching and writing. In this chapter, Matz discusses what Gregory means by purification and the different areas in which this theme permeates his ministry. Chapters three through six focus on four Orations of Nazianzus: 2, 45, 40, and 14.

Throughout the work, Matz proves to be thorough in his understanding of Gregory and has shown the themes of pastoring, contemplation, baptism, and concern for the poor throughout Gregory's works. The work is documented well in the endnotes. At times, I would have liked more direct citations from Gregory, but I finished the book confident that Matz has represented him well.

Readers will be intrigued by the stories of Gregory's shipwreck (16–17), the influence of both of his parents on his life and ministry (17), his habit of running to and away from home at several points in his ministry (4, 20), his theological departure from his father (21), and his lifelong tension between desiring a contemplative life and obedience to the ministry to which the Lord called him (15, 18). Matz referred to this struggle as his extroverted self vs. his introverted self (36, 53).

Gregory made prolific use of Scripture in his writings. Matz describes his "almost stupefying concoctions of countless biblical citations and ideas" (22) as weaving "the language of Scripture into his text in such a way that it does most of the talking for him" (73). Often, Gregory will start with a topic and find multiple verses that share a common word or theme. Thus, according to Matz, "His own voice is really only found in the passages connecting one biblical quotation, reference, or allusion to another" (128). However, at times, this practice led Gregory into allegorical interpretations and multiple meanings of the text, thereby advocating that the spiritual meaning of the text was more important than the historical meaning (24, 32, 85–86, 98, 128).

Gregory's impact as a theologian was profound. He was the first to call the Spirit "God" (1, 22, 47). His teaching on the Trinity influenced much of his writing (22, 26, 107–08). He passionately (even against his own father) defended *homoousios* against the replacement theory of *homoiousios* (21), argued against apollinarianism

(33), and battled the political factions vying for power at the Council of Constantinople (34). As a result, Gregory was elected Bishop of Constantinople, a position that he retained only briefly before returning to Nazianzus because of the continuing political squabbles (35).

Gregory had a high view of the office of a pastor, whose role he equated to that of a physician (128). He struggled to understand questions of theodicy (120, 124), but passionately defended caring for those in need. Matz highlights the theme of purification throughout the book as a conviction for Gregory as well as a theme of his ministry. For Gregory, this purification was to be modeled and taught by pastors (49) and insisted of them by the congregation (68).

This work honestly assesses the person and work of Gregory of Nazianzus. True to his intention, Matz has focused on the theme of purification throughout the work, but also highlighted the impact of this pastor-theologian in ways that ignite an interest in him and an appreciation for how God used him at a pivotal time in the life of the church.

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The Works of Andrew Fuller: Volume 9. Apologetic Works 5. Strictures on Sandemanianism. **Edited by Nathan A. Finn. General Editor, Michael A.G. Haykin. Boston: De Gruyter, 2016. 160 pages. Hardcover, $140.00.**

Strictures on Sandemanianism represents the first volume in an updated collection of the complete works of eighteenth-century British Particular Baptist Andrew Fuller (1754–1815). Prior to the undertaking of this task, those who would read Fuller were reliant upon the Sprinkle Publications reprint edition (1998) of the compilation of his works published initially in 1845. Since that time, various letters and tracts penned by the theologian of the eighteenth-century Baptist missions movement have been discovered. In light of those discoveries and a recent renaissance of interest in the theology and writings of Andrew Fuller, this new publication of his works edited by Michael A.G. Haykin provides contemporary historians with a critical edition complete with helpful introductions, theological and historical footnotes, as well as various other insights to assist in their studies.

This volume, edited by Nathan A. Finn of Union University, contains Fuller's *Strictures on Sandemanianism, in Twelve Letters to a Friend*, originally published in 1810. In these letters, Fuller wrote to an unnamed friend concerning a previous literary dispute between himself and Scotch Baptist Archibald McLean (1733–1812). During this time, two distinct groups of Baptists existed: the Scottish Baptists had been developed from and influenced by their English counterparts, whereas the Scotch Baptists had developed out of the Sandemanian movement, as some had come to credo-baptist convictions. Archibald McLean was the leading proponent of the Scotch Baptists. While McLean sought to differentiate the Scotch Baptists from the Sandemanians, this distinction was predicated upon the worldliness he perceived in the Sandemanians in contrast to the piety of the Scotch Baptists. However, he continued to honor the teachings of the Sandemanians and advocate for their interpretation of Scripture and understanding of salvation.

McLean had been "an ally in the cause of the [Baptist Missionary Society]," but Fuller perceived a drift in McLean's theology that would lead to hyper-Calvinism if remaining unaddressed (22–23). Most concerning to Fuller (as evidenced in

his writings) was the Sandemanian conception of saving faith. Whereas "McLean argued for justification by intellectual assent to the facts of the gospel," according to Finn, "Fuller argued for justification by 'believing with the heart,' which includes both assent and acceptance and results in a transformation of the whole person" (30). Fuller had ceased this earlier disputation before McLean had finished his response leading some to believe that it served "as a proof that [he] felt it unanswerable" (37). As Fuller demonstrated in this work, he did not lack words for a response.

While many contemporary readers may not have heard the descriptor "Sandemanianism," most would be familiar with the Stone-Campbell movement that developed from its teachings. Sandemanianism itself "reached the height of its influence during the latter half of the long eighteenth century" (xv). As such, Finn's introduction to Fuller's *Strictures,* an overview of Sandemanian teachings, as well as the British Particular Baptists's interactions with those espousing such thought, provide helpful context in understanding the manner in which Fuller's writings against the Sandemanians should be read—they are polemical writings situated in a specific context. Moreover, Fuller's words in this context provide a helpful lens by which contemporary readers can understand and refute teachings similar to those of Sandemanianism. Though Fuller's critique of Sandemanianism is far from the only refutation, it is considered to be "the key polemic" against its teaching written by a British Calvinist (xvi). Indeed, Martyn Lloyd-Jones once observed that Fuller's critique "demolished Sandemanianism" (D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *The Puritans: Their Origins and Successors* [Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 1987], 173).

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John Knox. **By Jane Dawson. Yale University Press, 2015. 384 pages. Paperback, $25.00.**

Jane Dawson is a professor of Reformation History at the University of Edinburgh. Dawson's biography of John Knox is a straightforward telling of his life and work. She offers little critique of Knox, rather hoping to provide a balanced look at the figure who most often is seen as a hot-headed demagogue and most often remembered for his passionate sermons. Dawson's biography is mostly sympathetic. One of the more important contributions Dawson makes is her inclusion of newly discovered letters between John Knox and Christopher Goodman (4, 90). This sort of discovery is always helpful and appreciated from a historian. With these sources, Dawson attempts to show that John Knox should be treated with more affection than he has been recently and to show that he was not always an aggressive rabble-rouser. With new sources in hand, Dawson attempts to re-evaluate certain questions about Knox: How scholarly was he? How angry was he? It is clear from her biography that Dawson sees John Knox as a well-meaning reformer who was more preacher than scholar and whose ministry was shaped more by passionate preaching for Christ than by angry preaching against the Catholic Church.

Dawson writes a straightforward history of Knox with very little theological critique. Her focus is primarily tracing Knox's journey and trying to offer "Knox's side of the story." Dawson gets the facts straight and constantly refers to the primary sources. Her near novelization of John Knox is also a delight to read. The details she provides on his personal life and letters, especially regarding his protracted and

loving engagement to his first wife Marjorie, leave the reader wondering if he is reading Jane Dawson or Jane Austen.

Her intentionally whimsical style is an interesting choice given the epic saga of Knox's life: his multiple exiles and constant battles in Scotland. For example, she says of Knox's temperament that "[i]f a nail needed driving home the Scot reached for a sledgehammer; if salt were needed to cleanse a scour, then he picked up a shovel" (79). The only difficultly reading Dawson is the unfortunately tiny font in which the book was published.

If Dawson's only purpose is to endear John Knox to the reader, then she succeeds completely. However, Dawson hopes to demonstrate that John Knox slowly developed into the firebrand and radical preacher that he is reputed to be. Dawson wants to show that he begins life much gentler and kinder, and that perhaps scholars should treat him a bit more amiably (3). This idea of Knox developing into a fiery radical is undercut by the facts Dawson presents of his early life. As a young protégé to George Wishart, Knox was parading around behind George with a massive sword strapped to his back—looking as though ready to start an insurrection at any moment (29). Furthermore, he was refusing positions in the English church over doctrinal issues before having to flee to the continent from Mary Tudor. These early radical features may work against Dawson's central contention that Knox develops into a hardened, uncompromising warrior when he eventually returns to Scotland. Rather, it seems that he always had a flare for the dramatic. Still, even as Dawson honestly reports all this, she begs the reader not to view him as a one-sided character of historical fiction, but as a real person with the whole range of human emotion. Dawson is correct and helpful on this point.

The only other comment regarding the book concerns what it is not; it is not a work of theology. Dawson rarely engages in a theological evaluation of Knox or any of his contemporaries. She simply presents the facts of his journey in the kindest possible light. Still, it would be unfair to judge a book for what it is not, or for possessing too much sugar and not enough salt. Dawson brings new material to light, she is honest with the primary sources, and she is thorough in her examination. These are excellent qualities for a historical biography, and this is an excellent historical biography.

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Awakening the Evangelical Mind: An Intellectual History of the Neo-Evangelical Movement. **By Owen Strachan. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2015. 240 pages. Hardcover, $24.99**

With this nicely packaged work, Owen Strachan offers an accessible overview to the intellectual movement known as neo-evangelicalism. Strachan has been seriously studying evangelicalism for a decade. Drawing on both the considerable historiography of evangelicalism and his own archival research, *Awakening the Evangelical Mind* is drawn from Strachan's dissertation, completed under the supervision of Douglas A. Sweeney at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School.

Awakening the Evangelical Mind is not driven by a strong thesis nor is it heavy-handed in argumentation. Rather, Strachan aims to recount how a small coterie of post-fundamentalist elites led an intellectual revival among born-again Christians, which shaped the trajectory of evangelicalism for the rest of the twentieth century

and arguably to the present day. Although polemical in some public spaces, in person Strachan is winsome, warm, generous, and quirkily funny (Full Disclosure: Owen is a friend). The latter qualities come through in *Awakening*, making the book fun to read even as it deals with a seriously important topic and revolves around people who were quite serious about themselves and their tasks.

Strachan focuses on the personalities at the center of neo-evangelicalism, hearkening back to an earlier model of historical writing that has fallen out of favor with many professional historians. Yet, this "great man theory" of history works well for his topic. After all, the evangelical intellectual renaissance of the mid-twentieth century was led by a relatively small group of highly motivated leaders whose personal relationships one-with-the-other provided the organizational framework for the movement. These visionary leaders pushed, pulled, and pressed evangelicalism towards greater intellectual endeavors and greater cultural engagement.

Their compulsion towards this goal led them to seek academic credentials beyond the fundamentalist fold. In this effort, many young men ended up in Boston, matriculating at Harvard Divinity School at a time when HDS desperately needed enrollment. In Boston, many came in contact with pastor-theologian Harold John Ockenga (1905–1985), who had traveled that path ahead of them, earning a Ph.D. from the University of Pittsburgh, a respected non-evangelical school. Further, he modeled a rigorously intellectual, academically-informed pastoral ministry for these "Cambridge evangelicals" (77). Over the years, Ockenga would lead several critical evangelical institutional endeavors such as founding Fuller Seminary (f. 1947), birthing the National Association of Evangelicals (f. 1943), and providing impetus for the Evangelical Theological Society (f. 1949) through the Plymouth Scholar's Conferences of the late 1940s. Clearly Strachan's hero, Ockenga is the pastor-theologian *par excellence*, fully capable of pastoring a congregation comprised of an elite Bostonian laity while comfortably engaging the emerging evangelical intelligentsia with alacrity.

The contours of this story are well known for those who are familiar with the work of Joel Carpenter, George Marsden, and Garth Rosell. However, Strachan's archival research adds freshness to the story, providing additional depth and, at times, completely new material. Information drawn from the Ockenga and Park Street Church Papers reveal much interesting material, not only about Ockenga but the movement as a whole, while Carl Henry's dream of establishing a top-tier research university firmly committed to an evangelical worldview emerges from the Henry Papers. Reading between the lines, the intellectual reinvigoration of the evangelical pulpit embodied in Ockenga represents one of the great successes of neo-evangelicalism for Strachan, while its inability to launch "Crusade University" typifies its failure, demonstrating just "how fragile the evangelical movement proved to be" (157).

Strachan's general assessment is correct. Indeed, the movement was even more "fragile" than he thinks. Disagreement at the margins—such as over potential "behavioral standards" at Crusade University—were not themselves the source of this fragility but reveal trouble at the center. At its heart, the neo-evangelical movement demonstrated a solid, sincere, and doctrinally-grounded unity around a minimalist core (the doctrinal position of the National Association of Evangelicals, for example, was a brief seven-point statement). Whereas unified efforts that centered on a "cause" were often successful, those that aimed towards a more robust

center almost always failed in the long run. Here, Strachan's appreciation leads him to place too much retroactive hopefulness in the awakening of the evangelical mind.

Awakening the Evangelical Mind focuses almost exclusively on elites, not really considering ecclesial leaders (pastoral and parachurch) or rank-and-file participants. While it is unfair to expect that Strachan would deal exhaustively with those groups in an intellectual history, evangelicalism is at its heart a grassroots movement, so folding them into the story just a bit would have strengthened the book—or perhaps shifted some of the analysis.

In Strachan's telling, the robust intellectual life of contemporary American evangelicalism owes its legacy to the neo-evangelical movement. Without a doubt, he is correct. Alongside its evangelistic and ecclesial foci, neo-evangelicalism injected a significant impulse towards cultural and intellectual engagement into evangelicalism, an impulse that persists to this day. As a result, although there is still much that passes for good scholarship that should not, evangelical scholarship and scholarship by evangelicals has multiplied exponentially—to the benefit of us all. For that, twenty-first century evangelicals owe a debt of gratitude to the mid-century neo-evangelicals.

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***Kierkegaard: A Christian Missionary to Christians*. By Mark A. Tietjen. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2016. 173 pages. Paperback, $24.00.**

Seen by many as the father of existentialism and either ignored or condemned by evangelicals, Søren Kierkegaard (1813–1855) wrote on many aspects of life. How then should Christians interpret Kierkegaard, and what benefit, if any, do his writings have for the modern church? Mark A. Tietjen argues in *Kierkegaard: A Christian Missionary to Christians*, "Kierkegaard is a voice that should be sought and heard for the edification of the church" (25). It may seem paradoxical to state that Kierkegaard was a Christian missionary to Christians, but in reality his mission was to reintroduce Christianity to a stagnant church.

The book is split into five chapters. The first introduces Kierkegaard as a person and covers some of the main issues Christians have had with him. The remaining four chapters, Tietjen claims, are the central themes of all of Kierkegaard's writings, themes that are also central to the Christian life. Each chapter concludes with reflection questions.

Chapter one acts as an apologetic of sort for Kierkegaard. Since Kierkegaard has been a major influence on the philosophies of existentialism and postmodernism, quite often Kierkegaard is viewed through a negative lens. Tietjen examines the question of whether the Christian should be suspicious of Kierkegaard (35). Tietjen explores two figures through their interpretation of Kierkegaard, Dave Breese and Francis Schaeffer. Breese counted Kierkegaard among his seven figures that "have had a lasting and dangerous influence on contemporary Western thought and culture" (37). Schaeffer criticized Kierkegaard for his concept of an irrational leap of faith (43). Tietjen pushes back claiming that for Kierkegaard, "Christianity concerns one's whole life, in particular one's hearts and emotions" (53). For this reason, Kierkegaard should not be avoided but rather read with proper discernment.

Chapter two is concerned with Kierkegaard's critique of three problematic issues regarding the person and works of Jesus: the "liberal theology view" (56), the

"Pelagian view" (57), and the "grace abuse view" (57). Kierkegaard's responses are centered on Jesus being the God-human (58), the "sufficient savior" (64), and the "pattern" (70) that Christians ought to imitate. For Kierkegaard, Christianity was about having a personal relationship with Jesus and imitating him, rather than mere intellectual assent. Christianity, then, was about changing behavior as well as beliefs.

Chapter three is where Kierkegaard can be tricky. In regard to the question of what it means to be human, Kierkegaard has lots to say. He starts with the human view of selfhood as the "created self" (84). Humans are created as relational beings, standing in relation ultimately to God. We are also inwardly relational beings, and for Kierkegaard, this is manifested in our anxieties, our freedom, and our sin. Here is where Tietjen mentions Kierkegaard's terms of the aesthetic, the ethical, and the religious in regard to human development (101). The implications of this thinking for the Christian are a "deep and personal familiarity with one's own sin, and trust and rest in Jesus Christ for forgiveness of that sin" (110).

Chapter four analyzes the believer's witness as it communicates Christianity to the world. Tietjen writes, "As a Christian missionary to Christians, Kierkegaard believes that the problem in Christendom is not knowledge of the Christian faith but acting according to that knowledge" (112–13). For Kierkegaard, the best witness is a changed life, an existence that imitates Christ. He criticized the Christians of the day for failing to live up to the standards they preached or discussed.

Chapter five is where Kierkegaard's notion of Christian love is examined. For Kierkegaard, the concept of Christian love is the defining factor for a Christian. It is so unlike the world's notion of love that its origin could only be divine (137). Acting in accordance with the greatest commandment of loving God and loving one's neighbor is how one avoids the common hypocrisy of Kierkegaard's time. According to Kierkegaard, love is commanded; it is seen through actions, not just emotions. It also applies to all people; there are none whom the Christian should not love, since all are made by God (145). This notion of love is key for Kierkegaard, for it is this "by which humans realize their own identity and destiny before God" (159).

Overall, Tietjen does well in presenting Kierkegaard's views on how to live a life worthy of a Christian. Tietjen rightfully is aware of some of the misconceptions and difficulties with Kierkegaard's views. His work is refreshing because it highlights what can be gleaned from Kierkegaard for today's culture.

While Tietjen claims his book is not a primer or introduction to Kierkegaard, it does read that way. He claims the book's purpose is to show how Kierkegaard can still be used to edify the church today; however, the book does little to show how his writings or thoughts can or should specifically be utilized in today's context. It seems that Tietjen tries to accomplish this goal with the end-of-chapter questions he poses for the reader, but this choice limits how much this goal affects the book as a whole. Perhaps most beneficial are the recommended sources for further reading. For those interested in Kierkegaard but wishing to have a starting place for his works and thoughts, *Kierkegaard: A Christian Missionary to Christians* serves as a fine introduction.

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Ethics and Philosophy

God and the EU: Faith in the European Project. **Edited by Jonathan Chaplin and Gary Wilton. New York: Routledge, 2016. xvi + 290 pages. Hardcover, $155.00.**

The European Union can trace its roots to a time when the continent was war-torn, bankrupt, reeling from the wounds of mass genocide, and watching as the two great powers of the post-war world divvied up European territory as the spoils of war. The European peoples had tremendous motivation to create something new, a social order that would discourage conflict and enable the cooperative rebuilding of a shattered culture. It is impossible to look at Europe today, regardless of the observer's position on the wisdom and desirability of European integration, and fail to recognize the remarkable successes of the member states in recovering from a devastating war and, for half of the continent, a generation of oppressive Soviet domination. The contributors to this volume trace the influence of the Christian faith on the formation and evolution of the European Union and describe the impact of the faith on several current issues facing the continent. The book could not be timelier, as Europeans are wrestling with their European and national identities in an era when the continent's governments are facing the strain of a refugee crisis, Euroskepticism, and Islamic terrorism.

Part 1 of the volume begins with an examination of the deep religious convictions of Robert Schuman, the "Father of a United Europe," and how his commitment to Catholic social teaching shaped his vision for integration. The following chapters flesh out a wider view of the Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox perspectives and discuss the contributions of Christian theology in the realms of economics, social order, and European identity. Part 2 seeks to address the ways that the faith has impacted particular policies within the EU or ways that faith considerations could improve on these policies, including religious freedom, public faith, monetary policy, environmentalism, and science. The editors of this book are to be commended for honestly and effectively illuminating the ways in which the structure, process, and goals of European integration have been impacted by Christian thinking. Further, the volume is stronger for the contributors' diversity of perspectives from within the Christian tradition.

While each chapter is strong and penned by contributors that are undoubtedly qualified to speak to the areas that they address, there are a few weaknesses. First, every contributor approaches the question of faith as if it is a force for good. There are those taking part in the conversation who would disagree. While the historical record is a matter of fact, a voice critical of faith in public life could have provided some contrast to this common assumption. Second, the contributors all live and work in EU member states in the north and west of Europe. The Orthodox perspective is explicitly addressed, and this necessarily brings with it an element of the cultural uniqueness of Eastern Europe, but the East contains those member states that have joined the EU most recently. Many of those states are still recovering economically, culturally, and spiritually from the years spent under Communism, which sought to replace Christian and other religious values with state-sponsored atheism. The perspective of those who were born and educated under such regimes, whose home countries currently suffer most from problems such as unemployment and brain-drain and whose governments can least afford many of the policy requirements relating to supranational regulations, is vital in any discussion involving the

future of the European Union, especially when the moral implications of integration are at issue.

Notwithstanding this critique, *God and the EU* is an immensely helpful volume without a single weak article in the collection. This is not an introductory work, so those readers without some familiarity with the EU may not find it approachable in its entirety. For those in the fields of theology concerned with the role of religion in public life, this book is worth consideration. Americans too often fail to appreciate the significance of Europe in many different arenas, and American Christians often think of the continent as spiritually dead and well past its claim to be the center of the Christian world. While religion is and has been in steep decline in Europe, this book points out many ways in which principles derived from the faith have been used to guide and shape a social order, an issue about which all Christians would be well served to reflect.

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Just War Reconsidered: Strategy, Ethics, and Theory. **By James M. Dubik. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2016. 225 pages. Hardcover, $50.00.**

Retired three-star general James M. Dubik complains that the *jus in bello* aspect of traditional just war theory—that aspect related to the morality of the conflict itself—fails to address adequately strategic-level concerns and responsibilities. Drawing upon examples from the American Civil War, WWII, and the more recent conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq, Dubik convincingly demonstrates that strategic war-waging responsibilities of both political and military leaders have ethical components and concludes that *jus in bello* must address not only conduct in battle, but also in waging war. This gets to the heart of civil-military relations, which he examines next. Dubik argues that traditional just war theory, as represented in the writings of ethicist Michael Walzer, follows Samuel Huntington's model with its sharp division between political responsibilities in deciding for war, and military responsibilities in prosecuting the war. He complains that the objective-control and principle-agent theories, modeled on control and/or obedience and which form the basis for Huntington's model, ignore the nature of wartime strategy as a spirited dialog between unequal partners. A proper war-waging dialog takes time, energy, professionalism, openness, and compromise, and it must include performance–what Dubik calls "a performance-oriented, dialogue-execution regime" (129). He rightly concludes that such a dialog will protect against excesses, short-sightedness, unnecessary escalations, and other strategic ethical failures.

Although Dubik characterizes his argument as a corrective to traditional just war theory, it is better to view it as a criticism of the application of *jus in bello* within a Huntingtonian framework for civil-military relations and a call for military and political strategic leaders to consider the ethical implications of their wartime decisions. Much of the book is devoted to civil-military relations, specifically with a view to undermining the Huntington thesis and offering a variation on Eliot Cohen's *unequal dialog* thesis (*Supreme Command: Soldiers, Statesmen and Leadership in Wartime* [New York: Free Press, 2002]).

Unfortunately, Dubik never really engages the just war tradition, ancient or contemporary, and instead relies almost exclusively on Walzer, whose agreement with Huntington is probably more reflective of the time he wrote—following the

Vietnam conflict—than of the just war tradition itself. In fact, many in the just war tradition have argued that strategic leaders must address *jus in bello* concerns, as they have tied them to those of *jus ad bellum* and *jus post bellum* (the justice of going to war and of actions following war, respectively). For example, Augustine argued that war-making is proper to political and military leaders and that death is proper to soldiers because of their inherent mortality. He concluded that the evils of war are found not in the deaths of soldiers, but in "love of violence, revengeful cruelty, fierce and implacable enmity, wild resistance, and the lust of power, and such like" (Augustine, *Contra Faustum* 22.74–79; quoted in Henry Paolucci, ed. *The Political Writings of St. Augustine* [Chicago: Henry Regnery Co., 1962], 164.). The attitudes that give rise to the need for good men to use military force in war are the real evil and thus, *jus ad bellum* concerns dictate the other aspects of just war theory. He also saw the justice of war as tied ultimately to the divine purpose for a better peace and believed this meant that mercy should be shown to the defeated foe. In this way, he also tied *jus post bellum* to *jus ad bellum*. That is, Augustine saw all three aspects of just war theory—*jus ad bellum*, *jus in bello*, and *jus post bellum*—as inextricably linked, and as therefore having tactical, operational, and strategic aspects and requirements. Likewise, Thomas Aquinas, the first theologian to put forth criteria for just war, noted that the just intentions of political leaders for peace must guide intentions of military leaders during battle. This suggests that strategy is not only a part of *jus in bello* in the tradition, but is primary (*Summa Theologica* 2.40).

In addition, Dubik undermines his argument against Walzer on more than one occasion. For example, he criticizes Walzer for claiming that generals "plan and organize campaigns" and "decide on strategy," when those decisions are the result of a complex and ongoing civil-military dialog, but this is more a critique of Walzer's view of the strategic decision-making process than of his failure to address strategic issues (22). Dubik admits as much when he agrees with Walzer's claim that wartime policy can affect the conduct of war and, therefore, addresses *jus in bello* (23).

Similarly, Dubik acknowledges that traditional just war theory, in the notions of proportionality and appropriateness, recognizes the inherent value of soldiers's lives because taking those lives requires justification (51–52). The underlying principle of that recognition already speaks to the moral imperative of senior leaders to reduce the cost of war (in terms of lives) through responsible planning and decision-making throughout wartime operations. Dubik admits that Walzer addresses both this issue and that of identifying war's proper end, fighting beyond which constitutes an ethical violation, but he maintains that traditional just war theory does not address the *jus in bello* because it relegates these concerns to decisions made prior to hostilities, or *jus ad bellum* (53).

Here, then, the debate seems to be primarily about semantics and not ideas, for a robust conception of just war theory (even traditionally conceived) includes considerations at the strategic level throughout the entire process. It is hard to see how Walzer has not touched upon *jus in bello* in his reference to the ethical obligations for ceasing of hostilities. Such decisions can only be made during the combat phase; benchmarks and ends can be identified in planning, but the decision to cease fighting can only be made in the midst of hostilities, that is, *in bello*.

Despite these minor shortcomings (and they are minor), Dubik's underlying concern—that the ongoing dialog between senior political and military leaders on waging war has clear ethical dimensions—is sound. His work can therefore serve as a helpful corrective, not to just war theory *per se*, but to the improper application and

influence of Huntington's theory to the prosecution of war and to how senior lead-
ers think about their ethical responsibility in that prosecution. Since Huntington's
theory continues to enjoy support among many top military and political leaders,
Dubik's work will prove timely and valuable. Senior military and political leaders
would do well to heed his call to think through the ethical implications of their
strategy formulation. It could mean the difference between mission success and fail-
ure, and between life and death for U.S. service members.

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Idealism and Christian Philosophy, Volume 2: *Idealism and Christianity*. Edited by
Steven B. Cowan and James S. Spiegel. New York: Bloomsbury, 2016. 211 pages.
Hardcover, $100.00.

When Christian philosophers develop mature theories of the world, they
often employ divine ideas to do philosophical work. A standard move for the medi-
evals, for example, was to relocate the Platonic horde (which includes properties,
relations, and propositions) out of Plato's heaven and into the mind of God, iden-
tifying such recondite objects with divine ideas or collections of divine ideas. In the
modern era, Bishop Berkeley pushed this strategy to its extreme, reducing all of
physical reality to divine ideas. According to Berkeleyan idealism, there exist minds
(a divine mind, which is the source of everything else, and many finite minds) and
ideas (divine and non-divine). Rocks, chairs, and bears exist, but not as enmattered
mind-independent realities. Rather, physical objects are mind-dependent; nothing
escapes the all-knowing gaze of the Cosmic Mind. The idealist thesis strikes many
as obviously false, a violation of common sense. Yet a number of prominent Chris-
tian philosophers think Berkeleyan idealism is both orthodox and true. *Idealism and
Christian Philosophy* is an attempt by its contributors to show the Christian creden-
tials and explanatory benefit of Berkeleyan idealism.

Each of the ten essays addresses an area of philosophical concern—the
rationality of theism (chapter 1), realism and truth (chapter 2), the metaphysics of
particulars (chapter 3), perception (chapter 4), the mind-body problem (chapter 5),
the nature of God (chapter 6), God's relationship to time (chapter 7), science (chap-
ter 8), miracles (chapter 9), and the moral life (chapter 10)—demonstrating the
fruitfulness of idealism in resolving long-standing issues as well as its compatibility
with Christian orthodoxy. The essays are all tightly argued and well-written. Still,
while more plausible than typically thought, it is not obvious (to this reviewer) that
idealism is the rationally preferred theory of reality. Space prohibits a detailed explo-
ration of each chapter. I confine myself to a few worries representative of the kinds
of worries I see throughout the entire book.

In chapter 1, James Spiegel aims to show how the idealist thesis provides "a
more reasonable or plausible brand of theism" (25). I am not convinced Spiegel's case
is successful. Two examples will do. First, Spiegel claims that since every perceptual
experience is a perception of a divine idea, it follows that "every single percept we
gather . . . is immediate evidence for God" (12). But in fact, our perceptual experience
is not immediate evidence for God, if he means by immediate, "non-inferential."
Rather, the theistic idealist, like the theistic non-idealist, makes an inference to the
best explanation in order to account for our perceptual experience. As Spiegel notes,
we postulate a divine mind as the source of our perceptual experience because of its

unity and consistency and the fact that human minds are just not up to the task of producing them. It is certainly not the case that "for the idealist, then, the reality of God is immediately apparent" (14), unless we assume at the outset Berkeleyan (theistic) idealism. But that would be to argue in a circle, which falls well short of a "more reasonable brand of theism." Second, Spiegel argues idealism solves the age-old problem of how an immaterial divine spirit causally interacts with material objects by removing the dualism of immaterial/material in favor of a monism of mental substances (15–16). Unfortunately, the interactionist problem does not dissolve; it relocates. The question now is: how does my finite spirit enjoy two-way causal interaction with the collection of divine ideas that is my body?

Interestingly, in chapter 3, Steven Cowan notes that there may well be no *causal* interaction between the mind and the body, and idealists have tended, therefore, to embrace occasionalism. Fair enough, but now the explanatory benefits accrued to the idealist in solving the causal interaction problem may be (for many philosophers) negated by the inclusion of occasionalism, the view that God is the only causal agent in the physical world. The price of endorsing idealism continues to mount as explanatory benefits in one area give way to costs in others. For example, Cowan argues that all living organisms, including plants, are best understood as immaterial substances. But, on idealism, substances are not merely immaterial, they are immaterial *minds*. Thus, if the idealist is to maintain the *esse est percipi aut percipere* mantra, it seems plants must be minds, too.

In chapter 6, Adam Groza argues Berkeleyan idealism is committed to a weak version of panentheism, "but not in a way that conflicts with an orthodox understanding of God's nature" (119). But in fact, idealism does seem to entail a problematic version of panentheism in conflict with orthodoxy, since it seems to make creation part of God. Assume, reasonably, that divine ideas are part of God. But, if the physical world is composed of divine ideas, then the physical world too is part of God. Moreover, creation is not *ex nihilo*. As Marc Hight acknowledges in chapter 8, since divine ideas eternally exist in the mind of God, the "creation" of the physical world is not the coming to be of a previously non-existent reality. Rather, it is just the making public of certain divine ideas, "and this was not creation from nothing" (181).

For at least these reasons, it is not clear to me that Berkeleyan idealism is as attractive as the contributors to this volume claim. Regardless, I highly recommend the book to those interested in the intersection of Christian theism and philosophy.

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Inventing the Individual: The Origins of Western Liberalism. **By Larry Alan Siedentop. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 2014. 448 pages. Hardcover, $35.00.**

Larry Siedentop is Emeritus Fellow of Keble College, Oxford. He has spent his career specializing in British political philosophy. He is the author of *Tocqueville (Past Masters)* (Oxford University Press, 1994) as well as *Democracy in America* (Columbia University Press, 2001).

Siedentop's central claim is that Christianity, as articulated in the writing of the Apostle Paul, gave genesis to the concept of political liberalism, based upon a change in the moral understanding of the self in relationship to society. This change

is due to a new sense of justice that places an increased emphasis on the promotion of equality and personal control (autonomy). Siedentop believes that Paul's identification of the self as a new creation in Christ is the impetus for a cultural shift that takes focus away from the social structures of family and *polis*, prominent at the time of Jesus Christ, towards a new path that develops into liberalism (2 Cor 5:17; Gal 6:15). Siedentop ranges across approximately two millennia of world history—from antiquity to the Enlightenment—to note the start, development, and culmination of this process.

The aim of the work is to acknowledge the Christian faith's role in the rise of the present understanding of the individual within the context of society. Upon this acknowledgement, serious reflection should be given to ascertain what the implications are for both Christianity and society if the present result is the natural and inevitable development of a proper understanding of man's identity relative to others.

Prior to the Incarnation of Jesus Christ, Greek and Roman society had an integrated system with religion, politics, morality, law, and science under the social umbrella of the family and/or *polis*. These developments were in place from roughly 500 BC through the sack of Rome in AD 410. The impact of the Christian faith, as reflected in the Catholic Church and articulated by Augustine (354–430) in *Concerning the City of God against the Pagans* (*De Civitate Dei contra Paganos*), ultimately gave rise to shifts in society toward feudalism. Siedentop identifies Augustine's articulation of the weakness of the human will, bound to sin, and in need of gracious help from outside itself in the form of God's love and mercy as catalyzing a moral revolution in the understanding of the individual.

With the fall of Rome due to barbarian invasions, the Catholic Church would become the societal center of knowledge and learning. Due to the lack of coherent territorial leadership, the unity of the Catholic Church provided the grounding for its ascendency in shaping new attitudes towards spiritual and temporal powers as the Catholic Church gradually became more powerful politically.

The Catholic Church began to work intently on capturing the basics fundamental to law to ease the burden that was present in society. Ultimately, the Catholic Church toward the end of the feudal period would have strong powers consolidated in the position of the pope. Developments in the understandings of law and the individual started to give rise to the concept of natural law and rights. The development and articulation of natural law and natural rights shifted societal relations toward that of equality and reciprocity. With the advent of these ideas, a new model of government was taking shape, whereby individuals saw themselves as having the right through natural law and rights to make decisions based upon reason. This provided a power shift in society towards the people. Ultimately, it led to the creation of nation-states because individuals believed they had the ability to take charge over their temporal affairs, while the Church would maintain leadership in the spiritual realm.

Siedentop properly connects Christianity and its claim that all individuals are uniquely responsible for responding in faith to the soteriological call placed upon them by Jesus Christ to a societal shift that requires a proper understanding of the self. In correctly identifying this conception, it would have been helpful for Siedentop to articulate that while soteriological claims are individual ethical claims of how one acts and responds in society, these claims do not dissipate and become the prerogative of the individual. Failure to understand this key distinction leads to moral

autonomy and removes God from the proper authority of how one is to respond to others.

This book is intended for an audience that is interested in the history of ideas and political philosophy. From the outset, Siedentop states that he is not interested in pursuing every single trail and idea that exists because he wants to stay focused on articulating a common thread across two thousand years so that the reader can grasp the central claim. Although I would have liked for Siedentop to take a less causal approach with the reality of the claims of the Bible and the Christian faith, I still heartily recommend this book for those who have an interest in the Christian role in shaping Western society's concept of the individual.

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The Routledge Handbook of Philosophy of Imagination. **Edited by Amy Kind. London and New York: Routledge, 2016. 481 pages. Hardcover, $192.00.**

There has been a renewed interest of late in the role of imagination in art, theology, and ministry. Christians who are artistic are rightfully pressing the centrality of the imagination as a guide on the quest for beauty. Christian intellectuals such as Kevin Vanhoozer, James Smith, and Holly Ordway have highlighted the role of imagination in theology, spiritual formation, and apologetics. Pastors such as Timothy Keller urge greater attention to the imagination in preaching. Given its centrality in much of human life—including perceiving, learning, creating, and moralizing—acquaintance with the nature and role of the imagination is welcome and needed within the Christian community. Rigor and clarity is also needed. *The Routledge Handbook of Philosophy of Imagination* is well-placed to be a helpful guide in understanding the contours of image, imagination, and the imaginary.

The handbook, at nearly 500 pages, is not for the faint of heart. However, each of the six sections and chapters within (34 total chapters) serve as accessible stand-alone pieces on some facet of the imaginative life. The introduction by editor Amy Kind offers a taxonomy of the imagination serving as a useful framework for the essays that follow.

Part 1 explicates six historically prominent philosophers—Aristotle, Descartes, Hume, Kant, Husserl, and Sartre—and their philosophy of imagination. The selection of philosophers seems *ad hoc*—Descartes and Husserl perhaps—and other important thinkers on the imagination, such as Plato and Coleridge (albeit not a philosopher), were noticeably absent from the discussion. Still, these historical treatments offer the reader needed context for the discussion to follow.

Part 2, "Contemporary Discussions of Imagination," explores whether acts of imagining always include sensory mental images (chapter 7), whether imagination is fundamentally similar or different than belief (chapter 8), how imagination and perception interact (chapter 9), how imagination and memory are similar and different (chapter 10), whether dreaming states are exercises in hallucination or imagination (chapter 11), and whether attitudinal imaginings (imagining that p) can also take a desire-like form (chapter 12). One is struck, in considering the wide range of issues discussed in this section, with the versatility and centrality of imagination to the cognitive life. Man truly is *Homo imaginans*, as the philosopher Colin McGinn provocatively suggests in his book *Mindsight*.

Part 3, "Imagination in Aesthetics," explores the role of imagination in art, music, and fiction. In this section, Stacie Friend's essay entitled "Fiction and Emotion" (chapter 16) is especially insightful, explaining how it is that we imaginatively experience genuine emotion when reading or watching fictional stories. Importantly, these emotional experiences are appropriate, typically mirroring our emotional responses to real life, highlighting the role of story in exercising and expanding our moral imagination.

Part 4, "Imagination in Philosophy of Mind and Cognitive Science," probes a cluster of phenomena that inform our understanding of human nature, the self, and action. For example, how is it that we can imaginatively resist certain (abhorrent) fictional scenarios (chapter 17) or understand or imagine being others by mentally simulating being them (chapters 19 & 20) or engage in make-believe (chapters 22 & 23)? Notably, Dustin Stokes's chapter entitled "Imagination and Creativity" (chapter 18) insightfully delineates the role of imagination in the creative process, arguing that freedom and spontaneity of the productive imagination play a crucial role in art, scientific discovery, and in the stories with which we narrate our lives. Ruth Byrne's essay "Imagination and Rationality" (chapter 25) is unique, highlighting empirical evidence from psychological studies on counterfactual reasoning that suggest the same sort of computational processes are involved in reasoning and imagining.

Part 5, "Imagination in Ethics, Moral Psychology, and Political Philosophy," highlights the role of imagination in the moral and political life, including an important essay (chapter 28) on the ethics of imaginative experiences (in fantasizing, engaging with fictions, and in dreaming). In another illuminating essay (chapter 26) from this section, Mark Johnson argues that we ought to abandon the deeply rooted assumption that the right moral decision is given in advance via rationally derived principles. Rather, the imagination plays a key role, a *constitutive* role, in moral deliberation (e.g., in addressing clashes of values, conflicts of ends, and moral indeterminacy).

Part 6 addresses the role of imagination in the cognitive life including philosophy, mathematics, and science. Peter Kung's essay (chapter 32) is essential reading for anyone wanting to understand the state of the debate over Hume's famous dictum that "imagination is a guide to possibility." Also in this section, Roy Sorensen canvasses another key contribution the imagination plays in discovery via thought experiments (chapter 31). Thought experiments are like actual (scientific) experiments except that the knowledge gained is through the imagination instead of perception, all without hazard or expense!

Each of the 34 essays sets the stage for further exploration, providing the conceptual framework and bibliographical details from which the interested reader can forge ahead to new vistas of the imaginative landscape. For the theist, applications abound. In particular, the doctrines of creation, omnipotence, and omniscience could be further illuminated by considering the nature and role of the divine imagination in creating, grounding modal reality, and in knowing what it is like to be another via simulation. I highly recommend this handbook as a helpful guide in exploring the philosophy of the imagination.

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C.S. Lewis's Mere Christianity: *A Biography*. **By George M. Marsden. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016. 264 pages. Hardcover, $24.95.**

The "Lives of Great Religious Books" series by Princeton University Press novelly offers "biographies" of significant religious works. In *C.S. Lewis's* Mere Christianity: *A Biography*, George M. Marsden traces the "life story" of Lewis's celebrated work from its origination to its reception and continuing influence. "What is it about this collection of informal radio talks," Marsden asks, "that accounts for their taking on such a thriving life of their own?" (2).

Following a short introduction summarizing Lewis's own life up through the outbreak of World War II, Marsden's first chapter describes the circumstances in which Lewis came to deliver his (first) series of talks over BBC airwaves. These "Broadcast Talks," while momentous, were but one facet of Lewis's wartime service.

Chapter two focuses on Lewis's series of talks, the first installment of which he delivered live on August 6, 1941. Due largely to their popularity, Lewis ultimately was secured for three sets of talks—each of which were published in turn between 1941 and 1944. Between these talks and the publication in 1942 of *The Screwtape Letters*, Marsden explains, Lewis became something of a celebrity both in England and the United States.

Lewis wrote eleven books during World War II, including the collation of all his broadcast talks: *Mere Christianity*. Predictably, these works, including the broadcast talks, generated wide-ranging responses. Marsden's third chapter, "Loved or Hated," surveys some of these responses (including that of George Orwell). In sum, "though widely popular, Lewis remained a highly divisive figure in Great Britain, in part just because of his popularity" (65). In the United States, on the other hand, Lewis found—with certain exceptions—an overwhelmingly positive reception.

The fifth chapter, "Into the Evangelical Orbit," recounts the discovery by American Evangelicals of Lewis's writings, especially of *Mere Christianity*. Thanks to the efforts of Evangelical influencers (e.g., Chad Walsh, Walter Hooper, and Clyde Kilby) and organizations (e.g., *Christianity Today* and InterVarsity Campus Fellowship), Lewis's star rose quickly and continues to shine brightly across the Evangelical spectrum. In a similar vein, chapter six surveys Lewis's influence among well-known Protestant and Catholic figures, establishing that "contrary to his own expectations that his works would soon be forgotten, Lewis is far better known in the twenty-first century than he was at the time of his death in 1963" (137).

Chapter seven briefly reviews some critiques of *Mere Christianity*, notably that of John Beversluis.

In the eighth and longest chapter, Marsden is at his best. He considers seven reasons for *Mere Christianity*'s lasting vitality. Whereas much of the first seven chapters' material will be known to readers familiar with the existing literature on Lewis and his work, in this final chapter Marsden offers an original analysis of Lewis's work. Here, Marsden perceptively highlights qualities of Lewis's writings—style, approach, content—as well as of Lewis himself—for example, his sensitivity to human nature and carefulness in balancing reason and imagination—to account for the continuing (perhaps even growing) influence of Lewis.

C.S. Lewis's Mere Christianity: *A Biography* is a well-written, enjoyable tour through land familiar to Lewis aficionados. Though useful to day-trippers desiring

a beginner's guide to local paths, the seasoned wayfarer in search of untrodden trails shall have to look elsewhere.

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The End of the Timeless God. **By R. T. Mullins. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016. xxiv + 248 pages. Hardcover, $110.00.**

The End of the Timeless God is the newest addition to the Oxford Studies in Analytic Theology series. Analytic theology, simply put, is theology done in tune with the resources of analytic philosophy. Author Ryan Mullins capably brings these resources to bear in arguing against the "divine timeless research program," which rests on adherence to four hypotheses: divine timelessness, divine simplicity, strong immutability, and strong impassibility (10). This program, it is argued, ought to be rejected both because it is internally incoherent and because it raises more problems than it solves. While Mullins is careful in laying out his case, the book assumes a readership having facility in metaphysics as well as some background familiarity with the existing literature concerning God and time.

Following a particularly helpful preface establishing the need for greater precision in work on divine eternality, the book's first chapter sketches the divine timeless research program to be examined. Noting that "it makes no sense to ask what God's relation to *x* is if one does not have a clue what *x* in fact is" (13), Mullins's second chapter takes up the question "What is Time?" Developments in the philosophy of time factor prominently in contemporary approaches to the God and time question, and Mullins shows he is well acquainted with these developments. Although duly emphasizing the ontology of time, Mullins's somewhat dismissive stance toward the A- versus B-theory debate (24–25) will no doubt surprise certain readers. Regardless, whereas appeal to the B-theory of time is generally regarded as the only available (albeit undesirable) option for divine timelessness, Mullins positions himself to argue that timelessness is compatible with neither presentism nor eternalism. This strategy suggests a real advance in the God and time literature. Turning in chapter three to the question, "What is eternity?" Mullins explicates the understanding on offer from the timelessness research program and its interplay with that program's four hypotheses. Pointed questions are raised at each juncture, but the book's main argument begins in the fourth chapter.

The opening burden of chapter four is to promote a decidedly minority reading of the classical theists as proponents of presentism (rather than eternalism, which he dismisses as anachronistic). Resting as it does on the repeated assertion that presentism is *assumed* (76, 79, 82, cf. 52) in these writings, scholars of these figures are unlikely to find compelling reason to alter already settled views. What some will perceive as undue haste in this section notwithstanding, one appreciates Mullins's historical mindedness—especially his interaction with the medievals—throughout this and the preceding chapter. Chapter four rounds out with a consideration of the (bleak) prospects of holding timelessness, presentism, and omniscience. Turning to the doctrine of creation, chapter five continues the demonstration of the timeless research program's incompatibility with presentism, arguing that a timeless God can neither create nor sustain a presentist universe. The latter argument naturally raises the question of God's "real relation" with creation, and Mullins convincingly shows

that "the denial that God is really related to creation brings about severe incoherence within Christian theology and practice" (122).

Having argued that the timeless research program is incompatible with presentism, Mullins shifts his focus in chapter six to argue that it fares no better in conjunction with eternalism. Not only can such a view not support creation *ex nihilo* (135), Mullins argues, it entails a modal collapse—meaning "there is no contingency for everything is absolutely necessary" (138). Moreover, the crucial distinction between "begotten" and "made" cannot be maintained on an eternalist ontology, and as Mullins keenly observes, "that is not a good position to be in if one holds to the eternal generation of the Son" (143). Chapter seven, the longest of the book, maintains that there is no acceptable model of the Incarnation that is compatible with the timeless research program. Particular attention is paid to the "two-minds" view (which is rejected as Nestorian), and Mullins rightly highlights the unacceptable implication of an eternally incarnate Christ implied on eternalism (187). Certain readers, however, will be nonplussed by Mullins's assumption (188) that eternal subordination is tantamount to inequality. Nevertheless, the chapter is richly thought-provoking, pushing readers to choose between timelessness or the Incarnation.

Overall, *The End of the Timeless God* is a formidable critique of the timeless research program, both resharpening familiar arguments as well as forging new ones. Mullins is an engaging writer, notwithstanding the occasional jarring turn of phrase (e.g., "eternal generation and procession are an ineffable mystery, and…I find ineffable mysteries to be incoherent and repugnant to Christian theology," 102). Proponents of relationalism, quite comfortable affirming a beginning of time, will detect Mullins's penchant for the absolute view of time latent at several points (e.g., 67, 86, 151). Certain temporalists justifiably will cry foul in response to assertions such as "there is little sense in claims that God is timeless *sans* creation but temporal with creation" (73), "if God is timeless, He is necessarily timeless" (73), and "if there is a state of affairs where God exists without creation and another where God exists with creation, God has a before and after in His life" (133), and it is regrettable that space limitations seem to have prevented substantive engagement with those who have put forth major arguments to the contrary. Still, *The End of the Timeless God* presents a well-developed case deserving careful consideration.

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Preaching and Pastoral Ministries

***The Worship Pastor: A Call to Ministry for Worship Leaders and Teams*. By Zac Hicks. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2016. 198 pages. Softcover, $17.99.**

Recently, an increasing number of voices from among contemporary worship leaders have arisen to challenge the common performance mentality and encourage a ministry mindset. Zac Hicks, Canon for Worship and Liturgy at Cathedral Church of the Advent in Birmingham, Alabama, adds his contribution to this growing list with this volume. Hicks argues that worship leaders are not simply leading music; rather, they are pastoring worshipers.

Hicks states his underlying thesis in the Introduction without defense or explanation. At the same time, he includes one of the more insightful sections of the book—a brief historical survey assessing why churches formed a split between the pastoral office and the church musician (15–17). Hicks believes that repairing this division requires not a return "to antiquated forms and functions of worship leadership" (17), but rather a practical guide that describes the duties of a worship pastor. Each chapter of the book seeks to accomplish this goal by exploring the role of the worship pastor in various functions through which shepherding takes place.

For what Hicks describes as "rock star" worship leaders (17), many of the book's prescriptions provide necessary corrective. Hicks helps them understand that they shape people's beliefs and understanding of worship through how they lead, whether they recognize it or not (14). He correctly bemoans the loss of pastoral awareness among worship leaders and provides very useful tools to recover this critical emphasis by "filtering every decision they [make] and every action they [take] through the grid, 'Does this build up the body?'" (53). He also avoids the common mistake among contemporary evangelicals of assuming musical forms are neutral; rather, Hicks correctly identifies the power of music in its ability to mimic emotion (64), wisely notes that "not all emotions are the best or the healthiest" (152), and rightly suggests that musical choices in worship can help to mature emotions (149).

Some omissions and inconsistencies weaken the overall value of the book, however. First, while Hicks correctly identifies the problem of dividing the pastorate from worship leadership, he does not present a substantive biblical case for why worship leadership is a pastoral role. Furthermore, by his own admission, he "purposefully downplay[s]" the spiritual qualifications for a worship pastor, relegating the discussion at the end of the book to a half-page (194). This minimization of pastoral qualifications appears to derive from the fact that Hicks does not view the worship leader as a pastor in the formal sense at all, considering the moniker something of a metaphorical—albeit "serious"—function only (195). While his recognition of the formative nature of corporate worship is admirable, this admission in the final pages undercuts the potency of his overall aim.

Second, while Hicks in several places rightly insists that it is not the worship leader's responsibility to "usher people into God's presence," even claiming that this is an unbiblical error of charismatic theology (17, 37), he nevertheless embodies this very underlying theology throughout the book. For example, he expects that in worship, the Holy Spirit will "come down . . . manifesting His presence to us" (33), defines worship as "a vibrant, emotionally charged" experience (34, cf. 38), suggests that music is a means through which worshipers encounter "awareness of God's presence" (36), and articulates the gospel shape of worship liturgy as essentially an "emotional journey" that happens to resemble the Praise and Worship theology of charismatics like Judson Cornwall or John Wimber (151, cf. 165–7). This leads him to claim that "emotional flow" is a central concern in worship leadership (153), something worship leaders must carefully guide through demeanor (154), music (175), transitions (186), and "ambiance" (187) lest they lose the "desired affect" and interrupt the presence of God (184–85). Particularly telling is Hicks's regular acknowledgement and praise of charismatic theologians upon his own thinking (31, 36, 59, 153) and his attempt (which even he admits as a "stretch") to fit charismatic liturgy within a gospel shape (167). What is worse is that Hicks does not seem to recognize his own charismatic presuppositions. For example, when exploring how charismatic, Reformational, and sacramental traditions each understand the pres-

ence of God in worship (35–37), he presupposes a charismatic definition of presence in his interpretation of all three, suggesting that each simply differs in how they think God's presence is "tangibly" experienced. On the contrary, Reformational theology in particular does not simply find tangible presence of God in the Word rather than in music or sacrament, as Hicks argues; rather, the Reformers expressly differ from sacramental or charismatic traditions in insisting that the presence of God is something Christians enjoy intangibly through the gospel by faith, not through experience. As Bryan Chapell (whom Hicks often cites favorably) notes, the charismatic movement *lost* the gospel shape of worship when emotional flow became its chief concern (Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Worship: Letting the Gospel Shape Our Practice* [Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009], 70.).

For contemporary worship leaders embracing a charismatic theology of the presence of God in worship, *The Worship Pastor* can help avoid focus on performance and recover needed emphasis on shepherding God's people. Nevertheless, because Hicks assumes his understanding of worship rather than proving it, the book will have limited value outside those who agree with his presuppositions.

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Pastoral Ministry: The Ministry of a Shepherd. **Edited by Deron J. Biles. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2017. 224 pages. Paperback, $29.99.**

In *Pastoral Ministry: The Ministry of a Shepherd,* Deron Biles defines and defends the primary role of a pastor being that of a shepherd. Biles uses Ezekiel 34 as a framework to explain the role of a pastor as shepherd. This follows in the tradition of the reformer Martin Bucer, whose work, *Concerning the True Care of Souls,* originally included five pastoral expectations from Ezekiel 34:16. From this verse, Bucer asserted that pastors, as shepherds of God's flock, should be seeking after the lost, restoring stray sheep, binding up the hurt and wounded sheep, strengthening the weak, and guarding and feeding the healthy sheep.

Biles seeks to "examine the areas for which God holds His shepherds accountable and to understand the expectations He has for His leaders today" (14). In the introduction, he provides an exegetical analysis of Ezekiel 34 along with brief introductions to each of the expectations of a shepherd. To understand and explain the expectations for faithful shepherds, he looks beyond Ezekiel 34:16 to the whole chapter and identifies nine expectations of the pastor. Six of these expectations mirror Bucer, though Biles separates guarding and feeding the sheep into separate chapters. Healing the sheep, leading the flock, and trusting the shepherd are expectations that Biles adds to Bucer's original discussion. These nine expectations form the outline of the rest of the text. In each of these chapters, the authors work to extricate the meaning of the shepherding metaphor in order to apply it clearly to the work of the pastor.

In chapter two, David Allen argues that feeding the flock is best done in the preaching ministry of the pastor. Allen argues in this chapter that the best way to feed the sheep is through expositional, text-driven preaching. In chapter three, Biles argues for personal pastoral care as the pastor seeks to strengthen the weak sheep. Referring to the importance of pastoral care and its difference from preaching, Biles writes, "One can feed en masse from a distance, but one only strengthens up close and one at a time"(50). Chapter four, authored by Paige Patterson, points to prayer

as the primary prescription for the pastor to use in ministering to the sheep in need of healing. In the fifth chapter, Dale Johnson "aims to demonstrate that the task of shepherding includes active personal participation in leading the broken to Christ, the only balm that restores the soul" (82). From the imagery of a shepherd binding a broken sheep, Johnson makes clear that a shepherd should be actively involved in the counseling and care of his congregants. Malcolm Yarnell argues in chapter six that the shepherd should protect the sheep in the primary ways. Yarnell writes, "The Christian shepherd's role may be summarized as that of caring for the congregation, seeking the little ones who have become lost, and combatting heretical teachings in the flock" (115). The sixth chapter, authored by Tommy Kiker, reminds the shepherd to be prepared to sacrifice in order to retrieve lost sheep. In chapter seven, Matt Queen contrasts the evil shepherd who seeks not the lost sheep with that of the good shepherd who is actively involved in the seeking of lost sheep. Queen admonishes his readers to plan and participate in personal evangelism as the means of seeking lost sheep. Chapter nine, authored by Fred Luter, instructs the shepherd as leader of the sheep to remain faithful to God, His word, and His church. In the final chapter, Stephen Rummage encourages shepherds to seek the true shepherd as they pursue their course of ministry.

Though this text is written by various authors, each chapter is connected, coherent, and convinced of the necessity of assuming the posture of a shepherd in the work of a pastor. In chapter five, Dale Johnson writes, "professionalism and secular psychology, like a two-horned bull, threaten the call of the shepherd to bind the broken. Shepherds embracing the CEO model of pastoral ministry are often more concerned about the business of ministry rather than tending to the lame or wounded sheep" (85). These threats mentioned by Johnson are dismantled in each chapter, and each author points pastors to shepherding over psychology or business-based professionalism. Biles, as the editor, has done an exemplary job in keeping each of these chapters focused on the text and principles of a shepherd in Ezekiel 34, while also arguing against the influences of professionalism and psychology on pastoral ministry.

It should also be noted that the greatest weakness of this text is Luter's chapter on leading the flock of God. Though Biles provides a helpful introduction to pastoral leadership in the introduction when he writes, "Good shepherds do not lead by proxy, dictate demands, or achieve goals by good intentions. Shepherds live among the sheep and carefully and consistently lead the sheep from where they are to where they should be" (23), his explanation of this imagery is not picked up in chapter nine. Instead, Luter differs from the other authors and provides more of a pastoral testimony than an exposition and application of the text in Ezekiel. Luter's chapter is certainly profitable, as it offers practical examples and plenty of encouragement to pastors, yet it seems to lack continuity with the rest of the work. An opportunity was missed in this chapter to expand upon the definition of pastoral leadership provided by Biles in the introduction.

This volume is the first of a new series edited by Paige Patterson and Jason Duesing entitled *A Treasury of Baptist Theology*. This series aims to "reflect the understanding of holy Scripture as Baptists have grasped it" (xvii). Yet, this work has a much broader application than to Baptist pastors or leaders. Though this work may implicitly suggest a primary elder church government, there is nothing in the work that limits its utility to only Baptist pastors or shepherds. The expectations of shepherds as presented here by the contributors have broad application to all who serve

in pastoral work. Whether it is the seminarian on the path to future ministry or the veteran pastor in the midst of his present ministry who reads this volume, both will be reminded of the high calling and lofty expectations of a faithful shepherd of the flock of God.

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Index of Book Reviews