



**JESUS. AN EXPERIMENT IN CHRISTOLOGY**, Edward Schillebeeckx. New York: Seabury, 1979. Pp. 767. \$24.50.

A colleague has assessed this volume and its companion (*Christ. The Experience of Jesus as Lord*. Seabury, 1980) to be the most significant single effort in the study of Jesus since Albert Schweitzer's near the turn of the century. I agree. Both books are immense and expensive. Both are well worth the money to purchase and the effort to read. They may well redirect and deepen one's approach to the New Testament. In fact several of the pastors who read through *Jesus* with me in a recent graduate seminar have said that Schillebeeckx's work has enriched their teaching and preaching and has stimulated their own rethinking of christological issues.

Schillebeeckx's *Jesus*, in spite of its subtitle, is not yet a Christology. It is a systematic theologian's summary and critical evaluation of virtually all of the important exegetical work done on the New Testament for the past several generations. Few theologians were cited, but scarcely any important New Testament scholarship was overlooked in the search for the biblical foundations of a viable Christology today.

Although the author pays tribute to Bultmannian approaches to New Testament texts, he is no skeptic about the possibility of finding a historical foundation for Christology. Nor does he think that existentialist categories are adequate for interpreting the historical evidence.

We can identify several of the underlying assumptions which inform Schillebeeckx's treatment of the vast material he has assembled. These, assumptions, it will be noted, set his work off from other approaches to Jesus in recent theology and are also a clue as to why he is under official investigation by the Vatican.

First of all, the author insists that the disciples would have experienced Jesus as saviour come from God even if he had not been crucified. Indeed, it is because Jesus was so experienced that he aroused official opposition and was subsequently executed. At the same time the connection between his manner of life and his crucifixion has to be explained christologically, indeed theologically. Even though the execution of Jesus can be explained as a political expediency carried out by anxious magistrates and instigated by self-serving religious leaders, the christological question remains: What does the crucifixion imply about God's way in the world? If, after all, Jesus is God's news for humanity, why is God's gospel rejected? The point is that for Schillebeeckx the historical starting point for Christology is not the resurrection (à la Pannenberg) but the life and death of Jesus. It is the historical life of Jesus which accounts for the shocking death, and, together, the life and death of Jesus can account for the stories of the resurrection.

Secondly, the author does not equivocate about the relation of faith and history. Here he seems to agree totally with Pannenberg's program. In *Jesus—God and Man*, Pannenberg argued pointedly that “Christology is concerned...not only with *unfolding* the Christian community's confession of Christ, but above all with *grounding* it in the activity and fate of Jesus in the past.”

The history of Jesus is important, accessible and self-authenticating. Jesus provokes both faith in him as saviour and rejection of him as imposter. Schillebeeckx will make no prior appeal to dogma or to faith in order to commend the life and death of Jesus to people today. He insists that Jesus set in motion something which continues until now and which can be experienced now such that one can still respond with either faith or rejection. While dogmas about Jesus both express and protect the faith provoked by Jesus, only the Jesus of history can authenticate the dogmas. Neither the authority of the church nor the authority of true faith gives credibility to Jesus as

saviour. The appeal is to Jesus, not to a true church or a true faith.

Thirdly, one does not begin with some human quest for salvation and then show how Jesus provides the answer to that quest. Theories or ideas of salvation are too various—even in the New Testament—and too culture-specific. How Jesus can be experienced as saviour cannot be decided in advance.

Finally, our author indeed proceeds from the supreme confidence that Jesus evoked faith in himself as God's good news and that this can be established as historical fact. This whole project rests on his assumption of what counts as historical fact. It is a matter of historical fact that Jesus communicated to people that he was God's good news come on earth. It is a matter of faith whether we or anyone else believe that Jesus was right. But the historical evidence, at least to Schillebeeckx's satisfaction, is available so that on the basis of history one can make the judgment about Jesus apart from any appeal to authority, institutional or confessional.

What can we make of this effort? The scholarship is prodigious, exhaustive and persuasively organized. If our author is correct as well as comprehensive, what does his effort amount to? I venture several evaluative comments.

1. Although this book is a search for the historical Jesus, it is a search with a difference. That is, the author is not ready to dismiss the world-view of the New Testament. The New Testament does not need to be de-mythologized in order to be understood because even for the contemporary person it is in principle possible to experience Jesus as God's way of living and ruling in the world just as those who first had a living encounter with Jesus. In the second volume (*Christ*) Schillebeeckx details for us what that "experience of Jesus as Lord" entails. For this author revelation is not reducible to cognitive (à la the Enlightenment) or faith (à la existentialist) categories, but revelation must be redefined in terms of a corresponding redefinition of experience.

2. Not only does Father Schillebeeckx intend to redefine experience, but he also redefines 'person.' Most of the methods of historical criticism, as he reviews them, are too tight and restrictive and their categories are inadequate for catching hold of the historical origins of Christianity centered in Jesus. The critic, armed with these methods, went looking for the "historical Jesus" so understood that the object of the search could only be a fiction, an abstraction so totally "unique" that by definition none of the relationships which comprised the life of Jesus were considered essential to the person or work of Jesus. And so Schillebeeckx proposes that a historical person be conceived more broadly, that is, as the "focus of an extensive area." There is a focus called a person but that person is known by what is focused. A person is a social fact, a web of relatedness. Whenever any New Testament critic would dismiss as

unreliable those ways in which people perceived Jesus or the ways people might have responded to Jesus, it was the same as subtracting all of the relationships which comprised Jesus' life. The result of eliminating the relativities, for the purposes of isolating the historical person, was not an "objective" Jesus as Jesus was in himself, but a non-person. Thus, for Schillebeeckx, the origin of Christianity is traceable to that social matrix of relationships which can be characterized as a movement which Jesus set in motion prior to the crucifixion. The interactions, the relationships, the way Jesus was perceived and the way he influenced and was influenced are exactly what are necessary to describe the historical origins in terms of the living confrontation with Jesus. Jesus embodied for others God's dispensation from fasting, from restrictive law, from sadness and from fear of death. Schillebeeckx reverses the argument by which faith alone establishes the truth of Jesus apart from the relativities of history. Jesus is the historical foundation of faith.

3. *Jesus* opens with an agenda of questions: "Why this book has been written." No single answer will cover all the author's questions. But, finally, he says he wants to build a bridge between academic theology and "ordinary" Christians. The fact is, however, that ordinary Christians like those he has in mind are not the conservative majority who seem to dominate in mainline churches, but are doubtless the Christian intellectuals on the "left" who are often made to feel marginal to the life of the church.

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4. We can claim that Jesus is a historical figure only to the degree that we take seriously the human relationships that made up his life. So the primitive experience of those who were drawn to him are what forms the source of Schillebeeckx's reconstruction of the historical base of Christology. Jesus is human and historical only if one sees Jesus as the focus of a genuine historical and social reality. It is a plain fact for Schillebeeckx that Jesus was experienced as God's saving presence. Now the place where many readers may object to this scheme is where Schillebeeckx also asserts that it is a plain historical fact that Jesus was conscious of or perceived himself as such.

Jesus never spoke of himself as 'the Son' or as 'Son of God';...what is certain is that he referred in a special way to God as *Abba*. To recover something of Jesus' own relationship to God, therefore, we are thrown back on Jesus' *message* and *manner* (my emphasis) of life and on his prophetic self-understanding which can also be regarded as a settled fact of history....Actually this fits well the anthropological insight that, whether for himself or for others, it is only in his actions that a man is finally to be understood (258).

All of us both reveal and conceal in our behavior the mystery of our selves, but, says Schillebeeckx, this is the only way any person is accessible, however ambiguously and indirectly. How Jesus related to others and how they responded to him (especially how they wrote about him) constitute our empirical base for "an invitation to assent in faith to what is indeed God's great work of salvation."

If Christology finds its source in experience, what experience lies behind the resurrection stories? In answering this

question Schillebeeckx writes one of the most arresting and provocative sections of the book (320-329). The community or social movement initiated by Jesus who is experienced as God's good news, desert him at the time of his ugly death. They let him down. Prior to his execution they experience Jesus of Nazareth as good news. When they reassemble they experience him as Jesus Christ. That is, "they return to a fellowship in the here and now with that same Jesus." Schillebeeckx asks, "What, historically speaking, occurred that was experienced by the disciples as a pure act of grace on God's part...?" His answer is conversion. The root experience is conversion to Jesus as the Christ and it is this conversion to a new experience of Christ that lies behind the stories of the empty tomb and the resurrection appearances. Those who had let Jesus down by deserting him at the time of his death, reassemble and experience Jesus as present among them, in their assembly. More specifically they experience his forgiveness. "The experience of having their cowardice and want of faith forgiven them, an experience further illuminated by what they were able to remember of the general tenor of Jesus' life on earth, thus became the matrix in which faith in Jesus as the risen One was brought to birth. They all of a sudden 'saw' it" (391). Belief in the resurrection does not rest, then, on some external evidence (empty tomb or appearances or the like) but on the experience of forgiveness by Jesus even of their cowardice. Thus, if Jesus can be, and is, experienced after his ghastly death, he must have been raised from the dead. "To put it another way: after his death Jesus himself stands at the source of what we are calling the 'Easter experience' of the disciples; at all events what we meet with here is an experience of grace" (392). It is this experience of grace which is brought to expression in the traditions of the empty tomb and the appearances.

This first volume, then, is not Schillebeeckx's Christology. But it is of a piece with his fundamental assertion that Christology presupposes salvation or soteriology, and salvation presupposes the experience of liberation from sin, death, law and condemnation. It is that experience which is not only recoverable historically but is still being offered by the church today whenever people assemble in the name of Jesus.

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**DOXOLOGY: THE PRAISE OF GOD IN WORSHIP, DOCTRINE, AND LIFE. A SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY**, by Geoffrey Wainwright. New York: Oxford University Press, 1980. Pp. 609. \$24.95.

Years ago I read a statement by Paul Ricouer that fundamentally theology is reflection on the faith of the church. At the time it struck me because I was bemoaning the almost complete separation of Lutheran theologians from the current liturgical renewal. It seemed as though there were two separate camps which never engaged in compromise or even acknowledged that they were looking at the same phenomena—the theologians and the liturgists.

Roman Catholics use the formula *lex orandi, lex credendi* (rule of prayer, rule of believing) to lead into a discussion of the interaction between the performed liturgy and prayer of believing people and their theological reflection. Protestants usually assert that theology has

precedence over liturgy and prayer. We strive for a “theology of worship” to set the ground for discussion.

Some years ago, we were treated to an approach to theology and worship which was new to us and fresh. It bridged the chasm beautifully. It was Alexander Schmemmann’s *Introduction to Liturgical Theology* (Faith Press, 1966). Schmemmann, an Eastern Orthodox, showed the interaction between the two poles from Orthodox thought and life.

In *Doxology*, Geoffrey Wainwright, a well-known English Methodist, attempts to do the same. He stands on the ecumenical bridge and attempts to use his wide-ranging knowledge of everything that has and is and will be happening to draw the lines of a systematic theology from worship. We know his excellent book, *Eucharist and Eschatology*, his articles in *Studia Liturgica*, as well as in the fine volume, *The Study of Liturgy* (Oxford University Press, 1978). Therefore, it was with some enthusiastic expectation that I waded into this 609 page, \$24.95 volume.

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This book examines the interplay between doctrine and worship: how the way we worship affects the way we believe, and the way we believe affects the way we worship. He approaches his task in three large sections: the structures, the means, and the contextual questions.

The author establishes his starting point in the Christian doctrine of God and of humankind created in God’s image. Out of the communion between God and human beings, which is the heart of prayer and worship, comes the experience which is then a matter for religious belief. He shows how this develops into living beliefs about God the Father, Christ the Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit, our Sanctifier in the Church.

Under the second section on the means, he treats the Scriptures, creeds and hymns, *lex orandi*, and *lex credendi*. This section continues to demonstrate Wainwright’s thorough knowledge of the liturgy and its development, especially in the patristic period. One is constantly finding oneself saying, “I didn’t know that!” and marking the place for later collection; but at the same time, one cannot tell where the author is going!

The last section on contextual questions seems to be various essays on new dimensions which our modern contextual situation demands: ecumenical discoveries, revisions in the light of our culturally pluralistic surroundings and new ethical demands of life today.

The book is offered open-endedly in every subject treated. Liturgy and doctrine are, in the eyes of the author, developing in a process of interchange. It is his hope that *Doxology* will stimulate other studies in this field.

Well, I don’t know. It is my experience that the land is already sharply divided between liturgists and theologians. Sure, a lot has happened, as Wainwright suggests, that should open up conversations between them and establish traffic on the *lex orandi*, *lex credendi* bridge. First, perhaps, will come the Eastern Orthodox and we must listen carefully to them; then the Roman Catholics. But I fear that most Protestant theologians are pretty well entrenched, literally, to work their theologies of worship out from academic halls rather than from congregational worship. And the liturgists—in this country—don’t exist. Those who study liturgy are largely active pastors who recognize the importance of worship, and out of this have intuited their theory without rigorous theological effort. Generally they are no match for theologians.

That the conversation should begin we will grant. That this book can be *the* instrument for its commencement is not so clear. Wainwright, though teaching at Union Seminary now, is so much a part of the British scene that the British preoccupation with christological controversy (“The Myth of God Incarnate” fuss) and present philosophical efforts to justify Christianity in the modern world become the background within which he sets much of his argument. I found myself looking up quizzically from the book again and again, trying to piece together his “sitz im Leben.”

My reaction after reading the book several times is that—for me—the book doesn’t really start at one point and move in the way my mind does. There seems to be so much particular knowledge that each item has to be taken out and admired, and described, and set within a developmental pattern which is constantly left open. Wainwright’s ecumenical experience drives him to example after example till one wonders if there is really a thread of continuous theological thinking at the heart. Maybe a Lutheran expects a theology to move from one statement to another, but I can’t find where his starting blocks are. It seems to be a type of eclectic theology held together by the fact that the church somewhere uses it.

This is, however, an important book. For liturgists, who are used to dealing with details and then putting them together into a whole, maybe the best way to read it is to consult the ample index and select topics, following them through in the suggested references. I don’t know how to advise the theologian, except perhaps to master the outline in the contents and then to see how the argument develops. There is just too much brought in on each subject to be able to read the book directly from beginning to end.

After reading *Doxology*, I am convinced that Wainwright’s former study on *Eucharist and Eschatology* is the better book and the one for the student’s library. *Doxology*, I hope, will be purchased by our seminary libraries and be available for reference. But in the area of the conversation

between *lex orandi* and *lex credendi*, I still look to Schmemmann’s *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*.

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**FAITH UNDER FIRE: BIBLICAL INTERPRETATIONS OF SUFFERING**, by Daniel J. Simundson. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1980. Pp. 158. \$4.95 (paper).

Simundson’s purpose in this book is to spell out the various biblical approaches to the problem of suffering, largely through an exploration of different Old Testament (primarily) and New Testament traditions (e.g., Job, Lament Psalms, II Isaiah). The book is intended for “those within the Christian faith who, like biblical writers themselves, struggle to connect the ancient traditions of the faith to the reality of present suffering” (16).

The result is a clear, well organized, eminently readable book. While careful in its handling of the material from the perspective of the discipline, the book can be put in the hands of most laypersons with profit. The treatment neither dwells on technicalities nor is it a pabulum for the supposedly naive faithful. While one might quibble with his treatment of a text now and

again, his distillation of the more detailed exegetical work is handled very well. Yet, the author would have been of more help to us all if he had included some footnotes or a selected bibliography.

Within his basic structure, the author tends to view what he finds there in terms of two basic approaches to suffering: 1) The more intellectual “answers to suffering” such as: It is our own fault, a theory of retribution connected with this life or the next (“the basic biblical view of suffering”); God will make good come out of suffering, either for others (suffering as expiation) or for ourselves (suffering as education or discipline); suffering comes from evil forces (limited cosmic dualism); and suffering as mystery (the inscrutable purpose of God). 2) The survival approach, which is concerned with how one copes in the face’ of suffering, such as: Negative feelings should be expressed; wait and trust, in the assurance that relief is coming; be assured that the God who cares is present with and for the one who suffers. The author agrees that these two approaches are not mutually exclusive, though in both ancient and modern settings the former is used more in those times when there is breathing room, while the latter tends to emerge when present suffering becomes a preoccupation.

Perhaps the greatest strength of this material is that it assists us in seeing that the biblical approach to suffering is not univocal; it is as complex as the reality of suffering itself. Recognizing the occasional character of these texts, the author sees that one type of word about suffering was (and is!) appropriate for one type of situation, while another word was (and is) more appropriate for another context. Thus, in a contemporary pastoral approach to suffering, one must be alert to the diverse biblical picture, and seek to determine which one best fits the pastoral moment. Thus, e.g., is this a time for using Ecclesiastes or apocalyptic? Exegesis of the context is thus as important as exegesis of the text.

Yet, for all the strengths of such a diverse picture, one misses in the book any significant level of concern for the question of unity. What is finally going to hold all of these pieces together? The book tends to have an anthropological focus, with suffering seen largely from the perspective of human activity and response. However important that is, there is need for a more self-consciously theological approach, i.e., the question of suffering is finally a question about God and his relationship to the world. While the book begins by asking some of the more theological questions (e.g., “Does God have control over what happens in this world or not?”), they are not returned to in the book in any sustained way. Such a theological (and apologetic) approach to the problem has more pastoral value than is admitted. Pastorally, one can too quickly resort to: “It’s all a mystery.” Probing texts that deal with divine providence, with divine self-limitation, with the divine struggle against evil and effects, and with divine suffering, can speak volumes in certain situations.

Finally, however, it needs to be said that Simundson has given us not only significant insights into the biblical materials

on suffering, but also an important resource for the practice of ministry. It should be widely read and used.

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**MESSAGE AND EXISTENCE. AN INTRODUCTION TO CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY**, by Langdon Gilkey. New York: Seabury, 1979. Pp. 257. \$10.95/\$4.95 (paper).

Professor Gilkey of the University of Chicago Divinity School has written a very useful introduction to Christian belief, a “baby systematic” as he calls it. Its accessibility is not purchased at the price of superficiality. One who knows Gilkey’s distinguished work will frequently hear in these pages echoes of the extensive scholarship explicitly informing such works as *Maker of Heaven and Earth*, *Naming the Whirlwind*, and *Reaping the Whirlwind*. While some will miss the opulent notes distinguishing those volumes (most recently 110 pages of very fine print in *Reaping*), Gilkey’s argument is more accessible, set free as it is here from the complex dialogue with other interpreters. Moreover, since he endeavors to cover “every central Christian symbol,” a reader prizing range and especially coherence will particularly welcome this book. Gilkey has offered a travelog and not a driver’s manual, and that decision promises to serve a wide and frequently neglected audience.

After important opening chapters on “method,” Gilkey divides his work in parts assigned to the areas designated by the three articles of the Apostles’ Creed. In each case he begins with a discussion of some aspect of human existence as discernible in general experience and continues with an explication of pertinent Christian symbols. This procedure is doubly defended. Christian symbols “are such that they interpret, illumine, and clarify the basic nature of our human existence and history” and “correspondingly, the character of our human existence and history...is such that they can only be understood fully” when interpreted through these Christian symbols (8). This method of “correlation” (Gilkey frequently acknowledges his debt to Tillich) is apologetic in form, since it begins with the common ground of shared experience. But it is not to be regarded as “natural theology”—as a theology developed solely by rational interpretation of that experience.

*Message and Existence* is an impressive achievement on both formal and material grounds. Gilkey exercises his remarkable gift for clarity, aided by an enviable directness in style and a beautifully articulated blueprint for his journey with the reader. Materially, it is particularly helpful to read Gilkey’s suggestions about the empirical reference of theological materials that are often left mercilessly abstract. For example, in his discussion of the traditional notion of “creature, yet sinner” he writes of human community: “What is on every level more natural than family? Yet what is more elusive and rare than a real family, more insubstantial and precarious than most families, or more destructive than all too many actual families?” (203). His concern about actual human liberation in its social reference may be painfully educative for those self-styled “classical” theologians who suggest that the concern for justice in those theologies emanating particularly from Latin America tends to lack theological substance and precision.

Gilkey’s emphasis on starting with common experience, with “world” in the widest sense of the term, permits a graceful movement to the discussion of the metaphysical role of God as located in the traditional symbols of creation and providence. He expounds the ex nihilo quality of our continuing dependence upon God as “the power that gives us our past and preserves it, that creates and recreates our freedom, and that lures and calls us with new possibilities” (84). Clearly this is not a metaphysically derivative God, and Gilkey drives his point home by using one of the book’s few notes to repeat *Reaping*’s criticism of Whitehead’s distinction between God and creativity.

This very developed emphasis on the metaphysical ultimacy of God does not prevent



Gilkey from attributing to God three themes which Gilkey regards as more contemporary than classic: potentiality, reciprocity, and becoming. Yet he insists that God is not rendered finite or contingent by such attributions (96).

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Gilkey does not combine these two emphases in a “dipolar” view of God as the process theologians tend to do. In place of such a construction there seems to be stress placed on the transcendence of God which is such that God’s attributes “are, so to speak, slightly beyond our natural comprehension and yet not completely out of its range” (98). Another complex qualification of God’s metaphysical ultimacy occurs later when Gilkey assigns our sense of fatedness to human causality since an “exhaustive” explanation in terms of providence “challenges our confidence in the goodness of God too directly and denies as well our certainty that contingent historical causes have also been involved in creating the situation...”(224).

When Gilkey moves into the discussion of sin and redemption, the stress on common human experience seems to serve less fully. Since “the function of a religious or theological symbol is to uncover the deeper or *religious* dimension of all facts” (136), it will not do to commit the category mistake of speaking of the Fall as an actual human event or act. The reference is rather “to the *becoming* of all human events in their destiny and their freedom” (138). Yet Gilkey’s sound theological intuition prevents him from regarding this matter as one involving metaphysical or ontological structure, for that would make sin necessary and abrogate human responsibility. Here we are back on the ground of that famous formulation, “inevitable but not necessary,” offered by the other of Gilkey’s great teachers, Reinhold Niebuhr. Surely the difficulties presented by the formula are Christian difficulties. One wonders whether they may have been exacerbated by the emphasis on the universal which is so strong that the historical echo in the story of the Fall—and with it the sense for the contingent character of sin—is lost.

Gilkey begins his discussion of “Jesus as the Christ” with a recognition that this is “the center of Christian witness and un-

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derstanding” (158). Surely here the historical specificity of the content is most pointed! Thus Gilkey takes very seriously the best historical judgment concerning the ministry of Jesus. He states significantly: “The most indubitable element in the tradition of the historical Jesus in his violent and demeaning death” (173). He speaks clearly of the event of the resurrection. Yet it is as the definitive and decisive revelation of God that Jesus is the center. While Gilkey cites Irenaeus twice here (Jesus presented *humankind*—and *God*—to humankind in a new light), one senses most strongly an affinity with the subjective emphasis of Abelard. Perhaps more clearly than Abelard Gilkey speaks of how the symbol of the atonement expresses the themes of divine judgment and the divine mercy. But the divine suffering for us seems chiefly to mean God’s identification with us. What Gilkey will not do is speak of “God as a large being acting in space and time,” as the orthodox Christologies seem to him to do.

Thus again it is the nature of God on which all of this depends most fundamentally. The orthodox Christian “mythology” represents invalid speech about God, for it seems to suggest that God is an individual divine being. I agree that it does. Clearly faith cannot settle for a God

distinguished from us by merely quantitative extension. The question remains whether God's ontological supremacy cannot be stated in terms other than the option represented by Tillich's category of "being-itself." Gilkey's rich and winsome discussion of Tillich's distinction of theonomy (God's rule) from autonomy (self-rule) and heteronomy (rule by an external other) does not seem to require that God not be an individual (227). This "theonomous principle" finally underlies Gilkey's entire method of relating human existence and Christian symbols. I do not wish to forfeit the significant gains Gilkey makes in the exercise of that method, but I believe that Christian faith and experience bear witness to One whose identity is such as required by intentional action and fully personal passion. It is after all God to whom we are related, and not merely a dialectic of affirmation, negation and reaffirmation (183). Langdon Gilkey writes so perceptively of the human condition, its predicament and promise. One regrets that the Platonic dimension of his Tillichian heritage seems to handicap him in speaking of God.

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**THE ELUSIVE PRESENCE: TOWARD A NEW BIBLICAL THEOLOGY**, by Samuel Terrien. *Religious Perspectives*, 26; San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1978. Pp. xxx + 511. \$20.00.

All the requisites of a good book are present in this volume: the book has a central focus which is forcefully argued throughout; the argument is nuanced but not into obscurity; the writing style is elegant; the literature cited is ample and almost unbelievably up-to-date; and whether or not one agrees with the author one will have learned much from a careful reading of the book. In short, the book reflects the insights which Terrien, a sensitive and seasoned scholar, has accumulated during along career of teaching and research.

Terrien asserts that the fulcrum of Israel's beliefs and cultus was a unique theology of presence, for it "worshipped a God whose disclosure or proximity always had a certain quality of elusiveness" (1). While there is a singleness of theme, the chapters progress sequentially from the patriarchs through the early church. Throughout the book Terrien refuses to reduce his subject matter to a series of historical sketches or a didactic exposition. Similarly, Terrien does not regard his two chapters on the New Testament as a mere appendage, for he regards the motif of presence as that which unites "the divine asseverations, 'I am Yahweh,' of the Hebraic theophany, and 'I am the Lord,' of the Christian faith in the resurrection of Jesus" (43). The dynamic tension between divine self-disclosure and divine self-concealment is present in the whole of Scripture. The theme that Terrien again and again explicates in his discussion of biblical texts is that, while "the proximity of God creates a memory and anticipation of certitude, it always defies human appropriation. The presence remains elusive" (43).

Within each chapter, Terrien does not

attempt to describe the religion of a given period or section of literature by means of a catalogue of concepts documented with a compendium of biblical citations. Rather, entire pericopes are discussed. For example, the chapter on the patriarchs treats Gen 12, 15, 18, 22, 28 and 32; in

“The Sinai Theophanies” Exod 3-4, 19-24 and 33 are discussed; and in “The Psalmody of Presence” Pss 18 (2 Sam 22), 22/51, 23, 27/47, 73, 84, 139 and 2 Sam 23 receive particular attention. In many cases the discussions include insightful amplifications of the meaning of key terms and fresh translations (e.g., Ps 51:11: “Restore unto me the mirth of thy rescue/and let the spirit of nobility uphold me.” [324]). As a result, the reader has for many key texts all that can be gained from a good commentary. In addition, as Terrien treats the specifics of texts, he interjects generalizations that invite the biblical scholar to move beyond the purely descriptive and should entice the more systematically or philosophically minded reader to engage the particulars of biblical texts and traditions. For example, at the end of a discussion of the spiritual isolation encountered by the prophet when the prophetic vision faded, Terrien asserts, “When Yahweh was silent, the prophet prayed but could never compel. Here lies the central element which distinguishes prophetic faith from anthropocentric religion” (264), or, commenting on the psalmists’ use of the poetic idiom in the expression of their faith, Terrien asserts, “A creed is to be sung as a doxology, not signed as a didactic or legal document” (337).

Throughout the book Terrien displays enormous aesthetic insight and his use of the English language is exquisite. He does not merely contrast the presence and absence of God, but many other polarities are gracefully employed: time/space, name/glory, ear/eye, ethical passion/emotional contemplation, and ethical demands/spiritual delights. Again an example: After indicating that obedience to the prophetic vision “enabled the nation to survive the state” (262), he discusses the role Jeremiah and Ezekiel had at the onset of the Exile in the development of the concept of Yahweh’s absence from history as a sign of presence in judgment and even the self-abasement of God. Terrien adds,

When the presence left the temple and the new prophetic vision faded, Jeremiah and Ezekiel lived with a new intensity through the inwardness of their faith.... Thanks to them, the sabbath, sacrality in time, could be observed as a substitute for the temple, sacrality in space....Once again, the ear prevailed over the eye, since the survivors’ faith could renounce space for the sake of time (268).

Terrien consciously distances himself from a *Heilsgeschichte* or historical-covenantal perspective and as a result attention is given to texts that are too frequently neglected in biblical theologies. Wisdom materials are not a mere appendage in this book and some may even assess them as central in Terrien’s development of the theme of elusive presence. But has Terrien jettisoned too much of the historical-covenantal perspective? This reviewer suspects that such is the case. Early in the book, in his treatment of the patriarchal epiphanies, Terrien himself speaks of a teleological element in Hebraic theology. In his discussion of Exod 20:1-2, the coupling of the name God with a reference to the Exodus is said to introduce the topic of “God’s will for his chosen instrument of presence in history” (129). The vision of Elijah does not escape the historical context, in Terrien’s view, for the reference to Jehu and Hazael shows that, besides the personal communion with Elijah, God provided for “agents of his historical purpose” (235). The prophets’ visions, although highly interiorized and personal, also disclosed “God’s purpose for history” (262). Are these references to “history” merely remnants of a generation or more of *Heilsgeschichte* theologies which Terrien has failed to purge from his vocabulary or do they point to themes in the biblical tradition that Terrien and others will have to deal with when they move beyond a prolegomenon to a full, new biblical theology? It is difficult to imagine a full

biblical theology that does not deal with the Exodus and Conquest/Settlement. Neither topic appears in the subject index and Terrien has strikingly few references to either Exod 13-14 or the early chapters of Joshua.

Another result of the avoidance of the historical-covenantal perspective is the

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lack of any focused discussion of the larger community during the period of prophetic activity. The chapter on the “Prophetic Vision” includes discussions of 1 Kgs 19 (Elijah at Horeb), Amos 7, Hos 1 & 3, Isa 6 & 8, Jer 1 and Ezek 1-3. Terrien’s treatment of these narratives focuses on the individual prophet and God. This approach leaves out of consideration prophetic books that do not have comparable narratives and, although these narratives provide a summation of the prophets’ message to the people, too much prophetic material is bypassed which is both theologically and historically necessary in a biblical theology—even one limited to the “elusive presence” theme.

New Testament scholars will need to evaluate the details of Terrien’s treatment of New Testament texts. Terrien’s discussion of the Gospels includes Annunciation, Transfiguration and Resurrection narratives and these are clearly necessary components in a discussion of “elusive presence.” But it seems difficult to avoid a direct treatment of the Crucifixion if one intends to treat the Gospels. Terrien points in the direction of the Crucifixion in his treatment of the Transfiguration: “Jesus was the reflector of the glory of God, but the reflection of this glory led to Jerusalem and to his own death” (425). He also asserts that the *theologia crucis* is rooted in Jeremiah’s rebellion (20:28) and grows from the tenacity of Job the Agnostic and even from the disquieting acquiescence of Qoheleth the Skeptic (474). But Terrien could do much more. Could he not have linked a discussion of the Crucifixion with his depiction of Jeremiah and Ezekiel’s understanding of the Exile as God’s own self-abasement and entrance into the human predicament?

But make no mistake about it, this is an important book. Terrien’s exposition of the theme of “elusive presence” is brilliant. Even if the book does not become a prolegomenon to the new biblical theology or pave the way to a truly ecumenical theology as Terrien hopes, this book should not be treated as merely another proposal which will be soon discarded or will convince few. Terrien focuses on the biblical narrative, not the current debate about biblical theology, and, as a result, it will have a continuing value. Unlike some other scholarly works, this book is both a delight to read and a useful reference work.

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**THE LORD’S SUPPER**, by Martin Marty. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980. Pp. 80. \$2.25 (paper).

What Martin Marty has done in his brief book, *The Lord’s Supper*, is comparable to what poet John Cairdi did in his 1959 book *How Does a Poem Mean?* Both take a topic difficult for the layperson to understand and ask the relationship question rather than the definitional one. Martin Marty basically asks “How does the Lord’s Supper mean to the contemporary Lutheran

Christian who sits in the pew on a Sunday morning?”

“Holy Communion has more to do with persons than with things.” This brief sentence summarizes the intent of Marty’s work, for it directs the reader toward self-reflection rather than dissection of sacramentology. In this book Marty assumes the role of a layperson and reflects on the means of grace within his life.

The book, 80 pages in length, is divided into four chapters. Each chapter poses a clearly written, sensitively phrased theological premise. That premise is then exemplified in a highly personal manner.

Chapter one, entitled “For You...For Forgiveness,” reflects on preparation for the Lord’s Supper. To understand the meal as “an act of God directed toward humans but also an act of God responding to humans” permits the reader to understand the highly personal dimensions of the meal. In this chapter Marty uses the example of a community meeting in an Eastern European country to reduce the Lord’s Supper to its essential yet critical elements. In order to recapture a sense of simplicity in the meal in which the actions of Christ are stressed, Marty chooses to use as example a community which truly does “live under the cross.”

Chapter two, entitled “Preparation,” examines confession and forgiveness as it relates to the Lord’s Supper. Here Marty chooses to focus preparation on the sign of the cross as it reminds each penitent of

his or her identity as a washed member of the body of Christ. The example Marty uses is our own “wake-up liturgy.” As our eyes are opened to the beginning of a new day, so too our eyes are opened each time we prepare to receive the sacrament. Marty attempts to personalize the “searching of the heart” that is possible within a Lutheran understanding of communion preparation. Those who would convict others without first subjecting themselves to their own conviction are seen by Marty as proclaiming a grace that is not only cheap, but irrelevant.

Chapter three, entitled “The Service,” is a narrative walk through the *Lutheran Book of Worship*’s “The Holy Communion.” It reminds this reviewer of Bishop J. A. Robinson’s “liturgy coming to life,” in which he looked at life’s dynamics as they relate to the worship life of the people of God. Marty clearly relates liturgical activities to the daily life of the person within the pew. It is unfortunate that this book, and particularly this chapter, was not published in time to be a grounding document for the *Lutheran Book of Worship* in 1978. It is this reviewer’s opinion that Marty, better than anyone yet read, clearly and succinctly relates the Holy Communion to life. Marty’s narrative walk through the service takes each part of the liturgy and grounds it in some life experience.

Chapter four, “Reflections during Communion,” can best be called a reexamination of Lutheran piety. The question “What does communion mean?” is not as important as “How does it mean?” in the daily lives of those who seek forgiveness and would be the people of God in mission. For those familiar with contemporary misunderstandings of the Lord’s Supper, *The Lord’s Supper* appears as a checklist in the correction of diverse Lutheran pieties. It is as if Marty has listened to and heard all contemporary objections to the restoration of Word and Sacrament in proper confessional balance. The questions of frequency of the supper, sacramental versus sacrificial balance, celebration versus awe and gratitude, worthiness, and the presence of Christ within the meal are all dealt with in compassionate yet comprehensible argument.

*Baptism*, as essential reading for all who are attempting to worship with the *Lutheran Book of Worship*. As stated earlier, it is unfortunate the book arrived two years late. Had it arrived earlier, much of the ignorance and apprehension surrounding the *Lutheran Book of Worship* could have been avoided. This book is highly recommended for Lutheran laity; however, it should not be limited solely to a lay audience.

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**GROWTH COUNSELING: HOPE-CENTERED METHODS OF ACTUALIZING HUMAN WHOLENESS**, by Howard Clinebell. Nashville: Abingdon, 1979. \$7.95.

Clinebell wrote *Growth Counseling* to present a liberating approach to people. Centered in the growth-hope perspective, this approach is to liberate people to develop their possibilities and increase their joy in being alive.

Clinebell sees himself as a pastoral counselor writing to clergy, counselors and educators. He intends that his basic principles and methods will encourage these professionals to develop their own unique style of growth enabling counseling and therapy which will in turn make their organizations more effective wholeness centers.

Although Clinebell claims breadth for his approach, its central philosophy, concepts and language are drawn from the human potential movement which Clinebell seeks to integrate with the Hebrew-Christian tradition.

Readers will find Clinebell writing in his usual clear and lucid style. He writes with more enthusiasm and personal transparency than in his previous works. Poignant illustrations and collated case studies concretize his presentation. Each chapter contains exercises through which the reader can participate in the growth-hope perspective and its liberating potentials. Inclusive language and androgynous concepts unify and balance his view of wholeness. He seeks to place inner and relational growth in the context of institutional and ecological conditions. His emphasis is decidedly on promoting health rather than diagnosing illness. Clinebell provides an excellent framework in which to view and integrate the work being done by today's wide range of self-realization practitioners.

So Clinebell has expanded the scope of the human potential movement while building on its foundational concepts and utilizing its language. His efforts to deepen its understanding of the human predicament and develop more profound and lasting responses fall short.

Clinebell mentions Carl Jung three times in the work. None of these citations carry with them the dimension and depth that a substantive inclusion of Jung's understanding of symbol, myth and shadow and their reflection of the profundity of the unconscious could have brought to the presentation's framework and methods. Milton Erickson and his followers have done substantial work to both reveal the limitations of "insight" growth orientation and demonstrate the sustaining and healing capabilities of work designed to reach humankind's unconscious and

collective selves. Clinebell's work reflects little if any of the depth of this contemporary stream of therapy.

Liberation is a major theme of Clinebell's work. He refreshingly places individual liberation in the context of cultural oppression, especially its sexist, institutional and ecological forms. Yet there is far more to sexual liberation than androgyny which is the central thrust to his sexual comments; his institutional liberation references are "middle class;" and his ecological suggestions are largely rhetoric. One looks in vain for the solid liberation foundations of Freire and Herzog, both professing members of the Hebrew-Christian tradition in which Clinebell stands and aims to integrate with the human potential movement.

Finally it is in his efforts to integrate the best of the Hebrew-Christian tradition with the human potential movement that Clinebell raises more questions than he answers. He uses "spiritual" often, yet never carefully defines it. He calls a philosophy of life a spiritual need; many would disagree. What is the "higher self" of which he speaks? Here and in his understanding of transcendence he sounds more like Abraham Maslow than the Hebrew-Christian scriptures. He says of evil,

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"Human destructiveness has been seen by some thinkers as inherent and therefore inevitable.... Some such views of human evil and pathology simply reinforce a sense of hopelessness, helplessness, and resignation, a passive waiting to be resolved by God or science" (60). There are more profound ways of speaking a word of hope than down-playing the reality of despair. Perhaps to have taken this reality of the human predicament more seriously would have led him more often to Job and his counselors and Jesus Christ in his rejection and Lordship. In fact, one finds little or no treatment of the tension of following the Lord versus following one's self.

I would have preferred more depth and profundity from this one for whom I have great respect. Yet I'm grateful for the new ground turned here. Perhaps it is to join in tilling that new ground that he writes to invite us.

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**A HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE**, edited by Hubert Cunliffe-Jones. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980. Pp. 616. \$29.95.

This work is a conscious attempt to succeed G. P. Fisher's *History of Christian Doctrine* first published in 1896. It is in no way dependent upon its predecessor, however, as it constitutes a fresh appraisal of doctrinal history by a group of ten distinguished scholars, nine from Britain and one from Ireland, under the editorship of H. Cunliffe-Jones, University of Manchester. The editor suggests it is no longer possible for one individual to grasp the totality of the history of doctrine, hence a collection of essays by specialists in each period. In the prologue the editor outlines some difficulties facing a writer of theological history, not the least being a definition of dogma. This volume operates with dogma as being "the record of a series of attempts made in successive periods to embody the contents of the Gospel in clear and self-consistent

propositions” (4), and “a distinct conception and perspicacious statement of the doctrine professed by the body, or by a considerable body, of Christian people” (5). Three of the best chapters are those by G. W. H. Lampe (Patristic period), Benjamin Drewery (Martin Luther), and John H. S. Kent (19th to 20th centuries).

Lampe follows the traditional periodization of the early church from the Apostolic Fathers to Chalcedon, in effect utilizing a biographical rather than topical approach. (Up to the 16th century all contributors follow the biographical outline.) This has the advantage of treating theologians on their own terms without forcing later systematic categories upon them. It has the disadvantage of leaving the reader in some doubt as to the doctrine “professed by the body” of the church. Lampe has consistently demonstrated his ability to articulate the bewildering nuances of patristic Christology in simple and lucid terms, and here is no exception. He guides the reader through the labyrinth of early controversies in such a way as to present each view with objectivity and sympathy. Some shibboleths are challenged. Pelagius at no time declared it possible to gain salvation without God’s grace. Indeed, his anthropology was decidedly pessimistic. Arius was not in the lineage of Paul of Samosata, and it appears he was, in fact, dependent upon no one. The dynamic monarchians had more in common with Sabellius than not. The author clearly and repeatedly demonstrates the role soteriology played in the formation of patristic thought. For instance, one of the problems at Nicea was that Arius and Athanasius were each operating with a different understanding of the work of Christ, resulting in two opposing Christologies. Much the same can be said for almost all the theological conflicts leading up to and succeeding Chalcedon. He concludes with chapters on sin/grace, church/sacraments.

An American (or German) may approach a British treatment of Luther with some reserve, but Drewery is not a novice in Luther studies, and his grasp of the Reformer’s theology is impressive. He understands all of Luther’s theology in terms of *coram deo* and a theology of the cross. He points to the paradoxes of Luther’s antitheses: glory/cross, revealed/hidden, mystery/revelation, freedom/ bondage, sinner/saint, strange work/proper work, law/gospel. “There is no third use of the law. This appears first in Melanchthon” (336). When dealing with

the ministry he suggests, “The ultimate priesthood of all believers as Luther understood it not only admits but demands a properly called and consecrated ‘ministry’” (347). The two kingdoms are best understood not as realms but as reigns, both belonging to God. Drewery is sympathetic but not uncritical. He points to some difficulties which Luther did not resolve, such as maintaining a practical distinction between the two kingdoms. Another problem is reconciling a bound/free will with predestination. As to the church, it is properly *gemeinde* and not *kirche*, Luther always translating *ecclesia* in the N. T. with the former. This chapter is a useful compendium of Luther’s theology in 35 pages for anyone who desires a quick review of the Reformer’s thought. The uninitiated may find Drewery’s copious use of Latin and German terms an obstacle, but then again this entire work is not for the uninitiated. This section is certainly an advance on the Fisher volume, which ignored Luther entirely! Drewery also writes a fine section on the Council of Trent.

Kent leaves the biographical format and instead offers topical sections on the 18th century, 19th century, the doctrine of the church, social theology and the 20th century. Considering the number of theologians in the last three hundred years this is the only realistic



approach. His contribution constitutes over one-fourth of the volume. Kent moves with confidence through the issues raised by the Enlightenment, questions of authority (Scripture and tradition), the challenges of philosophy, historical criticism, pietism, and church-state relations. For purposes of categorization he simply divides theologians into liberals and conservatives, which lends itself to ease of understanding but obviously leaves aside some nuances of thought. The task of reviewing theology in the last three centuries is formidable, yet the author exhibits a masterful grasp of the period. However, these pages appear to be heavily populated with British theologians, some of whom may not merit mention. It is true that American theology may be heavily derivative, but the only Americans to warrant significant treatment are Jonathan Edwards, Walter Rauschenbusch, Reinhold Niebuhr, and Paul Tillich (if he can be so considered), with several others (Bushnell, VanBuren) being given mention. Liberation theology is given a few scant lines (599) as is process theology. It may be true that the charismatic movement can be dismissed as having “more psychological interest than theological value” (590), but not everyone will be convinced of that, certainly not in terms of the doctrine of the church or sacraments, or of the definition of doctrine which includes “a considerable body of Christian people.” But in such a compressed treatment not everything can be said, and the author has presented an informed and perceptive outline of a rich period in theological development. His chapters constitute a solid contribution to the volume.

The late David Knowles, medievalist without peer, contributes the chapter on the Middle Ages. The preface states that Knowles welcomed an opportunity to write on medieval theology in his retirement. His contribution appears to be a compendium of his *Evolution of Medieval Thought*, which is a significant piece by itself. Knowles is lucid in his treatment of Aquinas and scholasticism, a difficult topic for any writer. His section is a welcome reminder that theology continued to develop between the patristic period and the Reformation, and that Luther was just as much in debt to his late medieval legacy as he was a pioneer.

Kallistos Ware offers a chapter on Christian theology in the East 600-1453. Despite the repeated reminder that Eastern theology was not static after John of Damascus but continued to develop, Ware (or the editor) is able to summarize such development in the last 500 years in a brief five pages. E. Gordon Rupp, the distinguished Cambridge scholar, offers an essay on theology at the eve of the Reformation in which he outlines the contributions of twelve theologians. Rupp is also the author of segments on Melancthon and Bucer. Other contributors are Basil Hall (Zwingli), T. H. L. Parker (Calvin), H. F. Woodhouse (16th century Anglican Theology), and R. Buick Knox (17th-century).

Both Lampe and Knowles demonstrate and articulate the truth that worship and practice frequently (Knowles says “always”) precede the formulation of doctrine. If that is so, one would hope that some consideration should have been given to such practice and piety in

the other chapters of the book. At the risk of splitting hairs, if doctrine is that “professed by the body of Christians,” the absence of such unity may well prompt the editor to consider re-titling the book a history of theology than of doctrine.

It may be debated whether a coherent history of theology can best be written by one person or by a committee of specialists. There are obvious difficulties in either approach. Jaroslav Pelikan and Justo Gonzalez have shown that the individual approach can still be done

with some success. It may be gratuitous to suggest that a collection of essays is in danger of lacking unity or cohesion (i.e. Lampe's definition of indulgences can hardly be reconciled with that of Knowles). But something can also be said for recognized scholars in each period of theological development making a joint effort. This volume represents the best of contemporary British scholarship and it is impressive. It is a worthy successor to the legacy of G. P. Fisher.

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**HAS THE CHURCH A FUTURE?** by Douglas John Hall. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1980. Pp. 192. \$8.95 (paper).

**FREEDOM FOR MINISTRY**, by Richard John Neuhaus. San Francisco: Harper & Row. 1979. Pp. 232. \$8.95.

The pastor-theologian who wants to take a hard look at the future and what it holds for local congregational life will find Douglas John Hall's *Has the Church A Future?* a small but engaging book which offers a hard critique of the *status quo*. At the same time, it holds out a positive path for renewal and radical (back to roots) restructuring and redirecting of energies by sketching a narrow and hard way for future Christianity to walk.

Canadian author Hall, a professor at McGill University, wrote this disturbing book for those Christians living in this "post-Constantinian era" who sense the death, the reduction, the "dechristianisation" of Christendom. Marshalling good evidence, Hall parades past our eyes scenes to convince us that Christianity as the majority mentality, the "Successful" Christianity enclaves, and the rampant and complacent followers in the Church soon will be at an end. The sixteen centuries-old image of the Church as triumphant institution dominating culture is over. And that, according to Hall, is as it should be.

The church which has a future according to Hall is the church which is willing to face our minority status in the world and begin again to take on servanthood as our prescriptive posture. This is a far cry from the prevailing attitude that Christendom is out to subdue and dominate the world and save the world in this generation. Gone must be our pretensions of Christian imperialism. To quote Hall, "After Auschwitz and Hiroshima, no form of Christianity has the right to engage in high pressure tactics to persuade people to become Christians. From now on we shall have to live in a pluralistic world where Christianity is one way among others" (31).

Hall posits that we must begin at the end of 'Christendom.' There we will find our proximity with the early Christians (i.e., our littleness and powerlessness) and can hear afresh what the New Testament is saying about the Church. Then we can join the Spirit in the unfolding renewal of the church for the future.

Joining Soren Kierkegaard and Reinhold Niebuhr in criticizing the "success motif" of Christianity, Mr. Hall goes for the jugular vein when he says, "(God) wants his crucified Son to be there for all who are crucified, for all who suffer....When the Church succeeded in worldly terms and turned its very gospel into a worldly success story, it removed Jesus from the sphere of all who are victims of human success, all who fail, all who die" (47).

Readers can rightfully ask, "What does Hall practically speaking have in mind after the demise of 'Christendom' in this post-Constantinian age?" Professor Hall responds with two

“musts”: 1) The church that is coming to be must be possessed by a new awareness of the uniqueness of the Christian message and way; and 2) the church’s life must be determined by an overwhelming sense of commitment to the world, not in terms of dominance, but in terms of service.

Hall goes on in the remainder of this powerful “gadfly” book to spell out what a tough, determined, realistic, disciplined, grace-formed, Spirit-transformed, congregational and individual Christian life would look like. Among the “marks of the church which has a future” we will find (1) a strong emphasis on learning; (2) a corporate life patterned by the synagogue in worship and study; (3) a priestly community that represents humanity’s cause before God and the Christ to the world; and (4) a linkage with any group that God is using in the cause of justice and peace.

Firm believers as myself in the sacraments and their power and centrality to our life and faith will have trouble with Hall’s cavalier rejection of sacraments as “magical” and having a “superfluous” character in middle class congregations!

This book is a call for Christian maturity and openness to participate in the broken suffering of the world and its people. Hall writes this book out of the conviction that, when we begin to understand once more that grace is the only recourse at Point Zero, we can experience resurrection out of death. Then we shall know what Elie Wiesel meant by saying God’s great gift to humankind is the privilege of beginning *again*!

Another very important volume being widely read and in dramatic contrast to Hall’s work, because it is a pointed and passionate affirmation for taking seriously the ministry of the concrete church in the neighborhood as a godly institution (St. John ‘the Mundane’) and calling for pastors to give their best energies and person to it is Richard John Neuhaus’ *Freedom For Ministry*. I will leave it to the reader to decide where their own theological loyalties lie on the Hall-Neuhaus spectrum.

Richard Neuhaus wrote *Freedom For Ministry* when he was pastor of St. John the Evangelist in the lower Manhattan section of New York. His pastoral heart and zeal for preaching, love for the liturgy, positive trust in peoples’ good sense and enthusiasm for the ministry rise to the surface on almost every page. Neuhaus’ awareness of being a minister of the Gospel and a pastor of an inner-city parish is critical to appreciating this book.

Whereas Hall’s volume is *anti*-institutional, Neuhaus depicts his perspective as a *critical* affirmation of the existing institutional church. For Neuhaus there is no other church than the one we encounter in the specific neighborhood, imperfect as it is. It daily needs to kneel and stand *simul justus et peccator*, for there is no other. The Church is that communion of God’s people called to be a servant and herald to this world. There is hope for the Church when it believes that it is the *sacramentum* offered for the sake of the world. The ministry can also be viewed as God’s *sacramentum* worked upon the church.

Neuhaus has been positively influenced by the Vatican II’s affirmation of the Church’s call to be servant. The servanthood motif, he argues, will save both the ministry and the institutional church from being self-serving. The ministry is always set within the context of the Church. That very same tangible and real church is living under grace, signaling, sighting, celebrating, always pointing to the reign of God disclosed in Jesus Christ.

The tempo of the book picks up in chapters nine and ten when the central task of preaching is brought to the forefront. With a decline of preaching behind us, it is refreshing for this reader to have Neuhaus affirm:

In whatever part of this great Church one is preaching it is imperative to keep the greater Church in mind. The whole is present in its parts....Our purpose is to help the Church recognize and actualize what God has already declared it to be.... Preaching that applies for a license from unbelievers is no preaching at all.... Preaching must engage the world and it should be marked by intelligence, sensitivity, and courage....Passion is essential to preaching. Passion is a sense of urgency. Preaching is like a fire under control... (142, 143, 147,153).

The source of Neuhaus' strong confidence in the strength of the Church and its potential for civic virtue, the exercise of justice, is the reality of the Church gathered *for worship*. Worship for the Church is praise and adoration of God and that is sufficient *raison d'être*. Through his close association with the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Neuhaus has witnessed the powerful flow of a life grounded in worship moving out from altar and pulpit into the streets, buses, marches, into a so-

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ciety and world in need of the eradication of poverty, hunger, racism. Worship leads to the creation of jobs for unemployed youth, just opportunity for men and women, the right to food and adequate housing and health care.

The final chapter, entitled "The Pursuit of Holiness," offers an extremely insightful analysis of the attractive seductions with which clergy need to do battle! Neuhaus exhorts pastors to be *exemplars* of singleness of heart, godly men and women, and pillars of integrity. He holds up the mirror of the Word to much that is shoddy and ethically questionable—that too readily accommodates clergy practices to today's lifestyles. One would do well to heed the warnings.

If in your present situation you are questioning your role and the role the church is to play, Douglas Hall may hold a powerful key to renewal for you. If you are struggling to express your convictions that the Church does matter and pastors do have something precious to declare, Richard Neuhaus will speak to you. Both authors are deeply concerned about creative ministry. A ministry which is shaped by a seriousness about the world, a world which God has rescued in Jesus Christ. However, for that ministry to take place, Hall will lead us back to Point Zero to begin again with the resurrection faith. Neuhaus will remind us that it happens as the Church sights, signals, supports and celebrates the reign of God for the sake of the one human family.

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**SEX, SIN AND GRACE: WOMEN'S EXPERIENCE AND THE THEOLOGIES OF REINHOLD NIEBUHR AND PAUL TILLICH.** By Judith Plaskow. Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1980. Pp. VIII + 216. \$9.25.

In this revision of her Yale dissertation, Judith Plaskow uses the work of feminist theorists and contemporary novelists, especially Doris Lessing, to argue that “woman’s sin” is primarily one of failure to achieve self-actualization, to take responsibility for her life, to make fully human choices in awareness of a variety of options. Against this background, she tests the relevance to the experience of white, middle class, western women of the doctrines of sin and grace in Reinhold Niebuhr’s and Paul Tillich’s theologies.

While Niebuhr includes the problems of lack of self and denial of freedom in his definition of “sensuality,” this sin is so subordinated to the sin of pride as rebellious self-assertion in his system that its analysis remains quite secondary. Niebuhr’s largely negative view of human creatureliness also leads him to underestimate the power and the specific temptations of “sensuality” as lack of self-actualization. His doctrine of grace, similarly, so stresses self-sacrificial love that Plaskow concludes that Niebuhr’s theology is framed almost entirely in relation to male experience, and serves to uphold familiar cultural expectations for women. And this is so despite Niebuhr’s prominent concern with social sin and the problems of justice and equality.

Tillich’s interpretations of sin and grace present a more complex picture in relation to the experience of women. His doctrine of sin as estrangement is more inclusive than Niebuhr’s fundamental notion of pride, and is specifically concerned with the importance of individualization, self-affirmation, and sins of “weakness.” Similarly, his treatment of grace attempts to establish the importance of human autonomy within its framework, both as the ontological autonomy of the self and as its capacity for self-affirmation and self-relatedness. Nevertheless, Tillich’s essential identification of estrangement with self-actualization in the coincidence of creation and fall undercuts those elements in his system. His dominant concern is with demonic and creative forms of sin, and with grace as participation rather than individualization in such fashion that the woman’s issue of self-actualization seems finally surrendered.

In her final chapter, Plaskow sketches the relationship of the theological anthropologies of Niebuhr and Tillich to their respective formulations of the doctrine of God. She indicates how their differences with regard to sin and grace can be traced to different images of the divine/human relation. Tillich’s image of God as the ground of being is fundamentally a maternal one, and the contradiction in his doctrines of sin and grace is viewed as a conflict between two types of mother: one

who fosters the independence of the child and another who refuses to allow its freedom and growth. Niebuhr’s image of God is basically that of a father who judges humanity and demands its obedience. Thus for Niebuhr the issue of independence and self-actualization never emerges as it does for Tillich; it is simply presupposed. Plaskow concludes by suggesting further implications with regard to the question of community in each of the theologians in relation to the experience of women, especially with regard to the social dimension of the contemporary women’s movement.

This is a carefully argued and important contribution to feminist theology. Plaskow reasons that insofar as theologies which attempt to take human experience seriously (as Niebuhr’s and Tillich’s explicitly do) fail to relate to the experience of women, they miss an

important dimension of human experience generally. Thus there is special value not only in her critique of contemporary theology, but also in her suggestions for further analysis and for constructive work in relation to other central Christian doctrines. For those concerned with the future of theology and with questions of its appropriateness to the life of the whole church, this is a richly provocative study.

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**THE CHRISTOLOGICAL CONTROVERSY**, translated and edited by Richard A. Norris, Jr. Sources of Early Christian Thought, Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980. Pp. 176. \$6.95 (paper).

A necessary element in any satisfactory approach to Christian doctrine is a familiarity with the patristic period, and central to such familiarity is an acquaintance with the doctrine of Christ which interacts profoundly with other fundamental doctrines. This small volume presents translated excerpts which deal with the christological issue up to Chalcedon (451). Included are Melito, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Origen, Athanasius, Apollinarius, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Nestorius, Cyril of Alexandria, Leo I, and

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Chalcedon's "Definition." The editor has prefixed a short introduction which describes the history of the controversy and the significance of each writer included in the volume. Volume III of the *Library of Christian Classics* contains some of the same materials as this book, but the present treatment is more comprehensive and focuses on the christological issue.

One cannot help but be impressed with the historical nature of doctrinal development in perusing these materials. Recently a seminarian confided that he found it extremely difficult to accept the fact that Clement of Rome (d. 96) may not have accepted the Trinity or the two natures of Christ in the same way as later theologians. This volume (and presumably others to follow in the series) is a healthy corrective to such an unhistorical (i.e. docetic) approach.

The editor, professor of Church History at Union Theological Seminary in New York, has collected the most significant materials of the controversy, though the two Gregories (Nyssa and Nazianzus) are absent. Since all the excerpts represent new translations it may have been useful to indicate the sources/editions from which the translations were made. The bibliography contains possible primary sources for only seven of the thirteen excerpts.

In reading this material it becomes clear that there is a prior concept of salvation which is basic to one's Christology. For Antiochenes Christ's human nature was the agent of salvation to save human natures, whereas Alexandrians looked to the divine nature as the agent to save people from human nature. A most telling excerpt is Apollinarius' Fragment No. 76 in which the heresiarch denies a human soul in Christ on strictly soteriological grounds.

Sources of Early Christian Thought, under the general editorial direction of William Rusch, is a welcome undertaking. In light of the comments made above, we suggest future volumes in this series on patristic soteriology and sources of early Christian worship. The

inaugural volume is a solid start on a series of collections which should commend themselves to all students of Christian theology.

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