The Church

THE CHURCH

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The doctrine of the Church is rarely ever the first doctrine pondered in theology. Christology, Theology Proper, and the Trinity rightfully are primary concerns. Yet in no way should this diminish the importance of the church and its teaching. The church has been an important concept for all of its history. The recipients of the early creeds and confessions of Christianity are addressed to the entity called the church. In almost every era there is a discussion about who is, or at least is in, this thing called the church. Great debate and schism still remain about particular functions of the church, such as Baptism or the Lord's Supper. One only needs to rehearse the division between Luther and Zwingli on the Lord's Supper to understand that beliefs about this practice are fundamental to one's faith. The birth of the Baptist movement also is an example of the importance of ecclesiology, for it is the concern that led to their separation from other Christian traditions. John Smyth, for instance, devotes his work *The Character of the Beast* to the question of the constitution of the church. Historically, the concept of the church has been manifestly an important doctrine for Christianity.

For the greater part of the twentieth century there was not much concern with the doctrine of the church. Fortunately, there has been a recent turn back in these traditions to ecclesiology. In particular, the works of 9Marks stand out as a recent example, especially Mark Dever's *Nine Marks of the Healthy Church*. Questions raised about the nature of the church, the Universal church and Local churches, membership in a church, Baptism, the Lord's Supper, and Discipline, to name only a few concerns, are very important, not just in and of themselves but as they function in relation to the rest of theology and to the functioning of the Christian Life. Our theology is only improved by seriously considering these topics as they relate to the Christian faith.

The current issue is concerned with this need to engage ecclesiology. Though the articles that follow are varied, they all address the church in a significant way. In the first article, Jonathan Watson of Charleston Southern University considers the concept of the ongoing use of baptism and relates it to the Baptist theological tradition. Watson specifically shows to what extent, if any, Baptist systematic theologies have engaged the ongoing use of Baptism in their theology of Baptism. Following this article is an engagement with the Lord's Supper written by Rustin Umstattd of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Herein he investigates the practices of the

Lord's Supper and suggests a different approach to the practice of the Lord's Supper be considered. In particular, he argues that the Lord's Supper may be best practiced as a part of a meal and not just as a symbol of a meal.

Following these two articles is an article by Robert Matz, also from Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Matz considers previous research by Southern Baptists on the question of childhood development and the child's ability to receive faith. A. Boyd Luter and Nicholas Dodson next present an article investigating the use of ἐκκλησία in the books of Matthew and Acts arguing for what they call a "Matthean Theological Priority." Finally, Michael A.G. Haykin presents an historical article on the English Baptist James Hinton, detailing the persecution he suffered because of his social position as an English Dissenter. Following these articles are a variety of Book Reviews of recent works in Biblical Studies, Theology, Philosophy, and Practical Theology.

The Ongoing "Use" of Baptism:
A Hole in the Baptist (Systematic) Baptistery?[1]

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The apostle Paul uses baptism as a pedagogical sign at several points in his letters. That is, he uses baptism to teach his readers about specific realities, especially their union with Christ and its implications for sanctification and the Christian life (e.g. Gal 3, Rom 6, Col 2–3). After establishing a biblical case for an ongoing use of baptism in the Christian life and the church's communication of the truths surrounding the Christian life, I will demonstrate that while certain traditions (e.g., Presbyterian and Lutheran) have long recognized an ongoing "use" for baptism in the life of the believer, the notion of a "use" for baptism is muted among influential, relatively recent, Baptist Systematic Theologies. Emphasizing the aspect of profession, credobaptists have tended to relegate baptism to the past tense. Describing this tendency, Stanley Grenz writes, "It is interesting to note … that many Baptists, whose denominational name derives from the ordinance, often view this act [i.e., baptism] as having no real importance beyond forming the entrance into the local church."[2]

I will consider how influential, relatively recent, Baptist Systematic Theology texts have dealt with this concept (if at all).[3] Specifically I will consider the six influential, Baptist Systematic Theologies by Daniel L. Akin, James Leo Garrett, Jr., Stanley Grenz, Wayne Grudem, Millard Erickson, and James Wm. McClendon, Jr.[4] These texts are broad representatives of Baptist theology and include both single and multi-volume texts. This survey will demonstrate a pattern of neglect toward the ongoing "use" of baptism in

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[1]This article was presented in nascent form at the 2018 Southeast Regional Meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society (Charleston Southern University, Charleston, SC).

[2]Stanley J. Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 515.

[3]"Relatively recent" here means 1980's to present.

[4]Daniel L. Akin, ed., *Theology for the Church*, rev. ed. (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2014); James Leo Garrett, Jr. *Systematic Theology: Biblical, Historical, and Evangelical*, 2 vols. (vol. 1, North Richland Hills, TX: BIBAL, 1990; vol. 2, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995); Stanley J. Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994); Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000); Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013); James Wm. McClendon, Jr., *Systematic Theology*, 3 vols. (Nashville: Abingdon, 1986).

discussions of baptism proper. It will also show that in most cases baptism is overlooked in developing the loci of union with Christ and sanctification, two areas in which the ongoing use of baptism is readily identified.[5] In this second sense, the issue of systematic theological method is raised as well. If baptism has a legitimate ongoing role as a pedagogical sign in the Christian life, what role might baptism play pedagogically for integrating various loci in Systematic Theology?[6]

In sum, this article will argue that baptism has an ongoing use in the life of a believer, demonstrate that this use has largely been overlooked in popular, Baptist Systematic Theologies, consider the implications of this use of baptism for Baptist systematic theological development, and offer modest proposals for future work.

Biblical-Theological Foundation for the Ongoing Use of Baptism[7]

In this section, we seek to establish the foundational claim that baptism has an ongoing role and function in the life of the believer—a role and function that is firmly rooted in the New Testament. The apostle Paul uses baptism as a pedagogical sign at several points in his letters. That is, he uses baptism to teach his readers about specific realities, especially their union with Christ and its implications for sanctification and the Christian life (e.g. Gal 3, Rom 6, Col 2–3).

For example, in Romans 6, the apostle Paul anticipates an antinomian distortion to the message of grace he has expounded in the preceding chapters: "What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase?" (Rom 6:1).[8] He responds by citing the meaning of baptism and its ethical implications:

> May it never be! How shall *we who died to sin* [οἵτινες ἀπεθάνομεν τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ] still live in it? Or do you not know that *all of us who* [ὅσοι] have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized

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[5]Arguably the entirety of the Christian faith is summarized in baptism. Thomas Oden has aptly commented that "Christian theology [is] best thought of largely as a commentary on baptism." Thomas C. Oden, *Systematic Theology*, 3 vols. (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1987–1992), 1:181, and "The history of Christian theology is best understood as an extended commentary on the baptismal formula," Oden, *Systematic Theology*, 1:202. Sharing Oden's position on this point, it is my conviction that all the loci of Systematic Theology intersect in the ordained sign of baptism and are subsequently rehearsed in the continuing sign of the Lord's Supper. Nonetheless, drawing out these lines of connection for all the major loci extends beyond the scope of this article.

[6]While the focus is upon Baptist Systematic Theologies, the implications for this discussion extend beyond this denominational territory.

[7]This section (along with the following two sections) draws from my (currently) unpublished dissertation: "The Relationship Between Baptism, Catechesis, and Entrance to The Church: An Argument for a Theological Catalyst" (PhD diss., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2015), 103–06.

[8]Unless noted otherwise, all quotations are from the NASB.

into His death? Therefore *we have been buried* [συνετάφημεν] with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so *we* too *might walk* [ἡμεῖς … περιπατήσωμεν] in newness of life. For if *we have become* [γεγόναμεν] united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly *we shall* also *be* [ἐσόμεθα] in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we [ἡμᾶς] would no longer be slaves to sin; for he who has died is freed from sin (Rom 6:2–7; emphasis added).

The first person, plural clauses of these verses indicate Paul's assumption that his hearers are baptized. George Beasley-Murray rightly notes that these phrases "self-evidently … include Paul and *all* his readers, otherwise his argument against the allegedly antinomian effect of the doctrine of justification by faith falls to the ground."[9] Further, not only is baptism an assumed common experience, Paul uses baptism as a pedagogical sign or paradigm of Christian identity. That is, baptism functions here to teach or communicate the realities and pattern of the Christian life, a life rooted and shaped by Christ's person and work.

In Romans 6, Paul recalls the baptismal imagery of the past and connects it to the present tense of Christian living. He presents the baptismal imagery as the way in which believers are to understand their new identity in Christ: "Even so consider [λογίζεσθε] yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus" (Rom 6:11). The imperative "consider" is in the present tense. Thus, it is to be an ongoing way of thinking, and baptism is the sign that summarizes the truth of such thinking.[10] In other words, baptism is a pedagogical sign that Paul uses to remind his readers of their identity.

Paul's use of baptismal imagery to illustrate and teach his readers about the new, ethical reality of the Christian life is not limited to Romans 6. In fact, George Beasley-Murray notes that Paul's appeal for a life shaped by the reality signified in baptism is "most extensively developed in Colossians 2:20–3:13."[11] Paul reminds the believers in Colossae that they "[have] been *buried with Him in baptism*, in which you were also *raised up with Him* through faith in the working of God" (Col 2:12; emphasis added). On the basis of their baptism into Christ's death ("If you have died with Christ"; v. 20), Paul admonishes believers to avoid new regulations such as "Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch!" (v. 21). Further, utilizing baptismal-resur-

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[9]George Beasley-Murray, "Baptism," in *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 60; emphasis original. He notes similar assumptions by Paul concerning his Christian audience in Gal 3:26–28, Col 2:12, 1 Cor 12:13, and Col 2:20–3:15.

[10]Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 380.

[11]Beasley-Murray, "Baptism," 64.

rection imagery, he exhorts, "Therefore if *you* have been *raised up with Christ*, keep seeking [ζητεῖτε] the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God" (Col 3:1; emphasis added). As in Romans 6:11 where believers are told to consider themselves dead to sin, the main verb ζητεῖτε [keep seeking] is a present, active, indicative, second-person, plural, indicating the ongoing, *corporate* nature of the action (i.e., "you all keep seeking"). Paul here calls the Colossian believers to an *ongoing* manner of life lived *together* that is shaped by baptism.

In light of the new ethical reality signified in baptism, Paul continues, "Therefore consider [lit. "put to death"][12] the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed" (Col 3:5). Because of the execution of the old man and resurrection of the new man, believers are to "put … aside" (NASB), "get rid of" (NRSV; *see,* NIV), "put … away" (ESV), or "to put off" (KJV; Col 3:8; ἀπόθεσθε) the practices of the old self and "put on" (Col 3:10; ἐνδυσάμενοι) the practices of the new self (*see,* Col 3:8–17). Thus, this new ethical reality is summed in the baptismal sign, a sign which plays an ongoing pedagogical role in the life of believers. Baptism is a sign of these realities, and it is to be used by the believer to remember those realities and subsequently live them out.

How and Why Baptism Is of Such Great Use to the Believer

Recognizing that baptism has an ongoing role in the life of a believer raises the questions of "how?" and "why?" baptism is of such use. Theologically, we can recognize that baptism is a symbol that is dense with meaning. Standing at the headwaters of the Reformation Martin Luther writes,

> In baptism, … every Christian has enough to study and practice all his or her life. Christians always have enough to do to believe firmly what baptism promises and brings—victory over death and the devil, forgiveness of sin, God's grace, the entire Christ, and the Holy Spirit with his gifts. In short, the blessings of baptism are so boundless that if our timid nature considers them, it may well doubt whether they could all be true.[13]

Southern Baptist theologians will take exception to much of Luther's baptismal theology (esp., baptismal regeneration and affirmation of infant

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[12]The word translated "consider … as dead" (Νεκρώσατε) by the NASB is different than that used in Rom 6:11 for "consider (λογίζεσθε) yourselves." The NRSV, ESV, NIV all render Νεκρώσατε as "put to death"; similarly, the KJV renders it "mortify."

[13]Martin Luther, *Large Catechism* (1529), in *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, ed. and trans. Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, trans. Charles P. Arand, et al. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000), 461. A similar example is found in the Roman tradition, "Baptism is justly called by us the Sacrament of faith, by the Greeks, the mystery of faith, because it embraces the entire profession of the Christian faith." *Catechism of the Council of Trent: For Parish Priests*, trans. with notes by John A. McHugh and Charles J. Callan (Charlotte: TAN Books, 1982), 240.

baptism). Despite obvious points of disagreement, credobaptist traditions can agree with Luther that the theological mysteries of baptism (even in the variety of ways in which they are understood) are inexhaustible. That is, the ongoing use of baptism is not simply a remembrance of one's identification with Jesus as his disciple, it is a remembrance of the entirety of the Christian faith and all that God has done for him or her in salvation. There is a theological depth to baptism that suits it for its ongoing pedagogical function. This theological depth can be illustrated in five brief observations that touch major loci of Systematic Theology, specifically theology proper, Christology (person and work), salvation (objective and subjective), ecclesiology, and eschatology.

First, relating to theology proper, baptism is Trinitarian. In Matthew, the apostles, and by extension the church, are commanded to make disciples by "baptizing … in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit" (Matt 28:19).[14] Further, Jesus's baptism in the Jordan by John stands in the background behind all Christian baptism (Matt 3:13–17).[15] Here the Spirit descends (v. 16), resting upon Jesus, and the Father declares from heaven, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased" (Matt 3:17). Thus, apart from any assertion of sacramental efficacy, the Trinitarian background and formula of baptism alone indicates the theological depth of this rite.

Second, relating to Christology, baptism displays core aspects of Christ's person and work. On the one hand, the rite as a whole puts forward the atoning work of Christ: his death, burial, and victorious resurrection over sin, death, and the Devil. Connecting these realities to baptism, Paul writes, "having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead" (Col 2:12; see v. 15 for the aspect of triumph). On the other hand, baptism also recall truths of Christ's *person*. The theological themes of death and burial connected to baptism presuppose Christ's incarnate person, for God alone is immortal (1 Tim 1:17; 6:16) and only mortal man may die. The theological theme of resurrection connected to baptism affirms his incarnation as well, for he was raised bodily from the dead. Southern Baptists are immersionists,[16] and the baptismal actions of this mode—immersion (placing under) and emersion (drawing out)—display core aspects of Christ's

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[14]Even baptism administered in Jesus's name only, so long as it is within an orthodox frame of reference, is inherently Trinitarian. Michael Reeves aptly notes, "when you proclaim Jesus, the Spirit-anointed Son of the Father, you proclaim the Triune God." Michael Reeves, *Delighting in the Trinity* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2012), 37–38.

[15]For an alternative view, see John Hammett, *40 Questions about Baptism and the Lord's Supper* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2015), 71–72, 75. Even if one disagrees with me at this point, the Trinitarian shape of Christian baptism stands on the foundation of Matt 28 alone. Nonetheless, it seems doubtful to me that Matthew's compositional strategy fails to bring Jesus's baptism and Christian baptism into close relation.

[16]"VII. Baptism and the Lord's Supper" in Baptist Faith and Message 2000, accessed 21 November 2018, http://www.sbc.net/bfm2000/bfm2000.asp.

person and work.[17] Thus, the person and work of Christ are intimately linked with baptism.

Third, relating to the doctrine of salvation, baptism is a visible portrayal of conversion (subjective) and union/identification with Christ (objective). As an act of obedience, baptism clearly manifests one's conversion and discipleship unto Christ. Submission to baptism visibly affirms Jesus' declaration, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth" (Matt 28:18). Commenting on baptism in the name of Jesus as found in Acts, Beasley-Murray notes that when connected to such a formula "submi[ssion] to [baptism] becomes a confession of trust in Him."[18] Moreover, baptism is a command of the risen Christ (Matt 28:19). While there is evidence that Jesus and his disciples baptized persons during his ministry (see, John 3:22 and 4:1–2), the command to be baptized as a means of becoming a disciple is not given until *after* Jesus's resurrection. The post-resurrection timing of his command to be baptized is significant for recognizing that baptism is itself a form of profession. To request and receive baptism in response to the command of the *risen* Christ to whom "all authority [in heaven and on earth] has been given" (Matt 28:18) is to profess one's faith in his resurrection and the legitimacy of his lordship.

Further, baptism signifies one's cleansing from sin and union with Christ. Beasley-Murray notes, "Cleansing is the primary meaning of baptism in all religious groups that have practiced it."[19] Similarly, Hammett observes, "While it is worded in slightly different ways, cleansing or purification or forgiveness of sins is one of the most widely agreed upon aspects of the meaning of baptism, included in Catholic, Lutheran, Reformed, and Baptist formulations."[20] As it relates to union with Christ, Paul writes, "For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ" (Gal 3:26–27). Thomas Schreiner comments, "Verse 26 says we know we are Christ's if we have faith. And v. 27 says that those who are baptized have clothed themselves with Christ. In other words, baptism signifies that one is united to Christ."[21] The baptismal actions (immersion/emersion) administered to the particular

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[17]Immersion is commonly argued for on the basis of its correspondence with the meaning of baptism (e.g., David Allen, "'Dipped for Dead:' The Proper Mode of Baptism," in *Restoring Integrity in Baptist Churches*, eds. Thomas White, Jason G. Duesing, and Malcolm B. Yarnell III [Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2008], 104–05). Admittedly one may be a credobaptist and not be an immersionist. However, the connection between baptism and the realities described here should find broad acceptance among all credobaptists.

[18]George Beasely-Murray, *Baptism in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1962), 101.

[19]Beasely-Murray, *Baptism in the New Testament*, 104; see also, Hammett, *40 Questions*, 117–18.

[20]Hammett, *40 Questions*, 117; see, 1 Pet 3:21, Acts 2:38; 22:16. How the rite of baptism is related to this cleansing is of course not a matter of consensus across denominations.

[21]Thomas R. Schreiner, "Baptism in the Epistles," in *Believer's Baptism: Sign of the New Covenant in Christ*, NAC Studies in Bible and Theology, eds. Thomas R. Schreiner and Shawn D. Wright, 67–96 (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2006), 89.

individual, signify his or her union with Christ. Baptism is not merely a reenactment of *Christ's* death, burial, and resurrection, but it demonstrates the *identification and solidarity (i.e. union) of the baptizand with Christ and vice versa.*[22]

Through its visible portrayal of union with Christ, baptism displays the profound truth of the glorious exchange between Christ and the new disciple. Luther, speaking of the benefits that follow faith, describes this exchange vividly, "[Faith] unites the soul with Christ as a bride is united with her bridegroom … it follows that everything they have they hold in common, the good as well as the evil. Accordingly, the believing soul can boast of and glory in whatever Christ has as though it were its own, and whatever the soul has Christ claims as his own."[23] In depicting union with Christ, baptism illustrates the exchange of the baptizand's sin, condemnation, and death with the righteousness, acceptance, and life of Christ. What is declared of Christ at the Jordan is true for all who are united with him by faith: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased" (Matt 3:17).

Fourth, baptism manifests the baptizand's union with the body of Christ, the church, and its mission in the world. The Baptist Faith and Message connects baptism to ecclesiology, stating, "Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper."[24] The close association of baptism with entrance into the communion of the local church is seen in Acts 2:41–42 where "those who had received [Peter's] word were baptized; and there were added that day about three thousand souls" (Acts 2:41). Subsequently, we see these persons living in community, "continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer" (Acts 2:42). Christian churches do not practice self-baptism (a.k.a., se-baptism or auto-baptism).[25] A local church administers baptism to persons as a means of making them disciples (Matt 28); as such, it is a rite to be received.[26] Thus, the doctrine of

[22]Insofar as baptism is a public profession of faith the "vice versa" of this statement applies on the basis of Matt 10:32–33 (cp. Luke 12:8) where Jesus declares, "Everyone therefore who shall confess Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever shall deny Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven." See also John 15:5–6 and Gal 2:20 for the idea of mutual indwelling and Christ's union with the believer.

[23]Martin Luther, *On the Freedom of a Christian*, in *Three Treatises* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1970), 286.

[24]Baptist Faith and Message 2000, Art. VII.

[25]John Smyth's se-baptism is a notable deviation from this norm. For a discussion of Smyth's se-baptism see Jason K. Lee, *Theology of John Smyth* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2003), 71–74.

[26]The main verb of Matt 28:19–20 is μαθητεύσατε (aorist, active, imperative, plural) "to make a disciple of, teach." According to Daniel Wallace, the participles βαπτίζοντες ("baptizing") and διδάσκοντες ("teaching") are best understood as participles of means, i.e., "the means by which the disciples were to make disciples was to baptize and then to teach." Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 645.

the church—its fellowship and obedient mission in the world—is bound up with this rite as well.[27]

Finally, baptism signifies the eschatological hope of the gospel. Here we begin by recalling what was previously said about Paul's discussion of baptism in Colossians 2–3. Baptism as a sign of future resurrection bears eschatological weight. Nonetheless, Schreiner sees eschatological significance in baptism's association with the washing with and pouring out of the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5 with Ezek 11:19; 36:25–27; Titus 3:6 with Joel 2:28–29; Isa 44:3),[28] union with Christ the seed of Abraham (3:15–4:7, esp. 3:27–28), and victory over sin (Rom 6:3–4, 9–10).[29] He summarizes, "Baptism, therefore, functions as a reminder of the new eschatological reality that has been obtained with the death and resurrection of Christ."[30] This eschatological reality of resurrection is already present in the life of the believer, but it is also a reality that has not yet been fully realized. As such baptism signifies the already/not yet tension of the Christian life: a life bathed in eschatological hope.

The five preceding observations are not exhaustive. They show, however, that baptism is a rite of significant theological depth. This depth fits the sign of baptism for sustained reflection and an ongoing use both for instruction of disciples and for each disciples' regular remembrance.

The Ongoing Use of Baptism Outside the Baptist Tradition

The ongoing use of baptism finds expression in other denominational traditions. While such an observation is not decisive for my argument, it functions to support the biblical-theological points already made and to illustrate how the ongoing use of baptism has been worked out by others. Two examples will be adduced.

First, the ongoing use of baptism is evident in Luther's thought and that of the tradition that bears his name. For example, in *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church* Luther argues that it is "proper to restrict the name of sacrament to those promises which have signs attached to them … Hence there are, strictly speaking, but two sacraments in the church of God—baptism and the bread."[31] Here Luther limits the sacraments to "baptism and the bread [the Lord's Supper]," but it was not without deliberation. Luther wrestled with the status of penance as a sacrament.[32] By the end of his treatise, he concludes, "The sacrament of penance, which I added to these two,

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[27]For helpful and succinct summary of this point, see Hammett, *40 Questions*, 119–20.

[28]For more discussion on the association of baptism with the gift of the Holy Spirit, see Schreiner's discussion of 1 Cor 12:13, Schreiner, "Baptism in the Epistles," 71–73.

[29]Schreiner, "Baptism in the Epistles," 87–89.

[30]Schreiner, "Baptism in the Epistles," 89.

[31]Martin Luther, *Babylonian Captivity of the Church*, in *Three Treatises*, trans. A.T.W. Steinhäuser, rev. Frederick C. Ahrens and Abdel Ross Wentz, 113–260 (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1970), 258.

[32]Luther, *Babylonian Captivity*, 132.

lacks the divinely instituted visible sign, and is, as I have said, nothing but a way and a return to baptism."[33] Thus, according to Luther, when a believer repents, he or she is returning to the reality manifested in baptism.[34]

John Mueller, a later Lutheran theologian, picks up on the ongoing pedagogical function and use of baptism, noting that while baptism is not to be administered more than once, it is to be in constant use by the Christian. "Baptism," writes Mueller, "should comfort and exhort the believer through his life (1 Pet 3:21; Gal 3:26–27; Rom 6:3)."[35] He continues, "For this reason the apostles in the New Testament again and again remind Christians of their Baptism … and urge them to heed not only its sweet comfort, but also its great significance for sanctification. *Baptismus semper exercendus est* [Baptism is always practiced]."[36]

Similarly, the Westminster Larger Catechism exemplifies the pedagogical function of baptism when it speaks of "improving" one's baptism. Question 167 asks, "How is our baptism to be improved by us?" It responds,

> The needful but much neglected duty of improving our baptism, is to be performed by us all our life long, especially in the time of temptation, and when we are present at the administration of it to others; by serious and thankful consideration of the nature of it [i.e., baptism], and of the ends for which Christ instituted it, the privileges and benefits conferred and sealed thereby, and our solemn vow made therein; by being humbled for our sinful defilement, our falling short of, and walking contrary to, the grace of baptism, and our engagements; by growing up to assurance of pardon of sin, and of all other blessings sealed to us in that sacrament; by drawing strength from the death and resurrection of Christ, into whom we are baptized, for the mortifying of sin, and quickening of grace; and by endeavouring to live by faith, to have our conversation in holiness and righteousness, as those that have therein given up their names to Christ; and to walk in brotherly love, as being baptized by the same Spirit into one body.[37]

By "improving" baptism, the catechism does not mean adding new

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[33]Luther, *Babylonian Captivity*, 258.

[34]Jonathan Trigg argues that Baptism in Luther's thought is given what he calls a "present tense" in the life of the believer. It is the starting point to which the believer must continually return. Just as circumcision was an ongoing sign of the covenant, so baptism has an ongoing aspect. See, Jonathan D. Trigg, *Baptism in the Theology of Martin Luther* (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 45.

[35]John Mueller, *Christian Dogmatics: A Handbook of Doctrinal Theology for Pastors, Teachers, and Laymen* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 1934), 496; proof text formats modernized.

[36]Mueller, *Christian Dogmatics*, 496; e.g., 1 Cor 1:13; Eph 4:5; Col 2:12; 1 Pet 3:21. For a similar statement from the Roman Catholic tradition see, *Catechism of the Council of Trent*, 169.

[37]Westminster Larger Catechism (1647), Q. 167, in *Reformed Confessions: Harmonized*, eds. Joel R. Beeke and Sinclair B. Ferguson (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999), 217, 219.

things to baptism, but rather, it intends that the individual live out more fully the grace-benefits signified and sealed in baptism. To do so, this baptism must be recalled "by serious and thankful consideration."[38] This recollection is specific, not generic; for the believer is to recall its "nature," "ends," "privileges and benefits," and "solemn vow made therein." Baptism, and all it represents, is here portrayed as a reservoir of truth and grace from which one lives the Christian life.

The improvement of baptism envisioned within the Westminster Larger Catechism is not relegated to one's initiation into the church, for it "is to be performed by us all our life long." At this point, the ongoing use of baptism as a pedagogical sign is on display. Those who have received this sign are to recall it and to let the truth it embodies shape them more and more.

With the biblical-theological foundations and historical illustrations of baptism's ongoing use in the life of the believer in place, attention now turns to considering how popular Baptist Systematic Theologies have dealt with this aspect of baptism.

Inspecting the Baptist Systematic Theological Baptistery

In this section we will engage six popular Baptist Systematic Theologies to see how—if at all—they have discussed the "use" of baptism as well as how they have used baptism in their presentation of various loci. In my review of these texts, I looked for if and how the author identified the ongoing use of baptism in his treatment of baptism and how he used baptism to teach and illustrate the doctrines of union with Christ and sanctification.

The following surveys have been ordered in such a way as to highlight the theological lacuna on this issue, moving from weakest to strongest. This grouping will hopefully at once show the need for work on this issue while also drawing together some of the best examples in which the issue is addressed to some degree.

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[38]Westminster Larger Catechism (1647), Q. 167, in *Reformed Confessions*, 217, 219. The wording of the catechism at this point reflects a logic that assumes adult baptism or at least the baptism of those older than an infant. This stands in tension with the usual practice of infant baptism. Such a tension between catechesis and the practice of infant baptism has been felt by Roman Catholic liturgists in the wake of liturgical reforms emanating from Vatican II. Those reforms include revisions to infant/children's baptism (1969), confirmation (1971), and adult initiation (1972). In the last reform document—"Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults" (RCIA)—the council laid forth a return to a robust catechumenate that culminates in baptism, confirmation, and first communion. Interestingly, William Harmless writing from within the Roman tradition observes, "[T]he RCIA should, over time, quietly but profoundly challenge the standards and presuppositions that undergird our long-standing habit of infant baptism." William Harmless, *Augustine and the Catechumenate* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 1995), 14; see also, Aidan Kavanagh, *The Shape of Baptism: The Rite of Christian Initiation* (New York: Pueblo, 1978), 106.

Millard Erickson: *Christian Theology*

Baptism (Proper). Millard Erickson addresses baptism in Chapter 52 of his *Christian Theology*. Erickson defines baptism as "an act of faith and a testimony that one has been *united with Christ* in his death and resurrection, that one has experienced spiritual circumcision. It is a public indication of one's commitment to Christ."[39] In his discussion he distinguishes signs and symbols, calling baptism a symbol and not a sign. "[Baptism] is a symbol rather than merely a sign," writes Erickson," for it is a graphic picture of the truth it conveys. There is no inherent connection between a sign and what it represents."[40] He illustrates the difference as follows: "It is only by convention, for example, that green traffic lights tell us to go rather than to stop. By contrast, the sign at a railroad crossing is more than a sign; it is also a symbol, for it is a rough picture of what it is intended to indicate, the crossing of a road and a railroad track."[41] He concludes that baptism is a symbol rather than a sign because baptism "actually pictures the believer's death and resurrection with Christ."[42]

Despite baptism's status as a symbol, Erickson's discussion does not address an ongoing use for this symbol in the life of a believer. The use of baptism is functionally relegated to the baptismal event.

Union with Christ and Sanctification. As noted above, Erickson defines baptism in part as a "testimony that one has been *united with Christ* in his death and resurrection, that one has experienced spiritual circumcision."[43] Because of baptism's connection to union with Christ, Erickson judges immersion the "most adequate" mode of baptism because it "most fully preserves and accomplishes the meaning of baptism."[44] He concludes by noting that baptism is "both a sign of the believer's union with Christ and, as a confession of that union, an additional act of faith that serves to cement … more firmly that relationship."[45] Union with Christ is, therefore, clearly a concept Erickson emphasizes in his discussion of baptism. Nonetheless, Erickson does not reference baptism in his earlier discussion of union with Christ (Ch. 45). Similarly, baptism is not referenced in Erickson's chapter on Sanctification (Ch. 46; "The Continuation of Salvation"). Though a symbol of union and commitment to Christ, Erickson does not use baptism to discuss these subjects when facing them directly.

Daniel Akin: *Theology for the Church*

Daniel Akin's edited volume *Theology for the Church* is a collection of essays in systematic theology that are each linked by a specific program of

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[39]Erickson, *Christian Theology,* 1028.
[40]Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 1028.
[41]Erickson, *Christian Theology,* 1028.
[42]Erickson, *Christian Theology,* 1028.
[43]Erickson, *Christian Theology,* 1028.
[44]Erickson, *Christian Theology,* 1032.
[45]Erickson, *Christian Theology,* 1032.

questions: (1) what does the Bible say? (2) what has the Church believed? (3) how does it all fit together? and (4) how does this doctrine impact the Church today? For the purposes of this article I reviewed the chapters by Mark Dever and Ken Keathley.

Baptism (Proper). In Mark Dever's chapter "The Church" he covers a wide amount of territory including the church's nature, attributes, marks, polity, discipline, mission and purpose, and culmination at the end of time. He develops baptism biblically under the heading of the second Reformation mark of the church: "the right administration of the sacraments."[46] Here he identifies two functions for baptism: (1) the confession of sin and (2) profession of faith.[47] He also notes that it is a sign of a believer's union with Christ.

As it relates to our question, Dever's development of the meaning and function of baptism focuses on the baptismal event. Any ongoing implications are found in his identification of baptism as a prerequisite to participation in the Lord's Supper[48] and his connection of baptism to church membership.[49] Dever covers standard polemical issues related to infant baptism in his historical section. In his systematic summary, Dever observes that Protestant churches, both credobaptist and paedobaptist alike, seek to place faith at the center of the church. Dever of course understands believers' baptism to be the most satisfying way to do this. "Faith," he writes, "shows itself initially in the believer's submission to baptism, and then repeatedly in his or her participation in the Lord's Supper."[50] While baptism and the Lord's Supper are strongly linked via their respective roles in expressing faith in Dever's presentation, he does not clearly identify an ongoing role or "use" of baptism subsequent to its administration.

Union with Christ and Sanctification. The subjects of union with Christ and sanctification are treated in Ken Keathley's chapter entitled "The Word of God: Salvation." Here, Keathley provides a robust discussion of union with Christ. "Since our experiential union with Christ is a spiritual union," he writes, "this reality can be illustrated by tangible examples but not fully explained by them."[51] Thus, while we can know something about our union with Christ, mystery always looms over this doctrine.

Keathley identifies six biblical analogies of union with Christ. They are (1) the Trinitarian relationships (John 17:21, 23), (2) the "stones of a building and chief cornerstone (Eph 2:19–22; 1 Pet 2:4–5)," (3) Adam's relation to humanity and Jesus' relation to the church (Rom 5:12–19; 1 Cor 15:19–49), (4) the vine and branches (John 15:1–17), (5) the marriage of husband to wife (Eph 5:22–23), and, finally, (6) the relation between the head and the

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[46]See, Dever, "The Church," in *Theology for the Church*, 615–21.
[47]Dever, "The Church," in *Theology for the Church*, 618.
[48]Dever, "The Church," in *Theology for the Church*, 621.
[49]Dever, "The Church," in *Theology for the Church*, 622.
[50]Dever, "The Church," in *Theology for the Church*, 656.
[51]Keathley, "Salvation," in *Theology for the Church*, 548.

body (Eph 4:15–16).[52] Notably, baptism is not listed among the "tangible examples" of the believer's union with Christ.

When discussing sanctification Keathley points to the believer as "positional[ly] and experiential[ly]" sanctified. However, though he speaks of dying and rising with Christ, baptism is not mentioned. In sum, Keathley's essay does not use baptism within his presentation of either union with Christ or of sanctification.

James Leo Garrett, Jr.: *Systematic Theology*

Baptism (Proper). In his treatment of baptism (Vol. 2, Ch. 73), James Leo Garrett treats a wide variety of topics. After exploring possible historical antecedents to baptism and the biblical references to baptism, he takes up a number of issues under the heading "Systematic Questions with Historical and Contemporary Answers." Here he deals with (a) the baptizand (i.e., infant-believer's baptism debate), (b) the meaning, (c) the mode(s), (d) the administration (i.e., who may baptize, receiving baptism from other denominations, "repairing" baptisms, and the formula of baptism), (e) the necessity, (f) church membership (close vs. open), (g) ecumenism, (h) culture (i.e., baptism as a counter-cultural symbol).[53] Though he earlier acknowledges the ethical implications of baptism in his treatment of Romans 6 in his biblical section,[54] at no point in his later wide-tour of subjects does Garrett discuss the ongoing "use" of baptism.

Union with Christ and Sanctification. In his chapter on baptism, Garrett summarizes the meaning of baptism as a sign encompassing "the believer's identification with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus; the outward sign of an inner cleansing or of the remission of sins; the sign of the eschatological resurrection of believers; the sign of the believer's entry in the body of Christ; a testimony both to believers and to nonbelievers; and an act of obedience to Christ."[55] Here we see both union with Christ ("identification with") and sanctification (at least positional sanctification in the form of "inner cleansing").

With regard to the sanctification, the ethical implications of baptism are rather underdeveloped in the chapter on baptism. Similarly, Garrett does not mention baptism in his chapter on Sanctification (Ch. 66).[56] Thus, baptism's ongoing use in the Christian life is underdeveloped in this systematic theology as well.

Concerning union with Christ, Garrett has a more to say with regard to baptism. For example, in his discussion of Galatians 3:27, Garrett observes that Paul "connects baptism with putting on Christ" and that it is "associated both with union with Christ and with fellow Christians (3:27–28) and with

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[52]Keathley, "Salvation," in *Theology for the Church*, 549.
[53]See, Garrett, *Systematic Theology*, 2:522–36.
[54]Garrett, *Systematic Theology*, 2:519–20.
[55]Garrett, *Systematic Theology*, 2:529.
[56]Garrett, *Systematic Theology*, 2:356–72.

faith (3:26)."[57] However, though baptism is understood to have a connection to union with Christ, it is not mentioned in the "Systematic Formulation" section that deals with union with Christ (Ch. 64).[58]

James Wm. McClendon, Jr.: *Systematic Theology*

James McClendon's three-volume systematic begins with a volume devoted to ethics.[59] Given his integrative structure, I will treat both of our questions together here. In this first volume he describes baptism as an overlapping of the story of Jesus with the story of the baptizand. In baptism, writes McClendon,

> the identification with Jesus as the incarnate, obedient, crucified, and risen one is not merely legal or mystical; it is a *narrative* identification (just as in the resurrection, Jesus' identification with God consists in a narrative linking of his life with the life of God—Rom 1:4). Here, then the baptist vision is at work: "this is that"—our baptisms recapitulate and so claim his resurrection in our own lives afresh.[60]

Baptism is, therefore, the beginning of a whole new way of life; that is, baptism should be understood as "the inception of resurrection morality."[61] McClendon goes on to note, "[T]he New Testament more generally, … often invokes the first committed step, which is baptism, as a basis on which also to require the virtues (and forbid the vices) that accompanied the full scope of Christian practice (Col 3:1–4:6; perhaps 1 Peter)."[62] Importantly, baptism was used by the New Testament authors "to summon converts to a socially accountable newness of life."[63] The ongoing ethical implications of baptism lead McClendon into a reprisal of infant baptism, which he believes undermines baptism as an ethical sign to be remembered.[64]

[57]Garrett, *Systematic Theology*, 2:518.
[58]Garrett, *Systematic Theology*, 2:336–37.
[59]McClendon defends his choice on the basis that (1) "no part of systematic theology stands quite independent; each presupposes the other parts"; (2) dealing with prolegomena first privileges philosophy in a questionable manner; (3) pedagogically, "When the study of systematic theology is understood as preparation for ministry, there is little reason to initiate students into it via that part of systematic theology most abstruse, most remote from daily life, and therefore least congenial. Many students, starting there, quit as soon as they can!" McClendon, *Systematic Theology*, 1:42.
[60]McClendon, *Systematic Theology*, 1:257. McClendon earlier defines the "baptist vision" as "a hermeneutical motto, which is shared awareness of the present Christian community as the primitive community and the eschatological community." McClendon, *Systematic Theology*, 1:31.
[61]McClendon, *Systematic Theology*, 1:255.
[62]McClendon, *Systematic Theology*, 1:258.
[63]McClendon, *Systematic Theology*, 1:258.
[64]McClendon, *Systematic Theology*, 1:258. "Christian ethics, … must deplore the intrinsic failure of infant baptism. It becomes a rite neither responsive on the candidate's part or responsible on the administrator's." Idem.

The function and need for baptism to be remembered is repeated in his second volume which deals with doctrine. Here, in fact, baptism is listed alongside prophetic preaching and the Lord's Supper as a remembering sign.[65] McClendon defines the "remembering signs as "repeatable monuments" to salvation-historical realities. Concerning baptism, he states, "Because the Christian rite of baptism recalls the baptism of Jesus and his death and resurrection, it functions as a remembering sign of faith in him."[66] He continues, "Our immersion recollects his death and burial; our overwhelming by the water of baptism recalls the overwhelming of suffering that he endured."[67]

Christian baptism, according to McClendon, involves at least five elements. These elements (the first three carrying over from John's baptism) are as follows:

> (1) entrance into a community awaiting the new age dawning,
> (2) conversion to that newness as a condition of admission, … (3)
> God's putting away the sins of each …, (4) the "name" of Jesus
> (later, the triune name) as the identity mark of each candidate
> and of the new community itself ("baptized into the name," *eis
> ton onoma*), and (5) the gift of the Spirit of God to the commu-
> nity and to each member upon his or her baptism.[68]

In short, baptism is a monument prompting a remembrance of entrance into the church, conversion, forgiveness of sins, one's new identity in Christ (and in relation to the Triune God), and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Additionally, McClendon distinguishes symbols from signs. "In the prophetic and baptism heritage baptism is not merely a symbol but a sign, for it is the nature of signs not only to betoken but to do something, to convey something."[69] Thus, he understands baptism as a performative sign. The action of the sign is, however, complex and not unitary; the performative action is three-fold, shared between the baptized, the baptizing community, and God. As McClendon puts it, "In the 'happy' case [of baptism], human action and divine action converge in baptism and indeed are one."[70]

As a remembering sign with performative action in which the baptized person takes part, baptismal administration should foster and be compatible with remembrance. This, according to McClendon, is what makes infant baptism so disastrous. The practice of infant baptism combined with the understanding that "baptism is absolutely unrepeatable" means that the child is "told she may not ever ask for baptism; nor is she permitted to remember her

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[65]McClendon, *Systematic Theology*, 2:386.
[66]McClendon, *Systematic Theology*, 2:381.
[67]McClendon, *Systematic Theology*, 2:381.
[68]McClendon, *Systematic Theology*, 2:386.
[69]McClendon, *Systematic Theology*, 2:388.
[70]McClendon, *Systematic Theology*, 2:389.

baptism; whatever else she may do in faith, she may not stand with a faith of her own in the baptismal waters and hear the glad words, 'Upon the profession of your faith I baptize you, my sister, in the name of the Father, and of Jesus God's Child, and of the Spirit of God.'"[71]

In a later section, McClendon suggests that to participate in the "Lord's Supper" is to "renew their baptismal pledges."[72] Thus, the Lord's Supper is cast as an occasion in which the performative sign of baptism is recalled. McClendon's integrative structure and the fact that he connects baptism so clearly to ethics offers a fruitful and creative example. Union with Christ is not developed in its own section, nor does it seem to play a significant role in McClendon's development of baptism.[73]

Wayne Grudem: *Systematic Theology*

Baptism (Proper). Wayne Grudem's *Systematic Theology* has become a go-to text for college and seminary campuses. While Grudem devotes an entire chapter to "Baptism" (Ch. 49), it is actually his discussion of "Means of Grace within the Church" (Ch. 48) that offers the most relevant discussion for our question.

Grudem defines "the means of grace" as "any activities within the fellowship of the church that God uses to give more grace to Christians."[74] He does not offer a full definition of baptism (proper) in this chapter or in his chapter on baptism, but his view is readily discovered from his presentation. He describes baptism as "a sign of the believer's death and resurrection with Christ (see Rom 6:2–5; Col 2:12)." Further, it is a "physical symbol" of these realities and "our participation in them" as well as the "inward baptism by the Holy Spirit."[75] While baptism is a sign and symbol of these things, the means by which they are realized in the believer's life is *faith*.[76] Thus, he will later state that "baptism is appropriately administered only to those who give a believable profession of faith in Jesus Christ."[77]

Importantly, Grudem affirms, "Since baptism is a physical symbol of the death and resurrection of Christ and our participation in them, it should also give additional assurance of union with Christ to all believers who are

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[71]McClendon, *Systematic Theology*, 2:391.

[72]McClendon, *Systematic Theology*, 2:410. Interestingly, he suggests that others should be invited to participate in the meal as guests at "'an agape feast' (a familiar term, since the church regularly provides such a meal, especially inviting the hungry in its neighborhood to share").

[73]In his discussion of baptism, he makes a passing reference to baptism and union in a comment on Gal 3:27 on his way to a different point (McClendon, *Systematic Theology*, 2:338).

[74]Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 950. He identifies eleven "means of grace": (1) Teaching of the Word, (2) Baptism, (3) The Lord's Supper, (4) Prayer for one another, (5) Worship, (6) Church discipline, (7) Giving, (8) Spiritual gifts, (9) Fellowship, (10) Evangelism, (11) Personal ministry to individuals. He notes that most theologians limit the list to the first three (e.g., Berkhof).

[75]Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 954.

[76]Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 954.

[77]Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 967.

present."[78] Because of its symbolic connection to the inward baptism of the Spirit, he also affirms that "we may expect that the Holy Spirit will ordinarily work alongside the baptism, giving to believers an increasing realization of the benefits of the spiritual baptism to which it points."[79] Though he denies an *ex opere operato* understanding, Grudem cautions that we should not hold that "the Holy Spirit *does not* work through [baptism] and that it is *merely symbolic*."[80] Such activity is, on Grudem's account, moving from faith through baptism. In this way, credobaptism functions as a "means of grace" within the church.

According to Grudem, "where there is genuine faith on the part of the person being baptized, and where the faith of the church that watches the baptism is stirred up and encouraged by this ceremony, then the Holy Spirit certainly does work through baptism, and it becomes a 'means of grace'."[81] Grudem, therefore, affirms an ongoing role for baptism as a means of grace at the point of baptism, both for the one being baptized and for the baptized community observing it. He does not, however, note a use outside of the baptismal event. Even the Lord's Supper is not clearly tied to baptism by Grudem, since he thinks it best to allow all professing believers to participate regardless of their baptism.[82]

Union with Christ and Sanctification. In his discussion of "Union with Christ" (Ch. 43), Grudem only mentions baptism in passing.[83] He comes close to making the connection between baptism and death to sin by quoting Romans 6:4 and 6:11 together, but then focuses attention on the spiritual reality of dying and rising with Christ and does not identify baptism as a key image for understanding it. In short, Grudem does not use baptism to elaborate the doctrine of union with Christ.

In his chapter on Sanctification (Ch. 38), Grudem focuses his attention on the definitive break with sin which begins at the point of conversion and regeneration.[84] He cites verses in Romans 6 but none before verse 11 (e.g., Rom 6:11, 14; 18; 12–13; 17–8). In other words, he does not include baptism as part of this discussion (vv. 3–4). Further, he does not connect these realities of "death to sin" or freedom from sin to the symbol of baptism.[85] In sum, Grudem does not use baptism in his unfolding of sanctification.

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[78]Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 954.

[79]Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 954.

[80]Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 954, (emphasis original).

[81]Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 954.

[82]Grudem does, however, think "it would seem wise to teach that the ideal situation is for new believers first to be baptized and then to partake of the Lord's Supper." Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 997.

[83]Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 842.

[84]Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 747.

[85]Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 751–52, 54.

Stanley J. Grenz: *Theology for the Community of God*

Baptism (Proper). Grenz offers the strongest treatment in terms of our subject. He speaks of both ordinances as having an "identity forming" role for believers. They are, as he calls them, "vehicles of the Spirit in this identity forming process."[86] He continues, "These acts constitute practices of commitment, by means of which we initially affirm and repeatedly reaffirm our inclusion in the covenant community."[87] Such language points to an ongoing role for both ordinances and indicates that they are working in tandem toward the same end of identity shaping.

Grenz extends this identity-forming role to the corporate level. He does so in three ways. First, the ordinances bring the past to life through their dramatic "retelling" or declaration of the gospel. Second, the ordinances "[facilitate] symbolic participation in the saving events which form the foundation for our identity as persons united with Christ."[88] Third, the ordinances sustain an eschatological hope and vision. He writes, "The acts of commitment are a powerful means of sustaining this vision in us. They provide a symbolic declaration that God will one day bring his work to completion in the world and that our true identity lies in that event: We are what we will be."[89] Thus, the ordinances remind the community of her inherent eschatological nature, keeping it ever before her eyes. Together these community acts of commitment provide a "transcendent vantage point" that enables us to see both the past and the future in the present.[90]

All of what Grenz says about the ordinances in general apply to each ordinance in particular. For example, he will later describe baptism as having an "eschatological orientation."[91] As such baptism looks to the end of our salvation (i.e., "glorification") while also including all points behind (i.e., "initiation into the Christian life") and between (i.e., "sanctification").[92]

Grenz's most significant contribution for our question is found in his section entitled "the impact of baptism."[93] He argues that baptism is an event with ongoing implications and an event that the Spirit will bring back to mind to shape us. The impact of baptism is felt by the baptizand, the congregation, and the world. For our purposes, the first two impacts are most relevant. The impacts of baptism on the one baptized are varied. Grenz writes:

> Baptism ought to have a powerful impact on the one baptized. For this person the celebration of the ordinance should be a day to remember. It should be a powerful motivation for godly living throughout life, as we subsequently recall the day of our baptism

[86]Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 517.
[87]Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 517.
[88]Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 517.
[89]Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 518.
[90]Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 517–18.
[91]Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 522.
[92]Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 522.
[93]Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 523–24.

and thereby are reminded both of the commitment we made to Christ and the presence of the Holy Spirit sealed to us on that day. Through his repeated reminders of our baptismal experience, the Spirit also admonishes us concerning the importance of living a holy life, a life conforming to the confession we made that day. And he strengthens us in our Christian walk.[94]

There is much to be noted here connected to the ongoing use of baptism. First, Grenz calls the baptismal day a "day to remember" and (a few lines later) an event that one should "subsequently recall."[95] Thus, it is not an act relegated merely to the past.[96] Second, he indicates that the event "should be a powerful motivation for godly living throughout life." Third, this rhythm of memory and motivation is fueled by the recollection of "both the commitment we made to Christ and the presence of the Holy Spirit sealed to us on that day." Finally, he asserts that the Holy Spirit will use the memory of this event to urge us on toward holiness in keeping with our baptismal confession. All of which will "[strengthen] us in our Christian walk."

As for its impact on the congregation, the baptism of an individual, Grenz notes, reminds the congregation that sanctification and growth in Christlikeness are lifelong; they begin at regeneration, but they do not stop there. Further, the congregation is summoned to their obligation to help him or her grow and reminded that there are many others who need to hear the gospel. Furthermore, each member is once again summoned to recall his or her "baptismal vow."[97] "Through this reminder," writes Grenz, "the Spirit calls us to renew the covenant with God we made on the day of our baptism (Rom 6:1–2, 11–13). And to dedicate ourselves anew to live a holy life."[98]

Beyond the initial event of baptism, however, where are the reverberations of its "impact" felt? Grenz has identified the baptism of other believers as a distinct occasion of remembering one's own baptism. Nonetheless, there is another key moment at which one's baptism is recalled, namely, the Lord's Supper. Grenz writes, "Through our presence at the Lord's table we publicly confess our loyalty to Christ. Through this act, we are owning once again the pledge or covenant we made at our baptism."[99] In this way, baptism is brought into regular remembrance in the life of the congregation.

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[94]Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 523–24.

[95]Polemically, Grenz views infant baptism as subversive to this aspect of baptism, see, Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 529.

[96]Grenz will later liken the baptismal event to a wedding: "In a sense, baptism is analogous to a public wedding. For a couple being married, reciting vows in the presence of witnesses becomes a day to remember. It is a focal point for their initial commitment to each other. Their public declaration of covenantal love both strengthens them to live in faithfulness to each other and throughout life draws their attention to the covenant they made on that day. In a similar manner, the Holy Spirit can use our baptism to strengthen our commitment to Christ." Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 527.

[97]Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 524.

[98]Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 524.

[99]Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 539. He observes, "Because presence at the

Union with Christ and Sanctification. Grenz does not have a section devoted to union with Christ. However, some of his most direct and developed statements on union with Christ occur within his discussion of baptism and the Lord's Supper. For example, Grenz describes union with Christ as the chief truth symbolized in baptism. He writes, "Above all, baptism symbolizes our spiritual union with Christ. This union entails our participation in Good Friday and Resurrection Sunday—our death to the old, sinful life and our being raised to new life (Rom. 6:3–8)."[100] He then goes on to describe some of the entailments of baptism's symbolizing of union with Christ. He writes, "The concept of participation in the death of Christ links baptism to the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38; 1 Pet. 3:21), which Christ died to effect … Similarly, baptism is linked to the new birth and the reception of the Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13), for participation in Christ's resurrection means that the Holy Spirit is now present in our lives … [acting] as the pledge and power of our future resurrection (Rom 8:11; 2 Cor 1:22; 5:5; Eph 1:13, 14)."[101] In these ways, Grenz draws a thick line of connection between baptism and union with Christ. Further, within the quote above he traces the web of connections that exist between this sign and many other aspects of salvation and life in Christ.

Grenz does not mention baptism in his discussion about sanctification. However, the resources for doing so are available. In his development of both baptism and the Lord's Supper (as noted in the previous section) he places heavy emphasis upon the ethical demands of one's new identity in Christ. Each time the community administers baptism or the Lord's Supper each onlooking member is reminded of his or her baptismal vow of allegiance and obedience to Christ and called once again to renew it.[102] Thus, baptism could easily be connected to his development of sanctification.

Proposals

As we have shown, baptism has an ongoing, pedagogical function in the life of believers. This function finds sound biblical-theological foundations in the writings of Paul (especially Rom 6; Col 2–3; and Gal 3). As such, it is argued here that this function should factor into the presentations of baptism as well as union with Christ and sanctification—two theological loci that are demonstrably linked to the sign of baptism. Nonetheless, as our survey has shown, there is a hole within the larger body of popular Baptist Systematic Theology texts on this issue. While there are examples of Baptist systematics that have developed the ongoing use of baptism (especially

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Eucharist entails our renewal of the covenant with God, baptism properly precedes participation in the Lord's Supper …The reaffirmation of our personal loyalty to Christ inherent in the Lord's Supper presupposes our initial declaration of loyalty made in baptism." Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 540.

[100]Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 522.

[101]Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 522.

[102]Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 539.

Grenz and to a lesser extent Grudem and McClendon), if we narrow our consideration to the top-three, most popular Baptist Systematic Theologies (Grudem, Erickson, and Akin),[103] the results of our query show a clear weakness in presenting and modeling the ongoing use of baptism discussed in the biblical-theological section of this article.

Reasons for this trend are likely legion. At minimum, however, the polemical situation in which Baptists have operated has seemingly bent Baptist Systematic Theologies to focus the majority of attention on the paedobaptism versus credobaptism debate and debates over the sacramental efficacy of baptism. These discussions focus on the event of baptism, and subsequently, they tend to narrow the scope of discussion to the event of administration. Thus, for most of the texts surveyed in this article, the ongoing aspect of baptism often remains untouched or underdeveloped in discussions of baptism proper.

The question now becomes "how might we better account for the ongoing, pedagogical function of baptism in Baptist Systematic Theologies?" As it relates to discussions of baptism proper, we should follow the trajectory set by Grenz (and to a lesser extent Grudem) by developing the ongoing "impact of baptism."[104] John Hammett's discussion of "The Importance of Baptism for a Christian's Life" in his *40 Questions on Baptism and the Lord's Supper* follows Grenz's trajectory and offers a noteworthy example how the ongoing role of baptism could be developed, especially in connection to the baptismal event. Hammett observes that baptism is important as an act of obedience, a source of blessing, and that the subsequent baptismal services within the church are an occasion for renewing one's own baptismal "pledge."[105] The first point is common stock of discussions of credobaptism in Baptist Systematic Theologies. However, the second and third points deserve more attention.

Hammett identifies two major ways in which baptism "benefit[s] the believer." The first benefit is assurance of salvation.[106] He writes,

> I do not believe that baptism is salvific or regenerative. Salvation is by grace through faith. But faith is internal, a decision of the heart. How can one know her faith is genuine? This is where baptism can help, because no one baptizes herself; she is baptized by a church. And baptism, when practiced rightly, is the church's affirmation that her profession of faith is credible; that she gives

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[103]The overall Amazon rankings for the six selected Systematic Theologies were as follows: (1) Grudem—10,114; (2) Erickson—68,583; (3) Akin—221,694; (4) Grenz—333,484; (5) Garrett—977,250; (6) McClendon—1,236,358. Statistics acquired through queries conducted through http://www.salesrankexpress.com; accessed 27 November 2018.

[104]Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 523–24; see, Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 954.

[105]Hammett, *40 Questions*, 318–19.

[106]Hammett, *40 Questions*, 318.

evidence of being a new creature in Christ. She is given objective, outside affirmation of her subjective conviction."[107]

Hammett is surely right, for on a credobaptist account of the administration of baptism the congregation affirms that personal faith has grasped "the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints" (Jude 3). As he notes, "The blessings promised to faith are subjectively confirmed in baptism."[108] The second benefit derives from the fact that baptism incorporates one into the visible body of Christ (i.e., the local church).[109] "As we enter into union with Christ," Hammett writes, "we also enter into union with his people."[110] Specifically, the benefit that follows is that of the fellowship of the saints and the ministry, accountability, and care—*inter alia*—that comes with it.

Additionally, Hammett locates the "ongoing importance for baptism in the life of a Christian" in the subsequent instances in which one "witness[es] the baptism of others."[111] When baptized persons witness the baptism of someone into the fellowship of their church, "they should be pledging themselves to accept their role in the care of this new brother or sister they are receiving into their family."[112] Framed in this way, baptismal services will take on a corporate and covenantal tone that will enrich the fellowship of the local church. Similarly, Hammett asserts that "observing the baptism of someone else should spark a remembrance of our own baptism and a renewal of the pledges made then."[113] Thus, in a manner similar to a married couple being reminded of their nuptial vows when attending someone else's wedding ceremony, baptismal services occasion a reminder and opportunity to renew one's baptismal pledge.[114]

Hammett, however, in his discussion here does not follow Grenz far enough, as he only connects the ongoing importance of baptism to the baptismal services of others. As noted in our earlier surveys of Grenz and McClendon, the Lord's Supper also functions as an occasion to recall one's baptismal "pledge" or "vow."[115] Grenz writes, "Through our presence at the

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[107]Hammett, *40 Questions*, 318.

[108]Hammett, *40 Questions*, 319. With this observation in mind, it is interesting to note that Garrett pairs the doctrines of union with Christ and Assurance, treating them in the same chapter (Ch. 64; Garrett, 2:338–46). This pairing is not only correct but one that would be strengthened by using baptism in his development of union with Christ.

[109]Hammett, *40 Questions*, 319; see also, 119–20.

[110]Hammett, *40 Questions*, 119.

[111]Hammett, *40 Questions*, 319.

[112]Hammett, *40 Questions*, 319. For a helpful examination of the connection between baptism and covenant, see Jason K. Lee, "Baptism and Covenant," in *Restoring Integrity in Baptist Churches*, eds. Thomas White, Jason G. Duesing, and Malcolm B. Yarnell III (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2008), 119–36.

[113]Hammett, *40 Questions*, 319.

[114]Hammett, *40 Questions*, 319; Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 527.

[115]Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 539; McClendon, *Systematic* Theology, 2:410.

Lord's table we publicly confess our loyalty to Christ. Through this act, we are owning once again the pledge or covenant we made at our baptism."[116] Furthermore, Grenz goes on to describe baptism's ongoing impact in terms that extend beyond corporate worship to the mundane moments of life. He writes,

> [Baptism] should be a powerful motivation for godly living throughout life, as we subsequently recall the day of our baptism and thereby are reminded both of the commitment we made to Christ and the presence of the Holy Spirit sealed to us on that day. Through his repeated reminders of our baptismal experience, the Spirit also admonishes us concerning the importance of living a holy life, a life conforming to the confession we made that day. And he strengthens us in our Christian walk.[117]

This language is similar to the "improvement" language of the Westminster Larger Catechism.[118] In my examination, Grenz does not seem to develop this broader notion of remembrance beyond this statement. Nonetheless, Luther's description of penance as "nothing but a way and a return to baptism" offers a way to conceptualize what subsequent remembrance might look like.[119] If baptism is a public proclamation of the gospel, a pledge of allegiance to Christ as Lord, a declaration of repentance and faith in Christ, etc. then why should subsequent moments of witness, commitment, belief, and repentance—*inter alia*—not remind one of his or her public initiation into this new life through baptism?

As for integrating baptism into discussions of union with Christ and sanctification, the above survey has also observed minimal usage of baptism in these discussions. I am not proposing that the baptismal tail should wag the dog of systematic theological development. Nonetheless, Paul's use of baptism to teach the realities of union with Christ and sanctification lead me to propose that our discussions of these matters would benefit from following this pattern more closely. Theology needs to maintain a rhythm of summary and explanation.[120] The ordinances, whether we call them "signs" (in McClendon's sense of performance) or "symbols" (in Erickson's sense of embodying what they signify), draw together arguably every strand of Christian theology in summary. The summarizing sign apart from explanations offered

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[116]Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 539.

[117]Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 523–24.

[118]See discussion in earlier section entitled "The Ongoing Use of Baptism Outside the Baptist Tradition."

[119]The pattern Luther proposes seems valid regardless if one joins Luther in his sacramentalism of not. See Luther *Babylonian Captivity*, in *Luther Works: Word and Sacrament II,* vol. 36, eds. Helmut T. Lehmann and Abdel Ross Wentz, trans. A. T.W. Steinhäuser, Frederick C. Ahrens, and Abdel Ross Wentz, 11–126 (Philadelphia, PA: Muhlenberg Press, 1959), 36:124.

[120]I owe this observation to Steve McKinnion.

within the various systematic loci leaves the sign empty. Extended explana-
tions of the loci without the summarizing sign leave the truth disjointed and
uncoordinated.

How might we better incorporate baptism in our systematic theologi-
cal development? What benefits might this produce? Two examples from
Keathley and Garrett serve to illustrate the utility and fruitfulness of better
integrating baptism (if not both ordinances) in our systematic development.

First, including connections to baptism in our development of other
loci need not be cumbersome or unwieldy. For example, consider the fol-
lowing headings found in Garrett's systematic formulation section on union
with Christ and the ways in which each finds clear connection to what cre-
dobaptism emblemizes (as identified in the parenthetical notes). In this sec-
tion Garrett deals with the (a) "Trinitarian Dimension of Union" (an aspect
connected to the Trinitarian formula of baptism; Matt 28:19), (b) the "Es-
sential Condition [of Union]: Faith" (a key prerequisite to *believers'* baptism),
(c) "The Ethical Consequences" of union (see our earlier discussion of Paul's
use of baptism in Rom 6 and Col 2–3), (d) the "Ecclesial Significance" of
union (a subject often discussed in the link between baptism and church
membership),[121] and (e) the "Abiding or Enduring Quality" of union (a topic
exemplified by baptism's one-time administration). Thus, as the above par-
enthetical notes demonstrate, each of Garrett's aspects of union with Christ
finds a strong line of connection to the sign of baptism. These connections
support the argument that incorporating baptism in systematic presenta-
tions of union with Christ would not be cumbersome or unwieldy. A few,
simple, suggestive statements that make the connection plain would in most
cases do the necessary integrative work. Further, such a methodological use
of baptism would serve to renew the depth of our baptismal theology and
practice.

Second, incorporating baptism in our development of other doctrines
has the potential to connect those doctrines to our liturgical life of corporate
worship. For example, Keathley offers a fruitful methodological schema in
his discussion of the "now—not yet" aspect of our salvation, framing sal-
vation with four perspectives: (1) Eternal, (2) Historical, (3) Present, and
(4) Ultimate.[122] These perspectives correspond with God's eternal plans, his
working out those plans in history through the sending of his Son, his pres-
ent activity in the lives of those who repent and believe, and the ultimate ful-
fillment of this salvation plan at Christ's return. This discussion follows im-
mediately upon Keathley's discussion of union with Christ. Importantly, he
notes, "All four moments of our salvation should be understood in the light
of our union with [Christ] because each aspect is accomplished 'in him.'"[123]

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[121]John Hammett writes, "As we enter into union with Christ, we also enter into union
with his people," Hammett, *40 Questions*, 119. See also, Bobby Jamieson, *Going Public: Why
Baptism Is Required for Church Membership* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2015), 47.

[122]Keathley, "Salvation," in *Theology for the Church*, 550.

[123]Keathley, "Salvation," in *Theology for the Church*, 550.

This is a helpful description and scheme. I suggest that establishing a clear link between baptism and union with Christ in the previous section would subsequently serve plant this scheme in fertile liturgical soil in which it could continue to grow in the minds of his readers.

Conclusion

In this article I have argued that baptism has an ongoing use in the life of a believer. Through a survey of six, influential, popular Baptist Systematic Theologies, I demonstrated that this use has largely been overlooked within this body of texts. We concluded by considering the implications of this on-going use of baptism for Baptist systematic theological development offering modest proposals for making use of baptism as an integrative, summarizing sign. Though, in Grenz's words, "many Baptists, whose denominational name derives from the ordinance, often view this act [of baptism] as having no real importance beyond forming the entrance into the local church,"[124] my hope is that the preceding study will aid us toward better presenting baptism's ongoing pedagogical function. Improvement in this area will enrich not only our theology of baptism itself but also our synthesis and summary of the Christian faith as liturgically expressed through the ordinances together.

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[124]Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 515.

The Lord's Supper:
Reclaiming the Symbolic Meal
from a Symbol of a Meal

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Introduction

It is animal nature to eat, but it is human nature to fellowship over food. The table is the place where people show to whom they belong and who belongs to them. People invite their closest friends to eat; those times of the year when they gather for special meals, such as Thanksgiving and Christmas, are deeply anticipated, more so for the company than the cuisine. Of course, when relationships are strained, meals become an ordeal and one wishes nothing more than to get it over and get away. What is desired is not just fast food, but fast fellowship. It is a hope that western Christianity in the 21st century, in its disconnected and socially isolated existence (even though it has Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, and Facebook), will come together around the Lord's Table to break bread and proclaim His death until He comes, and in doing this will find the community of the church as described in the New Testament.

This article's thesis is that the standard practice of reducing the symbolic Supper (regarding the bodily presence of Christ in the elements) to a symbol of the Supper (a wafer and small cup) has failed to enact the proper dramatic practice of the Lord's Supper.[1] While the Supper is meant to be a time of community remembrance and anticipation the current practice in many evangelical churches of passing individualized cups and tiny precut wafers creates a time of isolation between members as focus is given almost exclusively to one's own spiritual condition and relationship with God. The symbols used for the meal contribute to the individualization of the Supper. Each person takes his own cup and wafer that is sized for his individual

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[1]Kevin Vanhoozer, *The Drama of Doctrine: A Canonical-Linguistic Approach to Christian Theology* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2005). Vanhoozer's book is a sustained argument for the importance of doctrine in the Christian life. Additionally, he advocates that doctrines are not dead things to be left on a page, but are meant to be performed. The doctrines of the Christian faith are the stage directions for how the church can faithfully perform its actions. Doctrines are not complete until they are lived out in the life of the church, and how they are lived out in the church often teaches more than the words on the page.

meal. These symbols of a supper make it more difficult for the person to see the unified body of Christ in the bread and the cup because each of those elements has already been prearranged for the individual to acquire easily without considering someone else's portion.

The article will consist of four parts. The first, entitled "The Biblical Stage Decoration," will outline the evidence from the Bible that supports the Supper being a full meal. The second part will offer a historical investigation into how this stage decoration was reset from a full meal into a symbol of a meal in regard to portion size. The third part offers a theological argument of the meal that is truly Zwinglian—a symbol of the meal (i.e. cup and wafer) may not be the most dramatically fitting performance available. In opposition to a Real Presence understanding of the meal as a means of regenerative grace, in which only a symbol of the meal is needed to obtain the meal's grace, the section will attempt to show that the meal is about building community between members as they remember Christ's death and look forward to his return. The nature of the one loaf as attested by Paul will be the basis for arguing that the symbol (cup and wafer) of a symbolic meal (a rejection of Real Presence) needs to be replaced with an actual meal containing the bread and wine that symbolizes Christ's body and blood. A full meal better conveys the meaning of the Supper than a mere symbol of a meal has been able to do. The paper will end with practical suggestions for how a full meal could be accomplished in the local church and some benefits that could be derived from the move.

Setting the Biblical Stage Decoration

In the Gospels, we find Jesus regularly engaged in meals, the most famous and important one being the final meal of his life: The Last Supper.[2] It was from this event that Jesus's followers were given the practice of breaking bread in connection with the Lord's Supper. In the context of the Passover, the phrase "breaking bread" was given a deeper meaning than merely eating, being additionally associated with the body of Christ given for the sins of the world.

In the Last Supper, Jesus gathered with his closest disciples to celebrate and remember the Exodus from Egypt, and in the midst of the meal, He explained that a greater exodus was soon to take place through His coming crucifixion.[3] It was this meal that formed the basis for what is termed the Lord's Supper, a meal in which the New Covenant is symbolized in bread

[2]Jesus is often found dining with others in the Gospels. In the Gospel of Luke Jesus eats with Levi the tax collector (5:27–32), Simon the Pharisee (7:36–50), the 5000 (9:10–17), Mary and Martha (10:38–42), an unnamed Pharisee (11:37–52), a ruler of the Pharisees (14:1–24), Zacchaeus (19:1–10), the Last Supper (22: 14–38), the two disciples on the road to Emmaus (24:28–32), and the disciples (24:36–43). In addition to the Synoptic accounts, Jesus performs his first sign in John's Gospel in the context of a meal at Cana (John 2:1–12). Robert J. Karris, *Eating Your Way Through Luke's Gospel* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 2006).
[3]N.T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996), 554–63.

and wine.[4] The question to ask in the aftermath of the crucifixion and resurrection is, Did the apostles continue to celebrate this meal in its Passover form or did they translate it into a new meal? A further question to ask relates to whether this new meal is a full meal, as was the Passover, or was it a symbol of a meal, as practiced today in most churches?

The first passage to investigate is Acts 2:42–47, which describes the activities of Jesus's first followers after Pentecost. They gathered for teaching and fellowship, the breaking of bread, and prayers. The phrase "breaking of bread" is the one that requires further attention. Is this a term that has taken on a deeper meaning, that it is in fact a reference to the Lord's Supper, or does it only mean that they were eating together? While numerous commentators argue that this is indeed a reference to the Lord's Supper, in order to ascertain how Luke is employing the idea of breaking bread, one must examine its use in the rest of his writings.[5]

The first time Luke employs the language of breaking bread is in Luke 9:16. In this verse, Jesus is said to have taken five loaves (bread) and two fish to feed five thousand men. Luke recounts that Jesus took the bread and fish, blessed it, broke it and then continued to pass out what seemed to be an unending supply of both to the crowd. While this event does not immediately lead someone to see a relationship to the Lord's Supper, when taken in conjunction with John 6 the connection may become apparent. In John 6, Jesus says He is the Bread of Life and that one must eat His flesh and drink His blood to find that life. The disciples would have seen a connection between the feeding of the crowd and Jesus's further explanation at the Last Supper regarding what it means to eat His flesh and drink His blood. Joel Green recognizes the similarity in wording between this passage and the Last Supper wording in Luke 22:19. He further notes that the feeding of the five thousand is set in a context in which "kingdom proclamation and messianic suffering figure prominently."[6] This connection with kingdom and suffering lends a further connection to the Last Supper in which both of those themes are prominent.

The next use of the term "breaking bread" occurs on the day of the resurrection while Jesus is eating with the two disciples who were travelling to Emmaus. As they were sitting down to eat, Jesus took bread and broke it and gave it to them, reminiscent of the scene a few nights earlier in the Last

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[4]For an overview of the supper see Ben Witherington III, *Making a Meal of It: Rethinking the Theology of the Lord's Supper.* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2007); I. Howard Marshall, *Last Supper and Lord's Supper*. (Vancouver, Regent College Publishing, 2006); Joachim Jerermias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus.* (London, SCM, 2011).

[5]F.F. Bruce, *The Book of Acts*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 73; Bradley J. Chance, *Acts*, Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2007), 59; I. Howard Marshall, *Acts* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 88–89; Ben Witherington III, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 160–01.

[6]Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 762.

Supper. They then realized their guest was Jesus and He disappeared. The two immediately returned to Jerusalem to report what had happened, and in Luke 24:35 it was revealed that Jesus was made known to them in the breaking of the bread. The close connection in the Emmaus account with the breaking of bread in the Last Supper lends strong evidence to the idea that the phrase "breaking bread" is a term Luke is employing in reference to the Last Supper, and potentially the Lord's Supper that flows from it.[7]

Acts 20 recounts the story of Paul and word weary Eutychus. In 20:7 we are told that the church had gathered on the first day of the week to break bread. F.F. Bruce argues that this is the earliest passage from which we can ascertain that Christians came together on the first day of the week for worship. Further he writes "the breaking of the bread was probably a fellowship meal in the course of which the Eucharist was celebrated." [8] Paul talked until midnight, at which point Eutychus plunged to his death. Paul rushed down and revived the young man, went back upstairs, broke bread and ate, and then continued to talk until daybreak. The express intention of gathering on the first day of the week was to break bread, and it was sometime after midnight that this occurred. While it seems clear from 20:11 that breaking bread refers to a meal, does it connect with the Lord's Supper as part of that meal? Acts 20:7 indicates that it would, given that it was the purpose of the gathering, and as we will be shown in 1 Corinthians 11, having the Supper when the church gathered was a regular occurrence.

Acts 27:35 is one of two instances in Luke's writing where the idea of breaking bread is not directly related to a gathering of believers, the other being the feeding of the five thousand. In Acts 27 Paul is a prisoner on a boat bound for Rome. During the voyage, the boat encounters a storm so terrible that the crew fears it will capsize. Paul encourages the soldiers and prisoners to take nourishment since they had not eaten in fourteen days. Paul then takes bread, blesses it, breaks it, and eats. The context of the mixed crowd on the ship mitigates against seeing this breaking of bread as the Lord's Supper, but it does reinforce the idea that breaking bread involves more food than a mere token of bread and wine.[9] This passage, unlike the feeding of the five thousand, is the one exception that casts doubt upon Luke's use of breaking bread as shorthand for the Lord's Supper. While this does not eclipse the evidence already offered, it does give a reason to show caution in understanding the phrase as a technical term to describe the Lord's Supper.

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[7]Joel Green states, "Given the background in Jesus' own table practice for occasions of 'breaking bread' in Acts, we might anticipate that these meals would signify the coming near of salvation, and this is certainly the case." Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 851.

[8]Bruce, *The Book of Acts*, 384.

[9]Witherington III, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 773; Marshall, *Acts*, 434. F.F. Bruce, however, argues it was a Eucharist for the believers, but not the non-believers on the ship. He offers no compelling evidence for his conclusion and therefore it is hard to follow him in his claim. Bruce, *The Book of Acts*, 492–93.

Having examined the issue of the Lord's Supper in relation to breaking bread in Luke's writing, we will now consider Paul's contribution to the Supper in 1 Corinthians 10–11. In these chapters Paul is clearly referring to a meal that had significance beyond just filling one's belly. In 10:18 he asks if the cup the Corinthians bless and the bread they break is not a participation in Christ. Paul compares the Lord's Supper to pagan meals in which the worshipper communed with and in some sense dined with the deity.[10] Paul argues that the Lord's Supper is a participation in Christ, a statement of fidelity to Him. When Paul turns to the abuses of the members during the Supper, it is obvious that they were participating in a full meal. In Corinth, there was the possibility of overindulgence in food and wine. One could go home drunk, while another went home hungry. In most churches, everyone goes home hungry and there is no possibility of getting drunk, unless someone were to requisition an entire communion tray for himself—a highly unlikely act!

It was in the context of a meal that the Corinthian church displayed such horrible "table manners." As they gathered together to break bread, they were not exhibiting the unity that Christ gives, but were instead living under the old social divisions of Corinthian culture.[11] The division was so great that Paul told them they were not eating the Lord's Supper, though in fact some of them were eating a full meal, while others were left out. The Lord's Supper was meant to bring and to display the unity of the body according 1 Corinthians 10:17, but the Corinthian meal was bringing and revealing division. Paul calls them to correct this problem and thus avoid the indigestion (1 Cor 11:30) that a bad meal can cause.[12]

The last verses to consider are 2 Peter 2:13 and Jude 12, in which believers are warned about false teachers at their feasts. The evidence is too scant to determine conclusively if the love feast was the same as the Lord's Supper, but it is known that subsequently the love feast was distinct from the Supper. That was a development that was attested around the 2nd century.[13] Given the references to the church sharing the Lord's Supper as a meal, it appears most likely that Peter and Jude are referring to that same Supper. This is further supported by his statement that they feast without fear when juxtaposed with Paul's warning of the results of partaking of the Supper in

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[10]Gordon Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians,* New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 465–73.

[11]Witherington III, *Making a Meal of It*, 33–62; Fee, *Corinthains,* 540–45.

[12]In 1 Corinthians 11:30 Paul connects sickness and death that existed among the Corinthians congregation as related to how they were treating each other at the supper. It is not clear from Paul how this sickness and death had come about, whether by a direct judgment from God or because of the tension of the strained relationships among the body. Either way, Paul is clear that the behavior of the Corinthians at the meal was having a direct effect upon the health of the members of the congregation.

[13]Witherington III, *Making a Meal of It*, 97–109. It will be shown in the next section how the Lord's Supper subsequently became a separate event from the love feast, with the latter becoming a meal for the less fortunate in the church.

an unworthy manner, that is, when one fails to rightly recognize the body of Christ, a reference both to Christ's physical body and Christ's people.[14] In both passages it is during the meal that the false teachers are able to spread their pernicious ideas. This would not be possible if the feast were not a full meal in which people could interact with each other.

It can be stated with a high degree of certainty from the verses presented that the church in the New Testament was eating a full meal in the context of the Lord's Supper. How the bread and wine were incorporated into that meal is not explained, though, and this leaves it up to each church to determine how to serve the Supper to enact the meal with dramatic fittingness.

The Biblical Stage Decoration Reset

In moving into the post-apostolic era many things began to change, for our purposes the Lord's Supper changed from a full meal into a symbol of a meal. We will demonstrate this change by examining samplings from select writings during the first several centuries of church history.

The *Didache* is a first century manual of church order that addresses the issue of the Lord's Supper.[15] In *Didache* 9 and 10 one sees a reference to the Supper in which instructions about communion are given, with emphasis upon the prayers offered. In chapter 9 it states that only those who have been baptized may partake of the meal and in chapter 10 it reads, "After you are filled, give thanks this way."[16] While it is not conclusive, the idea of giving thanks after you are filled points to the position that it was a full meal that was taking place.[17] Furthermore, in chapter 14 on assembling on the Lord's Day, it reads, "But every Lord's day gather yourselves together, and break bread, and give thanksgiving after having confessed your transgressions, that your sacrifice may be pure." Here the Lucan phrase "break bread" is used as a reference to the Lord's Supper. This lends support to the phrase in Luke being understood as a reference to the Lord's Supper, but it does not give enough information to determine the amount of food that was consumed at the meal. Henk Jan de Jonge believes that the meal in *Didache* 14 is "the weekly community supper on Sunday evening."[18] This supper would have consisted of more than a tiny portion of bread and a sip of wine.

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[14]*International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* (1988), s.v. "agape." *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity* (1990), s.v. "agape."

[15]Allen, George Cantrell. *The Didache: Or, The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*. London: Astolat Press, 1903.

[16]*Didache*, 6–7.

[17]Witherington III, *Making a Meal of It*, 90–95.

[18]Henk Jan de Jonge, "The Early History of the Lord's Supper." in *Religious Identity and the Invention of Identity: Papers read at a NOSTER Conference in Soesterberg, January 4–6 1999*, edited by Jan Willem van Henten and Anton Houtepen (Assen, The Netherlands: Royal Van Gorcum, 2001), 222.

Ben Witherington argues that the Lord's Supper meal began to change in the 2nd century through the combined effects of four forces. First, as ecclesial power was consolidated in the hands of monarchial bishops, the Supper was increasingly seen as only valid when performed under the auspices of a bishop. This is evidenced by Ignatius around AD 110 when he wrote to Smyrna, "It is not permissible either to baptize or to hold a love feast without the bishop."[19] As the meal became more consolidated under the control of the bishop, its character as a full meal was more easily changed over time to deal with other concerns.

The second force that brought change was the rising battle against Gnosticism. As one reads Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, and Cyril, he can see that they are beginning to speak of a change in the bread and wine. Over time this tendency would lead to the full-blown doctrine of transubstantiation. This in turn led to a position in which one only needs a small amount of the Supper to receive the entire body and blood of Christ. While the 2nd century writers were not advocating a symbolic meal in relation to portion size, the shift to seeing the elements transformed into the actual body and blood of Christ would lend itself to a reduction in the size of the meal.[20]

Third, a rising asceticism gave impetus to the church to reduce the size of the meal. As critics of the Christian love feast compared it to pagan debauchery, those who defended the church sought to show that their meals were in fact moderate and restrained. Witherington writes, "The more ascetical the church became, the more concern there was about the potential bad witness of the agape, and this in fact lead to the separation of the agape from the celebration of the Lord's Supper altogether as it became a "church ceremony" rather than a part of a Christian family meal."[21] Eventually, at the Council of Trullo in AD 692 the love feast was banned from the Catholic Church.

The final change took place as the church became more Greek and the platonic distinction between form and matter took over. Under this pressure the meal turned into the Mass and the discussion shifted to whether the bread and wine became the body and blood of Christ. In effect, the church was not addressing whether a symbol of a meal can accomplish the same thing as a real meal; it was debating whether the elements were transubstantiated into the body and blood of Christ.[22]

So how did the Supper move from a meal to a symbol of a meal? Initially the church would meet on Sunday night. They would start with a meal, that included the Lord's Supper and then retire for worship in which there would be singing, preaching, and prophesying. This can be observed

[19]Ignatius, *Letter to Smyrna* 8. That the love feast is connected with both baptism and the need for a bishop's presence gives strong evidence that at this time the love feast and the Lord's Supper were the same event.

[20]Witherington III, *Making a Meal of It*, 101–05.

[21]Witherington III, *Making a Meal of It*, 106.

[22]Witherington III, *Making a Meal of It*, 113–25.

in 1 Corinthians 11–14. Since Sunday was a work day the meetings were in the evening. In the 2nd century the church started to gather for prayer early on Sunday morning before going to work and eventually the bread and wine were given at this gathering. Because it was early morning it was not necessary to have as much food, and this was the beginning of the separation between the Lord's Supper as a real meal and the Supper as a symbol of a meal. As the church continued to grow, the morning service became the primary service and the evening gathering was only attended by those who were in need of assistance from the church in the form of a meal.[23]

Eventually, the debate over the Supper was not about portion size, but about the real presence of Christ in the elements. Recounting the debate over transubstantiation is beyond the scope of this article, but suffice it to say that in the Reformation the Zwinglian view of the Supper as a memorial gained traction among many people. While the debate over the transformation of the elements took place there was no subsequent debate of any intensity over whether the symbols themselves (wafer and cup) could convey the memorial intent of the original Supper. Does the way a memorial is performed impact the outcome that the memorial is intended to create? In other words, if the props for the play have been radically changed, can the play be faithfully performed? While this article does not argue that the traditional manner of celebrating the Supper with a small wafer and cup cannot accomplish the biblical goal, it does suggest that the reset staging makes it much harder to accomplish that goal and can tend to convey ideas that the original Supper never intended. It is for this reason that the modern stage decoration needs to be reset to the biblical stage decoration.

Resetting the Modern Stage Decoration

It is impressive how powerful eating together can be. During the Civil Rights Movement African Americans and whites would attend the same churches, albeit not in large numbers, and they undoubtedly partook of the Lord's Supper together. It was however, the Greensboro sit-ins at Woolworths that outraged the segregated nation. On 1 February 1960 four African American college students sat down to eat a meal at the Woolworths lunch counter, and were refused service at the "Whites Only" counter. The men did not leave, but instead stayed until the store closed. The protest grew and eventually on July 25, 1960 African Americans were served at the Woolworths store.

This story speaks to the power of sharing a meal. While in church it was acceptable to share the Lord's Supper together many of the same people would not eat a meal with someone of a different race. Could it be that the symbolic nature of the Supper (in terms of the meal itself and not the presence of Christ) effectively removed the need to find unity within the church

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[23]Jan de Jonge, "The Early History of the Lord's Supper." De Jonge's article gives a thorough treatment of the early church writings to establish the above brief overview.

at the meal? Perhaps the outrage from white people generated by eating with African Americans was not prevalent at the Lord's Supper, because the church was not having a real meal, and the racial division that cut across many churches could not be addressed from a 1 Corinthians 11 perspective because the white people in church did not feel the outrage at eating the Lord's Supper with African Americans in the same manner as they did as eating at the Woolworth's lunch counter. This speaks to the power of table fellowship with one another. By not having a full meal as the Lord's Supper the church in America found it difficult to see how it was re-enacting 1 Corinthians 11, but instead of upon socio-economic lines it was dividing on racial lines.

It was not long ago in the United States that congregations were segregated by race, with African-Americans forced to relinquish their seats to whites and retire to the balcony for worship service. There could not be a more graphic example of the very problem in Corinth as these segregated churches ate the Supper together. The white and black congregants would eat and drink their symbolic meal at the same time, but they were not eating the Supper as Paul said to the Corinthians. These same people would not sit down to a real meal together, but could carry on the façade of the Lord's Supper without feeling the disunity in the congregation, and without experiencing the unity that a shared meal can create between people. If the Lord's Supper had been a real meal in those churches it might have been easier to let Paul's admonition to the Corinthians pierce through the racial division with the light of the unity that is found in Christ by the Spirit.

The reset stage decoration of the individualized wafer and cup, exemplified in the Meals Ready to Eat (MRE) style combo wafer and cup wrapped neatly in cellophane, lends itself quite strongly to conveying through its symbolism a message of dining alone with God. Each person in church carefully selects the wafer and cup, cautious not to touch anyone else's, and then sits quietly alone in the midst of the congregation waiting to eat and drink the bite-sized portion of a meal. While the church strives to present the Supper as a time of unity, often by consuming the elements at the same time, its symbols bring about an interiority and individualism that would not have existed in the New Testament as they enjoyed a meal together. As the pre-cut wafers and individual communion cups are passed, the symbols emphasize that as one partakes of this meal, it is about the wafer and cup, not the oneness from which the bread and wine come.

Also in a misguided understanding of 1 Corinthians 11:27–29, people are asked to search within themselves to see if they have unconfessed sin, when in fact, Paul was admonishing the Corinthians to look around the table and be sure that they were treating each other well, waiting on each other, showing the proper hospitability to each other as is fitting for those who are in Christ.[24] Within the larger context of the passage Paul is concerned about

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[24]Many churches practice a time of private confession of sin before the serving of

the "table manners" of the Corinthians and how their divisions were making a mockery of the unity they had in Christ. In 11:29 Paul warns the Corinthians to discern the body correctly. When Paul talks about the body he is referring to the church as the body of Christ; a metaphor that he expands in 1 Corinthians 12. Of course, Paul also understands the tight connection between Christ and the church as His body from his encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus, in which Jesus told Paul that he was persecuting Him in his persecution of His followers.

In many places church members have been conditioned not to look at each other during the Lord's Supper, not to make eye contact, out of fear that they will interrupt someone's private communion/confession with Christ. This practice would appear odd if the people were eating an actual meal, as they stare deeply into their plate, unwilling to talk to the people across from them, unwilling to experience the fellowship and joy that breaking bread together can bring. The modern practice indeed strikes the minor key of the death of Jesus, the grief that a loss can bring, and the silence that may ensue, but it does not resolve that melody into the major key of the victory of His resurrection. Yet Paul tells the church that in the Supper it proclaims Jesus' death (minor key) until He comes (major key)—pathos and joy rolled into one meal.

The Challenges and Benefits of a Reset Stage

How then can the symbolic meal be reclaimed from the symbol of a meal to experience the fullness of the New Testament practice? Also, what benefits might accrue from this change in practice? I have a few suggestions that I have worked out in my context both as a professor of theology at Midwestern Baptist Seminary and a pastor at Northland Baptist Church. First, the church should have a real meal. This is quite a simple suggestion, but it carries with it some strong challenges both practical and doctrinal. Practically speaking, how is a church to pull off this feat? At one time, Baptists were lampooned for always eating when they got together, but sadly, today they have lost this stereotype and many churches would struggle logistically to have a meal together. This is most likely driven by lack of facilities, but it could also be a symptom of lack of fellowship in general. Either they have no "where" to eat together or they have no "why" to sit down with each other for a meal.

At Northland Baptist Church we struggled with the issue of having a real meal together for several years. We were convinced that this was the practice that we wanted, but we did not have a place to have the meal. We

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the Lord's Supper. This time is meant to ensure that the person partaking of the supper is not doing so in an unworthy manner. While this practice is commendable, this is not what Paul is discussing in this passage. Paul is imploring the Corinthians to treat each other as equals at the supper as members of the body of Christ, and while we should have a time of introspection at the supper, this is not Paul's intent in this passage.

eventually remodeled our sanctuary to remove the pews and replace them with chairs so that we could use this large space for a meal. It was during Easter weekend of 2017 that we were able to finally have a full meal for the Lord's Supper. As our people gathered on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday we broke bread (fried chicken, mashed potatoes, etc.) together and celebrated the Lord's Supper. After we ate our meal, we had a time of teaching and then partook of the bread and the cup at each table. It was a wonderful time of fellowship as the church expressed and lived out the unity that is found in Christ. We also found that we did not have to manufacture a sense of unity at the meal, as the meal itself created unity.

Another option that allows people to experience a full meal for the Supper is to let your small groups have the Supper during a meal at someone's house. This option would allow for a church that does not have a large enough facility to seat everyone at once to still have a real meal for the Supper. It also allows the small groups in your church to see their unity as grounded in Christ and not just a sense of fellowship or shared life experience.

One critique of having the Supper in a small group is that a pastor could not be at every meal, but there is nothing in Scripture that would demand the presence of a pastor at the meal. This appears historically to be a result of the rise of the bishopric and the consolidation of the church under an episcopal model. Baptists are not bound by this historical trend, and while a pastor does not have to be present to validate the Supper, it would be wise and prudent for the church to make it clear that the Supper being taken in small groups is not an attempt to create a splinter group within the church, but is endorsed by the leadership. This is necessary given the historical precedent of the Supper and its community forming basis. To overcome the objections raised by tradition, there could also be a biblical basis for partaking of the Supper in homes, as seen in Acts 2:46. Luke writes that the believers would meet in the Temple complex and then break bread from house to house.[25] In this context the church gathered as a large body for worship and then met in smaller groups to break bread—to have the Lord's Supper.

A serious challenge of having a full meal for the Lord's Supper is that it is logistically almost impossible for churches to have a meal together in their facilities as we experienced at Northland. Even with the remodel to the sanctuary it would no be possible to have a full meal on a Sunday morning. Therefore, in addition to having a real meal for the Supper in small groups and occasionally as the whole congregation, the traditional manner of having the Supper in the Sunday morning service could be continued. This experience would be deepened and enriched by those Suppers that were real meals and would help the church to see the full meal in the symbolic meal. It could also be encouraged during this time to greet the people around you and to partake of the bread and cup together, as if you were sharing a meal together, which is in fact what we are doing. By giving permission to the members of

[25]Bruce, *The Book of Acts*, 72.

the congregation to fellowship with each while the bread and cup are distributed it will capture something of the fellowship that takes place over a full meal. In this way, the communal nature of the meal can be experienced, even if in a diminished manner.

There are numerous benefits of resetting the stage decoration from a symbolic meal into a real meal. First, the church's mandate to carry out discipline could be more effectively enforced. In Roman Catholic doctrine, excommunication from the Mass is enough to cause a member to reconsider his or her behavior. According to Catholic doctrine, the Mass carries with it the grace that is needed to continue on in one's salvation. In typical Baptist doctrine, the meal does not carry the same theological grist, hence a Baptist may not recognize the immensity of being barred from taking the Lord's Supper. I imagine that most Baptists would not consider it a heavy penalty to be asked not to partake of the wafer and cup that is offered at the end of a service once a quarter or evenly monthly. Missing a meal, however, would be a different matter. If a group of believers gathered together regularly to eat a meal and a person was excluded from that event, they would feel more deeply the loss of community with the group.[26] This would also affect those who have to exclude someone, and this is part of the point of church discipline. Discipline is not intended to remove someone who is causing trouble, but to save someone who is endangering both themselves and the church-community. In an intervention, the family and friends who intervene often suffer as much, if not more, than the person who is behaving in an unacceptable manner.

Second, by having a real meal, divisions in the body of Christ can be more easily detected and remedied. It was at the meal in Corinth that the divisions in the church were evident, and Paul instructs the church to put aside these table divisions and eat together in unity. There is often no better place to recognize the true feelings we have toward someone than over food. It is in that context that we will be better able to sense any conflicts and then attempt to remedy them as we share in the one loaf and cup that symbolize Christ. The unity that Christ gives will be the impetus to overcome the divisions that are made evident over a meal.

Finally, and this almost goes with saying, eating together binds us closer to each other. God created us and He knows us, so it is not surprising that we find God using meals throughout Scripture to commune with us and for us to commune with each other. While church members often go out to eat with each other after a worship service, there is seldom a time when we eat together in the recognition that we are the body of Christ. What better way both to display and to build the unity of the body of Christ than by eating a meal together in which we remember the body and blood of Christ given for us and look forward to His return. In the eager expectation of His return

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[26]In 1 Corinthians 5:11 Paul admonished the church not to eat with someone who proclaims to be a follower of Christ, but who is not living by that claim.

to share a meal with us, we will find that we are drawn closer to Him and to each other. It is my recommendation that we reset the modern stage decoration of the Lord's Supper as a wafer and tiny cup into a full meal so that we can more fittingly see our church's Supper table as a place to exhibit our unity in Christ.

The Cognitive Abilities of Children and Southern Baptist Baptismal Restrictions[1]

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In the latter half of the last century, Southern Baptists developed a heightened interest in their own evangelistic and baptismal practices as related to children. As part of the resulting discussions, several Southern Baptists scholars argued that the Bible presented an at best inconclusive picture as to the appropriateness of child evangelistic and initiatory practices.[2] As a result, numerous Southern Baptist scholars turned to psychology and its corresponding insights on child development to ascertain when children can cognitively grasp the specific elements required for conversion and are then in turn ready for baptism and initiation into the faith community.[3]

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[1]This article is drawn in part from Chapter 4 of Robert Matz, "Should Southern Baptists Baptize Their Children? A Biblical, Historical, Theological Defense of the Consistency of the Baptism of Young Children with Credobaptistic Practices" (PhD diss., Liberty University, 2015).

[2]For example, William Hendricks assumes such, stating that "Bible references to children are descriptive rather than theological." William Hendricks, "The Age of Accountability" in *Children and Conversion*, ed. by Clifford Ingle (Nashville, TN: Broadman, 1970), 93. Warren Withers makes a similar argument, "I have attempted to show that neither the New Testament nor early Baptist theology included the baptism of children. The only explicit New Testament texts regarding baptism report the baptism of adults. It is my contention that there is a trend in Southern Baptist churches in which children are being baptized prematurely." John Warren Withers, "Social Forces Affecting the Age at which Children are Baptized in Southern Baptist Churches" (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1997), 7. See also, Melvin Douglas Clark, "The Evangelism of Children: A Study in Southern Baptist Practice" (PhD diss., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1969), Chapter 4.

[3]The appropriateness of engaging psychology in this discussion has been challenged. For example Danny Akin asserts that, "psychological arguments carry no weight in this discussion." Yet, the fact remains that many Southern Baptists have and continue to make arguments from developmental psychology to justify their unwillingness to accept children as converts. For example, John Hammett states "developmental psychologists agree that children reach full moral decision making ability around the age of twelve." John Hammett, "Regenerate Church Membership," in *Restoring Integrity within Baptist Churches*, ed. Thomas White, Jason Duesing, and Malcolm B. Yarnell III (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2008), 40.

Such hesitations regarding "psychological arguments" are often based on a skeptical attitude towards the compatibility of psychology with the Christian faith as a whole as well as certain soteriological presuppositions about the effectual nature of the Holy Spirit's role in calling individuals to salvation. While from a Christian and Baptist perspective, caution is wise in terms of a wholesale acceptance of all psychological models of faith development,

Through their study of child development, many Southern Baptist scholars concluded that children were cognitively incapable of being converted. Such contributed to a growing backlash against child baptisms in Southern Baptists churches. This paper will first examine the assertions of many Southern Baptists regarding the cognitive abilities of children. After surveying these cognitive objections to the conversion of children, it will offer a series of cognitive-developmental, faith-developmental, and statistical rejoinders to these objections. It will then close by offering a series of criteria for evaluating childhood conversions based on these rejoinders.

The Psychological Argument against the Baptism of Children

In discussion of the baptism of children, the cognitive inability of children to grasp the gospel is often assumed without an actual engagement with cognitive research.[4] Actual sustained engagement with cognitive research is less common in articles addressing the conversion or baptism of children. Still, four doctoral dissertations from Southern Baptists have been written that deal directly with cognitive-developmental research. The findings of these four dissertations are outlined below.

there are cognitive elements to the gospel. Further, while Christian orthodoxy as a whole affirms the sovereignty of God, from a Baptist perspective, which emphasizes conversion as an essential element in orientation to the faith, the Spirit of God's sovereign work occurs within the context of individuals' normal cognitive and volitional abilities. Therefore, this paper, while presupposing the Scriptures as normative over psychology, remains open to the contributions of psychologists exploring child development.

In regards to the assertion that conversion occurs within the context of normal cognitive processes the Abstract of Principles of Southern Seminary is helpful. It notes that God's sovereign work occurs in such a way as "not in any wise … to destroy the free will and responsibility of intelligent creatures." "Abstract of Principles," The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, last modified 1858, accessed 8 March 2015, http://www.sbts.edu/about/truth/abstract/. For more on the relation between faith and psychology see Timothy E. Clinton and George W. Ohlschlager, *Competent Christian Counseling* (Colorado Springs, CO: WaterBrook, 2002); Daniel Akin, "Ten Mandates for Today's Southern Baptists," in *The Mission of Today's Church,* ed. R. Stanton Norman (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2007), 9.

[4]Hammett's assertion mentioned in the previous footnote is an example of such. Temp Sparkman makes similar argument based on cognitive development without direct interactions with the research. He argues that since the science of "growth and development will not admit that the young child is capable of abstract reasoning [or] that he is old enough to accept a philosophy of life," non-sectarians such as Southern Baptists should not baptize their children. G. Temp Sparkman "The Implication of Conversion among Young Children," *Religious Education Journal* 68, no. 541 (July 1965): 300–02, 313. For Sparkman, if children are baptized before coming to a "full awareness" of themselves, such children should be re-baptized. If this does not happen, Baptists become Bushnell-ian in their thought process. Sparkman does not directly interact with or cite any studies of cognitive development, but instead simply assumes that "science" clearly shows that children cannot reason abstractly or possess self-awareness. Robert Proctor offers a similar line of argument. He states that "the consensus of psychological opinion would be that one is not an autonomous self, capable of making commitments of one's self, until early adolescences." Yet like Sparkman, Proctor also fails to interact with a single psychological source. Robert A. Proctor Jr., "Children and Evangelism," *Review and Expositor* 63, no. 1 (Winter 1966): 62.

Lewis Craig Ratliff

The first major objection to children's cognitive ability to respond to the gospel in a way that is indicative of regeneration is found in the dissertation of Lewis Craig Ratliff.[5] Ratliff argued that the Baptist belief in lordship precludes children from salvation. Specifically, in his dissertation, Ratliff argues that to be a disciple of Jesus one has to be able to follow Jesus as Lord.[6] To follow Jesus as Lord, one must be capable of grasping abstract concepts relating to sin, repentance, and the atonement of Christ, and one must be able to function independently, in the sense of being able to self-criticize, and must be able to function autonomously in the social setting of the community of faith. In light of such, Ratliff questions if children are able to follow Jesus as Lord. To answer this question Ratliff turns to the theories of child development based upon the research of Jean Piaget.[7]

Ratliff notes that the beginner child (ages 4–5) "is extremely concrete minded," which he defines as lack of an ability to grasp symbolic meaning. Such children ask "inappropriate" (or heretical) religious questions, understand God through an entirely parental lens, and are characterized by a blind faith independent of reality (as seen in an adamant belief in Santa). Thus, Ratliff reasons that at such an age, "children cannot find their fulfillment in personalized religion."[8]

As with the beginner, so also with the primary child (ages 6–8), Ratliff asserts that these children cannot respond to the gospel. He argues that they have "little mental facility to deal with abstraction." Specifically, children at this age do "not possess enough experience to reason clearly or strongly."[9] Such children, Ratliff argues, have "no responsibility because [they are] not capable of having it. [As a result, such children possess only] rudimentary knowledge of God and the world, but comprehend very little of its real meaning."[10] Therefore, while Christian education and nurture are of utmost importance for such children, Ratliff reasons that they cannot be converted.

In the junior years (ages 9–12) the child's development turns sharply according to Ratliff. Children disassociate from parents as their primary source of identification, learn to love unselfishly, and develop a true morality.

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[5]Lewis Craig Ratliff, "Discipleship, Church Membership and Children among Southern Baptists: An Investigation of the Place of Children in a Baptist Church in View of Christ's Teaching on Discipleship and the Baptist Doctrine of the Church" (PhD diss., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1963).

[6]Ratliff summarizes his argument on the nature of conversion and discipleship as, "The argument thus far has been that one is accountable for his eternal destiny according to his relation to Christ. The relation between the Christian and his Lord is the Lordship-discipleship relation." Ratliff, "Discipleship," 132.

[7]For example, see Jean Piaget and Bärbel Inhelder, *The Psychology of the Child* (New York: Basic, 1969); Jean Piaget, *Possibility and Necessity: Volume 1* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1987).

[8]Ratliff, "Discipleship," 153–54.

[9]Ratliff, "Discipleship," 155–56.

[10]Ratliff, "Discipleship," 156.

Further, it is in the junior years that children begin to apply "abstract principles of fairness and unfairness, right and wrong."[11]

Ratliff therefore argues that children begin to move towards a readiness for faith at the end of the junior years (12 at the earliest) and even more so as the child moves into the intermediate years (13–16). Yet, Ratliff cautions about seeing twelve year-olds as genuine converts. Instead, he notes that at twelve, while a few children begin to grasp concepts abstractly and emerge from parental sway in their thinking, none are responsible before society.[12] Thus, "as a general rule, twelve does not have the necessary maturity to become a disciple."[13]

It is only by the age of 14 that "the adolescent has gained the power of abstract thinking. Now he can understand what it means to take Jesus as his Lord. He can comprehend repentence [*sic*], faith, sin, and discipleship. By these criteria, fourteen has reached the age of disciple-ability."[14] It is at 14 then that Ratliff argues that persons enter a point of independence in which self-criticism is possible. Ratliff reasons that self-criticism is essential for a person to be converted because "self-criticism precedes repentance. Fourteen has this ability."[15] Further, it is at 14 that Ratliff believes a person is capable of becoming a church member who can enter the mission of Jesus and be responsible for discipline. In order to do such, one must have reached a point of social maturity in which one can contemplate "the basic choices that must soon be made and at the same time have competence in determining one's present social life."[16]

So to summarize, based on the out-workings of the cognitive theories of Piaget, Ratliff argues that individuals become accountable before God and are thus fit persons for discipleship around the age of 14. Ratliff reasons that 14 is the age at which a person can be converted because only at 14 are individuals able to reason abstractly, self-criticize, and think about the future as well as their present social standing within the community of faith. Only once an adolescent can function in these ways does the adolescent become an independent person capable of conversion, submission to the lordship of Jesus and disciple-ability.

Douglas Clark

Douglas Clark's dissertation from 1970 offers a second insight into the psychological justifications used to restrict the baptism of young children. Clark also relies on Piaget's stages of cognitive development as well as Erik Erikson's stages of personality development. Clark asserts that work of Piaget and Erikson harmonize and reveal a picture of the young children as

[11]Ratliff, "Discipleship," 161.
[12]Ratliff, "Discipleship," 162–67.
[13]Ratliff, "Discipleship," 167
[14]Ratliff, "Discipleship," 172.
[15]Ratliff, "Discipleship," 174.
[16]Ratliff, "Discipleship," 177.

unable to grasp the gospel.[17] From such, Clark is able not only to argue that children are not ready to grasp the cognitive concepts of the gospel but also isolates a reason for false childhood conversions.

In regards to childhood conversions, Clark explains that beginning at the age of 5 or 6, children develop "a capacity for guilt."[18] Children growing up within the Southern Baptist context will almost certainly "have this latent capacity awakened." As a result, childhood faith decisions are built upon "a sense of guilt and a need to find forgiveness and reconciliation."[19] Yet, Clark believes that a sense of guilt alone is not sufficient for a child to be viewed as a convert. Rather, baptism and a church affirmation of such children as converts should be delayed. Instead, these children should be given the Lord's Supper.[20]

Gary Thomas Deane

Clark closes his dissertation noting that additional research is needed regarding "the nature of [children's] religious experiences," as well as a "conceptual development of children's" cognitive skills. Gary Thomas Deane's dissertation from Southwestern Seminary accepts Clark's call to additional research in these areas.[21] Specifically, Deane applies Piaget's stages of development to the faith development of children. In order to do this, Deane surveyed children attending a summer Vacation Bible School at the Glorieta Conference center in New Mexico in 1980. His survey took place over eight weeks during which he interviewed 819 children.[22] The children he surveyed were evenly distributed across ages.[23] From both a cognitive and biblical perspective, Clark argues that children should not be viewed as valid candidates for conversion.[24]

Deane's methodology was to survey children's conceptions of Christian conversion, baptism, and church membership. The children in question were all Southern Baptists and had just competed between grade levels three and six. Deane's survey was vetted by a panel of experts.[25] The children surveyed

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[17]Melvin Douglas Clark, "The Evangelism of Children: A Study in Southern Baptist Practice" (PhD diss., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1969), 227–28.

[18]Clark, "The Evangelism of Children," 230–31.

[19]Clark, "The Evangelism of Children," 231.

[20]Clark, "The Evangelism of Children," chapter 5.

[21]Gary Deane asserts that his research is the logical outgrowth of a rising concern regarding the baptism of children in specifically citing Ingle's collection of essays in *Children and Conversion* as well as Clark's dissertation arguing for delaying the baptism of children. Gary Thomas Deane. "An Investigation of the Child's Conception of Christian Conversion, Baptism, and Church Membership Compared with Jean Piaget's Stages of Cognitive Development" (Ed.D. diss., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1982), 1–10; Clark, "The Evangelism of Children," 248–49; Clifford Ingle, et al., eds., *Children and Conversion* (Nashville, TN: Broadman, 1970).

[22]Deane, "An Investigation," 56.

[23]Deane, "An Investigation," 60.

[24]Deane, "An Investigation," chapter 1.

[25]Including theology professors, senior pastors, and children's ministry leaders.

were highly churched; 80.9% had been baptized, with the average of baptism being 7.8.[26] Deane shows that in line with Piaget's model, older children will reason more abstractly in regards to the domains of Christian conversion, language of Christian conversion, church membership, and baptism.[27] Additional analysis of Deane's data will be offered in the section of responses below.

John Warren Withers

Following Deane, John Warren Withers completed his Ph.D. dissertation from Southern Seminary in 1997.[28] Withers's dissertation has been utilized by those arguing against the baptism of children as it provides a potential rationale for why pastors have increasingly viewed younger children as valid candidates for baptism.[29] Unlike Ratliff and Clark, who directly argue that children are not cognitively capable of grasping salvation, Withers concedes that "children can, and do, experience personal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ."[30] Even when this is the case, Withers asserts that discernment of the cognitive-faith development of children is almost impossible. As a result, the baptism of children should be delayed until children can clearly express faith, which he argues normally happens during adolescence.[31] Such delay will help to assure that children are genuine converts and preserve a regenerate membership.[32]

In arguing for the inability of adults to discern child conversion, Withers present a series of psychological arguments derived from the cognitive work of Piaget as well as the faith-development work of James Fowler.[33] As a primer for his discussion on the ability of children to respond to the gospel

[26]Deane, "An Investigation," 62–63.

[27]Deane, "An Investigation," 82.

[28]John Warren Withers. "Social Forces Affecting the Age at which Children are Baptized in Southern Baptist Churches" (PhD diss., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1997).

[29]For example, Mark Dever cites Withers approvingly in his critique of child baptismal practices. He asserts that, "in 1996, John Withers submitted a doctoral dissertation at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in which he noted this trend (of rising child baptisms) and suggested that it occurred in the twentieth century largely due to social pressures on the pastor." Mark Dever, "Baptism in the Context of the Local Church," in *Believer's Baptism: Sign of the New Covenant in Christ*, ed. Thomas R. Schreiner and Shawn D. Wright, NAC Studies in Bible 2 (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2006), 346; see also Hammett, *Biblical Foundations*.

[30]Withers, "Social Forces," 5.

[31]Withers, "Social Forces," 118ff.

[32]Withers expresses a strong concern regarding false conversion and an unregenerate membership in his introduction. He states, "From my perspective, the danger of baptizing young children is to imply that salvation has occurred in their lives" and "If children are being baptized without being converted the churches can have a growing number of unregenerate church members. Premature baptism could help account for increasing numbers of Southern Baptist church members who cannot be located or have become inactive." Withers, "Social Forces," 5, 7.

[33]Withers, "Social Forces," chapter 3. See also, James W. Fowler, *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning* (Cambridge: Harper & Row, 1981).

in a way that adults can discern, Withers notes the cognitive requirements that the gospel presents for salvation.

> The two human responses involved in salvation are faith and repentance. For a child there is no problem regarding faith. All believers must have faith like a child. Jesus described the faith of children as exemplary. The problem area in childhood understanding is repentance. Repent means simply "to turn." When applied to one's relationship with God, repentance involves a mature understanding of turning away from anything displeasing to God and turning to everything that pleases God. It indicates a rational choice has been made to co-operate with God in the transformations of one life [*sic*] that are necessary to please him. The message of repentance *is* depicted by Paul as a death. Mature thinking capacity is needed *in* order to understand repentance.[34]

With this in mind, Withers turns towards Piaget, Fowler, and cognitive developmental research as it relates to faith development.

He first interacts with Piaget's four successive stages of cognitive development.[35] In applying Piaget to the conversion of children, Withers argues that children must "be taught to think through problems." If they make decisions without doing such, "they are being encouraged so as to 'erect a verbal superstructure that may crumble under even minimal cognitive stress.'"[36] If children simply learn to recite facts about the gospel without a cognitive understanding of such facts, then when these children are challenged they will be far more inclined to reject the gospel.

Withers also highlights Piaget's understandings of guilt, lies, and moral failures as relevant to his thesis that the baptism of children should be delayed. He argues from Piaget's studies that, "this research indicates that children up to age 10 are in a precarious position with regard to understanding the nature of sin."[37] Only during middle childhood (ages 7–11) does a child begin to "understand intentionality regarding right and wrong."[38]

Withers continues noting the implications of Piaget's work as applied to the children's ability to be introspective and to reflect on their reasoning processes. Before age 11 or 12, children's ability to do such is limited. Withers reasons, "If one does not know why salvation is needed, is it possible for one to receive it? The directions of one's own thoughts deal with the processes of logic and reason. If children are not yet capable of thinking through and

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[34]Withers, "Social Forces," 35.
[35]They are sensorimotor, birth to age two; preoperational, age two to seven; concrete operations, age seven to 11; and formal operations, age 11 through adulthood. Withers, "Social Forces," 81.
[36]Withers, "Social Forces," 83–84.
[37]Withers, "Social Forces," 86.
[38]Withers, "Social Forces," 88.

understanding a commitment of life, children cannot understand sufficiently the concept of salvation."[39]

Withers believes that Piaget's research clearly shows that "children before the age of 7 or 8 do not follow logical patterns" and that children are not capable of real logical experiment prior to 11 or 12.[40] Only when they reach age 12, the fourth stage of Piaget's developmental schema, are children capable of formal thought and logical assumptions. Therefore, Withers argues that "It would be an error to move children too quickly on their faith journey during a time when they are arranging their thoughts so as to be able to make decisions based upon good judgment and sound reasoning."[41]

Withers also looks briefly at the work of Lawrence Kohlberg, David Elkind, and Herbert John Klausmeier. From Kohlberg he notes that children do not volitionally embrace the beliefs that they practice until around the age of 13.[42] From Elkind, Withers argues that children ages seven through 11 have an inability to recognize the truth.[43] From Klaumeier, he notes that young children are able to gain simplistic understandings from which a greater truth can be understood later in life. Withers states, "Young children who see a picture of Jesus and are taught "Jesus loves you" may be capable of transferring the concept of love that they experience from their father and mother to the concept of love from this person, Jesus, which does not mean that children understand salvation."[44] As a result of the work of these psychologists, taken together with the formative work of Piaget, Withers argues that the baptism of children is at best unwise because of their cognitive inability to grasp the abstract reality that is Christian salvation.

Withers closes his discussion of child development with an in-depth treatment of James Fowler's *Stages of Faith*. Withers finds Fowler's six stages of faith development particularly helpful to his overall argument, outlining each in detail.[45] From Fowler, Withers notes that children struggle to distinguish between fantasy and reality before the age of eight. It is only as the child enters the synthetic-conventional faith stage "that cognitive awareness is sufficiently developed in children for them to question the authority of the beliefs they have been taught and either adopt or reject them for themselves." This occurs in early adolescence.[46]

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[39]Withers, "Social Forces," 89.
[40]Withers, "Social Forces," 91.
[41]Withers, "Social Forces," 92.
[42]Withers, "Social Forces," 95.
[43]Withers, "Social Forces," 99.
[44]Withers, "Social Forces," 104.
[45]Stage 0 is primal faith age 0–3. Stage 1 is intuitive projective faith ages 3–7. Stage 2 is mythic-literal faith ages 7–early adolescences. Stage 3 is synthetic conventional faith that occurs during adolescence. Stage 4 is individuate-reflective occurs in late adolescences or early adulthood. Stage 5 is conjunctive faith, which does not occur prior to mid-life. Finally, stage 6 is universalizing faith, which only occurs in a rare number of individuals. Withers, "Social Forces," 105–10. Fowler, *Stages of Faith*.
[46]Withers, "Social Forces," 119.

Withers asserts that Fowler research is complimentary to his thesis, specifically "that salvation in children is progressive and should not be validated through baptism prematurely."[47] Since Fowler argues that both the home and the church play a key role in the faith development of children throughout childhood, Withers notes that the home and church should play this role. Baptism then becomes "the more dramatic step in the conversion process for children."[48]

While Withers concedes that the faith Fowler has in view is not the saving faith of the Bible, but rather is a type of human faith that tries to make sense out of life, Withers is undeterred. Withers argues from Fowler that when children have premature conversion experiences, such experiences have a stunting effect on their faith development. Teaching children about hell and the devil at a young age will often lead to an early faith commitment "in which the child takes on adult faith identity" but such leads to "a very rigid and authoritarian personality in adulthood."[49] Following Fowler, Withers then argues that "people who take on prematurely the patterns of adult faith modeled by their church will not go through the normal processes and stages of faith development and remain in that stage of non-faith development for life."[50] Withers believes such individuals are common in Southern Baptist churches based upon his own experiences. Therefore, Withers argues for baptismal delay of child converts because there is no way to discern if children are genuinely converted. Withers reasons that it is only in early adolescence that a child can apply faith to themselves.

In Response to the Psychological Arguments against the Baptism of Children

Three significant responses can be offered to the psychological objections of Withers, Deane, Clark, and Ratliff. Specifically, a study of contemporary theories of cognitive development, of the assumptions related to theories of faith development, and the relationship between age of conversion and life-long faith commitment provide ample warrant for rejecting the dated psychological arguments offered above against the conversion and baptism of children.

Cognitive Development

While Withers, Clark, and Ratliff present a mostly unified narrative that psychology has shown the cognitive development of the child means that children cannot grasp the truths of Christianity at an early age, such claims fail to account for advances in cognitive research from the mid–1970s forward. It is widely acknowledged today that children can learn far more

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[47]Withers, "Social Forces," 116.
[48]Withers, "Social Forces," 117.
[49]Withers, "Social Forces," 118.
[50]Withers, "Social Forces," 118.

than Piaget originally thought. Even those who agree with the major features of Piaget's approach have modified major aspects of his theory. Specifically, as even basic textbooks of child development now acknowledge, these Neo-Piagetians "retain the idea that the acquisition of knowledge goes through stages, but they believe that individuals' passage through the stages occur at different rates in different domains. A child may be a demon chess player or a precocious musician, yet solve typical Piagetian tasks no better than his peers."[51]

This idea that children learn different skills at different rates was first explored in the research of Michelene Chi and Randi Koeske in 1983. They studied the cognitive abilities of a 4 ½-year-old boy who "had been exposed to dinosaur information for about 1 ½ years. Like many children of his age, he was very interested in dinosaurs and was highly motivated to learn about them. His parents read dinosaur books to him often during this period (an average of 3 hours per week), and he had a collection of nine dinosaur books and various plastic models for use in play."[52] Chi and Koeske then probed the child's knowledge of dinosaur names as well as various characteristics about these dinosaurs in order for "information [to be] obtained about the child's recognition and spontaneous generation of a subset of the dinosaurs and their properties."[53] After observing the child, two lists were generated, one consisting of 20 names the child mentioned most frequently and another of 20 names he mentioned less frequently. The child was able to memorize twice as many names from the list of names he mentioned more frequently than from the list he mentioned less frequently. Further, the child was able to generate attributes about the dinosaurs when given their names.[54] From this, Chi and Koeske concluded that the more a young child knows about a topic, the easier it is for the child to recall items pertaining to that topic.[55]

Chi followed up on her research in 1986 and again in 1988. These later studies examined more specifically how one's knowledge of a domain affected one's ability to reason about that domain (the domain here was dinosaurs).[56] In these studies, Chi explored the differences in reasoning abilities between children who had an "expert knowledge" of dinosaurs and children who had a "novice knowledge."[57] She found that those with an expert level knowledge of the domain (dinosaurs) could successfully classify dinosaurs that they had

[51]Michael Cole and Sheila R. Cole, *The Development of Children*, 4th ed. (New York: Worth, 2000), 350.

[52]Michelene T. Chi and Randi D. Koeske, "Network Representation of a Child's Dinosaur Knowledge," *Developmental Psychology* 19, no. 1 (1983): 31.

[53]Chi and Koeske, "Network Representation of a Child's Dinosaur Knowledge," 31.

[54]Chi and Koeske, "Network Representation of a Child's Dinosaur Knowledge," 31–35.

[55]Chi and Koeske, "Network Representation of a Child's Dinosaur Knowledge," 36–38.

[56]Michelene T.H. Chi, Jean E. Hutchinson, and Anne F. Robin, "How Inferences about Novel Domain-Related Concepts can be Constrained by Structured Knowledge," *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly*, 35 no. 1 (1989): 27–62.

[57]Chi, Hutchinson, and Robin, "Inferences," 38–39.

previously never seen before because they could reason about the dinosaur's physical features. Of this finding Chi and her team then note:

> It seems that young children often reason in a naive way because they lack the relevant domain knowledge. But the direct evidence of our present study shows that 4- to 7-year-olds can reason deductively for domains (such as dinosaurs) in which they have acquired an independent and coherent theory. These young experts reason much like the way 10 year-olds and adults reasoned in the [another] study.[58]

Chi also argues from her study that "background knowledge per se can enable the expert children to learn new domain-related concepts more readily, despite the fact that both expert and novice children have the same fundamental learning skills."[59] The conclusion of her studies is "that one reason that children generally display global inadequacy across a number of domains is that they lack the relevant knowledge in a number of domains. By selecting a domain that some children know something about, qualitatively superior abilities that can be attributed only to domain-specific knowledge and the way that it is organized have been demonstrated."[60]

Thus, from Chi's research the idea that even young children can develop "islands of competence" when children know something about a specific areas has arisen. As a result of Chi's study among young children, a whole body of literature on these islands of competence has developed exploring all the various ways children's cognitive abilities can advance more rapidly than Piaget projected.[61]

As was noted above, Clark, Deane, Ratliff, and Withers all apply the four-stage cognitive development model of Piaget to the conversion of children. As a result, all (to lesser and greater extents) argue that children are cognitively incapable of either grasping (Ratliff, Clark, Deane) or applying (Withers) the gospel. Therefore, they universally conclude that it is at best unwise to baptize younger children. Yet, this application of Piaget fails to

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[58]Chi, Hutchinson, and Robin, "Inferences," 50.

[59]Chi, Hutchinson, and Robin, "Inferences," 59.

[60]Chi, Hutchinson, and Robin, "Inferences," 61.

[61]The idea of islands of competence does not come directly from Chi. Rather as Cole and Cole note, it is one relevant domain demonstrating that children are capable of understanding more than Piaget previously understood. These domains, Cole and Cole label as "islands of competence." Cole and Cole, *The Development of Children*, 344–54, 359–63. Environmental-learning accounting for increased knowledge and reasoning abilities within a domain has also been applied to gifted children's science reasoning skills. K.H. Kim, et al., "Assessing Science Reasoning and Conceptual Understanding in the Primary Grades Using Standardized and Performance-Based Assessments," *Journal of Advanced Academics* 25, no. 1 (March 2014): 47–66. It has also been applied to children's reading skills. Paul Broek, Elizabeth Pugzles Lorch, and Richard Thurlow, "Children's and Adults' Memory for Television Stories: The Role of Causal Factors, Story-Grammar Categories, and Hierarchical Level," *Child Development* 67, no. 6 (December 1996): 3010–28.

account for the fact that children can develop islands of competence about subject matters and as a result are able to reason and communicate about such matters in ways that are beyond what their age-level would otherwise anticipate. As a result, one would expect that children growing up in environments in which they were educated about Christianity, the Bible, and the gospel message in a way that caused the child to take an interest in such matters would comprehend the gospel message and conversion at a much younger age.

At this point it is appropriate to look further into the research of Gary Deane. As noted in the last section, his dissertation from Southwestern deserves a second look in light of this idea of islands of competence. Deane argues that his survey of children at Vacation Bible School at Glorieta reveals that older children reason more abstractly about conversion, baptism, and church membership than younger children.[62] While the necessity of abstract reasoning for a correct conception of conversion is open to debate,[63] Deane does not interact with a significant finding of his research, namely that even the young children he surveyed were able to successfully reason abstractly on several of his questions.

Deane classifies his questions of children into four domains (concepts of conversion, language of conversion, church membership as understood by Southern Baptists, and baptism as practiced by Southern Baptists). The responses to Deane's questions pertaining to the conception of Christian conversion[64] showed that even younger children possessed a high level of

[62]At this point several weaknesses of Deane's study should be noted. Specifically, Deane does not ask about a conversion experience in his biographical survey. He (possibly) assumes that baptism implies a conversion experience. Yet, since he is exploring the reasoning skills of children as it pertains to the separate domains of baptism and conversion, such an omission in his survey stands as a significant weakness in its application to child conceptions of conversion.

Further, while Deane acknowledges that 19.1% of the children had not been baptized and that the younger children were less likely to be baptized, he does not distinguish between baptized and unbaptized children in his results. Since, Deane never examines the significance of baptism (and potentially correspondingly conversion) for abstract versus concrete reasoning skills as it applies to his four measured domains. It is quite possible that baptized children reason more abstractly about conversion, baptism, and church membership than do unbaptized children, however Deane does not look for statistical significance or correlation between these measures. Arguably, since nearly 20% of the children are unbaptized, this important population could be affecting his measures significantly. While this was outside the purpose of his study, such limits the application of his study. Deane, "An Investigation," 91, 62, 64.

[63]Elsiebeth McDaniel states, "At six or seven, many children are ready to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior. At this age, a child begins to put together a connected story." Salvation is grasped by such children through the use of "supportive concrete ideas, such as being set free from a prison, being bought like a gift, or receiving a prize or gift." Elsiebeth McDaniel, "Understanding First and Second Graders (Primaries)," in *Childhood Education in the Church*, ed. Robert E. Clark, Joanne Brubaker, and Roy B. Zuck, rev. ed. (Chicago: Moody, 1986), 132; Edward L. Hayes, "Evangelism of Children," in *Childhood Education in the Church*, ed. Robert E. Clark, Joanne Brubaker, and Roy B. Zuck, rev. ed. (Chicago: Moody, 1986), 410.

[64]Deane does note that this domain, "discriminated the least between the age groups," but he does not go beyond this to examine the significance of this result or to explore what

abstract reasoning skills on three of the five questions he asked.[65] This is true even though Deane failed to isolate for the fact that 19.1% of respondents were unbaptized and that a significant number of these unbaptized persons were in the younger age groups.[66] Despite the limitations of Deane's study, it remains noteworthy that Deane found that 94.1% of all children surveyed responded to the question "To Become a Christian a person must_____" with the abstract response of "decide to choose God's way instead of your own."[67] While Deane does not break down the responses to any of his questions by age,[68] the fact that the overwhelming majority of children at this Vacation Bible School responded to his question with the correct abstract response indicates that even young children reasoned abstractly about the idea of Jesus's lordship.[69] Given the contention of Ratliff's dissertation was that children could not grasp lordship until they reached the age of 14, Clark's finding at this point throws much of Ratliff's argument for baptismal delay into doubt.

Deane also found that 95.8%[70] of all children surveyed responded to the question "A Christian is _____" with the abstract answer of "a person who has placed his faith in Jesus."[71] This indicates that the majority of young children gave an equivalent verbal response as to the appropriate object of faith as older children. It further reveals that even young children recognized that conversion requires a total commitment of oneself to Christ.

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it means that young children were able to reason abstractly. Deane, "An Investigation," 80.

[65]Deane also asked questions about sin and faith. Specifically he asked "Sin is _____" with the abstract answer being "choosing your own way instead of God's way" of which 70.3% responded, the middling answer being "doing something when you really know you shouldn't" of which 18.0% responded, and the concrete answer being "doing something bad" of which 11.7% of all the children responded. While from a theological perspective the first answer is the most complete, all three answers reflect a sufficient understanding of sin for a person to respond properly to the gospel.

He also asked "To have faith in Jesus means _____" of which 71.4% responded with the abstract answer of "you trust Jesus to forgive your sins," 26.8% responded with the middling response of "you believe what the Bible says about Jesus," and only 1.8% responded with the concrete response of "doing something good." Both answers 2 and 3 are theologically acceptable definitions of faith. As a result, even those questions which were asked by Deane which supposedly show that younger children reasoned more abstractly than older children, the questions themselves do not reveal that the younger children did not have a proper grasp of the topic in view (in this case sin and faith), but rather that all the children had theologically correct understandings of sin and faith. Deane, "An Investigation," 68, 92, 101.

[66]Unfortunately, Deane never examines the significance of baptism (and potentially correspondingly conversion) for abstract versus concrete reasoning skills as it applies to his four measured domains.

[67]Deane, "An Investigation," 68.

[68]Rather, he simply notes that there was even distribution of responses by age between the ages of 8 and 12. Deane, "An Investigation," 60.

[69]Which is even more significant given Clark's failure to isolate for the fact that 19.1% of his respondents were unbaptized.

[70]Deane, "An Investigation," 68.

[71]Deane, "An Investigation," 92.

Additionally, Deane notes that 92.4%[72] of all children surveyed responded to the question "that the best reason for becoming a Christian and being baptized is because _____" with the abstract answer "you have faith in Jesus as your Lord and Savior." Taken together, the responses Deane records to these three questions reveals that a majority of these young children were abstractly reasoning about the nature of conversion.

Understanding Deane's research within the context of islands of competence, it becomes clear that young children can reason abstractly about conversion. The vast majority of his participants were from highly churched backgrounds, and, as a result, it is reasonable to assume that many would have a significant exposure to the criteria for conversion prior to taking Deane's questionnaire. Within this context, despite Deane's failure to isolate for the fact that a significant percentage of his younger respondents were unbaptized, it follows that many of his younger respondents would have developed islands of competence about conversion.

Applying Deane's results to arguments against baptizing young children that state that young children cannot abstractly reason about conversion, such arguments should be at least partially rejected. In fact, for children being raised in environments in which there is significant exposure to the idea of conversion, Deane's results understood through the lens of Chi's research indicate that even young children are able to reason abstractly and grasp the nature of conversion if they have significant knowledge of conversion as result of living in an environment in which they are frequently exposed to this concept.

Faith-Development

Despite Withers's caveats, applying Fowler's stages of faith development to Christian conversion is highly problematic. Specifically, Withers acknowledges that the faith Fowler has in view is not the saving faith of Christian conversion. Rather the faith he has in view is of a more humanistic variety that allows a person to find meaning in life. While Withers still believes that Fowler's stages are applicable, in reality Fowler's vision of faith as presented by Withers is incompatible with Southern Baptist doctrine.

As noted above, Fowler argues that children can be converted at the synthetic-conventional stage of faith development.[73] Fowler notes of this stage that a person experiences "disillusionment, [and a] questioning [of] the authority of the stories they once took literally."[74] Further, at this stage, faith development lacks an objective ideology, lacks an independent perspective, and is unsure of itself to the extent that it cannot make independent

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[72]Deane, "An Investigation," 68.

[73]The descriptions of Fowler's views are understood through the lens of Withers's dissertation. The reason that Fowler is being interpreted through this lens is because it is only Withers's interpretation of Fowler that is germane to the research questions of this paper.

[74]Withers, "Social Forces," 108.

judgments.[75] It is surprising then that in this time of supposed personal un-certainty Withers argues that children should be baptized and affirmed as converts since it is at this stage that children can "cognitively embrace for themselves the faith they have been taught."[76] Based on Withers's descrip-tion of the synthetic-conventional stage of faith-development, he implies that faith should be embraced with uncertainty.

Withers description of Fowler's final three phases of faith development amplify this impression. The individuitive-reflective stage begins as early as late adolescence. Fowler notes that this stage is characterized by a move-ment from "the absolutes of previous faith stages." Instead, these absolutes "become more relative and individualized by people in this stage of faith development."[77] Conjunctive faith follows, normally in mid-life, in which the individual "sees truth in apparent contradiction."[78] Faith then reaches its zenith in a universalizing faith. This type of faith is described as a quasi-universalism in which the individual transcends their own tribe and instead "relinquish themselves for the sake of love and justice at the moral and re-ligious levels. They live with a felt participation in a power that unifies and transforms the world. They embrace a universal Community."[79]

It impossible to reconcile Withers's understanding of Fowler's stag-es of faith progression with the description of faith offered in the Baptist Faith and Message. This document, which serves as the confessional doc-trinal statement of Southern Baptists, defines faith as "the acceptance of Je-sus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Saviour."[80] From adolescence forward, the faith Withers argues for from his understanding of Fowler's research is increasingly a relativized faith rooted in a sense of progressing doubt about absolutes. Since Southern Baptists argue that faith involves a total commitment, Withers's understanding of Fowler's progression for faith development provides an inadequate rubric by which to judge the validity of childhood faith commitments.

Age of Conversion and Faith Commitment of Adults

Third, as noted above, the overarching concern underlying attempts to delay the baptism of children is based on the belief that such children are not capable of cognitively committing to a lifetime of Christian service.[81] Yet, there is a growing body of research that indicates that people who come to faith as children (as opposed to as adolescents or adults) go on to become the most committed Christians later in life. In a 2004 survey, the Barna group offered a significant support to this line of thought. Specifically, based on

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[75]Withers, "Social Forces," 108.
[76]Withers, "Social Forces," 119.
[77]Withers, "Social Forces," 109.
[78]Withers, "Social Forces," 109.
[79]Withers, "Social Forces," 110.
[80]Baptist Faith and Message, 1963 Article IV.
[81]See footnote 32.

a phone survey of 992 born again Christians from across the country, they found that 43% of adult born-again Christians became born again prior to the age of 13. Barna found that "People who become Christian before their teen years are more likely than those who are converted when older to remain 'absolutely committed' to Christianity" while those who convert as high school or college students were the least likely to describe their faith as deeply meaningful. The determining factor for the majority of those individuals converting at a young age was their family. Barna notes, "Among Christians who embraced Christ before their teen years, half were led to Christ by their parents, with another one in five led by some other friend or relative."[82]

In a follow-up study in 2009, Barna found that early-life spiritual experiences within the local church context played a key role in church attendance as adults. Barna notes, "among those who frequently attended [church] programs as a child, 50% said they attended a worship service in the last week." Further, Barna found that "weekly activity as a child … [was] connected with the lowest levels of disconnection from church attendance" as an adult.[83]

Within a specifically Baptist context, Baylor University's Dennis Horton's 2007 study, which examined the relationship between age of conversion and long-term faith commitment through a nationwide survey, is particularly noteworthy.[84] Horton anonymously surveyed ministry students from over 50 different theological schools and found that a disproportionate percentage of Baptist ministry students were converted at a young age in comparison with overall baptisms.[85] Horton states, "While only about 1 % of the Baptist congregants reported a preschool age [conversion], about 8% of the Baptist ministry students noted that they became a Christian during their preschool years. The percentage of early elementary conversions (ages 6–8) was about three times higher for the ministry students (26%) than for [typical] congregants (9%)."[86]

Two additional findings of Horton's study are relevant to this discussion on the cognitive ability of young children to grasp the gospel. First, the

[82]The Barna Group, "Evangelism is Most Effective among Kids," Barna Group, 11 October 2004, accessed 30 June 2014, https://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/5-barna-update/196-evangelism-is-most-effective-among-kids#.VQR_tI54pcR.

[83]The Barna Group, "New Research Explores the Long-Term Effect of Spiritual Activity among Children and Teens," Barna Group, 16 November 2009, accessed 30 June 2014, https://www.barna.org/barna-update/family-kids/321-new-research-explores-the-long-term-effect-of-spiritual-activity-among-children-and-teens#.VQSAFo54pcS.

[84]Horton's survey included a significant number of adherents from other credobaptist denominational contexts. Still, a plurality of his respondents (1,054 out of 2,604 total) were Baptists. Further, Horton isolates Baptists from other groups in many of his findings. Dennis Horton, "Ministry Student Ages and Implications for Child Evangelism and Baptism Practices," *Christian Education Journal* 7, no. 1 (Spring 2010): 30–51.

[85]Given that Horton is surveying ministry students, it follows that the typical age of conversion among such persons is lower than as ministry students as a populace skew younger than the general populace.

[86]Horton, "Ministry Student Ages," 38.

younger the age of a Baptist ministry student's conversion, the more regular they were in church attendance during their teenage years.[87] Second, the younger a Baptist person's conversion was, the more likely the individual was to come from a household in which one or both parents were active Christians.[88] Thus, Horton concludes from his research that young "children need not be discouraged from making a decision about their faith if they have committed Christian parents who will provide an environment for their faith to flourish."[89] Assuming perseverance and a lifetime of committed ministry service are evidence of genuine Christian conversion, it follows that many individuals baptized at a young age were genuinely converted. Therefore, "while parents and church leaders should not rush their children too quickly through spiritual milestones, they should make room for spiritual experiences, even conversion in some cases, at a young age."[90]

Taken together, these three studies reveal that the most involved and engaged church members as adults were the most involved and engaged church attendees as children. Further, a young conversion experience does not in and of itself lead to an unregenerate church member later in life. Rather, if the parents of a converted young child are Christians, such children are more likely to remain involved in a local church as adults.

Conclusions and Applications Regarding the Cognitive Abilities of Children

Over the last fifty years a narrative has developed among some Southern Baptists that children are not cognitively capable of coming to or acting upon a faith commitment until they reach a particular age. This narrative fails. It is based on outdated or inapplicable child-developmental research.

Specifically this narrative is outdated when it applies a rigid understanding of Piagetian stages of cognitive development (as all four dissertations interacted with above do). More recent research has shown that some children can (and perhaps even should be expected to) cognitively grasp salvation at a young age. Applying Chi's research and the resultant theories about islands of competence to children growing up in Christian households, one would expect that such children will cognitively grasp what it means to be converted at a younger age than children not growing up in such a

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[87]"At least 95% of those with preschool conversion experiences attended worship services on a weekly basis during their preteen or adolescent years. Weekly worship attendance ranged from 89-95% for those with conversion experiences during their early elementary years (ages 6–8). Participants with later elementary age conversions (ages 9–11) had weekly worship attendance ranging from 80-91 %. After age 12, the weekly attendance rate drops to about 70% through age 17. Less than 40% of those with later conversions (ages 18+) had weekly attendance during their preteen or adolescent years." Horton, "Ministry Student Ages," 40–41.

[88]Horton, "Ministry Student Ages," 40.

[89]Horton, "Ministry Student Ages," 43.

[90]Horton, "Ministry Student Ages," 44.

context. Further, those children growing up in households in which they are taught about the nature of the Christian gospel from an early age will develop a competence about the Christian message (including ideas of lordship, faith, repentance, etc.) that exceeds what the Piagetian stages would otherwise dictate.

Additionally, this narrative has relied at times on inapplicable research. Withers's dissertation stands as an example of such in its application of Fowler's stages of faith development to the conversion process. As was argued above, Withers application of Fowler's stage of faith development cannot be applied to Southern Baptist understandings of faith development. Specifically, Fowler's understanding of faith is incompatible with Southern Baptist conceptions of faith.

Thus the assertion that "developmental psychologists agree that children reach full moral decision making ability around the age of twelve" cannot be supported. [91] Therefore, cognitive developmental studies do not provide justification for restricting baptism from children.

Still, the cognitive sciences should inform discussion of child conversion. Specifically, Chi's assertion that even "4- to 7-year-olds can reason deductively for domains … in which they have acquired an independent and coherent theory" is applicable.[92] In light of Chi's research, parents, teachers, church leaders, and pastors who are confronted with children claiming conversion have an obligation to seek to discern if these children actually cognitively grasp the gospel and desire to personally submit to the lordship of Jesus Christ.

One possible way to discern if such a commitment is present would be through asking open-ended questions to see if the child can independently reason about the Christian gospel, repentance, faith and conversion and in turn apply such concepts to their own life.[93] Adults asking these questions should also seek familiarity with the amount of previous exposure the child has had to Christian message. In so doing, adults can discern both a young child's understanding the gospel message and such a child's willingness to repent and recognize Jesus' lordship in their lives.

Children who cannot reason about Christianity on their own should be affirmed in their interest in Christianity, but told directly they are not yet ready to make a faith commitment. Children who can independently reason about faith, repentance, the Christian gospel and conversion and who can

[91]Hammett, "Regenerate Church Membership," 40.

[92]Chi, et al., "Inferences," 55.

[93]For example, of the child expressing a desire for salvation and baptism, one could ask questions such as, "why do you want to be baptized?" or "why do you want to be saved?" Such questions force the child to express in his or her own words what is taking place in the child's life. If the response of the child seems scripted, other questions could be asked about the nature of repentance or lordship. The point of such questions is to see if the child can express salvation on his or her own, independent of adult pressures. Therefore, while parents should be present for such discussion it is of vital importance to let the child express himself in his own words.

explain how such concepts apply to themselves personally should be affirmed as converts and baptized.[94] Such a methodology addresses the concerns of Withers and others that one cannot simply assume from a recitation of verbal facts by a child that a child has been converted,[95] while at the same time acknowledges the reality that children are cognitively capable of grasping and applying the gospel message to their lives and adults can discern such.

[94]Conversion should be contemporaneous with water-baptism. See Matz, "Should Southern Baptists Baptize Their Children?" Chapter 1.

[95]Withers, "Social Forces," 83–86. Such a practice is also compatible with the exhortation of Hayes who argues that adults should "avoid making the invitation so easy that acceptance is not genuine. Some response is necessary." Hayes, "Evangelism of Children," 409.

"*Matthean Theological Priority?*": *Making Sense of Matthew's Proto-Ecclesiology[1] in Acts 1–14*

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The present article represents a sort of "detour" from the trail of evidence the present writers followed in previously authoring "Hidden in Plain View: An Overlooked Chiasm in Matt 16:13–18:20."[2] At that point in time, our stated intention for future research was to pursue the ecclesiological implications of additional elegant literary structures we had detected in the portion of the First Gospel after 16:13–18:20 and—to test our ecclesiology-related hypothesis, referred to in the title above as "Matthew's Proto-Ecclesiology"—in the earlier chapters of Acts.[3]

To our surprise, though, we found that the first half of Acts contains numerous literary structures remarkably like Matthew 16:13–18:20 (plus others later in the First Gospel).[4] More surprising, and even more significant in our minds, was that certain crucial theological emphases in Matthew 16:13–18:20 dovetailed closely with some of the most important theological themes in Acts 1–14.

What were we to make of this quite unexpected phenomenon? That is what this article laying out our "Plan B" research is about: charting and interpreting the meaning and significance of this largely undeveloped Matthean-Lukan theological interface. In doing so, the present writers realize full well that

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[1]By "Matthean Proto-Ecclesiology" is meant the ecclesiological-related material that exists between the chiastic structuring of Matt 16:13-18:20 the present writers expounded in "Hidden in Plain View" (see footnote 2) and the generally understood beginning point of the Church of Jesus Christ in Acts (or perhaps the first inclusion of *ekklēsia* in Acts in 5:11).

[2]A. Boyd Luter and Nicholas A. Dodson "Hidden in Plain View: An Overlooked Chiasm in Matt 16:13–18:20," *Filologia Neotestamentaria* XXVIII (2016): 23–37.

[3]*Filologia Neotestamentaria* XXVIII 2016, 36.

[4]Which we hope to publish, *Deo volente*, as time allows in our busy schedules.

there may be other plausible explanations for the pattern we have observed.[5] Up to this point, though, we have been unable to find or hypothesize other views that accord with the evidence as well as what we have chosen to call here "Matthean *Theological* Priority."[6]

Toward that end, because of space limitations, this presentation will focus only on the usage pattern of ἐκκλησία[7] and its significance in the Gospels and Acts 1–14. The study will proceed in the following manner: First, simply laying out the uses of ἐκκλησία in the Gospels and Acts; second, discussing the odd pattern of non-usage of ἐκκλησία in the Third Gospel, then considerable usage in Acts; third, discussing the apparently seamless dovetailing of the Matthean use of ἐκκλησία with that of Acts; and finally, putting an appropriate descriptive name on this data (i.e., in this case, "Matthean *Theological* Priority") and briefly previewing its possible viability and impact.

The Presence—and Absence—of ἐκκλησία in the Gospels and Acts

The Greek term ἐκκλησία is used 113 times in the entire New Testament. However, only three of those uses are in Gospels. By contrast, there are 23 inclusions of ἐκκλησία in the Acts of the Apostles,[8] 19 of which refer to the church.[9]

As seen in Chart 1, all three uses of ἐκκλησία in the Gospels are found in Matthew. There are *no uses* of ἐκκλησία in Mark, Luke, or John.

Chart 1
Usage of ἐκκλησία in the Gospels and Acts

Book	Instances of ἐκκλησία	Passages where ἐκκλησία is Found
Matthew	3	16:18; 18:17 (twice)
Mark	0	
Luke	0	
John	0	
Acts	23	5:11; 7:38; 8:1, 3; 9:31;11:22, 26; 12:1, 5; 13:1; 14:23, 27; 15:3,

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[5]It is our sincere hope that other scholars would come alongside the research/conclusions we lay out here and offer what might prove to be yet more compelling arguments or alternate solutions.

[6]As will be explained, our coined title—which we settled on simply for lack of a more accurate way to describe what we mean—should not be confused with the well-known (i.e., from the history of interpretation of the Gospels, at least) concept of Matthean Priority (i.e., as opposed to Markan Priority).

[7]In several cases, other important evidence for this view beyond the usage of *ekklēsia* or related issues will be treated summarily in footnotes.

[8]W.F. Moulton, A.S. Geden, and H.K. Moulton, *A Concordance to the Greek Testament,* 5th ed. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1978), 316.

[9]Acts 7:38 refers to the worshipping community of Israel in the wilderness—in keeping with common LXX usage—and Acts 19:32, 39, 41 refer to a chaotic secular "assembly" in Ephesus—in keeping with wider secular usage of the era.

4, 22, 41; 16:5; 18:22; 19:32, 39,
41; 20:17, 28

Let that sink in for a moment. Far more than a merely unusual statistical observation from a basic concordance study, the fact that the foundational ecclesiological term used in the New Testament (i.e., ἐκκλησία) is found among the Gospels only in Matthew is nothing less than astounding! After all, at the very least, Matthew is, with relatively little controversy, the most Jewish of the Gospels, which is, at first—or even second or third—glance, a seemingly odd place to find Jesus's teaching on the church.

Now, this is not to say that important ecclesiology-related terminology does not occur in the other Gospels. For example, μαθητής ("disciple") is found frequently in Mark (45 uses), Luke (38 uses) and John (80 times).[10] Even then, as seen in Chart 2, it is only in Matthew (which includes 75 uses of μαθητής), that the interchangeability of the plural μαθηταὶ ("disciples") with ἐκκλησία is reasonably apparent.

Chart 2
The "What" and "How" of Jesus's Building Project in Matthew

"What" Jesus Committed to Do	*"How" Jesus Commanded It Be Done*
"I will build My church" (16:18)	"Make disciples of all the nations" (28:19)[11]

Whether by the explicit inclusions of ἐκκλησία or the indirect presence of disciples (μαθηταὶ), the building blocks of the church,[12] Matthew is the only Gospel that clearly points beyond the Death, Resurrection, and Ascension of Jesus to the beginning of Christ's church. In the chronological succession of New Testament history,[13] that, of course, is precisely where the Book of Acts is found.

An Excursus on Richard Bauckham's *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*[14]

Among the most significant recent volumes to appear dealing with the Gospels is Bauckham's thorough and lengthy (538 pages) treatment applying

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[10]Moulton, et al., *A Concordance to the Greek Testament*, 608–11.

[11]Nicholas Dodson and A. Boyd Luter, "Mathētaical Ecclesiology: An Exegetical Examination of Disciples as the Church," unpublished paper presented at the 2015 Everyday Theology Conference, Liberty University. See also Luter and Dodson, "Matured Discipleship: Leadership in the Synoptics and Acts," Chapter 22 in *Biblical Leadership: Theology for the Everyday Leader*, Benjamin Forrest and Chet Roden, eds. (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2017) 334–48; and Luter and Dodson, "Hidden in Plain View."

[12]As will be explained below, this concept of the disciples being the building blocks of the church, implied strongly in Matthew, is clearly seen in Acts in five different passages in chapters 1-14.

[13]This is not a naïve claim that all the Gospels were written before the Book of Acts, just an affirmation that the events recorded in the Gospels focus on the life and ministry of Jesus, which historically precedes the events recorded in Acts.

[14]Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony*

the existing cultural concept of "eyewitness" to the Gospels. For the focused purposes of this presentation, Bauckham's most significant findings/conclusions are: (1) The way in which "eyewitness" testimony was passed on in the New Testament era completely precludes the still common ideas of lengthy oral tradition that changed to a significant degree over that time; and (2) The Gospels were produced either by such meticulous "eyewitnesses" or by those whose research was strongly dependent on just such "eyewitness testimony."

While these and other conclusions drawn by Bauckham are groundbreaking for wider scholarly study of the Gospels, he, like other broadly evangelical senior British scholars, does not conclude that the Apostle Matthew wrote the First Gospel.[15] However, that is not the case for most recent significant North American evangelical commentators on Matthew, who do hold that Matthean authorship of the First Gospel is most probable.[16]

In denying that the Apostle Matthew wrote the Gospel by his name, Bauckham states he is unable to equate the conversion accounts of Matthew (Matt 9:9) and Levi (Mark 2:14; Luke 5:27–28), the common evangelical view. However, besides assuming Levi was an alternate name for Matthew, there is another quite plausible understanding: that the Levi described in Mark 2:14 as "the son of Alphaeus" is the brother of another Apostle, James the son of Alphaeus, who is described as such in all four listing of the Apostles of Jesus (Matt 10:3; Mark 3:18; Luke 6:15; Acts 1:13).

This view is the conclusion of Tal Ilan,[17] of which, interestingly, Bauckham says "This may be correct,"[18] though he ultimately disagrees without presenting any evidence for why he does so. Also, *if* James the son of Alphaeus is the same person as Ἰάκωβος ὁ μίκρος (which can be rendered as either "James the less, "James the younger" or "James the small/short" [Mark 15:40]), *then* this relatively-unknown apostle's family was quite well-known in early Christianity. For instance:

1.   James the short's mother, Mary, followed and helped Jesus
     while He was ministering in Galilee (Mark 15:41), witnessed
     Jesus's death (15:40) burial (15:47);

(Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006).

   [15]Bauckham, *c* 108–12. See the similar conclusions related to the authorship of the Gospel of Matthew by e.g., John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew* NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005); and R.T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew* NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007).

   [16]E.g., Michael J. Wilkins, *Matthew* NIVAC (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004), 22; David L. Turner, *Matthew* BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 11–13; Grant R. Osborne, *Matthew*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 33–35; and Craig A. Evans, *Matthew* New Cambridge Bible Commentary (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 3. Evans goes so far as to say that, until the nineteenth century AD, "[T]here is not a hint that anyone claimed someone else as the author of Matthew" (3).

   [17]Tal Ilan, *Lexicon of Jewish Names in Late Antiquity: Part I: Palestine 330 BCE–200 CE* (Tubingen: Mohr, 2002).

   [18]Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 87.

2. This Mary, her daughter Salome, along with Mary Magda-
   lene, witnessed the empty tomb on the first day of the week
   (16:1–8);
3. Yet another son of Mary's, named Joses—presumably known
   by the readers—is mentioned in Mark 15:40, 47.

If the family of James the son of Alphaeus indeed was as prominent as
these verses suggest, the conversion of Levi, James's brother, would indeed
have been significant enough for Mark (2:14) and Luke (5:27–28) to record.
In such a case, the conversion of Matthew should be understood to have
occurred alongside Levi's conversion, on the same occasion. The following
celebratory banquet is expressly stated as taking place at Levi's house (Luke
5:29 [Mark 2:15 says "his house," clearly speaking of Levi]). Matthew 9:10
simply reads "*the* house" (τῇ οἰκίᾳ), implying Matthew, though an honored
guest, was also one of several tax collectors (Matt 9:10–11) in attendance at
the festive occasion at the home of Levi (Mark 2:15–16; Luke 5:29–30).

If Matthew did write the Gospel bearing his name, then he, along with
John,[19] are "eyewitness" Gospel authors. That assertion stands in contrast to
Mark[20] and Luke,[21] both of whom wrote (in different ways) "researched"
Gospels. This important distinction will be returned to later in the paper.

The Head-Scratching ἐκκλησία "Off and On" Switch in Luke-Acts

There is nothing strange in and of itself that Acts contains 19 uses of
ἐκκλησία in reference to the church of Jesus Christ, 12 of which occur in
chapters 1–14. However, there is something quite strange indeed when one
considers that the Gospel of Luke has no inclusions of ἐκκλησία at all.

Given that Acts is the second volume of Luke's two-volume work on
Jesus and the early church,[22] where does the theological impulse toward the
extensive development of the ἐκκλησία in Acts come from? It is as if there is
a light switch that is "Off" throughout the Gospel of Luke, then is suddenly
switched "On" in Acts. In other words, *how is it* (i.e, on what textual basis)
that the church suddenly "shows up" and is spotlighted in Acts when it is not
mentioned at all in the Gospel of Luke?

Were it not for the formal prologue to the Third Gospel (Luke 1:1–4),
that observation might remain completely mired in speculation. Fortunately,

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[19]It is assumed here that the Apostle John wrote the Fourth Gospel at a point in time
considerably later in the first century AD, the majority evangelical view.

[20]It is assumed that Mark wrote the Second Gospel, drawing largely on the teaching
and eyewitness memory of Simon Peter, a common evangelical view.

[21]Luke's research and writing methodology laid out in Luke 1:1–4 is assumed here,
with particular emphasis on his use of αὐτόπται ("eyewitnesses") and ὑπηρέται ("assistants,
servants") in 1:2. See also the discussion in the next section of this presentation.

[22]Acts 1:1a clearly states "I did the *first* narrative" (i.e., the Gospel of Luke, translation
ours; italics ours).

however, Luke, despite the use of technical and rare terminology,[23] does describe the careful methodology he utilized in his research clearly enough to answer at least some of the most pointed questions about the relationship between the Third Gospel and Acts regarding ecclesiology, as well as provide seemingly helpful implications concerning other questions.[24]

> Many have undertaken to compile a narrative about the events that have been fulfilled among us, just as the original eyewitnesses and servants of the Word handed them down to us. It also seemed good to me, since I have carefully investigated everything from the very first, to write to you in orderly sequence, most honorable Theophilus, so that you may know the certainty of the things about which you have been instructed (Luke 1:1–4, HCSB).

For the purposes of this presentation, as seen in Chart 3, Luke 1:1–4 can be helpfully broken down[25] in the following manner:

Chart 3
Stated Elements of Luke's Approach to Research and Writing

Abundance of written sources: Many (previously existing) narratives about "the events fulfilled among us" (i.e., centering on Jesus; 1:1).[26]

Culturally-expected means of transmission: Traditions being "passed on," "committed" or "handed down" (i.e., to hearers or the next generation; 1:2a).[27]

Trustworthy human sources: "Eyewitnesses[28] and "ministers"/ "servants"[29] of the Word "from the beginning"[30] (1:2b).

Stated research methodology: Careful investigation[31] of everything from the beginning (1:3a).[32]

Stated writing style: accurately[33] and orderly[34] (1:3b).

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[23]See the discussion just below for evidence for this claim.

[24]In her influential study, *The Preface to Luke's Gospel: Literary convention and social context in Luke 1.1.4 and Acts 1.1* SNTSMS 78 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), Loveday Alexander discusses at some length the rare—at least biblically—terms.

[25]More in-depth significant discussions of Luke 1:1-4 are, e.g., Alexander, 102-142; and Bauckham, 116-124.

[26]*BAGD*, "διήγησις," 195. This term is a *hapax legomenon*.

[27]*BAGD*, "παραδίδομι," meaning 3, 615.

[28]*BAGD*, "αὐτόπτης," 122. This term is also a *hapax legomenon,* though its meaning is well-attested in extrabiblical usage (e.g., Alexander, *The Preface to Luke's Gospel*, 120–23).

[29]*BAGD*, "ὑπηρέτης," 842.

[30]Rendering the phrase ἀπ᾽ ἀρχῆς, this wording in Luke 1:2 is clearly parallel in thought to ἄνωθεν in 1:3.

[31]BAGD, "παρακολουθέω," meaning 3, 619.

[32]Though a different Greek term is used (ἄνωθεν), the idea of "from the beginning" is purposefully repeated from Acts 1:2 (see footnote 28 above).

[33]*BAGD*, "ἀκριβῶς," 33.

[34]*BAGD*, "καθεξῆς," 388.

Intended outcome for the audience:[35] knowing "the full truthfulness"[36] of what Theophilus had previously been taught (i.e., about Jesus and his life and ministry; 1:4).[37]

The most significant relevant wording found in the preface to the Third Gospel is the terminology Luke utilized for his human sources: αὐτόπτης ("eyewitness") and ὑπηρέτης ("assistant, servant"). Alexander's explanation for why Luke uses αὐτόπτης in Luke 1:2, a word found only here in the New Testament, instead of the much more common μάρτυς ("witness") is: "Luke goes out of his way to avoid explicitly Christian language in the preface."[38] But, could there also be additional considerations for the choice of αὐτόπτης here?

It appears to depend on precisely how the relationship between αὐτόπται and ὑπηρέται is understood. Recent commentators generally agree with Alexander's view that this term speaks of "[T]wo roles: 'ministers of the word' … who have 'first-hand experience' of the facts they report."[39] However, Craig Evans states: "'Eyewitnesses' refers to the original disciples who became Jesus's apostles and were eyewitnesses of his life and ministry."[40] If Evans's understanding is correct, Matthew and John fit into the Lukan category of αὐτόπται ("eyewitnesses"). Certainly, Mark would fit as part of the ὑπηρέται ("assistant, servant"), given that he is expressly referred to as the ὑπηρέτην of Barnabas and Saul in Acts 13:5 and surely later played a similar role with Peter (1 Pet 5:13).

The long-held scholarly consensus of Markan priority assumes that the Gospel of Mark would be a written source for Luke "about the events fulfilled among us" referred to in Luke 1:1.[41] The fact that there are no instances of ἐκκλησία in Mark matches with the absence of ἐκκλησία from the Third Gospel. However, the textual reality that ἐκκλησία is entirely absent from the Gospel of Luke, while being on prominent display in Acts, demands an explanation.

Since, as seen above, the Gospel of Matthew includes three uses of ἐκκλησία—which fit hand in glove with the uses of ἐκκλησία in Acts—the most obvious explanation seems to be that the First Gospel is Luke's source for his ecclesiological content in Acts. Is that plausible?

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[35]The original reader was "most excellent Theophilus" (Acts 1:3c), but also all later audiences of *Scripture* (2 Tim 3:16; see 1 Tim 5:18, in which Paul equates a statement from the Gospel of Luke [10:7] with a quotation from Deut 25:4 as both being "Scripture").

[36]BAGD, "ἀσφάλεια," meaning 1.b., 118.

[37]A very thorough treatment of this passage and what it entails is found in Alexander, *The Preface to Luke's Gospel*, 102–42.

[38]Alexander, *The Preface to Luke's Gospel*, 124.

[39]*The Preface to Luke's Gospel*, 123. See, e.g., Darrell L. Bock, *Luke* NIVAC (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 42, who renders ὑπηρέται as "servants" (of the word).

[40]Craig A. Evans, *Luke* New International Bible Commentary (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1990), 20.

[41]It is almost as common for scholars to believe that Luke also utilized the hypothetical document "Q."

Yes. Until around AD 1800, virtually no extant writing expressed any other view than that the reason why Matthew is placed first in the order of the Gospels is because it was written first.[42] However, while it is not the purpose of this presentation to argue for Matthean Priority, based on the observation that Luke apparently drew upon the First Gospel in writing Acts, it also seems reasonable to hypothesize that the Gospel of Matthew was available—*in some form*, at least—when Luke conducted his research toward writing both the Third Gospel and Acts.

What is meant here by "in some form" is that Luke apparently did not get his Matthean-oriented understanding of the ἐκκλησία that is played out in Acts 1–14 from a theoretical "Q" source. Had he done so, Luke certainly would have included material like Matthew 16:18 and 18:17 in the Third Gospel. It is possible, though, as Papias's phraseology has been taken by not a few over the centuries, that the initial published version of Matthew was written in Hebrew or Aramaic and may have predated the Gospel of Mark.[43]

If it is the case, though, that Luke drew from the Gospel of Matthew in writing Acts, again, how can the absence of ἐκκλησία in the Third Gospel best be explained? A less likely possibility exists to explain the ἐκκλησία-related silence in the Gospel of Luke: The Gospel of Matthew could have appeared during the time between the publication of the Third Gospel and the Book of Acts. If so, Matthew would have made available to Luke to inform the inclusions of ἐκκλησία in Acts 1–14. However, since it is common for scholars to date the authorship of the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts no more than three years apart, and Matthew and Luke may well have been in distant parts of the Roman Empire when they were writing, the time window is probably too narrow to allow for the copying and spread/availability of the First Gospel to wherever Luke may have been as he was preparing to write Acts.

Thus, the more likely thesis is that the Gospel of Matthew—*in some form*—existed and was accessed for Luke's researching toward writing the Third Gospel (and Acts). However, Luke still apparently, for some reason, chose not to utilize the ecclesiology-related material in Matthew until he wrote Acts.

Evans is correct when he, in his discussion of the authorship of the Gospel of Matthew, observes that, "until the nineteenth century," Matthew was not only considered to be the earliest of the Gospels, but also the most appreciated.[44] And, if, as noted above, Matthew fits into Luke's category of "eyewitnesses" and Mark was in the "assistant/ servant" category (Luke 1:2),

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[42]And, that is a possible implication of the widely-known words of Papias, one of the apostolic fathers, who is cited by the early church historian, Eusebius. Currently, the most accessible translation of the various fragments of Papias's greatest work, *Exposition of the Logia of the Lord,* is in J.B. Lightfoot, H.R. Harmer, and M.W. Holmes, *The Apostolic Fathers* (Leicester: Apollos, 1990), 307–29.

[43]See the extended discussion of Papias's wording in Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 202–39.

[44]Evans, *Matthew*, 3. His word is "favorite."

the First Gospel naturally would have been held in at least somewhat higher esteem than the Second Gospel by Luke in his research. Could just such a sense of comparative theological importance be an important clue as to why the Gospel of Luke does not include anything remotely like the ἐκκλησία material in the Gospel of Matthew?

The Head-Scratching ἐκκλησία "On" Switch
Moving from Matthew to Acts

As discussed above, bringing the First Gospel into play at this point unquestionably brings light to bear on the issue at hand. Analogically, the Gospel of Matthew is like a light previously switched "On" regarding the material having to do with the life and ministry of Jesus that continues to cast light on the material in the Book of Acts. The fact that the "church" material is found in a Gospel (Matthew) that is not part of the matched pair of books written by Luke, usually called Luke-Acts, is, of course, where the rub lies.

However this Matthew feeding into Acts phenomenon initially strikes the reader, it is unquestionable that it exists. Substantial backing for this claim is found in Chart 4:

Chart 4
Clear Echoes of Matthew's Proto-Ecclesiology in Acts 1–14

- Flowing from Jesus's assertion "I will build My church" (Matt 16:18) are the development of local churches in: (1) Jerusalem (see the uses of ἐκκλησία in Acts 5:11; 8:1, 3; 11:22; and 12:1, 5); (2) Judea, Galilee, and Samaria (9:31); (3) Syrian Antioch (11:26; 13:1; 14:27); and (4) Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, and Pisidian Antioch (14:23).
- Matthew 16:18 says Jesus "will build" (future tense of οἰκοδομέω), stating that Jesus's church-building project would begin at some point in the future) and, in Acts 9:31, Luke says the building process (again οἰκοδομέω) is in progress "throughout all Judea, Galilee and Samaria" (HCSB);
- Matthew 16:18–19 envisions a unique leadership role for Simon Peter in the church Jesus would build, which certainly is fulfilled in what is seen of Peter's ministry in Acts 2–12;
- As mentioned above, the Gospel of Matthew strongly implies that the method by which Jesus's church would be built would be through the carrying out of the Matthean Great Commission to "make disciples." Not co-incidentally, the only other place in the New Testament in which the verb μαθητεύω (to "make disciples") is found besides in Matthew (13:52: 27:57; 28:19) is in Acts 14:21;
- Further identifying Jesus's intended church-building process as making disciples is seen in the interchangeability of ἐκκλησία and the plural μαθηταὶ ("disciples") in the following five pairings of verses in Acts 1–14:

  1. 5:11 and 6:1 (in Jerusalem);
  2. 8:1 and 9:1 (in Jerusalem and disciples from Jerusalem fleeing to Damascus);
  3. 11:26 (in Syrian Antioch, before the first missionary

journey [Note that "Christians" is also interchangeable with
ἐκκλησία and μαθηταὶ here]);

4.   14:22, 23 (Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, Pisidian Antioch);
5.   14:27, 28 (Syrian Antioch, at the end of the first missionary
     journey).

In each pairing, ἐκκλησία views the believers corporately and μαθηταὶ
views them as a group of individuals. It can be memorably—but accurately—
said that, in Acts, the "church" is *the disciples gathered* (often in worship) and
the "disciples" are *the church scattered* (to do ministry as they live day-by-
day).[45]

In summary, it certainly must be admitted that other explanations for
the phenomena treated in this paper may be possible. Yet, *if* the Apostle
Matthew did write the Gospel that goes by his name, which removes Bauck-
ham's misgivings about giving any serious consideration of the author of the
First Gospel as an "eyewitness,"[46] *then* the best alternative as to why Luke
echoes the Proto-Ecclesiology of the Gospel of Matthew in Acts 1–14, but
does not cite the First Gospel in the Gospel of Luke is out of respect for
Matthew's "eyewitness"/apostolic role: not wanting to duplicate the highly-
respected predictive ecclesiology of the Gospel of Matthew.

Although this statement may, on initial reaction, seem to contradict
Luke's stated research methodology in Luke 1:1–4, there is no wording in
his preface that requires that Luke record *everything* in the Third Gospel that
he found in his research. As seen in Chart 3 (above), all that Luke claims to
be doing is:

1.   to "give close attention" (παρακολουθέω; 1:3) to what his
     sources (including αὐτόπται and ὑπηρέται; 1:2) said, starting
     "from the beginning" (ἀπ᾽ ἀρχῆς and ἄνωθεν;1:2, 3);
2.   to be able to present an "accurate" (ἀκριβῶς; 1:3), "orderly"
     (καθεξῆς; 1:3) and "fully truthful" (ἀσφάλειαν; 1:4) account
     of the life and ministry of Jesus to Theophilus (1:3).

Thus, by his own stated standards, Luke did his job in writing the Third
Gospel exceedingly well. That is the case even though Luke did not choose,
in his Gospel, to reproduce the proto-ecclesiology found in Matthew's Gos-
pel, confident that his readers would hear—or had already heard—of Jesus's
stated intent to build His ἐκκλησία (Matt 16:18) and the Matthean Great

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[45]See Dodson and Luter, "Mathetaical Ecclesiology;" Luter and Dodson, "Leadership
as Matured Discipleship;" and Luter and Dodson, "Hidden in Plain View."

[46]Even given Bauckham's rejection of Matthean authorship of the First Gospel, there
is still surprisingly little having to do with the authorship of Matthew—or even the Gospel
by his name—in his "Index of Scriptures and Other Ancient Writings" at the end of *Jesus and
the Eyewitnesses*, particularly when compared with the large number of instances in which he
handles the Gospels of Mark, Luke, and John (526–31). While it is perhaps too strong to
characterize Bauckham's apparent hesitancy to cite the First Gospel as anti-Matthean bias, at
least statistically speaking, it certainly appears to be "Matthean minimizing."

Commission (28:19–20) through the First Gospel before they read the Book of Acts. Though speculative as to why Luke might have made that choice, it is plausible he decided to construct the Third Gospel to substantially complement[47] the content already available in Matthew (and Mark) with much he found in his research (Luke 1:1–4) about the life and ministry of Jesus, then develop the fulfilling of the Matthean proto-Ecclesiology in his second volume about the early church: Acts.

Conclusion: Is "Matthean *Theological* Priority" a Viable View?

The case for "Matthean *Theological* Priority" presented here is not intended to argue directly for Matthean priority in the sense that Matthew was the first Gospel to have been written.[48] That highly complex issue was far too broad to undertake in such limited space.

Does this presentation answer all the questions about the Matthean Theological Priority it concludes does exist, though? Hardly, and each reader must make up his or her own mind concerning what has been said. Indeed, what has been laid out here will undoubtedly raise many more questions that need to be addressed, including numerous implications yet to be noticed, much less carefully considered.

It is worth saying in closing, however, that, despite the long and often insightful history of the study of the Synoptic Gospels, it is high time to recognize that the Gospel of Matthew has, to a large extent, often been treated with somewhat less theological respect—or at least hesitantly—by those holding to, and playing off, their presupposition of Markan priority and its implications.[49] By contrast, what has been argued in this paper is the idea that significant evidence exists, not just in the virtually unanimous viewpoint of the earlier centuries of church history, but also clustering around the non-use of ἐκκλησία in the Third Gospel, that suggests Luke considered the Gospel of Matthew to be: (1) more significant than Mark as a source for the theological content that informed his extensive ecclesiological references in Acts; and (2) worth respecting/honoring by choosing *not* to repeat what he knew regarding Matthew's proto-ecclesiology in authoring the Third Gospel, but instead built upon it in the Book of Acts.

The court of theological appeals will weigh in on the new view set forth here in due time. As that takes place, no matter the wider response, it is sincerely hoped that the concern expressed here for a stronger, and thus healthier and more balanced, perspective on the theological contribution of

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[47]It is generally agreed that the percentage of material unique to the Gospel of Luke (i.e., among the Gospels) is roughly 60%.

[48]A treatment defending Matthean priority in a fresh manner is D.A. Black, *Why Four Gospels: The Historical Origins of the Gospels* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2001). The updated and revised version of this work is D.A. Black, *Why Four Gospels: The Historical Origins of the Gospels* rev. ed. (Gonzalez, FL: Energion, 2011).

[49]Note, e.g., Bauckham's wording: "So, *assuming* the priority of Mark's Gospel to Matthew's…" Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, 110, (italics ours).

Matthew's Gospel will be the result. Even if nothing else were to come about from this initial framing and presentation of Matthean Theological Priority, the present writers would be most grateful for that worthy outcome.

"Accounted worthy to bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus": James Hinton, the Persecution of English Dissent, & the Woodstock Riot

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Persecution is integral to Christian discipleship, a key principle that Christ urged his followers to never forget: "Remember what I told you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also" (John 15:20, NIV). Even in times when Christianity has had legal protection, persecution is ever present in the form of such things as ostracism and name-calling, and even outbreaks of violence. The following essay considers the case of English Dissent at the close of the long eighteenth century when Dissenters were technically protected by the law, but when violence against them exploded from time to time. The experience of the Baptist pastor James Hinton (1761–1823) in the Woodstock Riot is not only illustrative of this violence, but also a good reminder of how Christians are to face the world's hatred.

English Dissent and the French Revolution

The 1790s were not an easy time for English Dissenters. Although they had been granted freedom of worship and freedom to evangelize within registered church buildings a century earlier by the 1689 Act of Toleration, they still labored under various legal restrictions that effectively made them second-class citizens in England. Prominent among these restrictions were the Corporation and Test Acts, passed respectively in 1661 and 1673, which required holders of civil and military office to have taken the Lord's Supper in an Anglican church in the year before taking office. In 1787, 1789, and 1790 there were three distinct attempts by the Dissenters to secure the parliamentary repeal of these legal statutes, all of which were unsuccessful, the one in 1789 failing only by twenty votes.

Now, the failure of these attempts was partly due to the way that Dissent had become linked in the public mind to the anarchic upheaval of the French Revolution. A naïve enthusiasm for the French Revolution was definitely present in the public discourse of orthodox English Dissenters from

1789 to 1791 and that in part because of their own century-long experience of civil and legal discrimination. For instance, the Norwich Calvinistic Baptist minister, Mark Wilks (1748–1819), began a sermon on July 14, 1791—the second anniversary of the storming of the Bastille—with the provocative statement, "Jesus Christ was a Revolutionist." He went on to inform his congregation that the French Revolution "is of God and that no power exists or can exist, by which it can be overthrown."[1] Robert Hall, Jr. (1764–1831), the most famous Calvinistic Baptist preacher in the early nineteenth century, was equally enthralled by what was taking place in France. In a famous tract that went through a number of pirated editions, *Christianity Consistent with a Love of Freedom* (1791), Hall stated:

> Events have taken place of late, and revolutions have been effected, which, had they been foretold a very few years ago, would have been viewed as visionary and extravagant; and their influence is yet far from being spent. … The empire of darkness and of despotism has been smitten with a stroke which has sounded through the universe.

Such sentiments proved to be utterly naïve and uninformed, for right from the start the powerhouse behind the Revolution had been violence. As one of the moderate revolutionaries had remarked, "There must be blood to cement revolution."[2] In 1793 and 1794 the Revolution descended into a vortex of unspeakable violence and totalitarian terror. During this period, known to history as the Reign of Terror, at least 300,000 were arrested with some 17,000 people being executed by the guillotine. Many others died in prison or were simply killed without the benefit of a trial. French revolutionary armies also sought to spread the ideals of the Revolution to neighboring nations. What they exported, though, was "unprecedented destruction and warfare"[3] to the rest of Europe, and so plunged the continent into a war that lasted until 1815.

It is not surprising that Baptists like Hall thus became increasingly critical of what was taking place in France. In a sermon entitled *Modern Infidelity Considered, with respect to its Influence on Society* (1800), a work that made Hall something of a celebrity in England, Hall spoke of divine revelation having undergone "a total eclipse" in France, "while atheism,

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[1]Mark Wilks, *The Origin and Stability of the French Revolution* (Norwich, 1791), 5–7, cited Robert Hole, "English sermons and tracts as media of debate on the French Revolution 1789–99" in Mark Philp, ed., *The French Revolution and British Popular Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 23–24.

[2]Attributed to Manon Philipon Roland; see Simon Schama, *Citizens: A Chronicle of the French Revolution* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1989), 859. For this paragraph, I am indebted to Schama's perspective on the Revolution, especially the summary in *Citizens*, 851–61.

[3]These words are those of Mark Noll in his discussion of the French Revolution as a turning-point in the history of Christianity. Mark A. Noll, *Turning Points: Decisive Moments in the History of Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1997), 251.

performing on a darkened theatre its strange and fearful tragedy, confounded the first elements of society, blended every age, rank, and sex in indiscriminate proscription and massacre, and convulsed all Europe to its centre."[4] Hall was now convinced that at the root of the sanguinary violence of the Revolution—what he rightly described as "atrocities … committed with a wanton levity and brutal merriment"—lay the skepticism and rationalism of *les philosophes*, men like Voltaire (1694–1778), Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778), and Denis Diderot (1713–1784).[5] "Settle it therefore in your minds, as a maxim," he told his hearers, "that atheism"—he is referring to the thought of *les philosophes*—"is an inhuman, bloody, ferocious system, equally hostile to every useful restraint and to every virtuous affection; … its first object is to dethrone God, its next to destroy man."[6]

The Priestley Riots

English Dissent's initial show of support for the French Revolution coupled with its expansive growth in the 1790s alarmed many in the state church. Protests against the Corporation and Test Acts were interpreted as expressions of sympathy with the French Revolution. And thus, in reaction to their cries for greater religious toleration, the Dissenters were attacked in print, and occasionally, there were physical displays of violence. The worst of the violence against Dissenters during this era were the Birmingham Priestley Riots, which took place between July 14 and 17, 1791, and saw twenty buildings severely damaged or destroyed.

The riots were sparked by general fears that Birmingham Dissenters were harboring seditious designs against the government and were actually preparing to launch a revolution in England similar to that taking place in France. When Joseph Priestley (1733–1804), the minister of the New Meeting House in Birmingham and known throughout England for his advocacy of Unitarianism and radical politics, celebrated the storming of the Bastille at a dinner party on July 14, 1791, it was the spark that lit the fire. A mob, yelling its loyalty to the monarchy and the Church of England, converged on the New Meeting House and burned it down along with Priestley's home and laboratory (by avocation he was a scientist). This "Church and King" mob then terrorized Birmingham for the next three days before law and order was restored.[7]

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[4]Robert Hall, *Modern Infidelity Considered, with respect to its Influence on Society* in *Works of the Rev. Robert Hall*, 1:47.

[5]Hall, *Modern Infidelity Considered* in *Works of the Rev. Robert Hall*, 1:38.

[6]Hall, *Modern Infidelity Considered* in *Works of the Rev. Robert Hall*, 1:39.

[7]On the Priestley Riots, see R.B. Rose, "The Priestley Riots of 1791," *Past and Present*, 18 (1960): 68–88; Arthur Sheps, "Public Perception of Joseph Priestley, the Birmingham Dissenters, and the Church-and-King Riots of 1791," *Eighteenth-Century Life*, 13, no. 2 (1989): 46–64. See also the experience of James Hinton during these riots in John Howard Hinton, *A Biographical Portraiture of the late Rev. James Hinton, M. A.* (Oxford: Bartlett and Hinton/London: B.J. Holdsworth, 1824), 362–63.

The Birmingham Calvinistic Baptist minister Samuel Pearce (1766–1799) was away in Bristol and Plymouth on holiday with his family when the riots took place. They received a letter from his wife's step-mother Elizabeth a few days after the riots had been quelled telling them that Birmingham was "a scene of confusion and devastation."[8] Elizabeth told them that their home had been ransacked but thankfully it had not been damaged. Some friends, anticipating problems, had been able to remove some of their furniture to safety before the mob appeared. When the Pearces arrived back in Birmingham, they found that only Samuel's books and papers had been, as he put it, "deranged."[9] But one of the deacons of his church, John Harwood, who lived in the nearby village of Moseley, suffered the entire loss of his home. It had been completely burned to the ground by "the merciless rage of an incensed and cruel mob."[10] The attack on Pearce's house may well have been due to a sermon that he had preached in February 1790 criticizing the Corporation and Test Acts as "oppressive, unjust, and profane."[11] When Pearce had it published, he was nervy enough to have printed under the title on the front cover of the sermon a portion of the Anglian Litany that prayed for "all that are oppressed" and that asked God to forgive the "enemies, persecutors, and slanderers" of God's people, and "to turn their hearts" back to the Lord.

One of the long-term results of the Priestley Riots was random violence in other parts of the country against Dissenters. The Baptist Meeting House in Guilsborough, Northamptonshire, for example, was torched and destroyed on December 25, 1792, by a "Church and King" mob hostile to Dissenters. A local rowdy by the name of Butlin had made threats about destroying meeting-houses in a pub and this may well have prompted the destruction of the Guilsborough chapel. It says much for Samuel Pearce's courage that when the chapel was rebuilt in 1794 and Pearce was asked to preach a sermon on the occasion of the opening of the chapel, he chose to speak from Psalm 76:10, "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain."[12]

James Hinton's Early Years

Equally distressing was the ferocious mobbing of the Oxford Baptist minister James Hinton when he was preaching in a private home in the

[8]Elizabeth Hopkins, Letter to Samuel Pearce, 21 July 1791, Samuel Pearce Mss., FPC D55, Angus Library, Regent's Park College, University of Oxford.

[9]Samuel Pearce, Letter [to William Summers], 30 September 1791, in Andrew Fuller and W.H. Pearce, *Memoirs of the Rev. Samuel Pearce, A. M.* (London: G. Wightman, 1831), 19.

[10]Hopkins, Letter to Samuel Pearce, 21 July 1791, Samuel Pearce Mss.

[11]Samuel Pearce, *The oppressive, unjust, and prophane Nature, and Tendency of the Corporation and Test Acts, exposed* (Birmingham: J. Thompson, 1790).

[12]For these details, see F.A. Cox, *History of the Baptist Missionary Society, From 1792 to 1842* (London: Ward & Co./G. and J. Dyer, 1842), I:52–53.

town of Woodstock, Oxfordshire, on May 18, 1794.[13] Along with his friends Andrew Fuller (1754–1815) and John Ryland, Jr. (1753–1825), Hinton was "one of those Baptist leaders who, at the end of the eighteenth century, secured the revival of Baptist life in Britain."[14]

Hinton had been raised in a solid Christian home. His father, Thomas Hinton (d.1787), was known to be a committed Christian in the town of Buckingham, Buckinghamshire, where he lived, and a man who had to endure petty acts of persecution throughout his life. One Saturday night, for example, the door knockers from quite a number of neighboring houses in Buckingham were wrenched off their doors and somehow thrown into the front hall of his house. The people must have been told where they could retrieve their door knockers with the result that Hinton was bothered throughout that Lord's day—which he was in the habit of keeping as a day of rest—having to answer his door and find which door knocker belonged to whom.[15] Thomas Hinton's godly response to such attacks made a deep impression on his son James Hinton, who was converted in the mid-1770s. In the son's words, after severe mental wrestling with "deistical objections" to the Christian Faith, particularly with regard to divine sovereignty, God brought him to the place where he saw "something of the beauty and suitableness of Christ as a Saviour for me, and enabled me to plead for his mercy, only on the ground of his satisfaction and death."[16]

In Hinton's early Christian experience, he derived much benefit from frequently hearing the preaching of the Anglican Evangelical Thomas Scott (1747–1821) in a barn near Tingewick, not far from Buckingham.[17] From 1778 to 1783, Hinton served as an apprentice candle-maker in Chesham, Buckinghamshire, a town historically known for its four B's: boots, beer, brushes, and Baptists![18] It was during this time as an apprentice that he developed, in the words of his son, John Howard Hinton (1791–1873), a remarkable "facility for meditating on divine things."[19] And it was also during his time at Chesham, he became convinced of believer's baptism by immersion. He was baptized on May 21, 1781, and joined the Baptist church

[13]For biographical details about Hinton, see especially Hinton, *Biographical Portraiture*; Philip Hayden, "The Baptists in Oxford 1656–1819," *The Baptist Quarterly*, 29 (1981–1982): 130–32; Raymond Brown, "'Fear God and honour the King': James Hinton and the Tatham Pamphlet Controversy," in Rosie Chadwick, ed., *A Protestant Catholic Church of Christ: Essays on the History and Life of New Road Baptist Church, Oxford* (Oxford: New Road Baptist Church, 2003), 107–35; and Tim Grass, "'Walking together in unity and peace and the fear of God': the Challenge of Maintaining Ecumenical Ideals, 1780–1860," in Chadwick, ed., *Protestant Catholic Church*, 148–54.

[14]J.H.Y. Briggs, "Hinton, John Howard" in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 27:299.

[15]Hinton, *Biographical Portraiture*, 7–8.

[16]Hinton, *Biographical Portraiture*, 8–16. The quotations are from page 12.

[17]Hinton, *Biographical Portraiture*, 14.

[18]George Piggin, *Tales of Old Chesham* (Beverly: Highgate Publications [Beverley], 1993), 21.

[19]Hinton, *Biographical Portraiture*, 14.

in Chesham, whose origins dated back to the middle of the previous century.

The deacons of the Chesham church soon suggested that Hinton consider training for pastoral ministry, but it took Hinton nearly two years to agree. His father wrote a letter to Benjamin Beddome (1718–1795), the well-known pastor of the Baptist cause at Bourton-on-the-Water, to ask the principal of Bristol Baptist Academy, namely, Caleb Evans (1737–1791), for financial help for his son. When Evans wrote back with "characteristic kindness, and … assurance of considerable aid," Hinton's path was set.[20] In 1784 he began a three-year course of study at Bristol Baptist Academy, from 1784 to the spring of 1787. He treasured his years at Bristol, and was deeply convinced, in the words of his son and biographer that "though learning alone was worthless, it was of unspeakable value in association with piety."[21] The inestimable importance of holiness in this regard is evident in the following extract from a letter written to one of his sons who was studying for the ministry:

> My dear Son,
>
> I have been waiting a fortnight in expectation of a letter from you … Do write me a few lines. Tell me, does the Spirit of grace rest upon you? Are you walking closely with God, and making some advance in his good ways? Is the state of your mind, and the conduct of your life, such as may be held up for a pattern of fidelity and good works? Does your heart glow with love to Christ and to immortal souls? The devoted spirit, the heavenly mindedness, the victory over sin, the holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience, the delight in our Master's work, which must characterize the minister whom God will approve—these are things not to be learned in human schools; and these mark the call of the Holy Spirit.[22]

Called to Oxford

On June 1, 1787, Hinton went as a probationary minister to the open-communion, open-membership Baptist congregation in Oxford, now New Road Baptist Church in Bonn Square near the Westgate Centre. A Baptist congregation in Oxford had existed since at least 1653,[23] but by the close of the seventeenth century it was entering a state of decline, which lasted for much of the following century. Their church building was gutted during the

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[20]Hinton, *Biographical Portraiture*, 18–19.

[21]Hinton, *Biographical Portraiture*, 60. See also James Hinton, *The Union of Piety and Literature* (London, 1809).

[22]Hinton, *Biographical Portraiture*, 60–61.

[23]For the history of the congregation in the seventeenth century, see Roger Hayden, "'Through grace they are preserved': Oxford Baptists, 1640–1715" in Chadwick, ed., *Protestant Catholic Church*, 9–33.

Meeting-house riots of 1715, when upwards of fifty Nonconformists chapels were either destroyed or damaged by mobs hostile to Dissenters throughout England.[24] By the mid-eighteenth century the church was without a pastor and in "a period of melancholy declension, during which assemblies for worship" rarely took place according to Hinton.[25] The cause was basically kept alive between the early 1740s and 1780 by a few men and women meeting for prayer on Sunday mornings and reading together sermons by John Owen (1616–1683) and other Puritan divines, though they did have preachers sometimes ride over from the Baptist cause at Bourton-on-the-Water.[26] Finally, in 1780 Daniel Turner (1710–1798), the pastor of the Baptist work in Abingdon, played a key role in helping re-establish the church on a the basis of a new covenant.[27] Two pastors, George Dyer (1755–1841), who later embraced Unitarianism, and Edward Prowitt, whose ministry at Oxford was terminated in 1786 by heterodox views, preceded Hinton.[28]

The year after Prowitt's resigning the pastorate, the Oxford Baptists approached Caleb Evans for a recommendation as to a possible successor to Prowitt. Evans strongly suggested Joseph Kinghorn (1766–1832), who would later have a very distinguished ministry in Norwich and who was a fellow student and good friend of Hinton. But some in the Oxford congregation, having heard both Kinghorn and Hinton speak, considered Kinghorn "too deep … for them," while Hinton seemed a "better speaker" and had a more "affable temper."[29] They thus called Hinton to supply the pulpit for six months, after which the church formally called him to be their pastor in January of 1788.[30] Not long after his call to Oxford, Hinton wrote to Evans and Kinghorn that the great thing he lacked in the church was "an intimate friend." Hinton went on to tell Evans and Kinghorn: "I love my people, but they are too busy on weekdays, and too pious on Sundays to form earthly friendships"![31] One cannot read the final clause of this remark without detecting a note of sarcasm.

[24]J.H.Y. Briggs, "Oxford and the Meeting-House Riots of 1715," in Chadwick, ed., *Protestant Catholic Church*, 35–64.

[25]James Hinton, *An Historical Sketch of Eighteen Baptist Churches, included in the Oxford Association, with Appropriate Reflections* (Oxford: I.T. Hinton, 1821), 6. See also Daniel Turner, *Charity the Bond of Perfection* (Oxford, 1780), iv.

[26]Turner, *Charity the Bond of Perfection*, iv; Hinton, *Historical Sketch of Eighteen Baptist Churches*, 6.

[27]See Paul S. Fiddes, "Receiving One Another: the History and Theology of the Church Covenant, 1780," in Chadwick, ed., *Protestant Catholic Church*, 65–105.

[28]On Dyer, see Ernest A. Payne, "The Baptist Connections of George Dyer," *The Baptist Quarterly*, 10 (1940–1941): 260–67, and Fiddes, "Receiving One Another," 93–96; on Prowitt, see Hinton, *Biographical Portraiture*, 104, and Hayden, "Baptists in Oxford 1656–1819," 130.

[29]Joseph Kinghorn, Letter to David and Elizabeth Kinghorn, 2 April 1787, in Martin Hood Wilkin, *Joseph Kinghorn of Norwich* (Norwich: Fletcher and Alexander, 1855), 108–09.

[30]Hinton, *Biographical Portraiture*, 18–24.

[31]James Hinton, Letter to Joseph Kinghorn and Caleb Evans, 27 March 1788, 3-page letter, privately owned.

Such a situation made Hinton all the more appreciative of close friend-ships with men like Samuel Pearce, whom Hinton had first met at Bristol.[32] In a letter that Pearce wrote to Hinton in the autumn of 1796, he told his Oxford friend:

> I embrace this opportunity to assure you of the sincere and heart-felt joy which the kind expressions of your friendship afford me, and of the reciprocal affection which my heart bears towards you. I am thankful for the providence which led me to an acquain-tance with you: there are few with whom I feel such a congenial-ity of soul. O! it is the hope of heaven and its blest society, that best reconciles me to the distance at which we are now placed, and the consequent impossibility of frequent interviews.[33]

After Hinton's death, it was said of him that "it was impossible to be in his company and be dull."[34] Hinton was clearly an extrovert, who was energized by friends and company, for as his son noted, Hinton's "mind was strongly excited by society."[35] These qualities surely endeared him to Pearce. It should be noted that, from Hinton's perspective, Pearce was a model of holiness. Thus, writing to his son, he urged him to think about "Pearce and [Philip] Doddridge … neither of them men of genius, but of great goodness, and diligence."[36]

Hinton was married in April of 1790 to Ann Taylor (1765–1832), a woman he once described as a "truly excellent companion."[37] Just over ten years after they were married, Hinton had the pleasure of baptizing Ann as a believer. As he noted in his diary:

> Her attendance on this ordinance, I rejoice to say, is a voluntary tribute to the dictates of conscience and the honour of Christ; and in this view I think highly indeed of her conduct. She had no motive of a domestic kind, for the affection of her husband was entirely hers; and his approbation too, as long as she saw not the command of Christ full and clear to direct her personal obe-dience. I bless God that not the least disaffection … existed on account of this difference of opinion: and am particularly thank-ful, that I have never spoken one word that could induce her to think I should be more happy if she were a Baptist. The Lord has

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[32]Hinton, *Biographical Portraiture*, 95–96, 291. On Pearce, see Michael A.G. Haykin, *Joy Unspeakable and Full of Glory: The Piety of Samuel and Sarah Pearce* (Kitchener, ON: Joshua, 2012).

[33]Cited Hinton, *Biographical Portraiture*, 96.

[34]Cited Brown, "Fear God and honour the King," 129n3.

[35]Hinton, *Biographical Portraiture*, 94.

[36]Hinton, *Biographical Portraiture*, 62.

[37]Hinton, *Biographical Portraiture*, 50–51. The quotation is from page 51 and was written on the eleventh anniversary of their marriage.

been her only teacher, and the throne of grace her only place of converse on this subject …[38]

Ministry and Controversy

With next to no evangelical witness in Oxford, Hinton's early ministry in the town was, in the words of the Baptist historian Joseph Ivimey (1773–1834), in "one of the most difficult situations in which a Nonconformist minister in England could have been placed."[39] When Hinton was ordained in June of 1788, there were but twenty-five members, though the congregation included another hundred or so hearers.[40] Students at the University sought to disrupt the worship services from time to time and members of the congregation experienced significant difficulty in finding work in the town or sometimes found their businesses boycotted.[41] Hinton, however, was a gentle, caring pastor and thoughtful in his preaching. When Hinton preached on Sunday evenings, the majority of his congregation were increasingly not members of the church, but various Oxford residents along with a sizeable number of university students, some of whom came merely to ridicule the preacher and his preaching. Hinton, however, made a point of so constructing his evening sermons that while their wording gave no opportunity for mockery, they did not lack in pungency and power to smite the conscience. A good number of those who thus came to mock went away humbled, having come to respect Hinton, even though they did not respect his Baptist convictions. And there were some who were even converted. By the close of his ministry, the church's membership had grown to 270 and on a typical Sunday morning the congregation numbered around 800. A new building had been erected in 1798 (the core of the present church building), and further substantial enlargements made in 1819, four years before Hinton's death.[42]

Four years after his appointment as pastor of the New Road congregation, though, Hinton found himself embroiled in a pamphlet controversy with Edward Tatham (1749–1834), the Rector of Lincoln College, who had an extremely negative view of Dissenters.[43] In 1789, Tatham had given vent

[38]Hinton, *Biographical Portraiture*, 74.
[39]Joseph Ivimey, *The Excellence and Utility of an Evangelical Ministry, as Exercised by Protestant Dissenters* (London: John Offor, 1823), A2.
[40]Christina Colvin, "Protestant Nonconformity and Other Christian Bodies" in *A History of the County of Oxford: Volume 4, The City of Oxford*, ed. Alan Crossley and C.R. Elrington (London: Victoria County History, 1979), 418.
[41]Walter Stevens and Walter W. Bottoms, *The Baptists of New Road, Oxford* (Oxford, 1948), 12. Cf. also the remarks of Hinton, *Biographical Portraiture*, 107–08, 129–32.
[42]Hinton, *Biographical Portraiture*, 126–28, 132; Colvin, "Protestant Nonconformity and Other Christian Bodies," 418; "New Road Baptist Church Oxford: History," http://newroad.org.uk/history/, accessed 11 November 2018; Ivimey, *Excellence and Utility of an Evangelical Ministry*, 21.
[43]For this controversy, see especially Brown, "Fear God and honour the King," 107–35.

to his animus in the Bampton lectures, which were given annually before the university community. Tatham described Dissenting ministers as

> that formal and pompous class of men, … who maintain, upon all occasions, the utmost solemnity of profession, and, on all subjects, the profoundest affectation of learning; whilst "the smell of Greek" has scarcely "passed upon their garments";—Instead of wasting their time in breeding civil mutiny and fomenting dissension in the state, if these superficial and ostensible, but industrious, men would make the Greek grammar the subject of their labours, the nation might be more free from faction for fifteen years to come.[44]

Three years later, in 1792, Tatham followed up these acerbic remarks with an entire sermon devoted to an attack upon English Dissent, and in particular, Hinton and his Oxford congregation.

Basing his sermon on 1 John 4:1—an apostolic call to exercise doctrinal vigilance—Tatham contrasted the Anglican ministers trained at the state-supported divinity schools in the universities of Oxford and Cambridge with the "ignorant … teachers of every [other] denomination, … Methodists and Enthusiasts, … Anabaptists and Dissenters." Such men were "self-taught without the power, and self-ordained without even the appearance, of learning … Blind leaders of the blind." The Lincoln College Rector was adamant that these men were "artful and treacherous impostors" who were not only undermining the Church by their false doctrine but were also laboring to teach the English to despise the monarchy and so overturn the government and destroy the country in civil war "accompanied with horrors at which," he said, "our blood runs cold."[45] Tatham's patent dislike of Dissenters was rooted in a simplistic equation of rejection of Anglicanism with disloyalty to the British state.[46] Tatham was able to arrange to preach this sermon at five different parish churches in Oxford between November 18 and December 16, and the sermon proved to be so popular that it went through eight printings before the year's close.

Though a man whose temperament eschewed controversy, Hinton was convinced that something needed to be said in response to Tatham's scurrilous remarks. Hinton's *A Vindication of the Dissenters in Oxford, Addressed to the Inhabitants* went through four editions, and more than adequately answered the Tatham's charges. Hinton emphasized that Dissenters like himself were well "aware that learning is an excellent assistant in the ministry, though it cannot supersede the authority of Scripture."[47] He also rehearsed

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[44]Edward Tatham, *The Chart and Sale of Truth, by which to find the Cause of Error* (Oxford, 1790), II, 116–17, note n.

[45]Edward Tatham, *A Sermon Suitable to the Times* (London, 1792), 11, 13–15.

[46]Brown, "Fear God and honour the King," 109.

[47]James Hinton, *A Vindication of the Dissenters in Oxford, Addressed to the Inhabitants*,

his own academic pedigree. He had "passed through the usual studies pre-
paratory to the ministry in the Academy at Bristol" where he had studied
under "worthy and well-known tutors," men like Caleb Evans and Robert
Hall; and he had then been properly ordained with Evans, Samuel Stennett
(1727–1795) of London and Daniel Turner (1710–1798) of Abingdon of-
ficiating at the ordination service.[48] It bears noting that six years later, when
France seemed to be poised for an invasion of England in the French Revo-
lutionary Wars (1792–1802), Hinton published a small booklet in which he
argued that their situation was one that could brook no neutrality. "Let us
not desert our post," he urged his readers, "sully the glory of our ancestors,
and willfully consign our sons to the disgraceful slavery of France."[49] To be
sure, Hinton indicated, he prayed for peace; yet he was also convinced that
a defensive war was not only just, but benevolent, for "it originates not in a
desire to injure an enemy, but in a strong and virtuous impulse to protect our
friends."[50] It was warmly commended by none other than Edward Tatham.[51]

The Woodstock Riot

Hinton was also involved in preaching in a number of towns and vil-
lages near Oxford, including Wheatley, Watlington, Littlemore, Oddington,
and, the subject of the rest of this essay, Woodstock.[52] It was in the spring of
1794 that several inhabitants of Woodstock, who had heard Hinton preach
in Oxford, asked him if he would be able to come to the town. They wanted
him to speak to them in the home of Thomas Boulton in Oxford Street
opposite the Marlborough Arms Inn.[53] It was arranged that Hinton would

4th ed. (London, 1792), 12.

[48]Hinton, *Vindication of the Dissenters in Oxford*, 16–17. After describing briefly this
course of study and his ordination, Hinton took the opportunity to express his regret that
because he was not a member of any of the University colleges, he was "doomed to 'behold
magnificent libraries' without the liberty of access to them" (Idem, 21).

[49]James Hinton, *Brief Thoughts on the Importance of Defending our Country, Respectfully
Addressed to the Inhabitants of Oxford and its Neighbourhood* (Oxford: R. Slatter, 1798), 3–4.

[50]Hinton, *Brief Thoughts on the Importance of Defending our Country*, 11. See also his
fascinating account of his visit to the battlefield of Waterloo exactly a month after that
momentous battle in June, 1815: "A Visit to the Field of Battle at Waterloo," *The Baptist
Magazine*, 7 (1815): 356–60.

[51]Hinton, *Biographical Portraiture*, 364–365; Brown, "Fear God and honour the King,"
127–29.

[52]Hinton, *Biographical Portraiture*, 251–85; Stevens and Bottoms, *Baptists of New Road*,
Oxford, 13–15.

[53]For the full account of the Woodstock Riot, see Hinton, *Biographical Portraiture*,
255–63. What follows is primarily based upon an unpublished narrative of the event drawn up
by Hinton in 1795 as "a section in the history of persecution for conscience sake" and as a way
of removing misunderstanding about the nature of his own ministry (Hinton, *Biographical
Portraiture*, 265–66). The same was also essentially published as "A Narrative of the Riotous
Proceedings at Woodstock, Oxfordshire, on May 18, 1794," The Protestant Dissenter's
Magazine, 2 (1795): 252–56. For a very brief account, see Alan Crossley with Christina
Colvin and S.C. Townley, "Woodstock: Protestant nonconformity," in *A History of the County
of Oxford: Volume 12, Wootton Hundred (South) Including Woodstock*, ed. Alan Crossley and C.R.

come to the town on the evening of Sunday, May 18. He decided to get a lay of the land, as it were, the previous Monday, when he found the Boultons nervous due to threats having been made to break the windows of their home if they entertained Hinton. To set them at ease, Hinton went to see Henry Metcalfe (d.1807), the town's mayor and a whitesmith and polished-steel worker by profession, to make sure that there would be no disturbance the following Sunday when he preached. Metcalfe assured him that there would be no problems at all.

The following Sunday, Hinton travelled the eight miles or so from Oxford with five friends—he and John Bartlett (d.1823), one of his deacons, rode on horses, while Hugh Barnard, Thomas Brock, Jeremiah Hooper York, and John King walked. After taking tea at the Marlborough Arms Inn, they crossed the road to the Boultons's house to begin the service at 6:15 in the evening. There were about thirty adults and twenty or so children present—a huge number to fit into the house. Hinton led in prayer and a hymn, and then began to speak on Matthew 16:26, "For what is a man profited, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul." He had no sooner begun, though, than a mob of some three to four hundred people descended on the home. At least a quarter of the mob were Irish recruits from a British regiment stationed nearby with a number of their serjeants acting as ringleaders. Some of the rioters tried to barge their way into the house, with whom Hinton attempted to reason, telling them they were breaking the law. Hinton appeared to have some success with some of them, but others continued their rowdy behavior to the point that Hinton thought it best to conclude the service. Hinton thought that this would satisfy the mob, but he was wrong.

He and his friends crossed the road to the Marlborough Arms Inn, where they were going to stay the night. As Hinton and his friends walked across the road, the mob swarmed around them, screaming and cursing them, and calling Hinton a "Jacobin rascal." Clearly in the mind of some of the mob, the Oxford Baptists had ties with French revolutionaries, and hence the justification for their violence.[54] They got to the safety of the hotel and Hinton sent a note to the mayor asking him to bring out the village constables to suppress the mob. But the mayor's answer gave Hinton little hope that he would do anything to alleviate the situation. When the owners of the hotel, fearful of the damage that the mob would do to the hotel, urged Hinton and his friends to leave, he and Bartlett went out the back to get their horses, while their other friends set out from the front door.

The mob immediately set upon the four friends on foot. The soldiers suggested the four men enlist in the army, and when this failed to get a response, they unleashed a torrent of violence. Thomas Brock was beaten to the ground and he realized that if he did not strike back in self-defence, he

Elrington (London: Victoria County History, 1990), 415.

[54]As Hinton later noted, "The cry of 'Jacobin' was evidently put into the mouths of a misguided rabble at Woodstock, to serve a wicked purpose" (Hinton, *Biographical Portraiture*, 273).

would be killed. Though wounded numerous times, he was able to escape the fury of the mob. Hugh Barnard, though, was an older man and was not able to get free from the rioters. Hinton later recorded in disturbing detail what happened to him:

> By the force of many bludgeons striking at once, he was brought to the ground at least ten or twelve times successively, the mob just giving him time to rise, in order to have the brutal pleasure of knocking him down again. Deaf to all his entreaties for mercy, they at last threw him into a ditch, and while lying there one of them (he believes a serjeant) gave him several dreadful kicks on the ribs, and then called off the men.[55]

Jeremiah York was also brutally beaten, but being young, was able to flee. Only John King managed to escape without injury.

Meanwhile Hinton and Bartlett, being mounted on horses, could have ridden off easily, but they were determined not to leave their friends to the mercy of the mob. When they came around to the front of the hotel, they saw a considerable amount of blood on the cobblestones of the street and, Hinton later recalled in his written account of the riot, it was then that he became truly alarmed. Standing over the bloodied stones, according to Hinton's account, was

> a middle aged man, an inhabitant of Woodstock, swearing with all the fury of a demon. He first addressed me. "D[amn] you," said he, pointing to the blood on the ground, "this is Jacobin blood, and yours shall go next." "I hope my friends," said I, "they have not shed any one's blood." "I tell you", said he, again swearing, "it is Jacobin blood, and yours will go next." He repeated these words with additional ill language, to Mr. Bartlett, while multitudes all around him were uttering similar imprecations. At this instant a handful of dirt struck me on the left side of my head; I saw the man who threw it, who appeared to be a corporal: and at the same time … [a] recruit who had followed us from the inn began most violently to beat the horses on which we rode. I attempted to run back, but in a moment we were surrounded; every way of escape seemed closed, and all attempts equally perilous. The mob had now left pursuing our companions, and stones came thick upon us from all quarters. A stroke from a bludgeon totally disabled my right hand. I could however hold up my arm, which I did, and thus prevented repeated and violent blows (it is impossible to say how many) from reaching my head; but my arm was miserably bruised from my shoulder to my wrist.[56]

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[55]Hinton, *Biographical Portraiture*, 260–61.
[56]Hinton, *Biographical Portraiture*, 258–59.

At this point Hinton determined to ride to the mayor's home to obtain protection for himself and his friends. One of the mob offered to help get him there, but secretly intended to take him in a different direction to a nearby pond where he was to be killed by the rioters. John Bartlett yelled out to Hinton, "Where are you going?" "To the mayor's," Hinton replied. "Then you will never come back alive," Bartlett sagely told him. "Place yourself by my side," Bartlett instructed his pastor,[57] and, as Hinton later wrote:

> Having no alternative but death, we set ourselves to press through the mob towards Oxford. For this purpose we placed our horses abreast, and spurred them sharply; when, as though conscious of their situation, they reared and galloped with great force, but without in the least degree separating from each other, so that the rioters were compelled to fall back on each side of the road, and open a way for our advance. Every one who could come near struck us with a bludgeon, or a stone, as we passed, and each of us was violently bruised on the side open to their assault; but one side of each being sheltered by the position of the other, we were enabled to maintain our seats and effect our escape.[58]

When Hinton and Bartlett had gotten free from the mob, they found Hugh Barnard covered in wounds and blood. He could hardly speak, but he urged his pastor and Bartlett to make good their escape. But Bartlett told him, "I will not leave you, if they kill you they shall kill me too. Come, be cheerful; 'tis a good cause, and we will die together." Hinton and Bartlett put Barnard between their horses and placed his arms across the horses in front of their saddles, and in this way were able to rescue their friend. About three-quarters of a mile outside of the town on the road to Oxford, the mob turned back, and after riding another three-quarters of a mile they stopped to wait for their three other friends, all of whom but King had been severely wounded.

Though Hinton later sought to prosecute the rioters, it was without success. His son suspected that the temper of the times, in which the government was deeply fearful of a revolution in England similar to what had transpired in France, was partially responsible for this miscarriage of justice. Hinton's son also suspected that a highly-placed local magistrate was behind the appearance of the Irish soldiery. The regiment to which they belonged was soon dispatched to the continent, where, according to Hinton's son, it was largely decimated in a battle. Ultimately, though, Hinton's real desire was not so much for the vengeance of prosecution, but for the protection of his Oxford congregation and fellow Baptists in Woodstock, as well as other Dissenters in the British Isles. His heart, that of a true Christian pastor, is

[57]For this detail, see Hinton, *Biographical Portraiture*, 277, note *.
[58]Hinton, *Biographical Portraiture*, 259.

best revealed by what he wrote in his diary when got home to Oxford the
evening of May 18:

> A dreadful riot at Woodstock this day: myself, and four compan-
> ions, much wounded by the mob, with difficulty escaped with our
> lives. Blessed be God, who did not leave us in the hands of the
> enemy! May the blood of a good man, shed this day in the streets
> of that unhappy town, not cry to heaven for vengeance! Rather
> let us pray, "Father forgive them: lay not this sin to their charge!"
> May the great God so ordain, that this persecution may be the
> commencement of much good to the numerous inhabitants of
> Woodstock! My mind is very happy, thinking it an honour that I
> am accounted worthy to bear in my body the marks of the Lord
> Jesus, and to suffer for his name.[59]

"The Study of History"

In the aftermath of the Woodstock Riot, numerous individuals in Ox-
ford who had once been friendly to Hinton would have nothing to do with
him and shunned his company. They obviously thought that the Baptists
were somehow at fault for the riot. Others even went so far as to curse Hin-
ton to his face in the street and tell him that they wished he had been killed
in the riot.[60] But Hinton was not to be deterred. He continued to defend
village preaching, identical to what was attempted at Woodstock, since what
he called "the great commission of Christ to his ministers is still in force,
'Go preach the gospel to every creature'."[61] Moreover, Hinton believed he
not only had a dominical command, but also divine example, for "to preach
… in any convenient place, to any person, and to all who would hear him,
was surely no disgrace to our divine Master."[62] Given such a mindset, it is not
surprising that Hinton was closely associated with Andrew Fuller and John
Ryland in their leadership of the Baptist Missionary Society.[63]

[59]Hinton, *Biographical Portraiture*, 261.
[60]Hinton, *Biographical Portraiture*, 266–67.
[61]Hinton, *Biographical Portraiture*, 267.
[62]Hinton, *Biographical Portraiture*, 269.
[63]Hinton, *Biographical Portraiture*, 312–20. See also "An Abridgment of Mr. Hinton's
Missionary Sermon preached at Spa-Fields Chapel, June 21, 1815," *The Baptist Magazine*,
7 (1815): 406–13, in which Hinton registered his deep admiration of the way that Fuller's
"ardour of soul approaching to sacred enthusiasm" was "combined with a coolness and
prudence which could weigh a multiplicity of jarring circumstances in the nicest balance" and
that could inspire "our hearts with love" ("Abridgment of Mr. Hinton's Missionary Sermon,"
411). Preached only three days after the Battle of Waterloo, Hinton's sermon made free use
of martial imagery to drive home to himself and his hearers their responsibility to continue
Fuller's missionary labors: "Fuller fell—gloriously fell in the arms of victory. He fell, giving
directions to his fellow-soldiers to continue the conflict; assuring them that they also should
share his triumph. How great is our responsibility who received the charge from his hands!"
("Abridgment of Mr. Hinton's Missionary Sermon," 412).

When persecution is discussed today, the experience of the English Baptists at the close of the eighteenth century is not normally cited. Other eras, like that of the pre-Constantinian church or Nazi Germany, with their organized state violence against the followers of Christ are more dramatic and more news-worthy, as it were. But the English Baptist experience of the eighteenth century and that of Hinton in particular bears remembering, for it may well become typical of the Western church in the days to come.

Seven years or so after the Woodstock Riot Hinton observed in an or-dination sermon that "[t]he study of history usually fills the benevolent mind with distress."[64] Doubtless at the time of this remark he was thinking of the wars spread throughout Europe by revolutionary France.[65] But, he went on, the study of history also displayed patterns of Christian devotion and "holy joy" that should be deeply encouraging to every true believer.[66] He probably never thought of his own graceful grit and gumption during the Woodstock Riot being such an example for those who have come later. But it is.[67]

[64]James Hinton, *The Duties incumbent on a Christian Church*, in James Hinton and John Ryland, *The Difficulties and Supports of a Gospel Ministry; and The Duties incumbent on a Christian Church* (Bristol: Harris and Bryan, 1801), 33.

[65]Cf. his statement eight years later in his *Union of Piety and Literature*, 5: "The world, at the present moment, displays many scenes of distress. Not a few of the nations are filled with deeds of wrong and outrage, which embitter 'every day's report' …".

[66]Hinton, *Duties incumbent on a Christian Church*, 33–35.

[67]As Stevens and Bottoms put it, Hinton's experience "deserves to be better known" (*Baptists of New Road, Oxford*, 15). Hinton had the joy of seeing a church begun to be planted in Woodstock in 1819. See Hinton, *Biographical Portraiture*, 278–79; "Ordinations, etc.," *The Baptist Magazine*, 19 (1827): 234.

Book Reviews

Biblical Studies

Old Testament Law for Christians: Original Context and Enduring Application. **By Roy E. Gane. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2017. 448 pages. Softcover, $32.99.**

With the publication of *Old Testament Law for Christians*, Roy Gane has provided a substantial resource for students and scholars regarding the role of the Old Testament laws in the modern Christian's life. Building on the premise that Old Testament laws are "a neglected source of wisdom regarding values" (xiii), Gane writes to help Christians understand "how Old Testament laws reveal wise and enduring values and principles," which "reflect the divine character of love" (xiv).

Gane divides his work into four major sections. The first two sections cover standard introductory matters such as the cultural background, literary context, purpose, functions, types, and roles of the Old Testament laws in ancient Israel and the Old Testament. Within this section, Gane explains how the Old Testament laws reflect divine principles and values (22–25). Although Gane admits that divine values and divine principles "in a sense … can be viewed as interchangeable," he argues that the term "'values' also conveys the idea of things assessed as carrying high priority on a scale of relative worth or importance" (23). In other words, "divine values are God's priorities" (23) and are commonly "expressed by 'principles'" (24) in Old Testament laws.

The third and fourth sections of Gane's book focus on the application of Old Testament laws to modern Christians. After reviewing the common Christian approaches to Old Testament laws under the categories of "Radical Continuity" (163–68), "Radical Discontinuity" (168–73), and "Both Continuity and Discontinuity" (173–95), Gane outlines his approach to applying the Old Testament laws: "Progressive Moral Wisdom" (PMW) (197–18). Gane provides a thorough five-step (based on 16 questions) process for Christians to apply the Old Testament laws responsibly (202–03). Perhaps the most distinct aspects of Gane's model are in the fourth step of his process. The goal of this step is to "analyze the law within the process of redemption" by relating the law to "creation and new-creation ideals" and searching for "moral growth beyond the stage represented by the law" in the Old Testament and New Testament (208–09). Gane concludes his third section of the book with a case study of the PMW model applied to Exodus 23:4 (219–35). In the work's final section, Gane focuses on various values reflected in the Old Testament laws and their application to modern Christians. The concluding chapter consists of Gane's rebuttal of "five common misconceptions" about Christians and Old Testament laws (400–01).

Gane's work has many commendable features. First, Gane's emphasis on the Old Testament laws' continued relevance reflects his desire to take the continuity between the Old Testament and New Testament seriously. More specifically, his emphasis on love as the "paramount value and virtue" (148) from which sub-principles can be derived underscores the similar ethical ideals of both testaments. Second, Gane's attention to the creation and new creation ideals within his PMW model

provides a helpful lens for readers to identify God's priorities. Third, Gane does an admirable job of explaining the historical-cultural background for the Old Testament laws. His explanations of the historical context behind certain laws enhance his chapter entitled "Old Testament Law and Theodicy." In particular, he shows why some of the accommodations Yahweh made for the Israelites' sinfulness make sense in light of their ANE context. For example, he demonstrates how the law of servant concubinage in Exodus 21:7–11, although not ideal, ultimately protected the concubine (312–314).

In spite of the strengths I have noted, Gane's work has several issues. Instead of interacting with many particular points, I will deal with a couple of Gane's foundational views on the law. First, Gane uses 2 Timothy 3:16 as the rationale for his PMW model. In his interpretation of this passage, Gane argues that Paul's "'All Scripture' includes all Old Testament laws, including those that directly apply to us and those that do not so apply" (142). However, this interpretation of 2 Timothy 3:16 is too much. To be sure, we can and should apply Old Testament laws to our lives, but 2 Timothy 3:16 does not require an application of all the Old Testament laws just as we would not apply all the instructions for Noah's ark to our lives. Furthermore, Gane's claim that some laws directly apply to us appears to be another way of saying that Christians are still "under" some of the laws, including the Sabbath (156–61), dietary restrictions (350–58), laws related to breeding cattle (344), and the prohibition of sexual intercourse during menstruation (358). Gane needs to clarify how direct application differs from being "under the law," especially in light of Paul's assertion that Christians are not under the law (e.g. Gal 5:18). Moreover, conspicuously absent from Gane's PMW model is an emphasis on the cross. (He does mention Christ's sacrifice at several points in his book, but he does not include it in his PMW model.) In his five-step process, Gane connects the laws to creation, the fall, and restoration, but he does not highlight the central figure of our redemption and the point in the redemptive process where Paul locates a significant shift in the law's role (cf. Eph 2:11–21; Col 2:11–15).

Second, Gane criticizes another scholar for dismissing the Sabbath for reasons other than Scripture, reasons "such as consensus and tradition regarding practice" (193). However, Gane himself gives significant evidence of being "shaped by factors other than Scripture" (193), in particular, his theological tradition. For example, Gane—in his arguments for Christian obedience to the dietary laws—argues for a novel translation of Colossians 2:16–17 with his only support being an unpublished paper. Furthermore, he promotes the Christian observance of the Sabbath day, but he does not deal with Romans 14, a passage that certainly challenges his view. Throughout the book, his theological presuppositions influence many of his specific conclusions (e.g. ch. 15).

In conclusion, Gane's work is a good introduction to a Seventh-day Adventist's approach to the law. The primary strength of this work is Gane's explanation of the laws in their ancient context and the interplay between the various pentateuchal laws; however, when it comes to applying the laws to modern Christians, Gane's work does little to move the discussion in a helpful direction. Gane seems to operate on the assumption that Christians are directly under the authority of every Old Testament law except those that relate to "situations that do not occur in our lives" (139), "social and legal institutions in which we in the modern West are not involved," "the ancient Israelite theocracy," and practices that the New Testament "has terminated" (140). Like other approaches that assume Christians are under

some Old Testament laws, Gane's approach leads to inconsistencies and often looks like a pick-and-choose approach based on the interpreter's tradition and/or wishes.

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Texts and Contexts of Jeremiah: The Exegesis of Jeremiah 1 and 10 in Light of Text and Reception History. Edited by Karin Finsterbusch and Armin Lange. Contribution to Biblical Exegesis and Theology 82. Leuven: Peeters, 2016. 169 pages, Hardcover, $61.00.

The book *Texts and Contexts of Jeremiah* examines the intersection of reception history and textual history. The assumption of this work is that while both are to be distinguished from each other, they are linked since the textual history of a biblical book is also part of its reception history (v). Focusing on Jeremiah 1 and 10, the authors consider these chapters as ideal "test cases" for the study of reception history and textual history for two reasons. First, both chapters encompass the first major section of the book of Jeremiah. While Jeremiah 1 begins the book by explaining the prophet's role, Jeremiah 10 closes the first large unit. Second, in both chapters the Masoretic Text (MT) and Septuagint (LXX) differ significantly in rhetoric, structure, and content (v). During the first three quarters of the twentieth century most scholars considered MT and LXX of Jeremiah to be different but still going back to the same textual tradition. However, in recent times the majority view has become that these two point to different editions of the book, meaning that LXX was translated from a Hebrew *Vorlage* different than MT.

Alex P. Jassen starts off the first part of the book by exploring how the rabbinic literature has developed more fully the few biographical data given in Jeremiah 1. In addition to the connection to his father Hilkiah as priest and prophet, Jassen shows how the rabbis have also seen Jeremiah as a descendent of Rahab. In so doing, they drew "a metonymy for the Israelites in the land of Israel from conquest to destruction" (18). Jassen argues that the overall purpose of this connection reflects the rabbinic attempt to connect themselves to the past and to the experience of territorial loss and national suffering. Next, Georg Fischer studies the reception of Jeremiah 1 in the New Testament as well as Early Christianity. While Fischer identifies almost no connection between Jeremiah 1 and the New Testament, he sees that the Early Church Fathers drew links between Jeremiah's commission and Jesus. Sharing interests in the spiritual dimension of Jeremiah 1, the Early Church Fathers also pointed to the relevance of Jeremiah 1 for the life and faith of believers (35).

The following two essays deal with text criticism and exegesis of Jeremiah 1. Norbert Jacoby contests the view that the translator of LXX used the proto-MT as his Hebrew *Vorlage*. Based on a study of MT and LXX of Jeremiah 1:1–2, Jacoby argues that a translation out of MT would have necessarily produced a Greek sentence different in syntax and structure. Finsterbusch's essay extends this work by comparing Jeremiah 1:4–7 and 18 in MT with LXX. For Finsterbusch, both text editions show a distinct profile. While LXX emphasizes YHWH's message, the focus in MT is on Jeremiah and his words.

To start the second part of the book, focusing on Jeremiah 10, Moshe Lavee shows that the late haggadic midrashim saw a dichotomy between Israel and the gentiles. According to Lavee, the rabbis attempted to rehabilitate Jeremiah in two

ways. First, although the prophet harshly rebuked Israel, he never fell short in terms of his great love for Israel. Second, by reinterpreting passages that might support universalism and missionary approaches, the author argues that the rabbis portrayed Jeremiah as a defender of Israel's divine election. Lavee closes his paper by pointing to the contrary trend in the writings of the Early Church Fathers: for example, John Chrysostom used Jeremiah 10 to argue for God's abandonment of Israel. Next, Martin Meiser, who explores Jeremiah 10 within the New Testament and Early Christianity, points out that this chapter was used primarily in an anti-pagan context. He sees a fundamental difference before and after 390 AD, since the stop of the veneration of the Greco-Roman gods was seen as a fulfillment of Jeremiah 10:11.

The following two essays concentrate on text-critical and exegetical issues of Jeremiah 10. Hermann-Josef Stipp shows that LXX of Jeremiah 10 lacks verses 6–8 of MT and places verse 9 of MT in the middle of verse 5. Since the erasing of these verses with their strong adoration of God's incomparability and universal kingship seems odd in this context, it raises the question of who is responsible for these changes. Based on the assumption that it was either the translator of LXX or the scribe of the proto-MT, Stipp argues that MT of Jeremiah shows a proto-Masoretic idiolect that cannot be observed in the Greek translation, which leads to the conclusion that the first possibility is very unlikely. Accordingly, the proto-Masoretic idiolect definitely points to a Hebrew *Vorlage* different than MT tradition. In the next essay, Richard D. Weis focuses on Jeremiah 10 as a whole. By presenting two independent studies on the structure of both text versions of this chapter, Weis argues that both MT and LXX have a coherent and meaningful structure but were addressed to two different audiences. Weis thinks that LXX-Jeremiah 10 was aimed to an exilic audience, showing "that Yahweh is reliable and worthy of trust and worship in contrast to the gods of the nations" (134–35). MT-Jeremiah 10, on the other hand, was directed towards an audience in the Persian period, focusing on the praise of Yahweh and using the foreign gods as foil for this purpose.

The third part of the book consists of Christl Maier's response to how the preceding essays illuminate the intersection of reception history and textual history. Among other things, they show that every act of translation is already an act of interpretation that is informed by the setting and worldview that the translator inhabits.

Overall, this volume treats the intersection of reception history and textual history successfully. The essays are very informative and even a reader who is not highly familiar with the problem of MT and LXX in Jeremiah will benefit in better understanding some of its key issues and important exegetical issues. Weis's essay in particular ("Exegesis of Jeremiah 10 in LXX and in MT: Results and Implications") is stimulating by opening up a new path for approaching the textual critical problem as often done in Jeremiah scholarship. He analyzes the MT and the LXX text version of Jeremiah 10 independently and compares their structure and intent. Although in view of the present writer Weis's conclusion regarding the distinct audiences and time periods of both text versions goes too far, his approach might still be fruitful for establishing stronger internal criteria for cases where MT and LXX differ.

It is striking, on the other hand, that all four essays that deal directly with the textual differences between MT and LXX (Jacoby and Finsterbusch on Jeremiah 1 and Stipp and Weis on Jeremiah 10) argue in favor of the majority view, that the translator of LXX used a Hebrew *Vorlage* different than the proto-MT. However,

other viewpoints are mentioned only a few times but discussed thoroughly nowhere in the book. This gives an unbalanced impression. For example, Jacoby's own analysis on reflections of the Greek translation in Jeremiah 1 indicates that the translator had the capacity and the freedom to engage in constructing the text as he was translating. Whereas many aspects of the four essays mentioned above are convincing (e.g., Stipp's point regarding the absence of MT Jeremiah 10:6–8 and displacement of v. 9), a more balanced approach would still be preferable.

All in all, this volume is a valuable study of Jeremiah 1 and 10, demonstrating the importance of each text version as a distinct and coherent unit and how vital it is to consider their own worldview and hermeneutical perspectives.

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Jeremiah Invented: Constructions and Deconstructions of Jeremiah. **Edited by Else K. Holt and Carolyn J. Sharp. Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 595. London: Bloomsbury, 2015. 145 pages, Hardcover, $100.00.**

The scholarship on the book of Jeremiah experienced considerable changes during recent decades. The primary focus in the twentieth century lay on the historical person of Jeremiah. *Jeremiah Invented* represents a new direction in Jeremiah studies by focusing on Jeremiah as a *literary persona*. The editors Else K. Holt and Carolyn J. Sharp state that the characterization of Jeremiah as a literary persona is what holds the volume together. The essays probe the various ways in which the person of Jeremiah has been construed in ancient and contemporary contexts and how ancient scribes, modern biblical scholars, and contemporary artists have refracted the Jeremiah traditions (xvi).

Joe Henderson and Mary Callaway start off this volume by exploring biases and methods that have been used in the early twentieth century to account for an allegedly authentic portrayal of the historical person of Jeremiah. Henderson interrogates the ideological biases of the works of Bernhard Duhm and John Skinner. Next, using Jeremiah 20 as a case in point, Callaway explores the assumptions of historical-critical analysis and postmodern interpretations of the so-called "confession" of Jeremiah.

Barbara Green and Amy Kalmanofsky probe distinct communicative aspects in different passages of Jeremiah. Green investigates the interactions between Zedekiah and Jeremiah within chapters 20–39. She argues that the scenes "work narratologically to make visible the political options available to the besieged people of Jerusalem" (xvi). Kalmanofsky presents a gender critique to show how shame functions in Jeremiah 13 and argues that the text metaphorizes the naked body of Israel as a disgraced woman.

The essays of Kathleen M. O'Connor and Mary E. Mills explore aspects of lamenting and suffering in the book of Jeremiah and beyond. Focusing on links between Jeremiah and Isaiah's suffering servant, O'Connor investigates how the life and suffering of the prophet was "evocative and meaningful for members of the post-exilic community seeking to explain their suffering and claim power as survivors" (xvii). Mills, on the other hand, investigates how the books of Jeremiah and Lamentations symbolically depict Jerusalem as a textualized "site" refiguring the materiality of loss, collapse, and grief so that "mourning can be engaged productively and redemption can be envisioned" (xvii). In response to O'Connor and Mills, A.R. Pete Diamond and Louis Stulman mention an explosion of scholarly interest on

Jeremiah's "confessions" and offer several questions regarding future research.

The last three essays represent readings of Jeremiah in light of modern phenomena from artistic constructions. Stulman's paper may be understood as a theoretical groundwork, arguing that the book should not only be studied by the standard means of critical interpretation, but our interpretation of the horrors envisioned in Jeremiah should also take into account the perspective of the dangers, the suffering, and the pain of "the world that we inhabit" (97). Thus, he pleads for a "hermeneutic of engagement" consisting of a close reading of the text, an understanding of its reception (*Nachleben*) as well as an immersion "in a broken world in dire need of healing" (103). Next, using Jeremiah 27–28 as a case in point, Johanna Erzberger probes structural parallels between prophetic sign acts as presented in the biblical narratives and contemporary performance art. She argues that both can be used to understand the way in which prophetic sign acts assumed in biblical narratives produce meaning (104). The productive interaction between artist, audience, and specific public context causes an immediacy from which the audience cannot withdraw themselves forcing them to either accept or reject the message presented (115). In the final essay, Else K. Holt presents an exegetical "reading" of Rembrandt's 1630 painting of Jeremiah lamenting the fall of Jerusalem. Describing the evocative intertextual biblical references in the painting, Holt situates Rembrandt's work "within the political and ecclesial concerns of seventeenth-century Holland" (xix).

Overall, this volume is helpful for getting an understanding of the scholarly interest on the literary persona of Jeremiah. The strengths and weaknesses of this book can be shown by looking at three specific points. The first strength is at the same time the most stimulating aspect of all essays, namely its interdisciplinary connections with structuralist analysis, trauma theory, Mesopotamian art studies, gender criticism, contemporary performance art, and more. The basic justification for this approach is given by Holt and Sharp who assume that "what interpreters miss when they read may be as important as what they 'find'" (xix). For example, "the reader who has never thought deeply about trauma may miss significant ways in which Jeremiah can serve as a catalyst for healing within communities that have been silenced" (xix). The same may be true for politics and other social-political realities.

As far as the second strength is concerned, most of the contributions show a profound thoroughness on the development of several key issues in the history of Jeremiah scholarship. Particularly Henderson's "Duhm and Skinner's Invention of Jeremiah" and Callaway's "Seduced by Method: History and Jeremiah 20" are helpful in understanding the presuppositions and agenda of the historical-critical portrayal of the historical person of Jeremiah and the role of the prophet's "confessions" in Duhm's and Skinner's methodology. For example, exploring the ideological basis of these two scholars, Henderson shows that their source-critical work was fundamentally based on their adoption of the Grafian view of the decline of Israelite religion (3). Furthermore, Henderson not only shows the impact of Romanticism and poetics such as Johann G. Herder and Robert Lowth, but he also explores how Duhm and Skinner's judgment of the authenticity of Jeremiah traditions, situated in nineteenth century German liberal Protestantism (8–10), was influenced by "particular European convictions about individual piety and religious inspiration" (xvi).

Third, the weakness of the book, which is evident in most essays following Henderson's and Callaway's contributions, is the lack of any explanation or definition of the concept of literary persona. For example, while Stulman ("Art and Atrocity, and the Book of Jeremiah") and others rightly contest the old historical-critical

paradigm that separates the historical and "real" Jeremiah from later "secondary" additions (96), the alternative can hardly be a complete erasing of interest in the historical person of Jeremiah from scholarly inquiry. The book surely fits the current trend of Old Testament scholarship that takes it for granted that the books of the prophets have basically nothing to do with the historical persons of the prophets. However, it still does not answer what the concept of a literary persona actually means. Does this concept mean that the person of Jeremiah is a mere invention suited to the needs of certain Israelite communities in different time periods? Is there a relationship between the historical person of Jeremiah and what the authors of the book assume as literary persona? More clarification on these issues would surely strengthened many of the valuable essays of this book.

Overall, *Jeremiah Invented* is a valuable volume for scholars and students joining the conversation on the person of Jeremiah in the book that bears his name.

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Reading Biblical Greek: A Grammar for Students. **By Richard J. Gibson and Constantine R. Campbell. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017. 144 pages, Hardcover, $34.99.** *Reading Biblical Greek Workbook: A Translation Guide to Mark 1–4.* **By Richard J. Gibson and Constantine R. Campbell. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017. 112 pages, Paperback, $12.99.** *Reading Biblical Greek: Video Lectures.* **By Constantine Campbell. DVD. Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 2017. $124.99.**

With this new Greek textbook and its accompanying workbook and instructional DVDs, the authors Gibson and Campbell offer a fresh, different approach to teaching Greek, by presenting a new curriculum consisting of 83 lessons in total and 83 video sessions that are on the accompanying DVDs. The large number of lessons makes each lesson noticeably short, keeping material manageable at each step. The explanation of the approach is clear in the first lesson, which shows that each page correlates to one lesson that is divided into three sections for (1) learning each new topic, (2) material for memorization and (3) examples and exercise.

From the onset, there is a brief lesson on the history of Greek along with lessons for the alphabet and pronunciation. The authors are aware of both Erasmian and modern pronunciations, but in the end, leaves the final decision to the instructor. A short lesson on manuscripts provides an appropriate amount of cursory material for textual criticism. Lessons explaining basic grammar then follow from lesson 13 and on. Each video lesson, recorded by Campbell, lasts approximately six minutes— helpful for an audio-visual demonstration of the material in the book. Campbell is clear in his explanations and well-paced.

The vocabulary work begins from lesson 8 and continues sporadically in the book (the next one is in lesson 15). Each vocabulary section is in small portions with about 20 in number. The list is taken directly from Mark, which is helpful for students to get acquainted with biblical texts quickly, and the curriculum prompts the audience to start memorizing words in lesson 8.

The noticeable strength of this curriculum is the workbook, which assists students in translating Mark 1–4. By utilizing the lessons in the grammar book, students are encouraged to read through the Greek text with the vocabulary glossed with all parsing information available to the student for translating the Greek. To the right

of the passage on the following page is an area for students to write down their own translation using the provided information. Unfortunately, the students will not get to the workbook until lesson 42. Perhaps, the students could be introduced to the text sooner if the Greek passages may be simplified at first with a gradual increase in difficulty, but then at that point, the students would not be reading the actual biblical text, which would lose the selling point of the curriculum.

Despite the tremendous task of covering first-year Greek in one book, the curriculum is very thorough in its scope and approach to Greek grammar. While the workbook gives ample opportunity to incorporate the grammar, much of the burden is still left to the students to learn the pronunciation and understand Greek syntax and hermeneutics of translating Greek. Video lessons are helpful, but students may need more interaction with the instructor to reinforce their language skills.

The curriculum will most likely last the full two semesters, which is the normal duration of study in a Bible college or seminary setting. Though no textbook is perfect, this textbook can be a great starting point to help students engage Greek at various levels of exegesis.

Since textbooks tend to improve over time with different editions, this curriculum has the potential to assist students examine the Greek at the textual level more quickly than the traditional stale trifecta of grammar, vocabulary, and exercises. Some areas that may improve this curriculum are as follows: 1) more Greek sentences to translate early on to reinforce the grammar, 2) the video lessons could be enhanced with vocabulary studies, and 3) a way to interact with other students online, which would be helpful for those trying to acquire Greek on their own.

Some prior exposure to an ancient language (e.g., Latin or Hebrew) would prepare the students in advance, but the curriculum does not insist on it being a requirement. Any student willing to put in the time and effort would in fact be adequately exposed to New Testament Greek for study and sermon preparation.

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The Last Adam: A Theology of the Obedient Life of Jesus in the Gospels. **By Brandon D. Crowe. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017. 288 pages. Paperback, $30.00.**

In *The Last Adam: A Theology of the Obedient Life of Jesus in the Gospels*, Brandon Crowe's desire is to examine how the four Gospels present Jesus as the last/new Adam through Jesus's life and actions. Crowe states that he wrote this book to answer a question he has often asked himself: "What is Jesus doing in the Gospels?" (ix). Crowe seeks to answer this question by arguing that the Gospels do not dichotomize the "lifelong obedience of Jesus … from his death" (16), but that "the work of Christ in the Gospels is a *unified* obedience that entails both his life and his death" (17). This obedience, then, results in the life of Jesus portrayed as a "saving character" (17).

After a helpful introductory chapter where Crowe surveys the history of interpretation relevant to his thesis, Crowe develops his main point through the next six chapters. In chapter two, Crowe surveys the four Gospels and how they "consistently use Adam language and imagery for Jesus," as this language and imagery builds upon an "Adamic protology" (23). In the genealogy of Luke, Jesus is represented as standing "at the head of a new humanity" (33), whereas Matthew's genealogy "presents Jesus as a covenant representative" (35). Crowe further argues that the title

of Son of Man also presents Jesus as the Last Adam because the language of Daniel 7 describes one who is both an individual and a representation of those whom he represents (39). The many texts regarding the Son of Man not only associate Jesus with the figure from Daniel 7 but also provide a variety of Adamic connections as well (43–48).

Chapter three focuses upon the title Son of God, and here Crowe argues that this title given to Jesus is not limited only to his connections to Israel; rather, this title is also intimately connected to Adam. Thus, Jesus is the last Adam of Israel's history (55) and where both Israel and Adam failed, Jesus proved to be the better son since "Sonship in Scripture is consistently paired with obedience" (61). Crowe notes that the obedience of Jesus is immediately highlighted in the early portions of the Gospel stories primarily through the baptism and temptation narratives (68–70, 74–78), and in each instance Jesus identifies with "God's people as their representative" (68) and his "obedience benefits those whom he represents" (78).

Chapter four analyzes the fulfillment passages in the Gospels by examining the obedience of Jesus after his baptism and temptation as well as "what it means for Jesus to be described as righteous and the fulfiller of righteousness" (83). Crowe's analysis gives prominence to Matthew 3:15 since Jesus states his purpose is to fulfill all righteousness. Crowe notes both the importance of this verse in the broader context of Matthew (86–93) and its emphasis since these words were the first spoke by Jesus in Matthew's Gospel (86). Thus, Jesus's "fulfillment of *all righteousness* should be viewed in light of the coming day of eschatological salvation that entailed eschatological righteousness" (88–89). Chapter five advances Crowe's thesis specifically in the Gospel of John. Crowe argues persuasively that "Jesus's obedience stands in the foreground of John's narrative, and this obedience is necessary for salvation" (117). What the Baptist declared in John 1:29 finds its fulfillment in the obedience of Jesus within the Passion Narrative as the Last Adam where the obedience/disobedience of Jesus/Adam is uniquely seen. (134–37, esp. 137).

Chapter six focuses on the theme of the Kingdom of Righteousness in the Gospels, and Crowe primarily discusses the following: (1) the role of Jesus in implementing the kingdom of God (140–53), (2) Jesus's authority to bind the strong man (153–166), and (3) the relationship between Jesus's miracles and his messianic obedience (166–170). Jesus is presented as one who manifested the obedience "that overcomes the disobedience of Adam" and "the effects of Adam's sins" (170). However, as Crowe notes the kingdom is not fully established since it is the resurrection of Jesus that allowed the kingdom to be fully realized (170). This is a helpful transition to chapter seven, and Crowe argues that the life and death of Jesus are "organically interwoven" so that his work must be viewed as a "unified whole" (171). It is the resurrection that proves Jesus was fully obedient as the last Adam, and his full obedience "to the Father uniquely qualifies him to save his people from their sins… serving as the (new) covenant sacrifice" (176).

Chapter eight brings Crowe's work to a conclusion, as he attempts a theological synthesis between Adam's character and Jesus's obedience. Crowe notes that the incarnation of Jesus allowed Jesus to accomplish what was not possible for another human, and therefore the "incarnation is a *necessary*, but not a *sufficient*, condition for salvation" (201). Much remains to be accomplished in the obedience of Jesus, and the four Gospels portray his obedience in full.

Throughout the work, Crowe successfully argues that the Gospels present the obedience of Jesus as necessary for salvation and that Jesus is compared and

contrasted to Adam in his character. This argument primarily falls within the baptism and temptation narratives. Also helpful is Crowe's observance of both historical and recent scholarship in Gospel studies. Crowe notes throughout his work that it is not intended to cover all areas of his chapter's respective discussion, but he footnotes a wealth of sources for the reader to conduct further research.

What is absent in this work, however, is a discussion on the event of Jesus as a boy in the temple (Luke 2:42–52). How does Crowe reconcile the obedience of Jesus to his heavenly Father and his earthly parents in this scene, and how does it fit into the Adam/Jesus comparison?

The Last Adam is a helpful contribution to the field of Gospel studies. Crowe carefully demonstrates the core of his thesis throughout the work and persuasively shows how the Gospel writers carefully present the obedient life of Jesus as necessary for salvation. This work will prove helpful for any interested and it commends itself to be read widely.

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Revelation: A Handbook on the Greek Text. **By David L. Mathewson. Baylor Handbook on the Greek New Testament. Waco: Baylor University Press, 2016. Paperback, $34.95.**

David Mathewson, Associate Professor of New Testament at Denver Seminary, has written important works on the book of Revelation. *A New Heaven and a New Earth: The Meaning and Function of the Old Testament in Revelation 21:1–22:5* is his published dissertation (2003). He has also written *Verbal Aspect in the Book of Revelation: The Function of Greek Verb Tenses in John's Apocalypse* (2010). These helpful works show that two of his areas of focus are upon the use of the Old Testament in Revelation and upon the Greek of Revelation.

It is difficult to know how to review one of these handbooks in the Baylor Handbook series. It may be useful for the reader to know that these handbooks are something that Greek students, pastors, and teachers of the New Testament have long desired to have in their possession. They provide far greater assistance than previous resources, like A.T. Robertson's *Word Pictures*. Each handbook in this series provides a guide to understanding the Greek grammar and syntax of an entire New Testament book. Revelation is known for having some odd grammatical constructions that defy the ordinary conventions of Greek grammar. Mathewson provides invaluable assistance for anyone who needs help with these difficult constructions. More importantly, he will help anyone with some Greek knowledge to come to understand the more straightforward Greek that characterizes the majority of the book.

I came across Mathewson during the last year of my work on a commentary on Revelation. As I was trying to complete my translation of the book and check it for accuracy, I found Mathewson's work to be insightful and useful on passage after passage. In the introduction, he provides helpful clarification regarding how he will discuss Revelation's Greek verbs in relation to verbal aspect (xxv–xxviii).

In terms of possible changes or additions that could improve the book's usefulness, I did note some instances where further clarification or simplification would have been beneficial for many Greek students. For example, there is a difficult relative clause in Revelation 20:4 that begins with *hoitines*. In his explanation, Mathewson covers some of the options for understanding the relative clause (275–76) but

does not point out that it is a relative clause, which could modify a noun or act as a noun (a substantival clause). That kind of information would help most Greek students and pastors to understand his discussion a bit better. Also, Mathewson makes many informative comments about verbal aspect, but his translation of Revelation may or may not draw attention to instances of imperfective aspect. For example, he translates Revelation 3:20 as "I stand at the door and knock," where his comments on the verse might lead one to expect "I am standing at the door and knocking" (52). Of course, these are small points that do not take away from the superb work that Mathewson has done. If you want to study or preach the book of Revelation, this book is a goldmine worthy of careful consultation.

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Theological and Historical Studies

Scripture as Real Presence: Sacramental Exegesis in the Early Church. **By Hans Boersma. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017. 316 pages. Hardcover, $39.99.**

Writing at the intersection of current hermeneutical debates and patristic studies, Hans Boersma claims in this volume that the church fathers read Scripture as a sacrament. Boersma, to an extent, writes with the simple goal of describing the exegetical moves of the church fathers. "The main argument," he writes, "is that they saw the Scriptures as a sacrament and read them accordingly" (1). By referring to Scripture as a sacrament, Boersma contends that the church fathers understood Christ to be the reality beneath the surface of the Scriptures. As Boersma puts it, "To speak of a sacramental hermeneutic, therefore, is to allude to the recognition of the real presence of the new Christ-reality hidden with the outward sacrament of the biblical text" (12). Boersma, however, is not merely writing a primer on patristic exegesis. Rather, he weaves together description and prescription and calls his reader to both observe and learn from the exegetical moves of the church fathers.

Developing his argument, and following the canonical shape of Scripture, Boersma presents patristic exegesis of Genesis, Exodus, Joshua, Psalms, Proverbs, Song of Songs, Isaiah, and Matthew. By doing so, he introduces evidence which cuts across various genres and provides examples of exegesis done on diverse texts. Similarly, Boersma marshals a diverse crowd of church fathers as witnesses. Gregory of Nyssa, Augustine, and Athanasius appear, to name a few. However, while Boersma cites many patristic exegetes, his primary exemplar is Origen. Three early chapters examining the exegesis of Chrysostom and Origen, Melito of Sardis and Origen, and Origen, make Boersma's affection for the Alexandrian theologian clear.

Beyond historical argumentation, Boersma argues a return to patristic exegesis "is both possible and necessary" (274). Among other reasons, to ground the doctrine of the Trinity in the Old Testament (160), renew the life of the church (279), and to retain relevance (275–76), spiritual readings of Scripture must be employed today. According to Boersma, the church fathers serve "as faithful guides in our reading of the biblical text" (104).

Aspects of Boersma's work are commendable and fascinating. For example, his discussion of literal exegesis by the church fathers pushes boundaries and challenges simplistic understandings (30–31). From a historical perspective, *Scripture as Real Presence* is an informative and helpful portrait of patristic exegesis.

Furthermore, Boersma rightly challenges the tendency of some modern

readers to dismiss the exegetical moves of the church fathers altogether. Far from dispassionate, he writes with vigor and investment, and he leaps to the defense of the church fathers. Without question, there are deep reservoirs of wisdom and knowledge in patristic exegetes, and Boersma's elegant and passionate presentation could function as a remedy for those who prematurely dismiss them.

He, of course, anticipates this objection: "Spiritual interpretation is about moving from promise to fulfillment, from the outward to the inward, from the law to the gospel, from the letter to the spirit, from type to archetype, from sacrament to reality, and therefore from the Old Testament to the New Testament. As a result, questions surrounding spiritual interpretation often focus on how we are to read the *Old* Testament" (249–50). However, despite this observation, he argues, "Reading the New Testament text spiritually is exactly what the church fathers did" (250). But in contrast with eight chapters directly dealing with the Old Testament, one deals with the New Testament. When the limited evidence is examined, it does not cut across the diverse genres and texts of the New Testament in the same fashion as the Old Testament evidence. Therefore, his largely cogent historical argument falters at this point. While Boersma may be capable of substantiating his claim, this question remains unanswered: did the church fathers read New Testament epistolary or narrative literature sacramentally?

Additionally, *Scripture as Real Presence* is a tale of two arguments. On the one hand, Boersma presents a largely cogent historical description of patristic exegesis; on the other hand, he provocatively calls for a return to the exegesis of the church fathers. To be clear, Boersma makes no attempts to disguise his goal. He labels his book as a "project of *ressourcement*" (273).

Before fully embracing the exegetical methods of the church fathers, a few things must be kept in mind: The church fathers were historically situated and disagreed with one another. They were colored by the heresies they were responding to and the debates that raged during their time. Boersma correctly challenges modern readers to learn from and appreciate their example; however, their mistakes are also an opportunity to learn. More promising, grammatico-historical and redemptive-historical hermeneutical approaches, which Boersma rejects, frequently draw from patristic interpreters in balanced and responsible ways.

Furthermore, Boersma self-consciously argues for patristic exegesis because it lines up with his own metaphysical presuppositions (275). "My Christian Platonist convictions," he states, "persuade me that everything around us is sacramental" (1). While readers will appreciate Boersma's candor, those who do not share his basic commitments will predictably disagree with his conclusions.

Despite these critiques, *Scripture as Real Presence* has much to offer readers. Passionate, engaging, and provocative, Boersma is never a bore to read. In many ways, *Scripture as Real Presence* makes a notable contribution to wider conversations about the relationship of theology, history, and hermeneutics.

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Biblical Authority after Babel: Retrieving the Solas in the Spirit of Mere Protestant Christianity. **By Kevin J. Vanhoozer. Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2016. 288 pages. Hardcover, $24.99.**

The sixteenth-century Reformation(s), which birthed the Protestant movement, is often charged with perpetuating "radical religious individualism,"

"hermeneutical recklessness," and "interpretive anarchy." In *Biblical Authority after Babel*, Kevin J. Vanhoozer, Research Professor of Systematic Theology at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, defends the Protestant Reformation against common accusations by retrieving the reformational *solas* (*sola gratia*, *sola fide*, *sola scriptura*, *solus Christus*, and *soli Deo gloria*). He argues that the rampant "interpretative *egoism*" and "criminal negligence of tradition" arise from a misunderstanding, rather than genuine appropriation, of the dogmatic principles of the Reformation. The *solas* provide the theological resources to confront interpretative pluralism while the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers (which he likens to a "virtual sixth sola: *sola ecclesia*") speaks to the issue of interpretive authority (29).

In chapter one, Vanhoozer argues that *sola gratia* was a Protestant rebuke against late medieval sacramentalism, which, in postulating a "sliding scale" of nature and grace, elevated the human capacity to appropriate grace. Developing the ontological significance of God's grace for the interpretation of Holy Scripture, Vanhoozer writes, "Grace is not simply the content of the gospel but the overarching framework of its communication and reception." In this light, the triune God's antecedent perfection (a corollary of God's gratuitousness *ad extra*) funds the Christian reading of Scripture. *Sola gratia* therefore answers the problem of secularization: first, by providing a theological center of gravity—the gracious overflow of triune love is the economy of redemption—and second, by viewing the biblical text as "divine address" and thus placing the interpretative act within the economy of redemption. The interpreter is caught up in the gracious "communicative domain of the triune God" (50).

Chapter two appropriates Alvin Plantiga's Reformed epistemology—mainly, the notion of epistemic dependence—in order to develop an interpretive *via media* that eschews both "absolute certainty" and "relativizing skepticism" (105). *Sola fide* indicates the significance of the ecclesial community as human beings necessarily rely on others in developing their beliefs. Vanhoozer explains, "*Sola fide* promotes, then, not individualism but a righteous *polis*: a city and citizenship of the gospel, an interpretive community whose mandate is to profess and perform a word that indwells yet that also stands over against it, a word to which the church must measure up" (103).

Chapter three puts forward a "catholic biblicism" by setting *sola Scriptura* in relation to the other four *solas* and the ecclesial community. Within the economy of grace, the Holy Spirit guides the community's reception of Scripture. As ecclesial tradition is caught up in the economy of redemption, it becomes a faithful arbiter of interpretive authority. The authority of tradition is derived and "provisional" but nonetheless authentic. He concludes, "Scripture *alone* is the supreme authority, but God in his grace decided that it is not good for Scripture to be alone. He thus authorized tradition, and Scripture" (144).

Chapter four looks to overcome Protestantism's excessive diversity by positing an ecclesiology grounded in Reformational *solas*. To this end, Vanhoozer repositions the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers as an ecclesiological consequence of *solus Christus*. By virtue of union with Christ, the believer is united to all members of the one true church. Therefore, Scripture's proper interpretive context encompasses both the local congregation and the universal church.

In chapter five, Vanhoozer argues that the church is commissioned to glorify God (*soli Deo Gloria*) through visible and outward unity. Such fellowship is achieved through "strong denominationalism" wherein individual churches come together by

retrieving the gospel "contextually" despite disagreement over nonessentials. Vanhoozer identifies "first-level" or essential doctrines which demand common assent due to their close proximity to the gospel. He also offers suggestions for future cooperation among Protestants, including transdenominational "table talk." In this vision for outward fellowship, denominational diversity is welcomed and celebrated rather than bemoaned. Provocatively, Vanhoozer argues that "some [doctrinal] differences may be divine, intended by God for the enrichment of the church" (207).

Readers expecting a detailed account of Reformational theology or the historical context of the sixteenth-century will be disappointed. The author's contribution lies elsewhere in offering a constructive and somewhat fluid theological retrieval (which entails a dose of repetition and creativity) of the past in order to illumine the present. For instance, in retrieving the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, Vanhoozer discerns the significance of the interpreting community and thereby curtails the common misappropriation of sola scriptura that leads to interpretative anarchy. Evangelicalism often exhibits a certain ambiguity regarding the hermeneutical role of the ecclesial community—a naïve biblicism which tends toward interpretive subjectivism. Recognizing such a predicament, Vanhoozer recasts the Reformers' vision for "catholic unity under canonical authority" which situates scriptural reading within the ecclesial community, both past or present. Ecclesial tradition is the "'long past' of the Spirit's work" which possesses an "appointed role in the economy of salvation" (139, 143). Moreover, tradition is the Church's "corporate testimony" and "consensus teaching on Scripture's fundamental story line" (205; 137). This catholic orientation confronts the individualism of many evangelical faith communities.

In conclusion, *Biblical Authority after Babel* is a welcome contribution on the five-hundredth anniversary of the Reformation. The book exhibits characteristic traits of Vanhoozer's other writings—commanding rhetoric, compelling argumentation, and theological ingenuity. Vanhoozer offers a persuasive defense of the Protestant Reformation by adequately addressing the concerns of detractors and resourcing the reformers' dogmatic principles of the Reformation for the church today.

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The Triune God. **By Fred Sanders. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2016. 256 pages. Paperback, $24.99.**

Exegetical over-reaching of premodern interpreters has often tainted the authority and respectability of the doctrine of the Trinity among contemporary theologians. Conscious of the apparent difficulties for Christian theology, Fred Sanders—professor of theology at Biola University—aims to "make our knowledge of the Trinity more secure by ordering our language about it more accurately" (185). A key component of such revision, which also serves to govern the book's outline, is that "the manner of the Trinity's revelation dictates the shape of the doctrine" (19). According to Sanders, revelation of the triune God is located in the historical missions of the Son in the incarnation and the Spirit at Pentecost. It was the early church fathers' awareness of the theological claims of Scripture, particularly in the gospel narratives, that led them to read the economy of salvation "retrospectively" as the authoritative revelation of the divine life of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Recapitulating this well-trodden path, Sanders guides readers into the theo-drama of Scripture to reconsider the nature and form of the doctrine of the Trinity.

Chapters one through five explore the self-gifting of the triune God in the missions of the Son and Holy Spirit, thereby laying the revelatory foundation for the doctrine of the Trinity. Chapter one situates Trinitarian dogma in the realm of worship; to speak of the triune God is "essentially a spiritual exercise... a doxological movement of thought that gives glory to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit" (19). Chapters two and three introduce the nature of the triune God's self-disclosure. Although the doctrine of the Trinity is not "presented to us in a formulated state," it is nonetheless revealed in a "direct, intense, and personal way" (39, 40). God's self-witness incorporates "salvific actions" and "explanatory words." In the New Testament, the "eternal conversation" of the triune God extends outward in the "self-interpreting" economic missions of the Son and Spirit. Chapter four establishes the canonical unity of the biblical text, which serves as a presupposition of Trinitarian theology. The doctrine of the Trinity, Sanders argues, "arises from the totality of Scripture rather than from a congeries of scattered texts" (104). The unity of the Old and New Testament also exhibits a unified narrative that reveals the "agency of the triune God" (105).

Chapter five considers the internal triune relations of origin. The missions-processions scheme (as opposed to the more enigmatic idiom of the economic and immanent Trinity) provides the primary conceptual framework for distinguishing the triune persons. The triune missions and processions must be distinguished— the former terminating in time while the latter in eternity—without severing the link between God's external and internal acts.

Chapters six through eight further specify the relationship between God's triune self-disclosure and Holy Scripture. The historical missions are foundational for the New Testament canon, which "receives" and "presupposes" divine revelation. Sanders identifies three aspects of Trinitarian doctrine in New Testament. The Scriptures present (1) raw data in speaking of the Father, Son, and Spirit. The data occurs alongside (2) "patterned reflection" which puts (3) "pressure" on the interpreter to develop distinctions among the persons while maintaining unity. Sanders' ruminations on the unveiling of the Trinity in Scripture are insightful and carefully nuanced. In chapter eight, Sanders discusses prosopological exegesis of the Old Testament—a favored interpretive practice of early Christian communities—and endorses a recovery of this hermeneutic in the Church today. Sanders' exposition of Scripture in preceding chapters is limited to the New Testament—a methodology which corresponds to the qualitative difference between triune revelation before and after the economic sending of the Word and Spirit. It is, however, unfortunate that Sanders does not initiate this recommendation by realizing the dogmatic potential of the testimony of the prophets. Nonetheless, the study promotes further rereading of the Old Testament to clarify its distinct contribution to Trinitarian dogma.

The Triune God bridges Christian dogmatics, theological method, and hermeneutics. The dogmatic location of revelation, for instance, is a crucial part of Sanders' "seismic retrofitting" of the doctrine of the Trinity (180). In its widest signification, divine revelation embraces inscripturated revelation. Verbal revelation, Sanders argues, upholds the unity of God's being and act, and is therefore necessary for the flourishing of Trinitarian theology. However, revelation is properly restricted to "the actual historical sending of the Son and the Spirit in the incarnation and Pentecost" (185). Sanders thus distinguishes, without separating, God's triune revelation in the historical missions and the written attestation to those missions. Such an approach accords with the biblical witness, for "God did not first describe the Trinity's eternal

processions and then display them in missions" (94). This instructive construal serves to curtail interpreters' heightened expectations to discover a formulated doctrine of the Trinity in the Bible. Theology proper must "generate" a corresponding theology of revelation which in turn governs and shapes bibliology and scriptural reading. Holy Scripture proceeds from the domain of the Word and Spirit. Sanders remarks, "The Trinity is in the Bible because the Bible is in the Trinity" (44).

Theological reading yields a doctrine of the Trinity by tracing the text's witness to the immanent processions of the Son and Spirit revealed in the economy. In this process, theological discourse remains transparent to the particularity of the biblical writings. When overburdened, linguistic idioms sever the link between revelation and Trinitarian theology. As a result, the biblical basis of the doctrine of the Trinity is undermined. In contrast, according to Sanders' approach (which comes to view in the exegetically-focused chapters 6–8), the doctrine of the Trinity emerges as an interpretative gloss on the biblical narrative (e.g. Jesus' baptism in the Jordan). These brief exegetical readings are particularly illuminating and prompt further interpretive work in this mode. Moreover, Sanders overcomes a prevalent criticism against classical Trinitarian teaching by offering a portrait of the triune God deeply rooted in scriptural exegesis.

In grounding all human divine knowledge in the Word and Spirit, *The Triune God* successfully provides a "more secure footing" for Trinitarian theology (22). The volume may serve as an introductory textbook on the doctrine of Trinity for both undergraduate and graduate classes. That said, Sanders does not present a comprehensive historical or systematic account of the Trinity. Rather, he calls the church to ground the doctrine in the "intentional self-revelation of God" (106). The deity of the triune persons provides the theological anchor which unites the eternal processions and temporal missions. The Son, as God, and the Holy Spirit, as God, are truly "God's self-gift in the economy" (151).

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God the Trinity: Biblical Portraits. **By Malcolm B. Yarnell III. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2016. xi + 260 pages. Hardback, $29.99.**

Malcolm Yarnell's *God the Trinity: Biblical Portraits*, offers an excellent study on the biblical foundations of the doctrine of the Trinity, one that is conducted with significant interaction with historical theology. Yarnell, research professor of systematic theology at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (and, full disclosure, my close colleague), maintains that the Bible definitely affirms God's triune nature, but that only those with eyes to see will discern this. Modern interpreters trained by an Enlightenment hermeneutic often miss seeing God's triune nature in Scripture primarily because they approach the text with interpretive methods that are alien to the text itself. By contrast, those steeped in the Scripture's own communicative "idiom"—like the church fathers and other "pre-modern" exegetes both reformation and contemporary—have consistently underscored God's Trinitarian nature. The structure of Yarnell's study is consistent with what he understands to be this biblical idiom. Scripture is not a human document to be subjected to modern methods of historical-critical analysis; it is divine revelation which paints for us various portraits of God and his interactions with the world. Subsequently, Yarnell, like an art connoisseur, chooses eight of these portraits, displays them, and then offers rich comment and theological reflection.

Throughout *God the Trinity* Yarnell notes the inadequacies of modern (i.e. Enlightenment) interpretive strategies for understanding Scripture and how these thwart a robust Trinitarian theology. Modern exegesis underscores the historical-critical method, scientific analysis, and is dominated by mathematical and experiential claims. From the outset, these methods avoid considerations related to God's *nature* or *being*, concepts which today are deemed off-limits because of their metaphysical and/or Greek implications. In short, modern exegesis is inherently anti-Trinitarian and anti-Hellenistic (93, following Francis Watson). It is thus no surprise, Yarnell notes, to see some current evangelical interpreters make statements intimating that the doctrine of the Trinity is not revealed in Scripture even though it might contain the raw materials for such a doctrine (10–11).

Yarnell wants to counter these trends: "The Trinity is definitely revealed in the New Testament and, for those with sensitive enough ears, across both testaments" (11). The key to this hearing lies in broadening one's approach to interpreting the Scriptures. Yarnell does not wish to discard the historical-critical method altogether; he seeks to employ it in a chastened and limited manner (11) alongside of other "pre-critical" interpretive methods (86) that have appeared throughout the Christian tradition: typology, personalism, and *theologia* to name a few. Collectively, these approaches affirm that God does reveal his nature to a limited degree primarily through his acts (18, 99–100).

The structure of Yarnell's gallery of texts is easy to discern. His initial portraits, Matthew 28:19–20, and 2 Corinthians 13:16, are placed first because these texts relate to the Christian's first encounter with the Triune God, namely, through gospel proclamation and baptism (the Great Commission passage), and through the church's ongoing encounter of grace in its discipleship (the closing of 2 Corinthians). His next portrait, the *Shema* (Deuteronomy 6:4–6), considers the Old Testament's portrait of God in an effort to demonstrate the continuity between the one God of the Old Testament, the Christological monotheism of the New Testament, and the Trinitarian monotheism of the early church fathers. From there, Yarnell spends three chapters in the Gospel of John (John 1:18, 16:14–15, 17:21–22) where he explores the contours of John's rich immanent Trinitarian theology. These chapters lie at the heart of Yarnell's project as they represent an extensive exploration on the divine nature. The final two portraits address God's Trinitarian activity in the world (Ephesians 1:3–14) and the Trinitarian features related to his future coming (Revelation 5:6). Taken together, *God the Trinity* invites Christians to a refined way of seeing God's triune glory throughout the art gallery of the Christian canon.

Yarnell's Trinitarian theology deftly draws from multiple traditions throughout the history of the church, a feature which comprises one of the book's great strengths. *God the Trinity* is not written by a Cappadocian or Augustinian specialist; neither is it the product of a specialist in biblical studies or philosophical theology. As a theologian, Yarnell is well read in each of these fields and integrates them nicely into a coherent Trinitarianism that is biblical, Baptist, and supportive of the church's mission.

Several points are worthy of note. First, his study favors the Cappadocian or Eastern approach to the Trinity over Augustine's since, he contends, the former does a better job at avoiding modalism, Unitarianism, and a blurring of the divine persons (83–84, 167). He thus is generally critical of the Augustinian doctrine of *filioque* (154) while affirming numerous Eastern theological themes related to Trinity, specifically the doctrines of deification and theosis (though understood in an

evangelical way; "deification by grace, not by nature," 51).

Second, Yarnell is somewhat critical of the Trinitarianism articulated by the reformed tradition, a point that appears to derive from his preference for Eastern Trinitarianism over Western. B.B. Warfield is specifically singled out numerous times for criticism for the way he prioritizes the divine essence (9) and minimizes the sub-numeration within the ontological Trinity (147, see also 157n, and 175). Warfield, however, should not be treated as the standard bearer for the reformed view on the Trinity for the simple reason that the reformed tradition admits a variety of views on the doctrine (a point Yarnell would no doubt agree). Yarnell's study would have benefitted from greater interaction with the broader swath of the reformed tradition on the Trinity, including such writers as Bartholomew Keckermann, John Owen, and Jonathan Edwards.

Third, Yarnell creatively repackages and incorporates elements of modern scholarship to bolster his Biblicist Trinitarianism. He affirms the basic vision of Karl Rahner's famous axiom, but with important qualifications: "*The economic Trinity reveals the immanent Trinity truly but not exhaustively*" (173). This allows him to affirm a continuity between the economic and immanent Trinity without threatening divine transcendence and the priority of the immanent Trinity in our theological reflection. From this he correctly challenges the tendency, demonstrated by some in the complementarian-egalitarian debate, to allow theological anthropology to drive Trinitarian theology (172). He also incorporates aspects of Richard Bauckham's understanding of the "Christological monotheism" found in the New Testament as a healthy counter-balance to the way modern interpreters accentuate the differences between the God of the Old Testament and the God of the New (71–74, 83).

Systematic theologians, biblical scholars, historical theologians, as well as serious students of Scripture will find *God the Trinity* stimulating, accessible, and rich with theological wisdom. I highly recommend it.

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A Reader's Guide to the Major Writings of Jonathan Edwards. **Edited by Nathan A. Finn and Jeremy M. Kimble. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017. 240 pages. Paperback, $21.99.**

Building on an ever-increasing volume of literature on the eighteenth-century theologian, this volume is an introductory guide to the major writings of Jonathan Edwards. While other books have written about his life, systematized his theology, or chronicled the pastor's legacy, this book provides detailed analysis of his principle written works. The book orients the reader to each work's historical context, basic contents, and theological legacy. Each chapter on the major works ends with a point of contemporary application.

This volume is edited by Nathan Finn and Jeremy Kimble. Finn currently serves as Provost and Dean of the University Faculty at North Greenville University in Tigerville, SC. At the time of publication, he served as Dean of the School of Theology and Missions and professor of theological studies at Union University in Jackson, Tennessee. Kimble is assistant professor of theological studies at Cedarville University in Cedarville, Ohio. Together, they have assembled an impressive group of contributors from a variety of backgrounds and institutions.

The work begins with an introduction from the editors. They explain the

purpose of this work is "to bridge the gap between the work of scholars and the interests of general readers, especially pastors and ministerial students" (18). The major writings of Edwards include those that were popular during his lifetime, as well as works published posthumously which influenced later generations of missionaries, scholars, pastors, and laypeople. The book is organized by an initial chapter on how to read Edwards, followed by nine chapters dedicated to Edwards's major writings, and finally an appendix on John Piper's personal encounter with Edwards.

The first chapter, written by Dane Ortlund, will be the most helpful to the reader who does not have direct experience with reading Edwards. But before he offers a view on how to read Edwards, he offers an apology on why to read Edwards. Why would today's busy pastors and seminarians have any interest in reading this eighteenth century Puritan preacher? What are the benefits of engaging with his writings? In sum, Edwards ushers the reader into the presence of God. This chapter sees reading Edwards as a journey that is both theologically rigorous and devotionally stimulating.

In chapter two, Finn looks at Edwards's autobiographical writings. These important texts provide a look into the inner thought life of the eminent pastor. Immediately, the reader is directly introduced to the personal spiritual life of Edwards. Starting with Edwards's private reflections is helpful because it connects the reader to the heart of the pastor. Chapter three, written by Jeremy Kimble, analyzes Edwards's revival writings. These works constitute the works most widely read by non-specialists. These writings outline Edwards's theology of revival, salvation, and the church. The fourth chapter analyzes Edwards's *Justification by Faith Alone*. Michael McClenahan guides the reader through a key soteriological debate in the eighteenth century. In these debates, Edwards shows his skill, not only as a constructive theologian, but also as a polemicist. Arguing against Arminian doctrine, Edwards presents a sophisticated account of Reformed theology. McClenehan's chapter is helpful because it introduces the reader to contemporary scholarly debates over Edwards's teaching on justification. Gerald McDermott looks at Edward's *Religious Affections* in chapter five. The work covers a variety of intellectual disciplines and proves to be a very helpful work for contemporary evaluations of revivals and individual piety. McDermott's chapter helps the reader to understand and apply Edwards's interpretation of spiritual revitalization for today. In chapter six, Rhys Bezzant presents *The Life of David Brainerd*. This chapter sheds light on the background to a popular work. The next two chapters, written by Joe Rigney and Robert Caldwell respectively, deal with some of the most philosophically sophisticated works by Edwards, *Freedom of the Will* and *Original Sin*. These tomes are technically challenging reads which defend a Reformed perspective. In chapter nine, Sean Michael Lucas introduces Edwards's *History of the Work of Redemption*. This work is a sermon series delivered by Edwards from his Northampton pulpit. It is a biblical-theological work that Edwards hoped to be the foundation for a major work later to be published. Unfortunately, Edwards never completed that work due to his untimely death. Contemporary readers might find Edwards's interpretations on history and eschatology strange, but Lucas helps in identifying key insights and applying them for today. Chapter ten is devoted to Edwards's affectional ethics. Paul Helm outlines three of Edwards's works to give a broad sketch of Edwards's ethical writings. Finally, the reader is provided with an appendix, written by John Piper. It charts his personal encounter with Edwards. The appendix will be especially

enlightening for those who are familiar with the preaching and writing of Piper. He shows how Edwards shaped his theology and encouraged him in his Christian walk.

This volume proves to be an outstanding introduction to Edwards's major writings. It gives broad outlines to the contours of Edwards's theology. Each author brings a unique and insightful contribution to the work. However, Rigney and Caldwell's essays provide the most helpful essays to the book's intended audience. The dense nature of those works prove to be difficult reading for the normal pastor and seminarian. Yet, their essays make Edwards's prose much more accessible.

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Evangelical Dictionary of Theology. **3rd edition. Edited by Daniel J. Treier and Walter A. Elwell. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017. 972 pages. Hardcover, $59.99.**

Since 1984, the *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology* has been an indispensable resource for students of theology. Both the first and second edition (2001) were edited by Walter Elwell, but with his 80th birthday arriving in 2017, Elwell turned the responsibility for this, the third edition, over to Daniel Treier.

Of course, as a third edition and not a new book, much of the content remains the same from the previous versions. But in the preface to the third edition, editor Treier gives four of the "chief components" of this revision: (1) a reduction of overall length (from 1312 pages to 972); (2) addition of new content (150,000 words) and new contributors (younger, women, ethnic minority and Majority World perspectives); (3) updating every remaining article; and (4) updating all bibliographies. Each of these components deserves comment.

The shortened length comes from a narrower focus, on systematic theology per se, with less material on biblical or historical matters, and from a decision to omit articles on living theologians. The narrower focus is seen in the article on Pentecostalism. The new article is barely two-thirds the length of the article in the second edition, and has much less of the historical development and much more of the global expansion. Similarly, two articles on the Attributes and Doctrine of God are combined into one article on God that is less than half the length of the previous two. I am not sure how many articles there were on living theologians in the first edition, but flipping through the second edition I found articles on Millard Erickson, Gustavo Gutierrez, and Jurgen Moltmann. I am sure there were many more; all are omitted in the third edition.

A spot-check did find some of the new content mentioned by Treier. There was a completely new and much more up-to-date article on Church, Canon of Scripture, and Systematic Theology; numerous other new articles which were subsections of other articles (an article on the Trinity when it was a short subsection of the article on Doctrine of God; the same with Original Sin); new articles which were replacements or supplements to previous articles (a much more up-to-date article on Human Beings replacing Mankind; an article on Gender supplementing a much weaker article on Male and Female and replacing a dated article on Woman, Biblical Concept of), and some articles on totally new topics (such as Creation Care).

In terms of new contributors, I did not make a thorough comparison. There was a mix of names of those whose books I have on my shelves, and others unfamiliar to me. There were 75 authors who were noted as deceased (out of a total of about

350 contributors) and at least twenty whose names were almost certainly female.

The third new component, the updating of every remaining article, I will not dispute, but I will note that the revisions in many cases were very minor, especially in the cases of articles from authors now deceased. For example, an article on Adam by Leon Morris was quite dated, but had very little revision from the article in the second edition. The article of Justification was written by J.I. Packer in the second edition; it was reproduced almost verbatim in the third edition, but a new co-author, R. M. Allen, added a short paragraph relating to the New Perspective on Paul. Surprisingly, the article on Postmodernism was almost entirely the same.

In terms of the fourth new component, the updating of bibliographies, my spot-check of articles and their accompanying bibliographies was much more uniform and positive. Almost all the articles I checked had extensively updated bibliographies, remedying the chief complaint I had of the second edition. Having the bibliographies accompanying the articles was a very valuable feature of the second edition, but was weakened by bibliographies that were very often seriously dated. That is much less of an issue with this third edition.

There is another change, not mentioned by the editor, but of great value to readers. In the second edition, one could usually track down the article one wanted through cross-references (for Trinity; see God, Doctrine of; for Original Sin, see Sin). But occasionally I would struggle to find the article that addressed the topic I was studying. The improvement in the third edition is in the inclusion, at the very end, of an alphabetical index of articles. There will still be a need for cross-referencing, and editor Treier states that they have taken that task "very seriously." But the index allows one to easily find if the specific topic desired is treated, and if not, one can usually see a related topic for which there is an article.

While no book is perfect, least of all one with hundreds of contributors and articles, the third edition of *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology* is a definite improvement over the second edition, which was, for all its faults, by far the best sourcebook for theology students. This third edition is even better, and should serve students of theology for the future in the same stellar way the second edition has served students in the past.

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Studies in Philosophy and Ethics

Teaching Philosophy: A Guide. **By Steven M. Cahn. New York: Routledge, 2018. 101 pages. Paperback, $24.95.**

This volume is divided into two parts. The first seven chapters deal with the art and practice of teaching, and the second part deals with specific philosophical topics and how best to introduce them to students. The final chapter focuses on the importance institutions of higher learning should place upon good teaching. I limit my comments to Cahn's philosophy of teaching as he develops it in the first six chapters, dealing only with his thoughts about teaching undergraduates.

Cahn lays out a teacher's responsibilities. Teachers are responsible to know their subject better than their students. A teacher's authority derives from the fact that a teacher is expected to be an expert in the subject he or she professes (2). Cahn makes the important but often forgotten point that "knowing a subject and knowing how to teach it effectively are quite different" (4). Cahn thinks there are three things

that contribute to a teacher's success: "motivation, organization, and clarification" (13).

Motivation can take many forms. Here the focus is on the kind of rhetoric calculated to foster in students the attention needed to engage philosophy with joy. Beginning class by asking students to imagine a scenario is much more effective than telling students to turn to page 40 of their textbook.

Organization involves the careful arrangement and presentation of material. Here Cahn is unsparing in his criticism of those teachers who are interested in helping only the best or most talented students. "Poor teachers," he writes, "may not care whether their students understand a presentation, but successful teachers are eager to explain basic points to those who have trouble with them" (9). He concludes, "If someone has no interest in offering such help, that person is not cut out to be a teacher and is akin to a surgeon who is unhappy about having to deal with sick people" (9).

Clarification involves ensuring that students understand material presented to them. Clarification can be undermined if instructors speak too quickly and not as deliberately as they should (11). Lack of clarity can also result when teachers use terms with which students are unfamiliar.

Next, Cahn deals with a teacher's concerns, such as the preparation of syllabi, the professor's regular attendance at class sessions, keeping office hours, etc. Cahn singles out for discussion the importance of knowing student names. He recalls that a colleague with more than 200 students had managed to remember the names of all his students and even a little about their lives (21–22).

Regarding papers and examinations Cahn discusses the importance of making writing assignments clear. He also discusses preventative measures teachers can take to help students avoid such things as caricaturing positions with which they disagree, quoting sources improperly, and turning in written work with grammatical and spelling errors (24–25). Furthermore, Cahn provides a good reason for assigning exams. Exams motivate students to read the material assigned (28).

Regarding grades Cahn characterizes grades as "an expert's judgment of the quality of a student's work in a specific course" (32). He cautions against two equally misleading practices: never awarding high grades and never assigning low ones (35–36).

As far as a teacher's relationship to students, Cahn singles out for discussion three pitfalls to be avoided by professors: becoming a student's counselor, friend, or lover (40). The emotional difficulties faced by some students can lead caring professors to adopt the role of a counselor, and this is a role for which professors of philosophy, considered from the standpoint of their professional credentials, are unsuited. Friendship with students can also lead to preferential treatment that is inappropriate for the relationship between teacher and student, which is defined by the professional responsibilities of each. Furthermore, romantic relationships between professors and students, particularly when those students are members of a professor's class, are inappropriate, and constitute, on the professor's part, a blatant abuse of power (40).

I have one critique. An adjunct instructor reading this book is likely to feel a deep sense of inadequacy. Many adjunct instructors, because they are not paid enough money to live on, must devote several hours a week to another occupation to make ends meet. Some are fortunate enough to land several teaching gigs, but my surmise is that just as many are not. Some advice to adjunct instructors about how to deal with the problems they face as part-time teachers would be a welcome addition

to the book if it is reissued.

Cahn has offered important considerations about the noble task of teaching. If any aspiring or veteran teacher reads *Teaching Philosophy* and as a result becomes better at the craft, then Cahn's purpose in writing the book will have been fulfilled.

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God Over All: Divine Aseity and the Challenge of Platonism. **By William Lane Craig. New York: Oxford University Press, 2017. 241 pages. Hardcover, $82.00.**

Platonism is one of the oldest and most prominent systems of philosophical beliefs, but is it compatible with a theistic worldview? That is the question that William Lane Craig considers in his book *God Over All*. Craig asserts that Platonism (as it regards the existence of abstract mathematical entities) is not compatible with a theistic worldview due to its violation of the doctrine of divine aseity. Aseity is the belief in God's self-sufficiency. He alone is eternal and uncreated, and all other things in existence proceed from him (1–2). Platonism, however, argues that there exists abstract entities independent of God that are eternal, uncreated, and potentially exemplified in reality; therefore, God is not the source of all other things in existence (2–3).

In support of divine aseity, Craig cites John 1:1 to emphasize that God alone is eternal and uncreated. All other reality is created and dependent on God (13–24). He claims the same idea is found in Paul's writings, specifically 1 Corinthians, Romans, and Colossians (24–27). The church fathers as well supported the notion of aseity. Some of the fathers even referred to Platonism as heresy (31–40). From a theological viewpoint, Platonism is also heretical because it implies that there is an abstract entity called *deity* that God exemplifies making his existence dependent on something (43).

The modern issue of abstract entities involves mathematics stemming from the Indispensability Argument which claims that there are abstract entities that are needed in order to have referents in certain types of sentences (45–46). Singular terms and existential qualifiers are tools of ontological commitment: there is/are _____. Since a sentence such as 2+2=4 has simple terms and an object to which we supposedly must be ontologically committed, then there must be abstract entities to represent those terms (49–50). Thus, mathematics seems to commit the theist to the existence of necessary mathematical entities.

Craig reviews a number of potential approaches the theist could take in order to overcome this theological problem. Absolute Creationism argues that abstract entities were necessarily emanated/created by God. Divine Conceptualism, the view of the church fathers, reduces abstract entities to God's thoughts. Craig ultimately is dismissive of these realist views (though he thinks they are still available to a theist) and favors an anti-realist approach to mathematical entities. He prefers to reject the Indispensability Argument as committing one to the existence of abstract entities since it seems to imply that numerous strange and dubious entities exist. Views such as neutral logic and free logic state that the existential qualifier should be neutral in its claims of what does and does not exist. One should get rid of any preconditions in logic that settle what does and does not exist (140).

This opens a way to other approaches to mathematical entities which include fictionalism, figuralism, and pretense theory. Each of these theories regards

mathematical entities or discourse about such entities to be either literally false, merely figures of speech, or make-believe; however, mathematics still conveys some sort of truth. As a result, Platonic mathematical entities do not literally exist and a theist need not be ontologically committed to their existence. Craig believes that this is the best approach to overcoming the threat of Platonism to theism.

It must be said that Craig presents a strong biblical case against Platonism from which a Platonic theist will not easily extricate himself. If God is the source of all reality apart from himself, then a theist has good reason to suspect the theological adequacy of standard Platonism. It is difficult to see how a theist could make Platonism consistent with the biblical data on this issue, but perhaps it is possible.

That being said, I find Craig's criticisms of absolute creation and divine conceptualism (outside of the bootstrapping concern) rather insubstantial. Further, it seems to me that the bootstrapping concern is easily overcome without giving up a constituent ontology as Craig suggests, such as appealing to Aristotelian substance theory. I also find it strange that Craig notes that divine conceptualism is the historical theistic ontology but does not cover the classical approaches, only a modern one. Lastly, Craig treats the Indispensability Argument as the crux of Platonic thought; however, I am not convinced that it is. It seems to me that a (modified) Platonic theist has other arguments both philosophical and theological to bolster his claims for abstract entities besides the Indispensability Argument. Even if that argument fails, it seems that abstract mathematical entities could still exist based on other grounds.

Craig's appeal to anti-realism also bothers me. According to Craig, mathematical truth can be maintained via fictionalism, figuralism, and pretense theory. I do not see how. I can understand what truth *The Lord of the Flies* is conveying even though it is fiction. I can understand what truth "It is raining cats and dogs" is conveying even though it is figurative language. I can understand the truth behind hypothetical situations even though they are make-believe. But what truth am I to receive from *2+2=4* if this claim is literally false, metaphorical, or just make-believe? When science claims that light travels at 186,000 miles a second, what truth am I supposed to conclude if this claim is not literal?

In fact, why should anyone accept mathematics if it is not a literal claim about reality? People do not accept works of fiction as guides to history or figurative language and imagination as statements of fact. Could not a person simply reject mathematics as irrelevant to understanding reality? What does it matter that mathematics is internally consistent within its own rules? Why accept the rules in the first place? It seems to me that Craig's preferred path leads to an epistemological relativism regarding mathematics and any truth claim that relies on it, which undercuts anti-realism's warrant.

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The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Death. **Edited by Ben Bradley, Fred Feldman, and Jens Johansson. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2015 reprint. xii + 502 pages. Hardcover, $170.00; Paperback, $50.00.**

Bringing together 22 scholars, editors Ben Bradley, Fred Feldman, and Jens Johansson have given us a very engaging philosophical contribution to the philosophy of death. As the editors tell us in the introduction, the philosophy of death is not an orthodox branch of philosophy, since the philosophy of death is

"intersubdisciplinary", unlike strict metaphysics and ethics. The pivot of this volume is for analytical metaphysics and ethics to contribute to more precise conceptual analyses of death.

The approach is good because the more subdisciplines interact with each other, the more such subdisciplines can benefit and flourish. However, the goodness of such an approach contrasts with the book's restricted diversity of thematic perspectives. In a handbook such as this, one expects the variety of the contributions to come from as many subdisciplinary perspectives as feasible in the space allotted. What one finds, however, is an excessively cramped focus on only a limited set of topics from a limited set of thematic perspectives. Enlarging the handbook's scope would have greatly helped with clarifying the multifaceted nature of death itself. Nonetheless, such limited scope is enthralling within the boundaries of its exploration.

The strength of the present volume is twofold, as we will show in what follows. First, the authors represent a diversity of proposals within the few thematic horizons wherein they conduct their investigations. Second, the handbook offers the reader the first constructive treatment on the subject of death nurtured, almost entirely, within the analytic tradition.

The first theme of the handbook treats what death itself is. Cody Gilmore's "When Do Things Die?" investigates *when* things die by helping us find metaphysically necessary and sufficient conditions for the timing of death, construed as cessation of life. Fred Feldman's "Death and the Disintegration of Personality" challenges the idea that a person's death implies a cessation of *existence*. In "Person and Corpse", Eric Olsen explores, and finds wanting, the possibility that we continue to exist as an unconscious corpse after death, which brings up the ontological issue of what corpses *are*, and whether a corpse is *identical* to a living person prior to death.

The second theme is the relationship between death and time. Dean Zimmerman's "Personal Identity and the Survival of Death" explores how personal survival will impact how one understands death and personhood by providing a profitable taxonomy according to which the implications of a criterion for the possibility of survival could depend on the acceptance of the doctrine of temporal parts. Theodore Sider's "The Evil of Death: What Can Metaphysics Contribute?" is an ethical perspective on such a theme, showing how four-dimensionalism and presentism are compatible with the evilness of death. Lars Bergström's "Death and Eternal Recurrence" is the only analytic take on a continental perspective on death and time, Nietzsche's idea of eternal recurrence or "eternal return" (the idea that everything that has happened will eternally happen again).

The third theme is a historical one, with a solitary take on Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, and an exorbitant amount of attention paid to the view of Epicurus. In "Death in Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle," Gareth Matthews focuses on the "Socrates" represented in *The Apology*, Plato's robust view of the immortality of the soul, and Aristotle's ideas of the soul and immorality in *The Nicomachean Ethics* and *De Anima*. Phillip Mitsis, John Broome, Roy Sorensen, Christopher Belshaw, Kai Draper, all Steven Luper *all* providing variations on the Epicurean theme of whether death can harm us, whether it should be feared, what attitude it is rationally appropriate to have toward it, whether it is evil, or whether its badness can be retroactive.

We believe the historical theme of the handbook could have been greatly enhanced by confining the variations on the Epicurean theme to one or two contributions. This is not a criticism of the contributions themselves (they are all very well done), but an editorial critique of the restricted scope of the contributions. Where

is an analysis of death from the existential perspective? Why cannot there be a substantial analytic contribution from the continental perspective? And if the handbook is going to focus on Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and Epicurus, why not touch upon Augustine, Pascal, Schopenhauer, Kierkegaard, Heidegger, Sartre or Camus? And why not include the poetic or literary perspectives of someone like Shakespeare, Coleridge or Tolstoy?

The fourth theme is death and immortality. Both "Immortality" by John Martin Fischer and "The Makropulos Case Revisited: Reflections on Immortality and Agency" by Connie Rosati provide rejoinders to the famous "The Makropulos Case: Reflections on the Tedium of Immortality" by Bernard Williams. Williams launches a critique of immortality based on its undesirability and lack of value. Fischer finds both criticisms off the mark, and Rosati argues for the rationality of longing for immortality given that it is an expression of our autonomous agency.

At this point, the handbook circles back to a variation on the third theme, with Matthew Hanser's "The Wrongness of Killing and The Badness of Death", which considers the ethics of killing and its connection with why death is bad. Since killing violates the "special value or worth in virtue of which" persons "are owed respect", the degree to which killing deprives persons of such a value is the degree to which such a person's death is bad. The essay should have been positioned before Fischer's.

The fifth, and final, theme is the relation of death to various issues in applied ethics: abortion, war, animal death, and capital punishment. Don Marquis' "Abortion and Death" defends four theses: abortion causes the death of a fetus, the abortion of a non-sentient fetus causes death, abortion harms someone if it deprives one of valuable experiences, and harming a fetus presumptively does something wrong to the fetus. F.M. Kamm's "The Morality of Killing in War: Some Traditional and Nontraditional Views" is an overview of the classic stances thinkers have taken on killing in war along with alternatives stances, with the caveat that such stances spring from nonconsequentialist ethics. Alastair Norcross's "The Significance of Death for Animals" investigates the issue of whether death is bad for animals, where the degree of badness is in direct proportion to the quantity of well-being that is lost in a particular death. Torbjörn Tännsjö's "Capital Punishment" is an incisive commentary on whether the killing of those who have themselves murdered other humans deserve killing themselves.

There is one obvious criticism of the present volume, mentioned at the beginning of the review. In one sense, we are not surprised at the lack of other disciplinary perspectives represented in the volume. The vast majority of the contributors are analytic philosophers. On the one hand, this is a strength of the volume, but the fact that it is an Oxford Handbook suggests that it would have a wider influence from other disciplinary perspectives. We have in mind explicit contributions from historians, literary scholars, scientists, and, especially, theologians. One easy way to remedy this problem would have been to publish it in a distinct series, but as it is published in the Handbook series one would expect a wider set of disciplines intended for a wider audience. Relatedly, the topics of a Handbook seem myopic. While there is an extensive discussion on death as cessation and important ethical applications of that discussion, one would expect a more comprehensive set of topics. Some of these might include various religious perspectives on death and how this fits into a broad encompassing systematic and practical theology.

In the end, this is the first sustained analytic treatment of death. It deserves the attention of philosophers and theologians, especially those sympathetic to the

analytic tradition. Both religious philosophers and theologians will siphon out significant resources for additional constructive work on death and the afterlife. Apart from the criticism above concerning its mis-categorization as a Handbook, the present volume is an important contribution to the literature on death as a concept to be mined for wider use in analytic philosophy of religion and theology.

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Studies in Pastoral Ministry and Missions

Portraits of a Pastor: 9 Essential Roles of a Church Leader. **Edited by Jason K. Allen. Nashville: Moody Publishers, 2017. 192 pages. Paperback, $13.99.**

Portraits of a Pastor is a collection of lectures that was given at the first annual For the Church conference at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Jason Allen, the president of Midwestern, edited the volume and with eight others contributed to it. This book does not intend to give an exhaustive in-depth look at each of the roles of the pastor. Instead, what Allen has compiled are 9 snap shots of different roles he, and the other contributors, believe are essential to the ministry of the pastor. The central questions of the book are as follow: "What is the pastor to be? What must the pastor do?" (13). The picture that emerges seems overwhelming for one person to perform; nevertheless, the book provides a solid overview of the ministry of the pastor.

The best chapters are Jared Wilson's chapter, "Pastor as Shepherd," Owen Strachan's chapter, "Pastor as Theologian," and Donald S. Whitney's chapter, "Pastor as Man of God." Wilson focuses on the importance of loving people and loving Jesus. A pastor that does not love is not really a pastor at all. He writes, "What I notice a lot every day in the Christian spheres of social media is just how incredibly adept we evangelicals are at doctrinal criticism, cultural rebuke, theological analysis…But what seems less prevalent is love for Jesus" (26). Strachan presents an excellent exposition of 2 Timothy 1:5–14. His argument, that the academy has "boxed theology up," and that "the demotion of the pastor in American and even Western cultural life is likely the most significant intellectual trend of the last five hundred years," is something that pastors and theologians need to think through. Would not theology best be done by those serving in the church? Whitney presents the need for pastors to pursue personal holiness. He rightly notes, "Not every man of God is a pastor, but every pastor must be a man of God" (161). Whitney further makes the argument that pastors need to exercise spiritual disciplines to be the man of God that God calls them to be.

Some of the weaker chapters are Allen's chapter, "Pastor as Preacher," and Christian T. George's chapter, "Pastor as Church Historian," To be clear, these chapters are not defective chapters, they just are not as helpful as the others. Allen makes a few statements that are questionable. First, he states, "I believe preaching is the pastor's preeminent responsibility" (57). This is understandable coming from a preacher like Allen. But is it correct? Would not a more biblical approach be to say,

the preeminent responsibility of the pastor is prayer and the teaching of the Word (Acts 6:4), with teaching encompassing more than just preaching? Second, he states, "After all, as Broadus observed, if preaching was primary in Jesus' ministry, ought it not be primary in ours?" (70). Again, is this correct? Was Jesus more focused on preaching to the masses or on teaching his disciples?

George's argument is the weakest of the chapters because it is probably the most unnecessary of the 9 roles mentioned in the book. That is not to say that church history does not have its place. But it is to say that if a pastor is not a church historian, it would not adversely affect his ministry in a significant way. Yes, he can benefit from church history. But to call it essential seems to be a stretch. Also, George makes a statement that does not align with what typically has been understood throughout history: "Christian history has been called the queen of all disciplines because, like an umbrella, she encompasses the rest of them" (95). Actually, theology is referred to as the queen of all disciplines, not church history.

From an overall perspective, there is a lack of cohesion between the chapters. In other words, how would these different roles function together in the life of a pastor? Also, is there one that stands alone as the most important? While Allen would contend that it is the preaching ministry of the pastor, I think Duesing better captures the preeminent role of the pastor. He wrote, "The pastor can faithfully be a missionary as a natural part of his primary duties of prayer and the ministry of the Word" (145). A helpful addition to the book would have been to show how all these different roles serve the primary duties of the pastor.

Portraits of a Pastor was not meant to be a dictionary of pastoral theology. Instead, the goal was to offer a short summary of 9 roles that are essential to the pastor's ministry. While there were some critiques noted, there is much the reader can gain from each chapter in this book. Allen has done well to compile a strong list of contributors with a strong list of topics. For the pastor who is short on time, but would like to read something meaningful, this is a worthy choice.

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Encountering the History of Missions: From the Early Church to Today. **By John Mark Terry and Robert L. Gallagher. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017. 405 pages. Paperback, $29.99.**

As the latest addition to the stellar Encountering Mission series, which has been ably edited by Scott Moreau, this work does not disappoint. In the preface, Mark Terry mentioned Latourette's seven-volume *History of the Expansion of Christianity* and the difficulty of covering the history of missions in one volume. He then remarked, "Inevitably, students, professors, and reviewers will wonder why we did not include this or exclude that" (vi). This reviewer would have preferred a more detailed treatment of two particularly important missiological issues that will be mentioned later. Also, as researchers in the rapidly developing field of World Christianity uncover more material about key mission figures in the Global South, future history books should provide more examples of such key people. Concerning Global South figures, the book provides a good description of Samuel (Adjayi) Crowther, a Nigerian Anglican priest born in 1807 who "translated the Bible into Yoruba, producing an excellent translation" and opened a mission that prospered (256).

The book is both detailed and accurate. Throughout the book, the tables and

sidebars are helpful rather than distracting. The case studies that were placed at the ends of chapters 1, 8–11, and 13–17 will be helpful for generating discussion in small-group situations in classrooms or online forums. For consistency, case studies should have been placed at the ends of the other chapters as well.

Beyond the requisite dates and locations, human interest stories draw the reader's attention. Examples abound: Martin Luther played the flute (147), the Moravians cast lots (204), and a woman and her husband sued John Wesley for defamation of character (228). Although some people believe that business as mission (BAM) is a recent innovation, other people view Hans Egede, "a colonist and trader for the Danish monarchy in early eighteenth-century Greenland," as a pioneer of BAM "because of his efforts to join trade with his passion for mission" (192–96).

Because many young Christians are not familiar with Donald McGavran and the Church Growth Movement (CGM), this reviewer was delighted to see an entire chapter devoted to the CGM. Among the interesting facets of the chapter, readers may be intrigued by the influence of the CGM on the Lausanne Covenant (350). In its fair treatment of the CGM, the book listed both "significant accomplishments" and "needed improvements" (349–52).

Because C-5 insider movements have caused a serious division among members of the Evangelical Missiological Society, more space should have been devoted to the movements in the book. Neither side will likely be offended by the summary statement: "Parshall and others have expressed concerns about the more radical approach, fearing that syncretism will be the result" (289). At the very least, explanations of C-1 through C-6 should have been included in this section.

Like insider movements, ancestral rites are a continuing source of controversy among Christians. A chapter devoted to Jesuit missions in various countries includes this description of how Matteo Ricci viewed the rites in China: "Ricci believed that the Chinese burned incense as a gesture of respect, not worship, and that food was given symbolically as a sign of ongoing care for the family member" (164). By quoting Wenhan Jiang, however, the chapter gives a different perspective when Jiang refers to the rites as "ancestor worship" (167). More clarity and details are needed in this section. A summary statement at the end of the chapter expresses ambivalence: "Not all Jesuit missionaries were good missionaries, and often early Catholic missions seem shallow, theologically thin, and sometimes syncretistic, effortlessly melting Catholicism into the local religions. Still, the Jesuit record shows remarkable faithfulness to Christ and flexibility in expression" (169).

The final chapter, "In Retrospect and Prospect," includes general descriptions of what missionaries did wrong and what they did right during the past centuries. Another section on the remaining work to be done forms an appropriate conclusion. *Encountering the History of Missions* is a concise, well-written text, and it will be useful in classrooms for many years to come.

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Mission to China: How an Englishman Brought the West to the Orient. **By John Holliday, Stroud, UK, Amberley, 2016, 305 pages. Hardcover, $32.95.**

This biography of Walter Henry Medhurst (1796–1857) is written by one of his descendants. Medhurst was arguably the most influential missionary during a turbulent first half-century of Protestant mission in East Asia, and influenced other

missionaries such as Karl Gützlaff, Hudson Taylor and David Livingstone.

The author provides excellent insights into Medhurst's background and mi-lieu. Illustrated color plates and the reduced price make it a highly desirable addition to institutional and personal libraries for readers interested in the history of Prot-estant Christianity in East Asia, including South-East Asia (Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand), China, Japan, and Korea.

Seven chapters provide excellent information about the early life and upbring-ing of Medhurst and his wife. Born in London, Medhurst followed when his father became an innkeeper at Ross-On-Wye in 1803. He enrolled at the prestigious St. Paul's School in London in 1807. In 1810 he moved to Gloucester, where he became a printer's apprentice. He was converted through the influence of William Bishop at Southgate Street Independent (Congregationalist) Chapel, and responded to an ad-vertisement of the Missionary Society in London to become an assistant to William Milne in Malacca. On the way he visited Madras, India, where he met and married Elizabeth Martin, a biracial English-Indian widow of a British officer with a son.

After arriving in Malacca in 1817, Medhurst received his theological training and ordination from his mentor Milne. He commenced mission work in Penang in 1819 and 1821 before he joined the faltering mission in Batavia (Jakarta), Java in 1822. From there he conducted evangelistic work and tract distribution in the Chi-nese and Malay (Indonesian) languages, while operating a mission press, develop-ing tracts, preparing a new Chinese New Testament translation and books on East Asian languages and geography. He conducted mission exploration trips to Java, the east coast of Malaya and southern Siam (Thailand), Borneo (Kalimantan), and Bali. If these activities were not enough, he was also pastor of the English community in Batavia, raising funds for a church building, now known as All Saints Angli-can Church Jakarta, as well as organized the Parapattan Orphanage. These first two English institutions established in Indonesia exist until this day.

After the death of China Protestant mission pioneer Robert Morrison in 1834, Medhurst assumed leadership among Protestant China missionaries. In 1835 he undertook a mission trip along the coast of China. He then returned to England 1836–1838 where he promoted mission work to a new generation of missionaries. In 1843 he established with the medical missionary William Lockhart the first mis-sion in Shanghai, where he continued his Bible translation work, made a visit to the interior of China, survived a local uprising and a mob attack, and made contacts with the Taiping Uprising.

Influenced by the social reform of early 19th century British Evangelicalism, Medhurst was opposed to slavery and to British participation in opium trade in East Asia.

Of course, much more could be written about Medhurst. Medhurst's theo-logical views and assistants William Young, Lukas Monton, and Choo Ti Lang were significant. Medhurst is an important and little-studied figure in the history of Christianity in Indonesia. Virtually all Protestant missionaries of his time, including Robert Morrison, two Americans who were martyred in Sumatra, and many other Dutch, German, British and American missionaries visited him on route to their postings in Indonesia and East Asia.

I am interested in Medhurst's reception by Baptists. Medhurst provided nec-essary assistance to the English Baptist missionary Gottlob Brückner in Semarang to carry out the publication of the first Javanese New Testament and tracts, which in turn had an influence in the development of a Christian movement in East Java.

Elizabeth Medhurst recommended her biracial pupil Rosemena (also known as Mecha) to the Baptist mission in Bangkok. Mecha eventually was appointed by the Second Baptist Church in Richmond, Virginia, as a missionary to women in Shanghai, China. Jehu Lewis Shuck, the most influential of the early Southern Baptist missionaries in China, was initially very grateful for receiving Medhurst's 1838 revised Chinese New Testament. Shuck agreed with Medhurst on the need for medical missionaries. Shuck served on the Shanghai Delegates Bible Committee with Medhurst for a short time before Medhurst and other British missionaries withdrew to form their own committee. Shuck and other American missionaries preferred the Chinese term *Shen* for God which had been used by English Baptist missionary Joshua Marshman and the first Protestant China missionaries Morrison and Milne. However, the indigenous term *Shangdi* used for God by Medhurst was approved by English Baptist missionary Timothy Richard and by twentieth century Taiwan Baptist theologian Chow Lien-hwa. Since the late nineteenth century Chinese Christians have generally used the terms *Shen* and *Shangdi* interchangeably for God.

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Preaching with Cultural Intelligence: Understanding the People Who Hear Our Sermons. **By Matthew D. Kim. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2017. 288 pages. Softcover, $22.99.**

In *Preaching with Cultural Intelligence* Matthew Kim seeks to "prepare 21st century preachers for the realities of congregational diversity in North America and beyond" (xiv). Kim, who is an associate professor of preaching and ministry at Gordon-Conwell Seminary, writes from the perspective of a second generation Korean-American. Many preachers unknowingly tend to see the world from their own culture's perspective. He seeks to help preachers to communicate effectively to the "Other" (xiii).

The book offers two parts, the first being theory and the second practice. The first part sets a grid through which he examines the proper approaches to preaching to various "other" groups. This grid is divided into three stages in which he uses three acronyms: H.A.B.I.T., B.R.I.D.G.E., and D.I.A.L.E.C.T. The first examines the hermeneutical situation and stands for Historical, Grammatical, and Literary Context; Author's Cultural Context; Big Idea of the Text; Interpret in your Context; Theological Presuppositions. The second examines the Homiletical bridge and stands for Beliefs, Rituals, Idols, Dreams, God, and Experiences. The third aspect of the homiletical template examines the homiletical situation and stands for Delivery, Illustrations, Application, Language, Embrace, Content, and Trust. After laying out this grid format Kim has a chapter that draws the preacher to introspection. He writes, "One must scrutinize and interrogate one's own culture" (46). He calls for preachers to embrace other cultures and learn from them in order to effectively minister to them. This will facilitate the move from being a "Xenophobe to Xenophile" (47). There are a few appendices at the end of the book that offer helpful sermon templates and a sample sermon.

Kim begins his examination with a chapter dealing with denominations. Many in the congregation may be from different Christian denominations and still hold to some of their doctrines and rituals. How does one preach in a way that is winsome to others with various views? Kim states, "The culturally intelligent preacher demonstrates theological awareness about doctrinal positions and contextual empathy for

listeners who do not share our theological perspectives" (75). This is not to say the preacher should not have convictions, but he should give a fair hearing and presentation of others' views. This will in turn disarm them and make them more likely to take the preacher's view seriously.

Chapter six deals with preaching to a congregation of various ethnicities. Kim sees a tendency of preachers to "put our cultural identity above our Christian beliefs without even knowing it" (108). To prevent this requires a "cultural exegesis" in which the preacher studies and learns the intricacies of a culture's practices and values. This is done by spending time with others of a different culture and using most of the time listening and observing.

Chapter seven takes into consideration the cultural divide between the genders. Men and women not only communicate differently but also view communication differently. How do men and women see the application of particular texts differently? Generally speaking, women respond to more of a relational tone. This may require asking probing questions rather than stating truth principles bluntly (151).

Chapter eight examines what it looks like to preach in various locations. How does one preach differently in an urban setting than a rural one? What about to suburbanites? This requires a consciousness that the goals of a businessman who lives in a downtown loft may differ from those of a small-town farmer. The preacher would have to vary considerably the way he illustrates and applies the text.

Chapter nine is similar to the chapter dealing with various denominations. This one deals with preaching to a congregation that may have visitors from a different religion or new converts from a different religion. Like preaching to adherents to other denominations, this requires sensitivity of the preacher to the others' views. The preacher has to assume they will hear with suspicion. He has to anticipate their questions and offenses and then give them an explanation that they can understand. Kim writes, "We frequently lose sight of the fact that they are first and foremost real people" (209). This means they share common struggles, desires, and passions. Therefore, the preacher would do well to show how Jesus relates and offers a solution to their emptiness.

Kim's writing is permeated with a pastor's heart. The preacher must have a great love and interest in all of his people. Kim's writing calls for great introspection in order to expose our blind spots, which all of us have. His insights into the right questions to ask for each culture are helpful. The situational examples he provides help the reader realize not everybody thinks the way we do; however, he does highlight our commonalities to show there are effective ways to build bridges.

Because each chapter in part two is structured according to his three-stage grid, the book tends to be repetitive. Some of the chapters tend to overlap. Also, to illustrate his point in chapter six (Preaching and Ethnicities), he uses Acts 15 as an example of forcing a minority culture to conform to the majority culture's preferences (109). Although the point is understood, the division between Jews and Gentiles in this context was not a discussion about a mere cultural question but a deeply theological question.

Overall, this book is an outstanding resource for preachers who are ministering not only in other cultures but also those who are in communities with continually growing diversity. It will challenge the reader to put in the work to exegete not only the text but also to exegete the people to whom he is called to serve.

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Index of Book Reviews