



# THE ASBURY SEMINARIAN

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# THE ASBURY SEMINARIAN

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*The Wesleyan Message  
in the Life and Thought of Today*



A stylized logo for Asbury Theological Seminary (ATS) in a bold, calligraphic font.

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*The purpose of this publication is to serve as an organ of Asbury Theological Seminary for the dissemination of material of interest and value primarily to its immediate constituency of alumni, students and friends, but also to a broader readership of churchmen, theologians, students and other interested persons.*

*Material published in this journal appears here because of its intrinsic value in the on-going discussion of theological issues. While this publication does not pretend to compete with those theological journals specializing in articles of technical scholarship, it affirms a commitment to rigorous standards of academic integrity and prophetic forthrightness.*



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# Editorial Note

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*by Melvin E. Dieter, Editor*

Clement of Alexandria believed that the ultimate prayer was to make the whole of life a prayer. So we might say that the true teacher is one for whom in some sense teaching becomes life and life, teaching. How often students have confessed that they have been shaped by the personality and character of good teachers long after the contents of their lectures have faded away. The reputations and usefulness of institutions are borne along as much by who was teaching as by what was being taught.

In this issue of the *Seminarian* we pay honor to three men who for decades have enriched the spiritual and academic life of the Asbury Theological Seminary community.

Dr. Harold B. Kuhn has served the seminary for 38 years in the area of Philosophy of Religion. For 36 of those years he served as editor of this journal.

Professor John S. Tremaine has served for 19 years in the Church Music Department; he has become well known across the nation as the director of the Asbury Theological Seminary Singing Seminarians.

Dr. Thomas A. Carruth, professor of Prayer and Spiritual Life, has completed 18 years of service. He has had the unique honor of serving as the first head of such a department in American theological seminaries.

We are printing a festschrift article for each by colleagues to say "Thank you and God bless you! Christ has been honored by your ministry among us. We have learned more about Him because we have known you."

# Spirituality and Ministry<sup>1</sup>

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by J. Steven Harper

Recently I was visiting with one of our students who has been interviewing pastors in the area. His question to them was: “What is the greatest frustration you face in the day-to-day practice of ministry?” The answers were varied, but one struck me as particularly important for this article. That minister responded by saying, “My greatest frustration is loss of vision and motivation. It is too easy to let my work deteriorate into sterile professionalism and the mere practice of certain skills.”

This fellow is not alone in his frustration. In the past several years mainline denominations have begun to address the issue of “ministerial burnout.” While the causes of this are many, it is generally recognized that the problem is related to the quality of spiritual life. For many ministers the “springs of living water” have ceased to flow, and the result is dryness and lack of purpose in the practice of ministry. One of the largest denominations in America is developing a program of spiritual formation for its ministers. A full-time spiritual director has been appointed to move through the denomination to help ministers revitalize their spiritual lives.

Concerns for ministerial spirituality are also being felt in theological education. The Association of Theological Schools is emphasizing the need for spiritual formation among students. Dr. James I. McCord has called for a greater appreciation for “devotional theology” and a closer integration of the academic and spiritual dimensions of theological education.<sup>2</sup> At this point we have cause to rejoice because Asbury Theological Seminary was the first school to develop a Department of Prayer and Spiritual Life. For nearly twenty years Dr. Thomas Carruth has given dynamic leadership to this important area in seminary life. But we know there

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*Since 1980, Dr. Steven Harper has been assistant professor of English Bible and Prayer and Spiritual Life at Asbury Theological Seminary.*

## *Spirituality and Ministry*

is still much more to be done.

In this article my concern rests mainly with the person who is already out of seminary. I am concerned about the enriching of those who are already caught up in the day-to-day struggles of ministry. Are there principles which can be applied to life which will result in a revitalization of spirituality among the clergy? I believe there are, and I would like to write about them under the categories of integration, inspiration, intercession, and interaction.

### **Integration**

It is my growing conviction that the greatest need for ministers is a sense of integration in what they are doing. Fragmentation is too often the order of the day. It goes under the names of “busyness” and “wearing too many hats.” It results in a crisis of identity which expresses itself in preoccupation, boredom, depression, a sense of unfulfillment, and even resentment.<sup>3</sup>

Often these feelings spring from a problem in the spiritual life. In evangelical circles we have too easily compartmentalized our devotional life. We speak of having a “quiet time” and we have many resources to help us. But by putting the major emphasis on the time we spend with God at the beginning and end of our day, we can be seduced into thinking that the rest of the day belongs to us. Having had our “quiet time” we move out to live in the “unquiet time.”

Obviously it is not that simplistic, but it is true that by limiting our understanding of devotion we can forget that all of our time belongs to God. Even in our spirituality we can make the unfortunate dichotomy between the secular and the sacred. “This time is set aside for God,” we say, “the rest of the time is for business.” When we begin to think and live this way, we are on the road to fragmentation. We lose the sense of being guided through the day, and instead we feel pushed through it. We lose a feeling of control and find a feeling of oppression. E. Stanley Jones is absolutely correct when he says, “If we lose a sense of being led, we become victims of our circumstances.”<sup>4</sup>

We begin to recover a sense of integration when we realize that our whole life is a devotional experience. As Wesleyan Christians we should be able to pick up on this. The Puritans had taught Wesley that “every moment is a God moment.” So even before Aldersgate he had learned that true devotion was a life lived before God, not just a time to be alone with God.<sup>5</sup> Dr. Albert Outler has recently given an excellent definition of Wesleyan devotion by calling it “life in the

Spirit, life from God, to God, and with God.”<sup>6</sup> To the extent that we begin to reorient our lives to this comprehensive understanding of devotion, we will be able to find a sense of integration in our spirituality.

There are many practical dimensions of integration which could be mentioned at this point, but none more important than the practice of solitude. The mystics have historically called it “centering down.” The phrase itself is descriptive of the process of finding a sense of unity and integration in life. In our day of fast-paced living, when our calendars become our taskmasters, it is a rare thing to find persons who know how to “be still.” In fact, it is not unusual to find people who either fear silence and being left alone, or who do not know what to do with silence when they have it. We are conditioned by the media to think of silence as “dead air time.” In the place of solitude we put noise, crowds, and words.<sup>7</sup>

The recovery of solitude will enhance our sense of integration in our spiritual lives. Solitude creates the space necessary for us to hear the inner Voice. It provides the opportunity for us to form our own ideas and set realistic priorities. It reminds us that life is to be lived from the heart. And it fosters the affections necessary to genuinely care for others and relate to them. Far from being “dead air time,” solitude is the necessary wellspring from which God-directed action flows. Maxie Dunnam puts it this way, “Solitude is thus preparation for more honest relationship and more deliberate participation with others and the world.”<sup>8</sup>

Integration is necessary for spirituality in anyone, but it is particularly important for the minister. How tragic if we who are supposed to “seek first the Kingdom” succumb to the temptation of our age to become hollow persons. Because we are self-employed we have an opportunity to carve out the time necessary for solitude. Because of the nature of our vocation we have the opportunity to live our days in the presence of God and in the name of Jesus Christ. We must not let these opportunities for integration pass through our fingers, otherwise we will be the blind leading the blind. Instead, we must “walk in the light as He is in the light” and minister to others from the resources of integration rather than the crumbs of fragmentation.

### **Inspiration**

It would be a mistake to equate integration in particular or

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spirituality in general with abstractions. It is true that spirituality is, of necessity, related to the nonmaterial and supernatural dimensions of life. But this does not mean it lacks content. On the contrary, a mature spirituality will be developed by conscious instruction through the classic sources of inspiration. In evangelical circles we speak often of the need to “disciple” people. As ministers we see this as one of our primary tasks. But we must not forget that we too need to “be disciplined.” To be sure, this knowledge has been a major factor in the rise of continuing education programs for ministers, but there is also the sense in which we must “be disciplined” every day. It is my conviction that this should happen primarily through our encounters with Scripture and the devotional classics.

As Wesleyans we stand in the tradition of him who said, “I am a man of one book.” It would be hard to imagine anyone reading more books than John Wesley, or to read them in as many fields as he did. His reading lists are challenges to depth and variety in our reading today.<sup>9</sup> Yet, he never lost his perspective. The Bible always remained the central work and the touchstone by which he evaluated everything else that he read. He said himself that he allowed no other rule, whether of faith or practice, than the Holy Scriptures, and that he followed it in all things great and small. We continue to do well to remember that the Bible is the primary spiritual guide, even for us in the practice of ministry.

And yet, it is difficult for us to read the Bible devotionally. As ministers we too easily approach the Bible as a sermon starter rather than a personal developer. A fellow pastor has written of this problem and said, “I was not aware, at the time, of how my devotional life was affected by this frustration. In retrospect, I now see that when I turned to the Word to find personal help and inspiration, subconsciously my mind would begin to whirl . . . ‘Just how can this scripture become a sermon?’ It was not long until the joy of reading God’s Word seemed to abate and become a chore. I was merely reading the Bible as a professional sermon-maker.”<sup>10</sup>

I feel this temptation in myself. There is a sense in which I do not want to completely overcome it, for I know I am charged with a particular responsibility to proclaim the Word to those under my care. But at the same time, I know I must encounter the Bible purely as a believer, stripped of all my degrees and professionalism, and with no eye to “making something out of it.” Practically, I have had to use material which is not directly related to my ministry.<sup>11</sup> I also

find that I need to keep the time simple and brief. I agree with E. Stanley Jones that the devotional life is “food for the day” and I do not need to stuff myself on Scripture to be fed by it. But I do need a steady diet of it for my soul’s health. Then to the extent that I am growing through my study of Scripture, I can move out in service to others.

Related to the matter of inspiration is a newer discovery. I am growing in my appreciation for the devotional classics as means for my personal discipleship. Richard Foster is correct when he describes our problem in terms of superficiality.<sup>12</sup> Religiously and theologically we are the victims of modernity.<sup>13</sup> Our spirituality has also suffered because of a sense of rootlessness. As I travel across the country, I find that ministers (and laity also) are focusing their devotional reading in the most recent publications. Falling prey to the “cult of the contemporary” presents the danger of developing a pop spirituality.

Lest I be misunderstood, let me hasten to say that I find nothing inherently wrong with keeping up-to-date and reading quality material recently published. Additionally, we can be thankful that there is a resurgence of interest in spirituality and many good books are being written to guide us in our devotional development. But what I’m calling for is a discovery of the devotional classics as means of nourishment. We stand on the shoulders of nearly two thousand years of Christian spirituality. We are not the first ones to walk the road of spiritual life and face the problems related to the journey. By reading the classics we are inspired to a greater sense of community. We can gain insight into our specific needs. We can avoid making some of the mistakes which our predecessors have made. We can lose our superficiality and take on a new sense of “roots” in our Christian experience. The classics have a stabilizing and enriching effect upon our spirituality.<sup>14</sup> Again, as Wesleyans, this should be attractive to us because of our appreciation for tradition as one of the formative influences in the Christian faith.

The matter of inspiration is of utmost importance for the minister. We, no less than those to whom we minister, must be growing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. The problem of “burnout” is related to the feeling of having no more to give. It is folly to think we can be in a giving, serving vocation for a lifetime without receiving all along the way. When inspiration ceases in ministry we either “give out” or we retreat into yesterday’s experience and material. Either

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way our life and work loses its cutting edge.<sup>15</sup>

### **Intercession**

What has been said so far is not unique to the clergy. Any person's quest for true spirituality must include the aspects of integration and inspiration. However, when it comes to intercession, there is a special dimension for those in ordained ministry. While everyone is called to practice intercession for others, the ordained minister does exercise a particular "priestly function."

In most forms of ministry one is responsible for a group of people. A significant act of ministerial devotion is interceding for these people. Traditionally, we have understood this in the context of prayer where the minister takes to heart the needs of his congregation and lifts those needs to God. Dr. Tom Carruth has reminded us well that the willingness to be an intercessor requires that we first offer ourselves to God.<sup>16</sup> In other words, prayer begins as an act of self-surrender. In the spiritual life this is a critical barrier to overcome. While no one denies that we must be concerned about our spiritual formation, there is also the need to transcend self. There is the need to take the focus of integration and the input of inspiration and turn them outward in acts of love toward others. The priest is one who not only seeks his own salvation, but also one who prays and works for the salvation of those around him.

In terms of spirituality this means that intercession will go beyond the traditional linkage of it with prayer. It will also include actions which "flesh out" the concerns which are born in the prayer room. Kenneth Leech has broadened the idea of intercession by describing it as "our cooperation with God in the work of reconciliation."<sup>17</sup> Kenneth Kinghorn has described the true disciple as a "co-creator with God."<sup>18</sup>

There are at least two implications of this for spiritual life. First, true intercession frees us from trying to force our desires for others on God. Rather, true intercession is our attempt to discover God's desires for others. In intercession, especially intercessory prayer, we are seeking to know the means by which God would reconcile others to Himself. To be sure, we are free and invited to share our desires about others with Him. But deeper than that is our concern to know His heart.

The second implication is that intercession is not "passing the buck" to God about another. We are called to enter in to the

redemptive process as instruments in God's hands. This is why our intercession can never be divorced from ideas like "action," "service," and "involvement." Again, Dr. Carruth has reminded us

. . . our bodies are very important in intercessory prayer because they are channels through which God communicates himself. . . . The body communicates through a smile, a handshake, a look of compassion, a voice, a kind embrace, or in service.<sup>19</sup>

One of the needs of the human being is the desire to feel wanted, even significant. By expanding intercession into the area of "mission" and "action" we come to see that God needs and wants us to join him in the process of reconciliation. On a day-to-day basis in the practice of ministry we truly discover this dimension as we concretely touch lives in His name. This not only gives expression to our spiritual lives, but at the same time creates a sense of joy as we see God at work through us.

A word of caution is in order at this point. Many ministers fall into the trap of feeling indispensable in the work of reconciliation. Consequently, they become workaholics at the expense of their families and their own health. They live with the words of Paul on their lips: "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" and they take the "all things" quite literally. What they forget is that while God can enable us to do anything, he does not ask us to do everything. True spirituality includes the ability to recognize our limitations, as well as the ability to see our potential. Unfortunately, some ministers have never learned this, and they burn themselves out in a feverish and unrealistic attempt "to be all things to all men" and effectively handle anything that comes up.

True intercession demands a certain amount of selectivity — a sense of priority. Charlie Shedd has been a great help to me in this regard. Having been appointed to a suburban church in one of the fastest growing cities in America, he soon found himself overwhelmed with job demands. For a while he attempted to do it all, only to learn that he could not, and that his effectiveness was reduced when he tried to. One day it dawned upon him that even Jesus didn't "do it all." He didn't heal everyone in Palestine. He didn't move at the same pace day-after-day. He did not permit an audience to everyone.

Shedd began to be selective, attempting prayerfully to discern



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God's will for his ministry. He had to let some things go. New opportunities arose to which he had to say no. But in cutting back, he actually went forward with a renewed sense of divine guidance. Consequently, he wrote, "Our creator does not expect us to do every good work that needs doing. . . . Some things are outside the sphere of our divine assignment, and we take a mighty step forward when we sense this truth."<sup>20</sup>

Intercession is a major feature of ministerial spirituality, both because of the nature of our calling and the immensity of the task. Intercession is the opportunity to live out the implications of our devotion and at the same time experience further renewal. In its dimensions of prayer and service it does demand discernment and selectivity; otherwise the needs we discover will drive us to despair rather than to action.

### **Interaction**

It is this dimension of spirituality which saves us from privatized devotion. While each of the preceding elements can and should have corporate expression, it is this final dimension which makes spirituality intentionally related to the larger community of faith. To my way of thinking it is a dimension greatly needed in and among ordained ministers.

There are two reasons for this. The first is that interaction demands that we reflect upon our life and work. And reflection is often missing in the practice of ministry. Like the pastor we met at the beginning of the acticle, we find ourselves "practicing skills" without much reflection upon the meaning and significance of them for ourselves and others. Interaction begins when we reflect in these areas of our ministry.

This is not easy. For one thing, true interaction means that we must face ourselves honestly and come to grips with our weaknesses as well as our strengths. Often interaction is an uncomfortable experience, and many prefer to by-pass the process. Until recently denominations have not really dealt with the limitations of their clergy. They have just passed them along to a new appointment where the self-destructive process starts over again. But the facts are coming in: bad ministers make bad churches. Boards of ministry are having to develop evaluative means to help ministers deal with their problems. Seminaries are expanding supervised ministry and intern programs to facilitate this kind of reflection even before ordination.

We are coming to see that no spirituality is complete unless it contains the dimension of self-reflection, evaluation, and critique.

On the personal level this can be enhanced through journal keeping.<sup>21</sup> Through this medium we are enabled to record the events of our lives and reflect upon them. We can “walk around ourselves” and see the positive and negative dimensions of our personal and professional growth. We can take our discoveries and our hopes, our affirmations and our confessions and formulate them into prayers.<sup>22</sup> The written word becomes a fixed means of returning to the events of our lives and to more objectively measure growth in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. Many people do not sense growth because they only sense it when dramatic events take place. Journaling helps us to see that we are constantly changing, most often in little ways. By recording and reflecting we are enabled to see the importance of “little things” for spiritual growth.

The second reason why interaction is so important for ministers is too many of us have adopted a “Lone Ranger” approach to our life and work. We are continually asking others to open themselves to us so that we may minister to them, but we do not open ourselves to others in return so they can minister to us. Not only are we failing to practice what we preach, but more importantly we are suffering under the false illusion that ministers must be self-contained units who portray the image of having it all together. This is not true and neither is it healthy. Interaction calls us to relate to others and allow them to minister to us. Self-reflection is expanded into group reflection.

We need more of this on the level of professional relationships. It is true that every pastor needs a pastor. Ministers need to be ministered to by their peers who can more perfectly empathize with the feelings which the vocation of ministry generates. Interaction with a peer group also gives us the chance to focus on topics of mutual interest that will result in personal and professional spiritual growth. Interaction also saves us from “the Elijah complex”<sup>23</sup> and gives us a greater sense of community and support. Every minister should have at least one other minister (and preferably a group) to whom he is responsible and with whom he may share common interests and concerns. This is one of the best forms of continuing education I know.

But it does not stop here. Interaction also needs to exist with laity. One of the worst pieces of advice I ever received was the counsel that

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ministers should not form close friendships within their congregation. I'm glad I saw it to be such and never followed it. To do so would have been to violate a basic tenet of humanity — the need to make friends. But even more, I would have denied myself of one of the richest sources of support and guidance I have ever experienced in the ministry. The mere fact that lay men and women are not in it “full time” gives a different perspective on the Christian faith. This perspective is often enriching for those of us who get so close to our work that we can't see the forest for the trees.

Furthermore, it is in interaction with laity that we often experience the deepest forms of *koinonia*. It is unrealistic for ministers to think, “It I share my problems and struggles with my people, they won't respect me or look to me for guidance.” To be sure, there are limits of propriety, but those limits can be broader than many ministers have been willing to admit or experience. It is far worse to portray an *image* of “victory” and “being above the common cares of men.” I am happy to write that some of my deepest concerns have been shared with persons in my churches. They have wrestled with me to find answers. They have exhorted me in times of depression and doubt. They have corrected me when my perspective was hazy. They have shown me much of what Paul meant when he described the church as “the *body* of Christ.”

Interaction is that essential process in spirituality which moves us from the private to the corporate, from the individual to the communal. In that movement we find insight, encouragement, reproof, and fresh motivation. Things happen when we are in the presence of others which can and will never happen if we limit our spiritual pilgrimage to a solitary walk.

These then are some of the disciplines which seem to me to be particularly appropriate for ordained ministers. While we can certainly avail ourselves of devotional disciplines common to all Christians, there are dimensions of our life and work which call for special attention. Above all, we must not allow the lure of professionalism to mask our need for personal spiritual growth. For even as we exhort our fellow Christians to grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ, we hear the call of the Master saying, “Physician, heal thyself.”

## Footnotes

<sup>1</sup>I am particularly grateful for the opportunity to write this article in honor of Dr. Tom Carruth. Dr. Tom has enriched my life in numerous ways, and his influence extends far and wide. One of his great concerns, which this article addresses, is the spiritual life of the minister.

<sup>2</sup>James I. McCord, "The Seminary Enterprise: An Appraisal," *Theological Education*, Vol. 17, No. 1, pp. 53-58.

<sup>3</sup>Henri Nouwen, *Making All Things New* (New York: Harper & Row, 1981), pp. 28-32.

<sup>4</sup>E. Stanley Jones, *Abundant Living* (Nashville: Abingdon Festival, 1976), p. 248.

<sup>5</sup>Those interested in a more comprehensive analysis of Wesley's devotional life may refer to my Ph.D. dissertation, "The Devotional Life of John Wesley: 1703-1738." (Durham: Duke University, 1981).

<sup>6</sup>Frank Whaling, ed., *John and Charles Wesley* (New York: Paulist Press, 1981), p. xiii.

<sup>7</sup>Richard Foster, *Celebration of Discipline* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978), chapter 7.

<sup>8</sup>Maxie Dunnam, *The Workbook of Living Prayer* (Nashville: Upper Room, 1974), p. 32.

<sup>9</sup>V.H.H. Green, *The Young Mr. Wesley* (London: Edward Arnold, 1961), pp. 305-319.

<sup>10</sup>C.D. Acheson, "Professional Bible Reading Is Hazardous to Your Health," *Preacher's Magazine*, January 1981, p. 8.

<sup>11</sup>I recommend the use of "Discovery" or "Encounter with God" which are two series produced by Scripture Union, 1716 Spruce Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103.

<sup>12</sup>Foster, p. 1.

<sup>13</sup>One of the best books that examines the problem of modernity in theology is Thomas Oden's *Agenda for Theology* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1979).

<sup>14</sup>Two good ways to become familiar with the devotional classics are, (1) Thomas Kepler's *Anthology of Devotional Literature* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1979) and (2) *The Upper Room Devotional Classics* (Nashville: Upper Room, n.d.).

<sup>15</sup>cf. D.G. Kehl, "Burnout: The Risk of Reaching Too High," *Christianity Today*, November 20, 1981, pp. 26-28.

<sup>16</sup>Thomas Carruth, *Prayer: A Christian Ministry* (Nashville: Tidings, 1971), p. 28.

<sup>17</sup>Kenneth Leech, *True Prayer* (New York: Harper & Row, 1980), p. 25.

<sup>18</sup>Kenneth Kinghorn, *Dynamic Discipleship* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1975), pp. 141-157.

<sup>19</sup>Carruth, p. 29.

<sup>20</sup>Charlie Shedd, *Time for All Things* (Nashville: Abingdon Festival, 1980), p. 56.

<sup>21</sup>One of the most helpful books on keeping a journal is Morton Kelsey's *Journey Inward* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1980).

<sup>22</sup>Henri Nouwen's *A Cry for Mercy* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1981) is a good example of this kind of written prayer.

<sup>23</sup>The "Elijah complex" is a term for the feeling that we are all alone in the work God has called us to do.

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# Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

## *A Man Through Whom God Sings*

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*by Donald E. Demaray*

God reveals himself through the music of Mozart perhaps more than any other composer in the classic tradition. The freshness, playfulness, and sense of having discovered the center of things, lay hold upon human souls at great depth, and set up vibrations that seem to articulate in harmony with the universe. The delicate patterns remind one of the finest Belgian lace; the minuet motifs picture graceful 18th century dancing in royal courts; the transparency of Mozart's work calls to mind the magnificent cut glass creations of his century. In a remarkable way this prolific music maker gathers up the arts of his time and brings the arts of all time to an apex that pierces the sky and lets us see a little bit into heaven.

### **Early Days**

Precocity in both composition and performance cannot find explanation apart from God. Providence opened the door to divinity in the music of Mozart, and the door came ajar at a surprisingly early age. From age four until his death at 35 he composed virtually nonstop on a daily basis. At age three his gifts surfaced and his father began to teach him music. Little minuets came from his creative mind right away. At age six he and his sister, Maria Anna, performed in Munich. He played a few months later for a fascinated court in Vienna, and taught himself violin and organ. At age seven he appeared in Paris where his first works came to publication. In the next year London royalty delighted to his sight-reading, spontaneity, creativity, and general all-round musicianship. Before age 10 he published his first symphony, did six sonatas for violin and harps, and made friends with important people in the musical world. In 1767 he composed an oratorio and the next year his first opera was completed.

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*Dr. Donald Demaray is the Granger and Anna Fisher Professor of Preaching at Asbury Theological Seminary.*

### **Life Fully Lived**

Born in Salzburg, January 27, 1756, he died in Vienna, December 5, 1791. Those intervening years brought to the world some of the most substantive music of all time. No one doubts his genius. Goethe illustrated genius by reference to Mozart who struck him as “the human incarnation of a divine force of creation.” The sheer quality of the music witnesses to Goethe’s description, but what astounds one is the vast quantity of excellent material. Rarely do strength and range come to the marriage altar and stay married thirty years!

The Köchel listing of the works (updated by Alfred Einstein) numbers 626. He wrote operas, masses, oratorios, cantatas, symphonies, divertimentos, concertos (for piano, string instruments and wind instruments), string quartets and quintets, piano sonatas, piano fantasias, piano and violin sonatas, piano trios and quartets, wind and string quartets and quintets, organ works, and more.

More than one authority believes Wolfgang wrote music as ordinary people write letters. He found both his work and his recreation in composing: “Composing is my one joy and passion.” Poor health, poverty, and difficult experiences seemed to have no power to rob him of the joy of creating. Life, fun and grace were never absent from his scores. The listener’s taste buds come to stimulation and this creates an appetite for more and more (Mozart acquired his taste from the Italians); the substance of his music stirs the cognitive powers of his listener (Mozart gleaned knowledge from the Germans); the aesthetic nature finds fulfillment in the elegance of his music (Mozart learned beauty and dignity from the French). Haydn once said to Wolfgang’s father, Leopold, “I tell you before God, and as an honest man, that your son is the greatest composer I know, either personally or by name; he has taste, and apart from that the greatest science in composition.”

### **Karl Barth**

The great theologian expresses his delight in life and beauty in his celebrated essay, “Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.” So taken was he with Mozart that he could say, “I have already been asked whether or not on the basis of my theological thinking I have discovered any other masters in the field of music. I must confess: there is he and nobody else.” Barth listened to Mozart on recording first thing each morning, then read the press, and only next moved to work on his *Dogmatik*. The Basel theologian admits that when he gets to heaven

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he wishes first to inquire about Mozart, and only then about Augustine, Thomas, Luther, Calvin and Schleiermacher.

Karl Barth helps us by his insightful statement that Mozart had no message, no autobiographical statement, no communication of musical rules. "Mozart does not wish to say anything at all; he just sings and sounds." He does not "intrude a thing upon the hearer, he does not ask decisions or comments of him, he just lets him alone." This quality allows us to see the nature of pure art. When a would-be artist attempts to "say" something, in that moment he robs his work of art. The best praise to God always comes transparent and uncalculated. The very humility, the sense of dependence unwittingly communicated, the total lack of manipulation, all combine to make art. Tolkien's works are an example, for according to his own admission he had no theological statement to project, yet he does just that. Innocence and witness turn out to be Siamese twins. And another grand principle: freedom, freedom in its purest state, comes to those who just pass on what they hear from God, with no attempt to impress, only to express. Mozart's unhampered expression reveals God.

### **God in Puzzles**

Three great puzzles loom into view sooner or later. The first, How could Mozart produce such pure, free music and still remain a child? In a sense, Wolfgang never grew up. Some authorities believe he never matured because of his contradictory life, his impractical ways, his lack of order, his inability to conduct himself in much of a businesslike manner. His mind filled with liberated notations, playful and joyous. His work strikes the human ear with the glad news of relief and lightheartedness, and brings an enormous emancipation, the kind one must feel upon release from kidnappers. Only a child possesses that capacity to free the human spirit. "If only we could allow the child in us to continue to roam!" cries Bill Moyers in his *Smithsonian* article on creativity.

We all have a little child in us; psychiatrists tell us if we develop the adult to the dwarfing of the child, we imprison our native instincts and creative urges. But rare indeed is the one who has allowed the child as much freedom as Mozart. While at a game of billiards he would compose in his head. While sitting at the piano he would improvise with marvelous brilliance. His mind focused intently, absorbed. Life could go rushing by, life could be filled with

contradictory behavior, but the music must go on. All human beings contradict themselves, some more than others. Wise human beings learn to live with contradictions in themselves and in others.

The second puzzle relates to work and play. For Mozart, work was play and play was work. Talk about industry! No man ever invested himself more assiduously; no one ever spent himself more conscientiously. Yet Mozart hardly thought of himself as a workaholic. If he bothered to examine his motives, his emotions, his mind's workings — he was, after all, a human being — these kinds of self-analyses evidently stayed at a minimal, not optimal, level. The result: unfettered expression.

Yes, a lovely lightness characterizes Mozart's music, but not the unsubstantiality which characterizes the ease of modern mood music. Yes, a marvelous unburdening quality enters the music of the Viennese master, but not release from responsibility. "That which is heavy floats and what is light weighs immensely," said an insightful person. Says Karl Barth, commenting on that statement, "Certainly, Mozart's singular quality is connected with this inconsistency — or rather with the fact that this does not constitute an inconsistency for him."

The third puzzle: his enigmatic religious posture. How can a man, baptized in the Roman Catholic faith, one day turn Freemason? How can one who writes score upon score for the Church behave as he did? Does the answer find its roots in his immaturity, his unordered childishness, his preoccupation with music over virtually everything else? We can hardly excuse the man on the one hand, and on the other we dare not react in superficial judgment, for only God knows the depths and genuine motivations of any human heart. Albert Einstein would sign politically unorthodox documents upon request from interested parties, apparently with little awareness of what he did. He had his mind on "more important" things.

Could the answer lie in the sovereignty of God? God can work even through enigmatic characters. Some such figures loom on the horizon more vividly than others. We leave the matter in God's hands.

### **Who Then Was Mozart?**

A composer open by grace to divinity. He heard the music of the spheres, and the compelling forces within him expressed themselves in flutes, organs, pianos, orchestras, quartets and quintets. He seems



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not even to have confronted temptations to limit himself to conventional patterns, either of score writing or professional discipline. If he had forced himself into some kind of programming, his creative gift would have foundered like a ship hopelessly moored in a sand bar. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart — liberated, playful, a fun-loving soul — did not capture God. God captured him with the result that we know a little more about the character of eternity.

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# The Panentheism of Charles Hartshorne: A Critique

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*by Laurence W. Wood*

A serious attempt to refute traditional theism is made by Charles Hartshorne. He polemicizes that traditional theism is “an incorrect translation of the central religious idea into philosophical categories.”<sup>1</sup> His voluminous writings attempt to show that traditional theism is self-refuting because of its contradictory affirmations.<sup>2</sup> In language reminiscent of Nietzsche, he suggests it might be a “hoax of priestcraft.”<sup>3</sup>

He proposes a “neo-classical theism” as the only means for preserving the logic of belief in God.<sup>4</sup> Some Christian theologians (notably, John Cobb, Jr., and Schubert Ogden) appeal to Hartshorne in much the same way as Thomas Aquinas appealed to Aristotle. Ogden says Hartshorne’s panentheism is “perfectly compatible” with the Bible and is the only means for presenting the Christian message to the contemporary mind.<sup>5</sup>

This paper intends in part to assess Hartshorne’s interpretation of traditional theism. It intends also to focus upon the common concerns of his panentheism and traditional theism, while at the same time pointing out their possible differences. While the sympathies of this writer will be obvious, no claim is being made to prove philosophically that traditional theism is true and that Hartshorne’s neo-theism is false. This paper more modestly intends to be an analytical interpretation of some aspects of these two theistic perspectives and pointing out their possible implications for religious philosophy.

## **1. The Possibility of a Natural Theology**

Henry N. Wieman praises Hartshorne because his natural

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theology “makes no appeal to revelation, faith, intuition, mystic vision, authority, paradox, or any of the devices by which religious teachers and thinkers exempt their ideas from rational criticism.”<sup>6</sup> For Hartshorne, truth is identical to conceptual clarity. Metaphysical truth is the abstract reality of what is exemplified in the actual world. Whatever is conceivable is intelligible and what is intelligible is reality itself. What cannot be known as it essentially is cannot be real.<sup>7</sup> If God exists, then His essence must be rationally comprehensible and He must be capable of being talked about literally without resorting to metaphor, equivocation, and paradox. Especially such metaphors as God is a father should be dropped.<sup>8</sup>

Hartshorne’s attempt at a natural theology is a needed corrective in protestant theology which labors under the inhibitions of Kant’s dictum that there can be no theoretical proof for God’s existence. However, he fails to see that while a natural theology is *in principle* a possibility, *in practice* it cannot be successful apart from revelation.

Contemporary Thomists insist that protestant theologians have greatly misunderstood their idea of natural theology. Battista Mondin particularly shows that Thomistic natural theology is not a pure natural theology. He shows that Barth’s criticism of natural theology has weight against the deistic philosophers of the eighteenth century who believed God’s existence is provable without recourse to revelation, but that is not the position of Thomism.<sup>9</sup>

While the existence of God should be self-evident from a consideration of the contingency of the world (which demands a self-existent being to account for the fact of its dependent being), in practice this knowledge is clouded by the distorting influence of evil upon human perception. Unlike the popular misunderstanding of Thomism in Protestant circles, Aquinas also taught that every part of human life has been negatively influenced by evil, including the ability to reason correctly. E.L. Mascall, a contemporary spokesman for Thomism, says: “One does not have to be Calvinist to acknowledge that sin has weakened human reason to see clearly what should be so obvious about God’s existence. Yet grace restores the mind as well as the heart to its proper integrity.”<sup>10</sup>

This does not mean a Christian has a higher intelligence than a non-theist, but it does mean he is existentially capable of insight unavailable to him before. Perception of truth is always more than intellectual exercise; our perceptions have an affectional dimension as well. Mondin writes of the Thomist position:

The believer is not endowed with an extra-power, that the unbeliever does not possess. What distinguishes the believer from the unbeliever is faith, and faith is no knowing power, but a mere habit which gives to the knowing power previously existing (i.e. to reason) a disposition to accept as true, and meaningful, what otherwise would be rejected as false and nonsensical.<sup>11</sup>

The debate between Bertrand Russell and Frederick Copleston illustrates this impasse between the theist and the non-theist. Copleston, a Thomist philosopher, admits their conclusions about God's existence are different because their "ideas of philosophy are radically different."<sup>12</sup> It is appropriate and possible to discuss natural theology with non-theists, but the theist recognizes that natural theology is successful only from the standpoint of revelation.

Hartshorne's revision of the ontological argument is unconvincing. Even before Kant, Aquinas argued against the sheer idea of God as constituting a theistic proof. The reality of God is more than a question of logic alone. If God exists, it is to be demonstrated upon a realist perception of truth. That is, the truth of reality is mediated directly through sensory experience. A realist perception of truth, while of course it cannot be logically proved, is more able to justify its postulates about reality than can an idealist perspective. Even the idealist in practice has to live like a realist.

An idealist interpretation of truth tends to draw deductive, infallible, absolute conclusions about reality. For example, Hartshorne asserts that the essence of God is altogether explicable through modal logic.<sup>13</sup> Such an identification of God with human reason is staggering even to those theists who are committed to an idealist perspective. On the other hand, an epistemological realist holds to the twin postulates that reality is mediated directly through our senses and that it is intelligible to the mind. If God's existence is to be demonstrated, the mind must perceive that fact through its experience with extramental reality. If the inner constitutive nature of being is not given through sensory experiences, then God's existence cannot be demonstrated. Yet the mind does perceive through its experience of the contingency of the world that God as a self-existent Being necessarily exists; otherwise, the world could not exist. The mind's obvious perception of the dependency of the world requires an infinite, self-reliant Being as its sustainer and creator. The

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contingency argument is not based on the deduction of one proposition from another, but it is a consequence of the inner constitutive nature of the world.<sup>14</sup>

Yet a pure natural theology cannot demonstrate God's existence. Etienne Gilson, who is perhaps the most significant expositor of Thomas Aquinas in contemporary scholarship, points out that while Greek thought provided the technique to express "ideas that had never entered the head of any Greek philosopher,"<sup>15</sup> Aristotle had taken natural theology as far as it could without reaching a true theistic understanding.<sup>16</sup> Gilson calls it "an unpalatable fact" that the revelation of God to Moses became "an epoch-making statement in the history of philosophy."<sup>17</sup> He shows that "Plato and Aristotle had pushed their investigations almost as far as human reason alone can take us."<sup>18</sup> The ultimate cause of things can only be known as a personal God from the standpoint of the Christian revelation.<sup>19</sup> For Aquinas, there is no way one can discover the true existence of God through reason alone.<sup>20</sup>

Gilson shows that after Aquinas had provided the climax in the history of natural theology, it was almost immediately followed by an anticlimax. Why? Because metaphysics was divorced from theology. While the existence of God should be "most obvious,"<sup>21</sup> the fact is no one sees it without the aid of revelation. Such a theistic idea was never realized by Greek philosophy. Only from the Judeo-Christian perspective does the existence of God become philosophically obvious. Gilson writes:

Philosophers have not inferred the supreme existentiality of God from any previous knowledge of the existential nature of things; on the contrary, the self-revelation of the existentiality of God has helped philosophers toward the realization of the existential nature of things. In other words, philosophers were not able to reach, beyond essences, the existential energies which are their very causes, until the Jewish-Christian Revelation had taught them that "to be" was the proper name of the Supreme Being.<sup>22</sup>

The reason why natural theology fell into disrepute, Gilson says, was because it ceased to be Christian. The post-sixteenth philosophers (beginning with Descartes) attempted a pure natural theology separated from the Christian religion. Gilson writes:

“Modern philosophy has been created by laymen, not by churchmen, and to the ends of the natural cities of men, not the end of the supernatural city of God.”<sup>23</sup>

For Thomas Aquinas, the supreme expression of wisdom was theology. Christian wisdom was a synthesis of revelation and human wisdom. Descartes, on the other hand, developed his philosophy “quite independently from his personal Christian conviction.”<sup>24</sup> Gilson writes: “What was new with Descartes was his actual and practical separation of philosophical wisdom and theological wisdom. Whereas Thomas Aquinas distinguished in order to unite, Descartes divided in order to separate.”<sup>25</sup> Gilson goes on to show that Descartes wrongly believed he could prove the existence of God “wholly separated from Christian theology . . . whom philosophy had never been able to discover so long as it had remained foreign to the influences of Christian revelation.”<sup>26</sup>

Gilson further shows that Descartes’ proof of God was not in fact a pure natural theology despite his contention to the contrary. For Descartes could never have affirmed so unmistakably the existence of God had it not been for the influence of the Christian revelation upon his philosophy. Gilson argues that the only successful natural theology is one which, given the revelation of God, proves that His existence is necessary from a rational consideration of the contingency (i.e., dependency) of the world. In principle, this natural theology done in retrospect of God’s revelation is arguable with non-theists as well, even though they may well not choose to accept it.

It is indeed surprising that protestant theology has so widely accused Thomism of constructing a pure natural theology. As Mascall points out, the textbook doctrine tends to be rigid in making the distinction between the natural and the supernatural and has been the basis in large part for this misunderstanding.<sup>27</sup> Yet Thomist philosophers have been insistent upon the mutuality of revelation and reason in constructing a natural theology.

Presumably, the myth will continue to the misfortune of protestant theology. Protestant thought has too long allowed itself to be victimized by the subjectivism of Kantianism. The consequences have been disastrous in many instances. Classical theological liberalism and new-orthodoxy are two notable movements which have had difficulty speaking biblically about God because of the Kantian dictum that transcendent reality is incapable of being known. Contemporary theology will continue to be fragmented into

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competing movements until the mutuality of revelation and reason is once again recognized. Neo-Thomism can contribute to a protestant balance between revelation and reason, if the long-standing prejudices and misunderstandings about natural theology can be laid aside. Otherwise, protestant theology will continue to swing from undue emphasis on reason (liberal theology and process theology) to an undue emphasis on revelation (neo-orthodoxy).

### **2. God as Dipolar**

Hartshorne defines God as dipolar. The dipolar concepts include: absolute-relative, existence-actuality, necessity-contingency, perfection-imperfection, being-process, abstract-concrete, infinite-finite. The latter terms in these polarities are inclusive of the former terms which play a subordinate role. Reality is thus made up of ultimate contraries which are brought into harmony with each other asymmetrically. While the terms in these polarities are interdependent, the latter are the constituent nature of reality. This is a reversal of the theistic position which ascribes being priority over process.

For Hartshorne's neo-theism, process, relativity, actuality, contingency, imperfection are interchangeable terms which are more inclusive than the concepts of being, absolute, existence, necessity, and perfection. He says that classical metaphysics with its monopolar view began "the long tale of the metaphysical abuse of Scripture" which dates back to Philo and culminated with Augustine.<sup>28</sup> Hartshorne believes his process philosophy which makes God primarily relative instead of absolute now permits us to rediscover the biblical God and the true meaning of worship.<sup>29</sup> Instead of a God who transcends the finite world, his concrete reality is the actual world in its entirety.<sup>30</sup> The dipolar concepts of existence-actuality illustrate this definition of God. He has both existence and actuality. His existence denotes his abstract essence; His actuality denotes the empirical exemplification of His abstract essence (i.e., existence).<sup>31</sup> God's perfect existence is a mere conceptual abstraction; it refers to the inexhaustible potentialities in God. His *actuality* is the ongoing series of imperfect expressions of His perfect *existence*. God's imperfect actuality is thus greater than (and inclusive of) His perfect existence.

The metaphysical necessity of God's existence is that, given the fact of the actuality of the world, one must posit necessary existence.

There can be no actuality without the corresponding necessity that existence be conceived. Hartshorne sees this to be the true discovery of Anselm's ontological argument.<sup>32</sup> The perfect being is one who cannot be conceived not to exist. Anselm's mistake was to confuse God's existence with His actuality. Instead of defining God's perfect existence and imperfect actuality as dipolar, Anselm posited a split between a monopolar God and the world.<sup>33</sup>

Another set of polarities is absolute-relative. He defines the absolute as "unrelated."<sup>34</sup> For example, in the ordinary knower-known relationship, it is the knower who is related and the known (e.g., a stone) that is absolute (unrelated). Theism supposedly turns this around. God's perfection is that He is "unrelated" (absolute). Hartshorne concludes that traditional theism really turns God into a superobject rather than a supersubject. He is more like a superstone than a superperson.<sup>35</sup> Herein lies the inconsistency of theism. It equates God's perfection with an absolute unsurpassability. While our greatness is our ability to be related to other objects, God's supposed greatness is His inability to be related to anything other than Himself. Yet classical theism insists the world is related to God, though God is not related to the world. What can be greater "nonsense," he asks?<sup>36</sup>

He could have been more helpful in his critique of theism if he had pointed out the several ways the concept of the absolute has functioned in the history of thought. First, it may refer to what is completely unrelated (as with Hartshorne). Second, the absolute may refer to the all-inclusive reality (pantheism). Third, the absolute may refer to the Supreme Intelligence whose existence is necessary but nonetheless actual and who is the creative ground of everything else which is contingent upon His necessary existence. This is the position of traditional theism. Since theism does not define the absolute as does Hartshorne, there is here no logical contradiction.

### **3. God in Process**

This new theism calls for a reorientation of God toward process and openness to the future. Herein lies its difference from pantheism which conceived God in terms of a monistic, static substance, whereas panentheism (all-in-God) stresses the dipolar concepts of reality.

A corollary to Hartshorne's panentheism is panpsychism. There is not such thing as blind matter. Nor is any aspect of the world without



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some degree of awareness.<sup>37</sup> Awareness means mutual interaction and freedom for everything to interrelate.<sup>38</sup>

Freedom means there is a degree of chance inherent in the behavior of the world. There are genuine alternatives in the world which can be chosen freely without coercion. Freedom means to be self-deciding and self-creating.<sup>39</sup> It reaches its greatest expression in God who embraces the actuality of everything past and present, as well as the abstract possibilities of everything future. The future of the concrete God, however, is never settled. What God's actuality will be is contingent upon the choices of all those present living organisms contained in His reality — from the subatomic level to the highest level found in humankind. It can thus be seen why Hartshorne says process is the fundamental concept of panentheism rather than the notion of being. It can also be seen why he labels his panentheism a surrelativism. God is Surrelative (i.e., the supremely relative).<sup>40</sup>

Hartshorne believes his quasi-theism is a more accurate reading of Holy Scripture than traditional theism. In the light of its insurmountable logical difficulties, Hartshorne thinks theists have no other alternative than to adopt his proposal.<sup>41</sup> If God is to be worshiped, then God must be a God in process, not a static, unrelated Monarchical-like Being.

Hartshorne fails to see that process is also a fundamental idea in traditional theism. While Greek metaphysics defined being in a static manner, traditional theism, represented by Augustine and Aquinas, did not. Aquinas redefined ultimate being as self-existing (acting) being. Gilson shows that Aquinas defined existence as dynamic activity (becoming). But God's becoming is not a finite becoming in which God changes from one state to another. The notion of activity is not identical in meaning to changing. Hartshorne's metaphysics confuses these terms.

In his exposition of Karl Barth's doctrine of God, Eberhard Jüngel shows that God's being is in becoming. But God's becoming does not mean finite movement in which God's existence is altered. God's eternal becoming is the motion of love within his truline Being.<sup>42</sup>

The God of Aquinas is Pure Act. Activity and energy within the divine being are fundamental. The biblical history of revelation substantiates this affirmation that God is one who acts (cf. G. Ernest Wright, *The God Who Acts*).

A weakness of the Augustinian definition of God is the Platonic philosophy of essentialism in which God is primarily defined in terms of ideas (essences) rather than concrete existence. While he certainly affirmed the dynamic reality of God and thus radically modified the Platonic notion of static substance, Augustine's reliance upon essentialism worked against the biblical insight that God is fundamentally one who is a self-existing being who acts with decisiveness.

Nevertheless, Augustine's substantialism was modified by his stress upon the relational concept of God's triune being. As Christopher Stead points out, Augustine's term for God was "substantial relations."<sup>43</sup> Hence process in God is fundamental for Augustine. God is Father by virtue of His dynamic relation to the Son. The Son is Son by virtue of his relation to the Father. The Holy Spirit is the dynamic union of Father and Son. In this way, Augustine affirms God's infinite being, while preserving His living, dynamic reality.

The Eastern Church spoke of the divine *procession*. God is in eternal process within Himself. The Father begets the Son, and the Holy Spirit proceeds from Father *and* Son (as formulated by Western Christianity). This notion of process is an infinite actual process which does not involve an alteration in God's infinite being. To be sure, finite process does involve change. But if God is an infinite being who has actualized all possibilities, then process within His divine reality does not imply finite changes.

Hartshorne's use of process harks back beyond the traditional theism of Augustine and Aquinas to classical Greek philosophy in which essence is a static notion. Hartshorne defines the essence of ultimate reality as a mere abstract, logical notion which lacks dynamic actuality. But if God is a personal Creator *ex nihilo* who is "a pure Act of Existing," then the infinite process within His divine being cannot be prejudged on the basis of our finite process. Hartshorne's metaphysics suffers from his not discussing the issue of process as formulated in traditional theism. He rather generally states that theism is riddled with logical confusion because he assumes that actuality always infers finiteness, while the concept of being always infers static sameness.

While Greek thought defined being in static terms of substance, Aquinas defined God's being in dynamic terms of existence ("pure Act of Existing").<sup>44</sup> That is why R.G. Collingwood says Aquinas

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altogether eliminated the Greek notion of substance with his definition of God as Pure Act.<sup>45</sup> This is also why Gilson calls Thomism an existential philosophy as opposed to an essentialist philosophy. Gilson writes that for Aquinas “existence is not a thing, but the act that causes a thing both to be and to be what it is.”<sup>46</sup>

While Hartshorne is right to insist upon process in God, it is a non sequitur that process necessarily involves finite changing. God’s existence is not an abstraction, but is His freedom to act, even as human existence is one’s freedom to act. For humans, to exist is a finite becoming of one’s true essence, whereas for God His existence is identical to His essence. His essence is a pure Act of Existing.

### **4. The Mystery of God**

A fundamental implication of God’s mystery in traditional theism is His ontological distinction from the created order of being. What emerges from this polarity of God and the world, Hartshorne says, is a third reality: “So it seems that the total reality is World-and-God, a whole of which both creator and creatures are constituents. This whole is neither God nor world but a third entity of which no account is given us in the system” of traditional theism.<sup>47</sup>

Hartshorne introduces an illicit meaning into the word, God, here. One cannot add God and the world together because they are different categories. God is not one more numerical finite entity alongside which other entities in the created world can be added together. The idea of a third entity, God-and-the-world, which would be greater than either God or the world, is a logical impossibility for a God who is infinite being, though it would be true of a finite God.

Corresponding to Hartshorne’s denial of God’s self-existence is his rejection of *creatio ex nihilo*. He says this doctrine arises from a “dubious interpretation” of an “obscure parable” in Genesis.<sup>48</sup> Though the Hebraic mindset was not metaphysically oriented, there is no intrinsic reason why the Bible could not be restated in the new cultural thought-patterns of Hellenism. In fact, this process was already begun in the New Testament. It is curious that after Hartshorne has blamed traditional theism for its “metaphysical abuse” of Scripture that he appeals to the Bible for support of his own process metaphysics, as if in his case the Bible does speak metaphysically.<sup>49</sup>

The doctrine of *ex nihilo* is implicit in the Bible. It became normative in later Judaism. The first clear statement of *creatio ex*

*nihilo* is II Maccabees 7:28, but as Edmond Jacob says, this doctrine “was the only possible issue [inference] from the thought of the Old Testament.”<sup>50</sup> As Yehezkel Kaufmann points out, in the Old Testament “this principle is not yet made explicit.” He further writes: “Yet the role of the *tohu wabohu* is quite unlike the past played by the primeval matter of pagan cosmogonies. God creates the cosmic phenomena of light, firmament, sun, moon, and host of heaven by fiat alone, with no recourse to primeval stuff.”<sup>51</sup> This doctrine implicit in the Old Testament became normative in Judaism of Jesus’ day. It is echoed in certain New Testament passages as Romans 4:17, Hebrews 11:3, and II Peter 3:5. Hartshorne is out of step with the consensus of biblical scholars in this regard. Nor does his pantheistic idea have truly biblical foundation. Kaufmann writes: “The pagan idea that the deity derives power and benefit from certain objects and substances is entirely absent in the Bible.”<sup>52</sup>

The thrust of Paul’s argument to the men of Athens on the Areopagus was the cosmological transcendence of God’s being. In contrast to the polytheistic inclusion of the gods within the world (which is not altogether unlike the more sophisticated pantheism of Hartshorne), Paul says:

The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by man, nor is He served by human hands, *as though He needed anything*, since He Himself gives to all men life and breath and everything (Acts 17:24-25).

Kaufmann further writes of the Old Testament: “Theogony makes the birth of the gods part of the eternal, self-operating process of becoming that governs the universe. Hence the gods . . . are subject to a succession of ages.” On the other hand, “the biblical god, however, is outside of the flux of becoming and change.”<sup>53</sup>

For Hartshorne to contend otherwise is to go against well-established results of biblical exegesis. Hartshorne’s pantheistic reduction of God’s being to finite process and relativity is a reverting back to the paganism rejected by the Bible. Pantheism is turning God the Creator into a naturalistic deity who is a creature (Romans 1:25). The God of the Bible is the living God of creation, the sovereign Lord of history, and His nature is invisible and spiritual (John 4:24; Romans 1:20). The inescapable conviction of the Bible is

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that God is personal though distinct from His creation, and He enters into relation with His creatures freely, while at the same time maintaining His separate, determinate individuality. Hartshorne's neo-theism lacks an appreciation for this quality of mystery in God's infinite being.

### **5. The Possibility of God-Talk**

Hartshorne's finite God does not tell us something about Himself because He lacks concrete personality. He argues that the personal God of traditional theism also could not talk to His creatures because the idea of an infinite being would logically exclude His relatedness to the world.<sup>54</sup>

The Christian theist chooses a different approach than Hartshorne's. Not only does the Bible preserve a balance between God's infinite mystery and His revelation in history, philosophical considerations substantiate that talk about an infinite God is a possibility.

The basic metaphysical attribute of God is being. Being as such is not a genus, but it is what embraces everything as Aristotle maintained. All God-talk in traditional theism presupposes that being is fundamental both for God and humans. The classical biblical text which illustrates this metaphysical conviction is in Exodus 3:14, where God declares his name to Moses: "I am who I am." The writer to the Hebrews also says the fundamental thing about belief in God is "that He is" (Hebrews 11:6). The "I am" statements of Jesus contained in John's Gospel also reflect the "I am" of Exodus 3:14.

Since being is not a finite category as such but a quality of all levels of reality, traditional theism avoids the charge that its God is wholly other. In this respect, the *imago dei* doctrine (Genesis 1:27) is a fundamental premise for making theological assertions.

The Thomist doctrine of the analogy of being is helpful here. One can make assertions about God, but they are *analogical*. Since God and humans are rational beings, communication can take place. But since God is infinite being and humans are finite beings, we can only understand what transcends our being analogically. Analogical language is not *equivocal* since we do have being in common with God, though unlike the divine being our being is dependent being. Nor is analogical language *univocal*, for finite beings do not possess being in exactly the same way the divine being does. Nonetheless, finite beings can know what the infinite being reveals in a positive

way about Himself since there is a *hierarchy of being* in which finite persons share being in common with God. Hence talk about God is a rational possibility.

Hartshorne may reject the notion of a complex hierarchical view of reality. He may opt for a “one-storied” universe. He may require that reality should be talked about univocally and literally, but in so doing, he obscures the spiritual uniqueness of human beings and the transcendence of God.

## **6. God’s Power and Evil**

Hartshorne’s God is not an actual person who bears responsibility for the “why” of creation.<sup>55</sup> Evil is a necessary implication of the freedom of the world, and God exercises persuasive (not coercive) power in influencing (but not dictating) the world.<sup>56</sup>

Traditional theism is allegedly unnecessarily burdened with an insoluble problem in understanding freedom and evil because it holds God responsible for creating *ex nihilo* and ascribes to Him a “sheer monopoly” of power.<sup>57</sup> Evil allegedly makes sense in pantheism because the world is free of divine coercion and because God is not the cause of things.<sup>58</sup> If God is the metaphysical cause of things, God’s goodness is called into question.

The hidden premise in this ancient objection to theism is that reality ought to be simple, but this is just where its inadequacy lies. Reality is far more complex than atheism or pantheism will allow. There are no easy answers in regard to the twistedness of the world. The sin of the world cost something also for God — the death of His Son. He could not simply whitewash the wrongs in the world. To do so would be to undermine His own morality. Not even an all-powerful God who has created persons with moral freedom can act capriciously, as if He had exclusive monopoly on power. But He can act graciously and lovingly. This is the significance of the incarnation — the divine person, the God-man, took upon Himself the pain and suffering of the world. The morality of God is vindicated, not by some capricious act in which He simply overcame and overruled finite freedom, but by His *becoming* finite in Jesus of Nazareth. (Notice that becoming, process, is at the heart of the doctrine of the incarnation).

To demand of God that He annihilate tragedy and sin if He is all-powerful is to misunderstand the meaning of divine power in traditional theism. It is to make Him a capricious Superman who

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defies the laws of His own moral being. For God to create persons with finite freedom implies the possibility of choosing evil. Edward Madden and Peter Hare in their classical treatment of the theistic problem with evil have shown that some evil is logically compatible with the notion of God's sovereignty and love. Their reservations about theism are not based on a logical contradiction in theism, but on the apparently gratuitous nature of evil and its unjust distribution.<sup>59</sup> Yet, is not the extensive twistedness of the world a possible implication of moral irresponsibility? Paul even shows that the entire creation travails in the pain of the consequences of human sin. Because of the interrelatedness and solidarity of humanity and because of the intrinsic relatedness of humanity with nature, all creation suffers evil as a result of human irresponsibility (Romans 8:18-23).

Unlike Hartshorne's view in which evil is largely explained away since no personal God is responsible for creation as such, traditional theism recognizes the tragedy of evil for what it really is — a consequence of wrong human choices. The tragedy of evil is in its fundamental sense that it was not necessary for wrong choices to be made (even though the *possibility* of wrong choices necessarily coexisted with the fact of freedom). Because of the intrinsic relatedness of humanity and creation, evil appears gratuitous and unjust in its distribution in the sense that evil extensively blights the whole world.

God had no ultimate reason for evil existing in the world. There is not some hidden plan He has for the world in this regard. What we view as tragedy is so for God. Ultimately, God will redeem the world and tragedy will be overcome through our choices to accept His redeemed humanity in Jesus Christ. This is why the eschatological hope of the Christian is an essential part of his faith in God.

The doctrine of original sin assumes the gratuitous nature of evil. But, as Mascall writes: "The doctrine of original sin is a cheerful doctrine, for it assures us that the sad condition in which we find ourselves is not the condition for which we are made and that by the grace of God we can be delivered from it."<sup>60</sup>

So radical is the Christian understanding of the terrible implications of free will that it allows for the real possibility that tragedy may not be overcome altogether. It is entirely possible that some through their moral rejection of God's grace may find themselves eternally outside the Kingdom of God. It has been

suggested that the highest compliment given to human beings by God is to allow them to choose their eternal destiny.<sup>61</sup>

This concept of the eternal loss of the self seems difficult to accept. We might well wonder why God made human beings knowing in advance the abuse to be made of freedom. Why would God create if evil would become so gratuitous and terrible in its consequences? There is no reason which we as finite beings can give. The theist chooses to let an infinite, wise God be God in this decision of His to create. Of course the believer affirms that God's will is in accord with his rationality and morality. Yet it will not help in the final analysis to argue with Leibniz that this is the best of all possible worlds. This is simply the world God freely choose to create. To demand that we fully know the reasons why God created is existentially understandable, but philosophically unproductive. Is the gratuitous nature of evil worth the price of creation? God thinks so, even if we think not.

Nontheists may think this insoluble problem makes theism unacceptable, but the theist is still free to argue that nontheists do not make the problem of evil any more palatable (especially since they offer no hope for deliverance). Nor do they offer alternatives which escape any less serious logical and existential difficulties, especially as it can be seen in the self-contradiction of the nontheist's assumption that there is no moral reason for things existing while morally arguing against the immorality of the world. One cannot simultaneously argue against the idea of the ultimate morality of the world while assuming the objectivity of his own moral insight. If there is no moral reason inherent in the being of the world, there can be no persuasiveness to the particularistic judgment of a nontheist who claims he possesses moral insight into why God cannot exist. The nontheist cannot have it both ways. If there is no inherent moral reason to the being of the world, then he should be unable to see any problem at all with regard to evil. A problem of evil is a problem for the traditional theist, but the nontheist from the outset has excluded himself from even discussing the issue by the nature of his own postulates.

A similar difficulty obtains for panentheism. Hartshorne assumes a moral and rational structure inherent in the world, but he denies there is any moral reason why there is anything at all. Morality is an irrational given; it is altogether unaccounted for. Especially God is not morally responsible for the cause of the world. A theist will argue



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that if there is no rationale for finite rationality itself then morality and rationality are indistinguishable from arbitrariness. Moral reasoning is simply reduced to individual caprice, and any attempt to construct meaning and value is illicit from the outset.

Even if there is a real element of chance (arbitrariness) in reality (the Heisenberg principle of indeterminacy), the scientist and the philosopher still assume the priority of rational structure over arbitrariness. Unless reality is predictable in accord with reason, then life will be disrupted and all theoretical constructs will collapse. For truth depends upon the principle of rational explanation. Yet how can one explain the principle of rationality itself? If we assume reasons can be given for everything (even to acknowledge irrational behavior depends on rational insight), then are we not compelled to assume that finite rationality itself must be accounted for? Hartshorne says not. He makes contingency the basis of everything.<sup>62</sup> Hence the self-cancellation of his panentheism. He has no apparent theoretical basis upon which to construct any theory of truth or morality, if irrational causes account for the being of the world. How there can be any logical reasoning at all if there is no ultimate reason why there is something rather than sheer nothing is not explained. Whitehead's labeling this difficulty "the ultimate limitation" and "the ultimate irrationality"<sup>63</sup> indicates the pantheistic failure to account for the validity of logical thinking. These labels do not theoretically justify logical reasoning any more than does Bertrand Russell's nontheistic attempt to justify belief in inductive reasoning through what he calls "induction by enumeration." He frankly admits that how one can justify the validity of reasoning "remains unsolved to this day."<sup>64</sup> The theist is able to see in these concessions traces of sheer fideism.

The pantheistic insight that God's existence is the principle of rationality is thus weakened by its equating God's actuality with contingency. If the reason for anything concretely existing is irrational, then upon what philosophical basis can reason be relied upon at all — other than blind faith? Irrationality and rationality become indistinguishable.

It seems apparent that the nontheistic and pantheistic objection to belief in a personal self-existent Being, who is all-powerful and good, is too easy. For there can be no true moral reasoning without the presuppositions of traditional theism which provides the only basis for assuming the validity of rationality and morality, as the

Thomist tradition has always maintained. While evil may be an insoluble problem for the theist, the more fundamental problem of reasoning at all is an insoluble problem for the nontheist and pantheist. What is metaphysically needed, as Kant put it, is a Supreme Intelligence who alone can “render the existence of the contingent . . . comprehensible.”<sup>65</sup> Otherwise, one falls into “the narrowing assertions of materialism, of naturalism, and of fatalism.”<sup>66</sup>

Though the theistic position poses a problem for itself, one’s faith in God does enable one to face the future with hope, even if the “why” of gratuitous evil and its unjust distribution cannot be silenced. The reason for this hope is grounded in the fact of the sufferings of God in Christ. To be sure, Hartshorne also speaks of God suffering. If God lacks a conscious, subjective awareness of emotions, there is little comfort in the pantheistic identification of God with the world. God in Christian theism suffers in Jesus Christ. God is affectional in His being, and because He is an infinite, intelligent Being, the intensity of His pain surpasses all limits of human anguish. This notion of a hurting God who has suffered in Jesus Christ shows the extent of His emotional involvement with creation. His suffering is a testimony that God is doing everything that an all-loving, all-powerful God can do to save the world, given the context of human freedom and morality.<sup>67</sup>

To be sure, God’s perfect being is not altered through His openness to the world and His emotional involvement with us. Yet God is truly affectionate and is consciously aware of His and our emotions. The error of Patristicism is not that it taught that God’s being included pathos, but that God was capable of being changed in His essence by finite persons. The idea of impassibility in traditional theism in this regard is misleading for us today since passion no longer means being acted upon and changed. Passion for us denotes the idea of emotional involvement.

## **7. Reality as Personal**

The basic philosophical objection to Hartshorne’s process metaphysics is that it de-personalizes reality. His conception of the world harks back to the early Greeks, such as Empedocles, who describes the essence of the world as love (attraction) and hate (strife).<sup>68</sup> Love and hate are metaphysical abstract essences, not characteristics of free intelligences. That is, love is not primarily

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associated with a conscious subjective knowledge of one's emotions, but is an abstract principle.

Hartshorne defines love as "sympathetic participation." That is, the actual world is the sympathetic (i.e., interdependent) participation of all its parts in each other.<sup>69</sup> Love is not primarily an affective relationship between intelligent persons, but is rather a mutual association of the particulars of reality. Love is more of a principle than a personal response.

Freedom is de-personalized in its primary signification and re-interpreted as a cosmological principle of chance inherent in all reality from the molecular level up to the actual whole of the world. To be sure, it is not sheer chance for Hartshorne, but the principle of indeterminacy is where his emphasis lies.<sup>70</sup>

Knowledge is also de-personalized in the primary sense of the word to mean ontological relatedness, not critical reflection.<sup>71</sup> He asks: "What is concrete knowledge . . . if not some kind of sympathetic participation or love?"<sup>72</sup> Love, knowledge, sympathetic participation are more or less interchangeable terms to designate an impersonal principle of interdependence, mutual association, and inclusiveness.

The concept of awareness is also de-personalized. "Awareness is essentially a response, an adaptation to others."<sup>73</sup> Also, "personality" is de-personalized. "And what is 'personality' but an enduring individual character or essence in a flux of such responses?"<sup>74</sup> Personality means the "character" of God (i.e., His abstract essence). It refers to "the mere universal divine outline of existence without concrete or particular content" and as such "is indeed empty."<sup>75</sup> Personality denotes primarily the social relations of all concrete entities. Personality thus no longer carries with it a common sense definition of meaning an individual rational being.<sup>76</sup>

Awareness means the "act" of God. To say God acts is to say he "responds." This responsiveness in God is the primary feature of the relative, concrete aspect of God. "Personality" is the primary feature of the absolute, non-actual aspect of his reality. It is the personality of God which is metaphysically, eternally enduring, but it is His awareness that is empirically changing. Personality is only a metaphysical abstraction, lacking actual intelligence. Awareness means the empirical relatedness of everything. It specifically has no connotation of psychological self-awareness which is a characteristic of determinate beings with intelligence.

What Hartshorne is asking us to see is that every part of reality from the molecular level up to the actual whole of reality (God-and-the world) is self-deciding, knowing, loving, responding, while stripping all these terms of their commonsense, personalistic meanings. In this respect, Hartshorne has more aptly called his panentheism a neo-Buddhism.<sup>77</sup>

His neo-Buddhism is further seen in the way he defines human beings as changing individuals who lack any enduring self-identity. Here we come close to the notion of absolute change, that nothing endures except that the present does somehow include the past, though what is present is not the past reality as such. The only enduring event is the specious present.<sup>78</sup>

How is it possible to defend this notion of absolute change in which nothing endures? Paul Tillich has shown the inadequacy of this idea:

The first thing to be emphasized is that human nature could not change if there was not something unchangeable in it. This is easy to understand: absolute change is an impossible notion, because without a subject of which we can say that *it* changes we neither could notice nor measure a change.<sup>79</sup>

Hartshorne refuses the force of this telling criticism of his process metaphysics. He in turn accuses Tillich of falling into Eleaticism because he makes being, not process, the key ontological concept.<sup>80</sup>

For Hartshorne, only love impersonally conceived as the dynamic interrelation of all things is the enduring quality of reality. God is the greatest exemplification of love, for he is the integration of all actualities, though he undergoes a “multiplicity of states.” Hartshorne says this means the God I “worship” is not your God. Neither do I worship the same God now that I did a moment ago.<sup>81</sup> Why? Because He is always changing in His actuality, though His love (i.e., that quality which binds reality together) guarantees the unity and harmony of the world. The Christian theists might be led to think this notion of many “gods” is only a more sophisticated form of polytheism.

It is apparent that love in its primary signification does not mean a self-conscious emotion between persons. To be sure, Hartshorne does say only men worship (i.e., praise God) because he alone has intelligence enough to speak.<sup>82</sup> But what does it mean to praise God if

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He has no determinate knowledge of our acts of worship? Worship is de-personalized to mean a verbal response on our part to something which cannot know what we are saying.

According to its commonsense meaning, to be a person is to be a determinate being with free intelligence. Hartshorne denies that God is a person in the sense of “a single determinate actuality.”<sup>83</sup> He is a person in the analogical sense that he, like men, is a unified and integrated being.<sup>84</sup> His difference from us is that he is “absolutely cosmic or universal in his capacities interacting with *all* others.”<sup>85</sup> Hartshorne rejects what he calls a “substance theory of personality” in favor of “the Buddhist-Whiteheadian or event theory” according to which “an existing person [whether divine or human] is a sequence of actualities, several per second presumably.”<sup>86</sup>

For Christian theism, this is the fatal flaw in Hartshorne’s panentheism. What sense does it make to say that reality is a process actualizing its meaning if reality is de-personalized? What sense can be made of a panpsychist contention that atoms strive, decide, create, love, know, if they are devoid of free intelligence?<sup>87</sup> Are not such qualities exclusively the possession of determinate beings with intelligence? Even allowing for the quantum theory of physics which says there is chance in the very structure of reality, there is no reason why we should anthropomorphize atoms. Even though Hartshorne claims his panpsychist metaphysics is the most intelligible alternative, it is difficult to avoid the impression that it is an abstraction unrelated to real life, especially because it de-personalizes reality.

Herein lies the most glaring paradox in his thought. The concrete God is the all-embracing actuality, but for whom is the concrete God an actuality? For Himself? No, because He is not a *self*-conscious living mind who has a determinate knowledge of Himself. For man? No, because there is no way any person can embrace in the mind the comprehensive whole of reality. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Hartshorne’s concrete God is an abstraction. A commonsense concept of personality requires us to think of ideas as belonging to a living self-conscious mind. Values are nothing if they do not belong to someone. Hartshorne implicitly admits this when he acknowledges that the concrete God after man’s disappearance from the world may include everything “faintly and ineffectively.”<sup>88</sup> Why? Because God’s existence is not an actual intelligent being. To locate “ideas” and “values” within the empirical world apart from any association with

an actual intelligence is finally to de-personalize the meaning of ideas and values. In his criticism of humanism, Hartshorne rejects this exclusiveness of values to rational beings as a deification of humanity.<sup>89</sup> But it seems his thought has fallen into the opposite error of anthropomorphizing the world.

Hartshorne's reduction of reality to the relative world leads to a further reservation about his panentheism. He seems to have no vision of mystery. There is no allowance in his system for what Tillich calls the abysmal nature of reality, or what Michael Novak calls the experience of nothingness.<sup>90</sup> Hartshorne's rationalistic emphasis upon the meaningfulness of reality ignores the gnawing suspicion that there is an unknowable element about ultimate reality which engulfs us and threatens us. Tillich's panentheism interprets this abysmal nature of reality as the unknowable depth of reality which points to the unchangeableness of God as Being-itself.<sup>91</sup> Existentialists, like Sartre and Camus, interpret this feeling of nothingness as an ontological vacuum in man's being. For them, nothingness is unknowable because nothing is there to be known. Hartshorne has no place in his philosophy for this experience of non-being. There is also a corresponding neglect in his panentheism concerning the feeling of anxiety and ambiguity of life. To say that the "essence of God is philosophically explicable and knowable"<sup>92</sup> is to say nothing is left unexplained about ultimate reality. If one knows the very essence of God, then one is not estranged from God. There is then no divine mystery, no grace, no sin, and that feeling of twistedness of the world and the threat of the Unknown are simply explained away.

It becomes easy to see why Hartshorne disallows subjective immortality.<sup>93</sup> His philosophy remains within the ordinary view of human experience with no properties lying outside. There is nothing more to reality. This emphasis upon the universality of truth has the advantage of claiming objectivity for itself, but it has the disadvantage of undermining the significance of the individual with his passionate interest in eternal happiness which transcends the specious present. It can thus be said Hartshorne has de-personalized immortality, for "we are ephemeral, but immortally so, for nothing escapes being woven into the imperishable and living texture of deity."<sup>94</sup> Hartshorne objects to the charge this makes the concept of immortality "impersonal."<sup>95</sup> He asks: "What is personal if not an actual human life from birth to death? It is that which is everlastingly cherished."<sup>96</sup> But what sense does it make to say a concrete God who

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has no determinate intelligence “cherishes” our life from its birth to death in His eternal life? And is not the notion of an individual who is “cherished” forever meaningless at least for the individual, if he has no subjective existence in the life hereafter?

Kierkegaard’s criticism of the Hegelian “concrete universal” seems applicable to Hartshorne: “What happens to the individual is in the last analysis a matter of indifference.”<sup>97</sup>

### **8. Hartshorne’s Panentheism and Christian Theology**

Obviously many of Hartshorne’s concerns overlap with Christian faith, and some Christian theologians believe his categories are easily adapted theologically for interpreting the gospel to the contemporary mind. Most notably among those who think this way is Hartshorne’s former student and distinguished professor at Claremont School of Theology, John. B. Cobb, Jr. Whether or not his attempt to provide this synthesis is successful merits consideration, but a full discussion of this question lies outside the scope of this present essay.

However, Cobb’s adaptation of process philosophy to Christian faith is suspect from the beginning for several reasons, if finite process is posited as the fundamental feature of God’s actuality. First, God can give us no “absolute” or “provisional” guarantee that good will triumph over evil,<sup>98</sup> despite Jesus’ promise of the coming Kingdom. If God is subject to finite process, then He too can be victimized by evil and cannot promise us with certainty the arrival of the New Jerusalem.

Second, Cobb, unlike Hartshorne, does allow for the possibility of life hereafter, though he is unsure about its reality and is not overly concerned about it.<sup>99</sup> His ambivalence stems in part from the pantheistic denial that persons possess enduring spiritual self-identity. Human beings are a sequence of momentary events who come to an end at their physical death. Paul thought differently about this. If we are imprisoned in the finite process with no spiritual transcendence and with no hope beyond this present world, Paul felt life was meaningless here and now. Without the eschatological hope, preaching is pointless, faith is empty, and existence is regrettable (I Cor. 15:14, 19).

Third, God’s reduction to finite process calls into question His deity. Unlike Hartshorne, Cobb’s Christian convictions cause him to ascribe personal self-awareness to God.<sup>100</sup> Yet His self-awareness is

limited by the finite process. Particularly, God does not know the future. If God is a self-knowing mind who does not transcend the relativities of this worldly process and who has no comprehensive knowledge of future reality, then one cannot help but wonder if God does not feel the insecurity and anxiety of this Unknown Future. What is to keep us from thinking God “deifies” this Unknown even as man’s anxiety about the future has been the occasion for his “anthropomorphizing” his experience of the Unknown? Despite his impersonal notion of being, Tillich’s criticism of Bergson’s process thought seems incontrovertible at this point.

A God who is not able to anticipate every possible future is dependent on an absolute accident and cannot be the foundation of an ultimate courage. This God would Himself be subject to the anxiety of the unknown. . . . On the other hand, without that which limits openness, history would be without direction. It would cease to be history.<sup>101</sup>

How finite process as the basic attribute of reality can be harmonized with Christian faith is impossible to know. For it gives us no security about the triumph of good over evil; it minimizes the significance of the eternal happiness of individuals; and it weakens faith (“ultimate courage”) in God since He Himself is “subject to the anxiety of the unknown.”

The religious implications of Hartshorne’s metaphysics are in many respects negative from the standpoint of traditional theism, as Hartshorne intended. It denies otherworldly realities. It denies the history of salvation. It denies the special revelation of ultimate reality (a personal God) in history. It denies that anything absolutely unique can happen in history. It is a denial of the Incarnation.<sup>103</sup> It is a rejection of the normative authority of the Bible, for the Bible can teach us nothing about the essence of anything which is not already exemplified in ordinary human experience.<sup>104</sup> The Bible as a record of God speaking and acting in history is decided against in favor of a philosophy which stresses universal principles for “which factual distinctions are neutral.”<sup>105</sup> Nothing historically factual is then of any consequence to Hartshorne’s quasi-theism. Hartshorne’s metaphysics minimizes the significance of the affectional nature of truth, as if the conscious subjective awareness of human emotion is not the core of personality. Hence worship of God as personal devotion is de-



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personalized into an aesthetic, intellectual exercise. Lacking the personal dimension, Hartshorne's theism has more aptly been called a quasi-theism.<sup>106</sup>

Yet Hartshorne impressively shows that a positivistic narrowing down of truth to mere empirical facts is a retreating from the philosophical responsibility of addressing reality as such. He demonstrates that human experience cannot successfully evade the fact of God's existence. He rightly contends that any meaningful notion of God includes His involvement in time and that His relationship to the world is grounded in the fact of divine energy and activity. He rightly argues against a deterministic model of reality, showing that freedom is a characteristic of the world because it is a fundamental attribute of God. His rejection of a Kantian bifurcated world in which only the appearance (phenomena) of reality (noumena) is knowable is a move in the right direction if a wholistic perspective of reality is to be maintained. Over against atheism, humanism, and deism, Hartshorne seeks to show that the values which give meaning to the whole of creation are grounded in the immanent activity of God's concrete actuality. Whether or not his quasi-theism is more adequate than traditional theism for interpreting reality is a decision each person must make for oneself. For truth, though it is an intellectual activity, is a moral decision.

### Footnotes

<sup>1</sup>*The Divine Relativity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1948), p. vii. Cited hereafter as DR.

<sup>2</sup>*Philosophers Speak of God* (with William L. Reese) (The University of Chicago Press, 1958), pp. 95, 103. Cited hereafter PSOG. Cf. DR, pp. 1-2.

<sup>3</sup>DR, p. 26.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 2.

<sup>5</sup>Schubert Ogden, *The Reality of God* (New York: Harper, 1966), pp. 174, 175, 68ff.

<sup>6</sup>Quoted on the backside of DR. Wieman came to reject process metaphysics. Cf. Victor Lowe, "Whitehead's Metaphysical System," *Process Philosophy and Christian Thought*, ed. Delwin Brown, R.E. James, Jr., and Gene Reeves (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1971).

<sup>7</sup>DR, pp. xvi, 1-5, 40. *The Logic of Perfection and Other Essays in Neoclassical Metaphysics* (LaSalle, IL: Open Court, 1962), p. 131. cited hereafter as LP.

<sup>8</sup>*A Natural Theology for Our Time* (LaSalle, IL: Open Court, 1967), pp. 2,4. Cited hereafter as NT.

<sup>9</sup>*The Principle of Analogy in Protestant and Catholic Theology* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1963), p. 169.

<sup>10</sup>*He Who Is* (Archon Books, 1970), p.25.

<sup>11</sup>Mondin, p. 11.

*The Asbury Seminarian*

- <sup>12</sup>Bertrand Russell and F.C. Copleston, "The Existence of God — A Debate," *A Modern Introduction to Philosophy* (New York: Free Press, 1973), p. 489.
- <sup>13</sup>NT, p. 77; DR, pp. 36-40, xiii.
- <sup>14</sup>Cf. *He Who Is*, p. 61.
- <sup>15</sup>Gilson, *God and Philosophy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1941), p. 43.
- <sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 37.
- <sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 40.
- <sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 43.
- <sup>19</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 48.
- <sup>20</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 54.
- <sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 22.
- <sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 65.
- <sup>23</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 74.
- <sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 75.
- <sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 77.
- <sup>26</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 80.
- <sup>27</sup>*The Openness of Being* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1971), p. 151.
- <sup>28</sup>PSOG, pp. 82, 92.
- <sup>29</sup>NT, pp. 109-110; DR, p. 1; *Man's Vision of God and the Logic of Theism* (Chicago: Willet, Clark, 1941), pp. 90-91. Cited hereafter as MVOG; LP, p. 34.
- <sup>30</sup>NT, p. 77; DR, p. 88.
- <sup>31</sup>PSOG, pp. 71, 72, 97, 98; LP, pp. 109f.; *Anselm's Discovery* (LaSalle, IL: Open Court, 1965), p. x. Cited hereafter as AD.
- <sup>32</sup>PSOG, pp. 105-106; LP, pp. 58ff.
- <sup>33</sup>NT, pp. 18, 45; PSOG, p. 105.
- <sup>34</sup>DR, pp. 8, 18.
- <sup>35</sup>PSOG, p. 131; DR, p. 8.
- <sup>36</sup>DR, pp. 16, 14, 26; NT, p. 45; PSOG, p. 133.
- <sup>37</sup>LP, pp. 124-126, 164; DR, p. 27.
- <sup>38</sup>PSOG, p. 22; LP, p. 126.
- <sup>39</sup>LP, p. 231; "The Modern World and a Modern View of God," *Philosophy of Religion*, ed. N.O. Schedler (New York: Macmillan, 1974), p. 474.
- <sup>40</sup>DR, pp. 21, 23.
- <sup>41</sup>DR, pp. 1-4; PSOG, p. 103.
- <sup>42</sup>*The Doctrine of the Trinity* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1976), p. vii.
- <sup>43</sup>*Divine Substance* (London: Oxford Press, 1977), pp. 164-165.
- <sup>44</sup>Gilson, p. 72.
- <sup>45</sup>*The Idea of History* (London: Oxford University Press, 1956), pp. 46ff.
- <sup>46</sup>Gilson, p. 70.
- <sup>47</sup>PSOG, p. 83.
- <sup>48</sup>DR, p. 30; cf. MVOG, pp. 93ff.
- <sup>49</sup>PSOG, pp. 36-38.
- <sup>50</sup>Edmond Jacob, *Theology of the Old Testament*, trans. A.W. Heathcote and P.J. Allcock (New York: Harper, 1958), p. 143.
- <sup>51</sup>Yehezkel Kaufmann, *The Religion of Israel*, trans. and abridged by Moshe Greenberg (University of Chicago Press, 1960), p. 67.
- <sup>52</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 72.
- <sup>53</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 73.

## *The Panentheism of Charles Hartshorne: A Critique*

- <sup>54</sup>DR, pp. 16, 14, 26; NT, p. 45; PSOG, p. 133.
- <sup>55</sup>DR, pp. 134-142.
- <sup>56</sup>DR, pp. 141-142; NT, pp. 80ff., 120.
- <sup>57</sup>NT, p. 119.
- <sup>58</sup>NT, pp. 80ff., DR, p. 135.
- <sup>59</sup>*Evil and the Concept of God* (Springfield: IL, 1968), pp. 38-39.
- <sup>60</sup>*The Importance of Being Human* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958), pp. 89ff.
- <sup>61</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 43.
- <sup>62</sup>DR, pp. 73ff.
- <sup>63</sup>*Science and the Modern World* (New York: Macmillan, 1954), p. 257.
- <sup>64</sup>*A History of Western Philosophy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1945), p. 545.
- <sup>65</sup>Kant, *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1950), p. 112.
- <sup>66</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 64.
- <sup>67</sup>*He Who Is*, p. 111.
- <sup>68</sup>"The Modern World and a Modern View of God," *Philosophy of Religion*, pp. 474-475. Cf. Werner Heisenberg, *Physics and Philosophy* (New York: Harper, 1958), pp. 64f.; Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript* (Princeton University Press, 1941), trans. David F. Swenson and Walter Lowrie, p. 85.
- <sup>69</sup>NT, p. 13; cf. MVOG, p. 346.
- <sup>70</sup>DR, p. 137; NT, p. 123; PSOG, p. 23; Hartshorne, "The Development of My Philosophy," *Contemporary American Philosophy*, ed. John E. Smith (New York: Humanities Press, 1970), p. 214.
- <sup>71</sup>PSOG, p. 19.
- <sup>72</sup>NT, p. 13; DR, pp. 10-11; LP, pp. 41-42.
- <sup>73</sup>PSOG, p. 22.
- <sup>74</sup>PSOG, p. 22.
- <sup>75</sup>NT, p. 76; MVOG, p. 249.
- <sup>76</sup>DR, pp. 25-27.
- <sup>77</sup>LP, p. 122; NT, p. 109.
- <sup>78</sup>NT, pp. 76-77; AD, pp. 111-112; LP, pp. 121-124.
- <sup>79</sup>Tillich, "Can Human Nature Be Changed?" *The Range of Ethics* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1966), p. 34.
- <sup>80</sup>Hartshorne, "Tillich's Doctrine of God," *The Theology of Paul Tillich*, ed. Kegley and Bretall (New York: Macmillan, 1964), pp. 168ff. Cf. Tillich, "Answer," *The Theology of Paul Tillich*, pp. 339f.
- <sup>81</sup>NT, p. 104.
- <sup>82</sup>NT, p. 4.
- <sup>83</sup>AD, p. 111.
- <sup>84</sup>PSOG, pp. 19-20, 22.
- <sup>85</sup>NT, p. 136.
- <sup>86</sup>AD, pp. 111-112.
- <sup>87</sup>LP, p. 125; Hartshorne, "The Development of Process Philosophy," *Process Theology* (New York: Newman Press, 1971), pp. 63-64; "The Development of My Philosophy," *Contemporary American Philosophy*, p. 212.
- <sup>88</sup>DR, p. 94.
- <sup>89</sup>*Beyond Humanism* (Chicago: Willet, Clark, 1937), p. 2.

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- <sup>90</sup>Michael Novak, *The Experience of Nothingness* (Harper and Row, 1970).
- <sup>91</sup>Tillich, *Systematic Theology* (University of Chicago Press, 1951), I, pp. 79, 110.
- <sup>92</sup>DR, p. xiii.
- <sup>93</sup>NT, pp. 76-77, 107, 110.
- <sup>94</sup>NT, p. 111.
- <sup>95</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>96</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>97</sup>*Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, p. 24.
- <sup>98</sup>Cobb, *God and the World* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1969), pp. 99f.
- <sup>99</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 101, 112.
- <sup>100</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 135-136.
- <sup>101</sup>*Systematic Theology*, I, pp. 275-276.
- <sup>102</sup>NT, pp. 18-19; cf. MVOG, p. 112.
- <sup>103</sup>PSOG, p. 9; AD, pp. xi, 112; NT, pp. 76, 77; LP, p. 68.
- <sup>104</sup>Cf. Hartshorne, "The Modern World and a Modern View of God, *Philosophy of Religion*, p. 472.
- <sup>105</sup>PSOG, p. 8.
- <sup>106</sup>Madden and Hare, pp. 12-13, 118-121.

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# Book Reviews

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*The Divine Inspiration of Holy Scripture*, by William J. Abraham. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981, 126 pp., \$27.95.

This book, by a 1973 graduate of Asbury Theological Seminary, has a number of features to its credit. Above all of these is its seriousness of purpose. Dr. Abraham wishes to restore evangelical theology to a place of importance in Christian thought which he believes its current theories of inspiration prevent it from taking. Along with this he wishes to make it possible for those who are convinced of the results of higher critical studies to retain a high view of the Scripture's authority in matters of faith and practice. To do these, the author has applied his considerable intellect and training to breaking new ground. He has not been willing merely to defend or criticize the old, but has sought to discover new paths which will lead beyond what he considers to be the present impasse. In all this, he seeks to be very honest about his origins and his concerns; there is no hidden agenda in the book. For all these he deserves warm praise.

The thesis of the book is rather simple and may be covered in four points: 1) all present theories of inerrancy or verbal inspiration are, despite their formulators' earnest claims to the contrary, only another version of the now-repudiated dictation theory; 2) attempts to state a theory of inspiration which will be more reflective of current understandings of the Bible are inadequate because they continue to consider inspiration as a facet of divine speaking; 3) the solution is to consider inspiration as a relational term on the analogy of its most common current usage: the student was inspired by the teacher. Thus the Scriptures are the result of divine inspiration, but that inspiration is not a guarantee of the accuracy of their content. To be sure, it favors that accuracy, especially in regard to the spirit of what is said, but it does not guarantee it; 4) the Scriptures' statements concerning their origin more nearly point to this view of inspiration than to verbal or plenary inspiration.

I approached the book with considerable anticipation. I was hoping for something which would make the orthodox understanding of the

Scriptures' origin clearer and more communicable. Unfortunately that is not the case. The author has abandoned that understanding, while claiming that that abandonment does not significantly alter the understanding that the Bible is (is the result of?) special revelation.<sup>1</sup> Whether he understands the radical nature of his proposal is not clear. However, as he admits, orthodoxy has for 20 centuries directly linked divine speaking and inspiration, largely in an understood, but undeveloped, theory of dictation. While on one hand he claims the fundamentalists could not support their claim of unity with the early church because they departed from dictation, on the other hand he claims they really did not depart! Surely both cannot be correct. But in either case the understanding that inspiration relates to divine speaking is clear. Thus Dr. Abraham, in saying that there is no such relation, has not merely modified the orthodox view, but abandoned it. This raises the question about the hallmarks of evangelicalism to which we will return at the end of this essay.

While many of the individual elements of the book are helpful, it seems to me that there is room for considerable doubt concerning each point in his argument. First of all, as noted above, the fundamentalists cannot have both departed and not departed from the early church's point of view. In fact, I think it may be argued that they remained in essential agreement with the early church while clarifying and correcting its point of view. At the same time it may be admitted that their attempt to lodge infallibility in the autographs becomes a self-defeating step. Understood in their own milieu and in the light of their own purposes, the Scriptures are as infallible today as they ever were.

Second, modern attempts to modify the view of inspiration have not failed because they continue to link inspiration and divine speaking, but because they separate inspiration and revelation, just as Dr. Abraham seems to be doing.<sup>2</sup> Unless God has disclosed himself in ways which are accessible to the cognitive mind (and how else than through language?), it becomes meaningless to speak of inspiration. A sunset may be inspiring, but it is not profitable for reproof, correction, or instruction in righteousness. There must be reliable cognitive communication. But if it is granted that no reliable, cognitive communication took place in the origination of Scripture, inspiration is very quickly drained of any significance.

That leads directly into the third point: can inspiration be limited to mere relational impact with accuracy of content only a likely

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corollary? Frankly, this is the weakest part of the book. The analyses of the various attempts to frame acceptable theories of inspiration are penetrating and well-argued, although those of the fundamentalists seem to be marked by an often condescending tone. By contrast, Dr. Abraham's presentation of his own theory is much less incisive. He seems content to present and explain his teacher-student analogy, but without the intense kind of argumentation such a radically new theory would seem to require. He does not seem to anticipate his opponents' arguments nor defend his idea against them.<sup>3</sup>

In fact, to suggest that inspiration can be separated from divine speaking is a radically new idea which needs a great deal of defense. As Barr has pointed out, if the Bible is about anything, it is about divine speaking. Not that alone to be sure, but it *is* about that. If that is so, the first issue is: did He speak? The second issue is: do we know what He said? The third issue is: do we have an accurate record of what He said? The orthodox church has answered all of these with a firm yes. And when it was asked why it affirmed these, its answer was that God had breathed the Scriptures. Whatever "inspire" may mean today is of little relevance to the way it was used in the biblical context.<sup>4</sup> We are not told that the biblical writers were so inspired by their encounters with God that they wrote their perceptions of His nature. The Bible says God breathed the Scriptures. That does not reduce us to dictation, but it does tell us that God *spoke through* the prophets.

Fourth, Dr. Abraham's treatment of the Scriptures regularly adduced to support verbal inspiration is more satisfying, but somewhat flawed in that whenever the texts would seem to say more than he wishes them to, he concludes that the speaker is merely appealing to the traditional Jewish understanding. It is one thing to say this of an off-handed statement like "Moses says." It is quite another when the very basis of a given appeal is that every part of the Scripture is from God.

Finally, we must address the question of the meaning of "evangelical." It is hardly merely "non-Roman Catholic" as the author suggests it meant in Reformation times. What it meant then, it also meant in the Evangelical Revival in England and to the early fundamentalists. Evangelicalism is about the evangel, the good news of salvation by grace through faith in the atoning efficacy of Christ's death as taught by the Scriptures. Thus, it is no accident that Luther and Wesley were both so committed to the authority of the text as it

stands. They saw what the fundamentalists of the late 19th and early 20th centuries saw — unless the Scriptures can be taken at face value, there is no evangel. The view that Jesus Christ’s death and resurrection make possible fellowship with God in this life and the next is wholly dependent for its survival upon a Bible whose content stems ultimately from God. Dr. Abraham says this is the counsel of fear. That is not so. It is the counsel of the history of the last century. However devout and godly such men as Robertson Smith and Charles Briggs may have been, it is not their descendants who now people even our liberal pulpits and seminaries. It is those who at least began their pilgrimage as the descendants of Warfield, Steele, Machen, and Orr.

#### Footnotes

<sup>1</sup>I predict that non-evangelicals as well as evangelicals will have a difficult time agreeing to this.

<sup>2</sup>He indicates he is working on a book on revelation, so we must wait for that before making a final judgment on his view of the relationship.

<sup>3</sup>At various points, he does argue that opposition to the idea will be the result of inbred conservatism, but he does not argue for the idea as opposed to others sufficiently.

<sup>4</sup>So, that many people today define “love” solely as the emotions associated with biological attraction is no warrant to interpret “love” in that way in the Bible.

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*The Rich Christian in the Church of the Early Empire*, by L. Wm. Countryman. New York: Mellen Press, 1980, 239 pp.

Dr. Countryman is Assistant Professor of New Testament at Brite Divinity School. This paperback volume is part of his doctoral dissertation and is published in the group known as *The Text and Studies in Religion*, this being Volume VII of that series.

The matter of stewardship of time and treasures has always been important in the Christian Church, as indeed in the Israel of the OT. Countryman’s research deals with the problem of wealth on the part



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of Christians. To what extent is it a hindrance or a benefit? After an introductory chapter dealing with wealth and poverty in the Christian communities of Judea he moves to the thought of one who was first to address himself seriously to this subject, Clement of Alexandria. The author then moves to early Christians' attitude toward wealth, the matter of almsgiving and the danger of riches both to the possessor and to the church of which he's a member. The study concludes with a case study of Cyprian of Carthage, who gave away his wealth and became a bishop of the important church at a crucial time in its history.

The author gives careful attention to the NT with its frequent warnings against temptations experienced by the rich and the consolation given to the poor. Jesus' words comforting the poor and warning the rich and urging the rich young ruler to give all that he had to the poor is followed by a survey of the epistles in which almsgiving and the sharing of one's wealth is given high priority. The most problematic is Jesus' statement that it's easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter heaven — a statement that so startled the disciples. Writing about 200 A.D., Clement of Alexandria published a homily entitled "Who Is the Rich Man That Is Saved?" Clement's conclusion is that it is not mandatory for every Christian to divest himself of wealth. The important thing is not how much money he has but the use he makes of it and his attitude toward it. Clement insisted on the importance of relative detachment from wealth and the cultivation of simplicity in lifestyle. This must be coupled with generosity. It was not money itself, but the love of money that was the root of all evil. In spite of the example of the believers in Jerusalem, very few of the early Christian authors advocated a community of goods, nor did they insist that the rich give up their wealth as did Barnabas.

Countryman analyzes the distinction between the Christian concept of wealth and that of the Greeks in the pagan environment. Greco-Roman philanthropy was directed to relatives, fellow citizens, or clients, and the donor expected some compensation in return for his generosity. In contrast the Jewish Christian donor expected to receive his reward from God and in the next life. This distinction is very important in the study of the early Christian stewardship. Studies show that often the rich were a problem in the early church because they tended to dominate the church or they would be nominal Christians without much real discipleship or self-

denial. There often resulted a rivalry between the clergy and the rich people of their congregations. At the same time many churches were dependent on the generosity of its wealthy members. In summary, it was learned that wealth was good if the owner was generous in giving to the poor and to the church without demanding a leadership role. No one was denied membership because he was wealthy, but he was constantly being warned of the hazards of wealth.

The author is very thorough in his study. The book is amply documented and reflects a thorough acquaintance with his sources. Many readers may find repetition and may wonder why the thought could not have been expressed in shorter compass. The relevance of the volume is seen in the affluence of Christian churches, especially in the West. The problem of being affluent and preserving a Christian lifestyle is a problem in every generation and never more so than in recent years. So the book is good both for the antiquarian and also for the earnest Christian of today who wants to be a good steward.

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*The NIV Interlinear Hebrew — English Old Testament*, edited by John R. Kohlenberger III.

The NIV Interlinear Hebrew-English Old Testament, edited by J.R. Kohlenberger III in four volumes, offers student and scholar a new reference work with a number of interesting features. These finely bound, handsomely printed volumes contain a number of distinctive characteristics which interlinears of the past have not offered. The most important of these include a grammatically literal rendering of each Hebrew word which will aid the reader in discerning not only general meaning but also such matters as pronominal suffixes and verbal inflections. Of lesser importance, but equally helpful to the uninitiated, is an arrangement which allows reading from left to right and thus one does not have to read “backwards.”

Kohlenberger’s *Interlinear* opens with a helpful introduction which, to this writer, may prove as valuable as what follows. He discusses what an interlinear is, what it can do, and what it cannot do. According to the editor, an interlinear does not attempt to make a sensible translation but serves as “a source book for word studies and for the study of Hebrew” (p. ix). Given a knowledge of the Hebrew

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alphabet, students may engage in basic word studies. For those who have had some Hebrew, the grammatically literal text facilitates learning by allowing them to read the text without constant reference to lexicons and grammars. Kohlenberger is quick to point out, however, that his interlinear cannot correct translations, give full expression of the meaning of Hebrew words, nor serve as an independent source of exegesis or interpretation. It would be well for everyone making use of an interlinear (Hebrew or Greek) to read these introductory remarks.

The editor is to be commended for a fair appraisal of the advantages and limitations of an interlinear. There are, however, at least two concerns raised by his remarks in particular and the volumes in general. Even with the disclaimers a word of caution should be voiced in regard to what may be gained from an interlinear in terms of word study. If, for example, words derive their specific nuance from context, then a word for word grammatically literal rendering of words — a major “strength” of these volumes — may prove a hindrance to significant word study. As well, a question is raised in regard to the practicality of these volumes — particularly for the novice in Hebrew. If students must first consult an analytical before a standard lexicon, one wonders if typical readers will be inclined “to go the distance” on the quest for meaning. As Kohlenberger himself suggests, the new interlinear is most helpful to those who already know a fair amount of Hebrew and wish to bolster their ability to read.

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*The Book of Joshua (New International Commentary on the Old Testament)* by M.H. Woudstra. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 396 pp., \$16.95.

This series of full-length commentaries on the Old Testament, edited by R.K. Harrison, is being produced to match the already published series on the New Testament. Woudstra is Professor of Old Testament Studies at Calvin Theological Seminary and author of several books on the Old Testament.

In the volume an Introduction of fifty pages precedes an exegetical section of over three hundred pages. The four indices deal with subjects, proper names, authors and biblical references. Seven

outline maps are included. Fortunately, for the reader, the publisher placed the footnotes at the bottom of the relevant pages rather than at the end of chapters or at the end of the book.

The volume reflects the author's wide acquaintance with biblical scholarship, especially European sources (Dutch and German). His excellent analytical outline of the book of Joshua is inserted in the text of the commentary. Each section is preceded by a printing of the biblical text and the author's rather liberal translation of the Massoretic Hebrew text.

Woudstra insists that the canonicity of any Bible book is inherent, and self-authenticizing; little account is taken of the historical process in its canonicity (p. 41). The author's central concern is to call attention to the avowed purpose of the book of Joshua which he defines as showing how God's promises to the Patriarchs were fulfilled in the conquest of Canaan; thus the book records the culmination of the Abrahamic covenant.

The reader of the volume will likely be interested to learn not only the contents of the book of Joshua, but also the perspective this commentator brings to his task. This he takes pains to divulge. He is modest about his major assignment, aware of the book's complexities and of the difficulty of solving problems. He is convinced of the Bible's trustworthiness and of its relevance to readers today. He faces the moral problems, such as the genocide of Canaanites, yet is unwilling to characterize this as unchristian or subchristian. In this he seems more cautious than Jesus who contrasted his own gospel with certain elements in the Old Testament (e.g., Matt. 5:12-45; Luke 9:52-56).

Since God is the author of the entire Bible, he affirms, one should not say God changes in his methods. The author appears not to accept the view that some portions of the Old Testament are more revelatory than others (cf. Mark 10:2-9). One senses that when reason and faith are in tension, as with the paradox of divine sovereignty (in miracles) and human responsibility, reason must yield to faith (p. 42). Of interest also is the author's preference of the "German school" and textual studies over the English-American "archaeological schools" with new-found archaeological data. Archaeology makes but little influence on this commentary, despite the author's professed appreciation of its contribution. He finds, for example, little evidence of the influence of Hittite covenants on the covenant-theme in the Bible. He is noncommittal concerning the

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date of the Exodus and conquest but seems to prefer an early date. There seems little evidence that the author has visited these biblical sites — pictorial descriptions might have enhanced the exposition.

Woudstra minimizes the contrast between the books of Joshua and Judges with reference to the completion of the conquest by pointing out passages in the former which indicate some Canaanites still unconquered. The author discounts Bible stories featuring heroes and heroines: instead he stresses the theological message conveyed, as if the two do not harmonize. In this he may be reacting against some contemporary scholarship. The author, as a Calvinist, also stresses monergism and minimizes synergism.

The overall result is a volume distinguished by its commitment to the trustworthiness of this Bible book, its relevance to Christian living, and which succeeds in its attempt to deal responsibly with some in contemporary scholarship.

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*An Index to the Revised Bauer-Arndt-Gingrich Greek Lexicon, Second Edition* by F. Wilbur Gingrich & Frederick W. Danker, John R. Alsop (ed.). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1981. 525 pp., \$10.95 paperback.

*Indexes to All Editions of Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew Lexicon and Thayer's Greek Lexicon*, Maurice A. Robinson (compiler). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1981. 89 pp., \$5.95. paperback.

These excellent tools enable students to locate words in three of the classic biblical language lexicons, no matter what the person's knowledge of Greek, Hebrew or Aramaic may be. Alsop's *Index* gives entrance to the revised *Bauer-Arndt-Gingrich Greek Lexicon* based on Bauer's fifth edition. It is a revision and correction of his earlier index to the previous *Arndt-Gingrich Lexicon* (Bauer's fourth revised and augmented edition). Because the index is arranged by biblical text references, the student can easily move from any word in any New Testament text to its treatment in the lexicon. Every Greek word from a given text that is listed in the BAG *Lexicon* is given in Greek type along with a translation, so that the work can be used not only by persons skilled in Greek but also by those with little or no knowledge of the language.

Robinson's work provides the same service for the Hebrew and Aramaic vocabulary of the Old Testament as it is treated in the classic Brown-Driver-Briggs *Lexicon* and for the New Testament Greek vocabulary listed in Thayer's *Lexicon*. Both indexes of Robinson are arranged according to the reference number in Strong's *Exhaustive Concordance*, making them also valuable tools for persons with little or no acquaintance with the biblical languages.

Each of these lexicons is a gold-mine of exegetical and bibliographic information. Robinson is to be thanked for drawing attention again to Thayer's excellent work. Persons without the advantage of a familiarity with the biblical languages will find these works especially useful for word study. Students who do know the biblical languages may find the time involved in locating words reduced by these tools. Often a student wishes to know how the lexicographers have treated not just a word in general, but the nuance of the word in a specific reference. The Alsop *Index*, arranged by text, can save an immense amount of time on such a search, since the user is led to the specific quadrant of the page where the citation is found in BAG.

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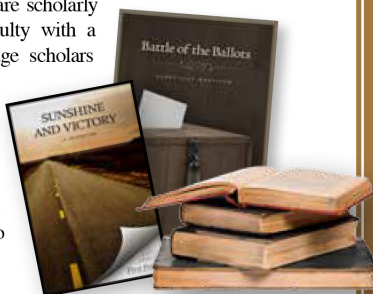
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