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First Peter in Recent Study

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In 1976 John H. Elliott wrote a key article lamenting and documenting the second-rate status of 1 Peter in the theology and exegesis of that time.[1] Since 1976, in no small part due to the efforts of Elliott himself, the study of 1 Peter has experienced something of a renaissance. In the last twenty-five years more than sixty commentaries on the epistle have appeared in English and the major European languages, plus hundreds of articles in journals and reference works and dozens of monographs on specialized topics dealing with 1 Peter and Petrine tradition in the New Testament.[2] Of those available in English, the following four detailed commentaries would be included on everyone's list of recent major contributions to the study of 1 Peter:

> Leonhard Goppelt. *A Commentary on 1 Peter.* Edited by Ferdinand Hahn. Translated and augmented by John E. Alsup. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993.
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> J. Ramsey Michaels. *1 Peter.* Word Biblical Commentary. Waco, TX: Word Books, 1988.

[1]John H. Elliott, "The Rehabilitation of an Exegetical Step-Child: 1 Peter in Recent Research," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 95 (1976) 243–254.

[2]The bibliography in Elliott's recent commentary, *1 Peter: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, pp. 155–304, catalogues ca. 3000 items. Since 1996, when Elliott's work was completed, dozens of relevant books and articles have appeared each year; see *New Testament Abstracts*, ed. Daniel J. Harrington and Christopher R. Matthews, published three times yearly by Weston Jesuit School of Theology, Cambridge, Mass.

Recent studies in 1 Peter abound and demonstrate a remarkable convergence on many points. The distinction between scholarly commentaries for the guild and devotional or homiletical commentaries for the church is being widely overcome.

Paul J. Achtemeier. *1 Peter: A Commentary on First Peter*. Hermeneia—A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996.

John H. Elliott. *1 Peter: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. Anchor Bible 37B. New York: Doubleday, 2000.

These are all thorough, full-length studies, exploring the details of the Greek text and exhibiting all the technical refinements of contemporary scholarship. Among smaller recent commentaries in English that mediate such scholarship to the more general reader are Wayne Grudem, *1 Peter*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Eerdmans, 1988); Peter H. Davids, *The First Epistle of Peter*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Eerdmans, 1990); Pheme Perkins, *First and Second Peter, James, and Jude,* Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching (Westminster John Knox, 1995); David L. Bartlett, "The First Letter of Peter: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections," *The New Interpreter's Bible*, vol. 12 (Abingdon, 1998); M. Eugene Boring, *1 Peter*, Abingdon New Testament Commentaries (Abingdon, 1999); Donald P. Senior and Daniel J. Harrington, *1 Peter, Jude and 2 Peter*, Sacra Pagina 15 (Liturgical Press, 2003).

A comparison of the methods, perspectives and emphases in these ten commentaries from across the denominational and theological spectrum provides a realistic evaluation of the present state of Petrine studies. There is a remarkable convergence—not to say unanimity or identity—on the following points, most of which represent a significant shift in perspective, emphases, and conclusions from the situation Elliott described in 1976.

I. 1 Peter was not written by Simon Peter, directly or indirectly

Of the ten commentaries, only Grudem, who espouses biblical inerrancy, insists that the letter was written directly by Simon Peter himself (p. 24).[3] Michaels, whose evangelical view of Scripture is more nuanced,[4] allowing for error and pseudonymity, interprets the letter as having been written in the 80s and inclines toward the view that Peter lived until this late date and is in some sense responsible for its content, though he did not necessarily compose it personally. All the others argue for pseudonymity, though some (Goppelt, Davids, Bartlett) think that Silvanus may have had a hand in its actual composition. The reference to Silvanus in 5:12, however, is now almost universally taken as referring to the one responsible for delivering the letter, not to the secretary who assisted in its composition. The two most ardent defenders of traditional Petrine authorship, Grudem and Mi-

[3]Grudem explicates his view of Scripture in "Scripture's Self-Attestation and the Problem of Formulating a Doctrine of Scripture," in *Scripture and Truth*, ed. Donald A. Carson and John D. Woodbridge (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992) 19–59.

[4]J. Ramsey Michaels, "Inerrancy or Verbal Inspiration? An Evangelical Dilemma," in *Inerrancy and Common Sense*, ed. Roger R. Nicole and J. Ramsey Michaels (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980) 49–70. Michaels is at pains to distinguish his own conservative view from fundamentalism.

chaels, both clearly reject the secretary hypothesis. The prevailing view is either that Simon Peter wrote it himself or that it was written in his name by a teacher in the Roman church some years after Peter's death, with most critical scholars clearly opting for pseudonymity.

II. 1 Peter is a positive example of early Christian pseudonymity

Pseudonymity is no longer considered the exception that must be explained or an embarrassment that must be somehow legitimated. Except for hard-line fundamentalism, many, perhaps most, scholars from across the whole spectrum of scholarship now consider the seven undisputed letters of Paul to be the only New Testament documents for which traditional views of authorship may be confidently claimed. All the rest are either anonymous or, with varying degrees of probability, pseudonymous.[5] This shift toward pseudonymity is not necessarily an indication that scholars have become more skeptical or that the gap between academy and church has become wider. Not only has more evidence accumulated that

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various New Testament documents were not in fact written directly by the authors to whom they are attributed, pseudonymity itself has come to be viewed more positively, and that not merely as making a virtue of necessity. First Peter is now generally accepted as pseudonymous, but not grudgingly so. Previous generations of critical scholars may often have felt that they must follow the evidence and honestly "admit" that 1 Peter was not written by Peter himself, but this was sometimes done with an air of resignation, or occasionally with triumphal glee that conservatives and traditionalists were wrong once again. Previously, critical scholarship was often concerned to show that pseudonymity must not be judged by modern standards and that, *even though* 1 Peter was not written by Peter himself, it is still canonical Scripture whose message is to be respected. This hesitation has now been in large measure overcome, both historically and theologically. Words such as "forgery" and "pious fraud" are heard less and less, and pseudonymous authorship is seen more and more as a positive means widely adopted in early Christianity in order to propagate the apostolic faith. While Bartlett is correct that there are "benign

[5]Evangelical scholarship is no longer predictable in this regard. Leading evangelical scholars now advocate, for example, the pseudonymous nature of Ephesians (e.g., Andrew T. Lincoln, *Ephesians* [Word Books, 1990]) and the Pastorals (e.g., I. Howard Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles, International Critical Commentary* [T. & T. Clark, 1999]). David Arthur deSilva, *An Introduction to the New Testament: Contexts, Methods, & Ministry Formation* (InterVarsity Press, 2004), is representative of this updating of evangelical scholarship. He unambiguously regards 2 Peter as pseudonymous (878), gives a balanced review of the arguments regarding 1 Peter without committing himself (844–847)—though his interpretation is not based on Petrine authorship—and presents a cautiously appreciative view of pseudonymity (685–690).

and less benign" ways of affirming pseudonymity,[6] the reassuring but relieved connotation of "benign" (= "not malignant") itself has been overcome, and exegetes increasingly regard pseudonymity not merely as "not all that bad," but as a positive good.[7]

III. 1 Peter is an expression of the church's growing ecumenicity

First Peter is now widely understood as a letter representing the (or some of the) leadership of the Roman church in the latter part of the first century, addressed to harassed fellow Christians encouraging them to hold fast to their faith. The letter is written by a presbyter (5:1), but speaks in behalf of the Roman church that has endured its own sufferings. *First Clement*, written from Rome shortly after 1 Peter, indicates that the Roman church saw itself as custodian of the legacy of the two leading apostles in early Christianity, both of whom had taught in Rome and had, in Rome, sealed their testimony with their deaths.[8]

Peter had been such an influential leader in the Roman church that in some later traditions he became its "founder." There may have been something like a "Petrine school" in Rome, analogous to the "Pauline school" widely accepted as carrying on Pauline tradition in the second and third generations; it is virtually certain that there was at least a Petrine "group" or "circle" that maintained and reinterpreted the legacy of Peter, and that such traditions are found in 1 Peter.[9]

Paul had not only written his longest extant letter to the Roman church; he

[6]David L. Bartlett, "The First Letter of Peter: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections," in *The New Interpreter's Bible*, vol. 12 (Abingdon, 1998) 233. While Bartlett himself regards 1 Peter as written by someone at the end of the first century (230–234), he is not greatly concerned with authorship, which he considers a matter of "guesswork" (234) that "makes surprisingly little difference" regarding the "theological claims of the epistle" (233), not essentially affecting what he calls the "homiletical payoff" (305). However, the genre and historical setting of a text are crucial if one is interested in understanding the text rather than merely extracting homiletical nuggets unrelated to its historical meaning, and both preacher and exegete must risk finite judgments on such historical issues.

[7]For helpful discussions of pseudonymity as a positive theological aspect of early Christian literature, see, e.g., David G. Meade, *Pseudonymity and Canon: An Investigation into the Relationship of Authorship and Authority in Jewish and Earliest Christian Tradition* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1986), a dissertation directed by James D. G. Dunn. That by no means all scholars are prepared to see extensive pseudepigraphical writing in the New Testament, or to evaluate it so positively, is indicated not only by the continuing apologetic writings from conservative evangelicalism, but by, e.g., Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Writings of the New Testament: An Interpretation*, rev. ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999).

[8]"Let us set before our eyes the good Apostles. There was Peter, who, because of unrighteous jealousy, endured not one nor two but many trials, and thus having given his testimony went to his appointed place of glory. Because of jealousy and strife Paul by his example pointed out the way to the prize for patient endurance. After he had been seven times in chains, had been driven into exile, had been stoned, and had preached in the East and in the West, he won the genuine glory for his faith, having taught righteousness to the whole world and having reached the farthest limits of the West. Finally, when he had given his testimony before the rulers, he thus departed from the world and went to the holy place, having become an outstanding example of patient endurance." *1 Clem.* 5:3–5, in *Apostolic Fathers*, J. B. Lightfoot and J. R. Hammer, ed. and rev. Michael W. Holmes (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1989). Used by permission.

[9]Cf. Elliott, "Exegetical Step-Child," 254; Raymond E. Brown and John P. Meier, *Antioch and Rome: New Testament Cradles of Catholic Christianity* (New York: Paulist, 1983) 128–182; Marion L. Soards, "1 Peter, 2 Peter, and Jude as Evidence for a Petrine School," in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt: Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung*, ed. Joseph Vogt, Hildegard Temporini, and Wolfgang Haase (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1988) 25/5:3827–3849.

too had taught and died there. By the end of the century, we should picture the Roman church as not only reading Romans regularly in its worship, but familiar with other letters of Paul as well. The previous generation of New Testament scholarship tended to see 1 Peter as too dependent on Paul's letters as literary sources and to make the author into a "Paulinist" who pasted together elements from the Pauline corpus but fell somewhat below the heights of Pauline theology. Jülicher's

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comment was often repeated, that if "Peter" was not the first word of the document, no one would have thought of attributing it to Peter and it would be considered another deutero-Pauline letter.[10] The most extreme form of this tendency was expressed in the suggestion that the initial word had in fact been Παῦλος, changed by a copyist to Πέτρος, a difference of only three Greek letters. Such excesses have rightly been rejected, but some recent scholarship is now in danger of overreacting. It is now commonly argued that 1 Peter is not "dependent" on Paul at all, that common elements and vocabulary are to be explained by both authors having drawn from a common stream of early Christian tradition.[11] But the author's indebtedness to Pauline tradition, including its distinctive elements not drawn from "common Christian tradition," need not be minimized. The author's adoption of the letter form is itself due to the influence of Paul, who made the apostolic letter a means of Christian instruction and had a decisive influence on the character of early Christian literature. From our centuries-later perspective, we tend to think it "normal" to have a New Testament consisting primarily of letters. It is thus difficult for us to appreciate the fact that it was *not* to be taken for granted that early Christians would use the epistolary genre to express apostolic tradition and authority. Unless the letter form had already assumed something of a normative status due to Paul's letters having been read alongside Scripture in the liturgy of the Roman church, it would be difficult to understand that both 1 Peter and *1 Clement* adopted this genre, and that Hebrews, despite its representing an essentially different genre, was pressed into a letter-like form.

Not only the epistolary form as such, but particular, distinctive elements of Paul's letters, in both form, content, and vocabulary, are found in 1 Peter. Of numerous examples, we may here note first the "grace and peace" formula in the greeting (1 Pet 1:1), a combination found only in Paul and literature dependent on

[10]Adolf Jülicher, *Einleitung in das Neue Testament*, 6th ed. (Tübingen: Mohr, 1906) 178.

[11]E.g., Goppelt, *1 Peter*, 28–30; Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 15–23; in particular, Elliott, *1 Peter*, 20–39 and passim, is too concerned to distance 1 Peter from Paul.

him. The same is true of distinctive Pauline phraseology such as "in Christ" (3:16; 5:10, 14) and vocabulary such as χάρισμα (spiritual gift, 4:10). Moreover, the basic christological pattern of 1 Peter is shaped by the Pauline kenosis Christology, in which the norm and guide for the Christian life is the Christ event as a whole, focused in the death and resurrection of Jesus rather than individual stories and sayings of the historical Jesus. For example, the author supports his appeal to live a Christian life from Scripture, not by citing sayings of Jesus. In 1 Pet 3:9–12, for example, the author cites Ps 34, not a saying of Jesus, as warrant for blessing those who abuse us. We readily think of the Sermon on the Mount, but "Peter" thinks not of the historical Jesus but of his Bible, through whom the risen Lord speaks (see 1:11 and the similar use of Scripture by the contemporary author of Hebrews, likewise in the Pauline tradition). When the author does think of Jesus as exemplary for the Christian life, the example for walking "in his steps" is the suffering and dying Jesus, not the teacher of Galilee (2:21–25). This emphasis on the Christ event as a whole, concentrated in the death and resurrection of Jesus, and the Scripture as mediating the message of the risen Lord, is thoroughly Pauline. While the author is no scissors-and-paste Paulinist, he is greatly in debt to Paul in both form and content.

The author also draws from general church traditions that can no longer be specifically identified, and adds his own theological convictions and creativity to the mix of his composition. But he should not be thought of as an individual "composer" or "redactor," but as a spokesperson for the Roman church, a church that is aware that it is steward of the legacy of both Paul and Peter. These two, though continuing to regard each other as apostolic colleagues, had had fundamental disagreements (one need only remember Gal 2:1–21, narrated of course from Paul's later perspective).Their respective followers in the second and third generations could have been tempted to see themselves as representing competing versions of Christianity or even two different churches. Like *1 Clement*, 1 Peter intentionally resists such a development. In the name of Peter, and with distinctive elements of Petrine tradition, the author adopts the Pauline letter form and many aspects of Pauline content and theology, associating the Pauline companions Mark and Silvanus with himself (5:12–13). Here the Roman church brings together Peter and Paul, and in Peter's name addresses their fellow Christians in Asia Minor. This does not mean that 1 Peter is an artificial "unity letter," synthesizing the antitheses of the historical Paul and Peter into a bland unity on the way to the "great church" of the second century. Such an understanding of early Christian history and the effort to fit all New Testament documents into it, popularized by F. C. Baur and his followers in the nineteenth century, has long been abandoned as the dominant paradigm for historical understanding of the development of the early church and its literature.[12] Likewise, the effort of the Roman church to encourage fellow believ-

[12]See William R. Baird, *History of New Testament Research*, vol. 1, *From Deism to Tübingen* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992) 258–269.

ers in another part of the world need not be seen as a sinister and heavy-handed power grab, but as an expression of brotherly (not necessarily big-brotherly) concern for fellow Christians in trouble and an affirmation of the unity of the scattered family of God.[13] First Peter is an ecumenical letter with regard to both senders and addressees: Pauline and Petrine Christianity are not rivals, but are both represented in a "Pauline" letter by "Peter" of the Roman church, and the beleaguered disciples in the five provinces of Asia Minor belong not only to each other but to Christians in the world capital.

IV. 1 PETER IS A REAL LETTER

Determining the literary genre of a document is probably the most important single hermeneutical decision made by the interpreter. A real letter written to me and my congregation by someone who knows us and our situation is very different from a promotional or marketing "letter" to "Box Holder" or "Current Resident," even if computer technology now allows it to be addressed "personally" to me. When 1 Peter was thought to have been written by Peter himself, the document was seen as a real letter to the churches in the five Roman provinces of Asia Minor. The general shift of scholarly opinion toward pseudonymity carried with it the view that 1 Peter is not a real letter, but an artificial document composed to look like a letter. Pseudonymous authorship was understood to mean pseudo-letter genre, and 1 Peter was interpreted more as a theological tract dressed up in epistolary form.

Particularly popular was the "baptismal homily" theory, according to which a sermon delivered at the baptism of new converts was later inserted into the letter framework and attributed to Peter. Already in 1887 Adolf Harnack had argued that the baptismal homily (1:3–5:11) had been provided with an epistolary framework, a theory refined in 1911 by E. R. Perdelwitz's argument that 1:3–4:11 was the sermon directed to new converts. In his view, the sermon was expanded and transformed into a "letter" by a later redactor in a different situation in which persecution, only potential and future in the baptismal sermon, was now actual and general. Beare's influential commentary is only one instance of this view that became a standard view in the critical orthodoxy of the past generation.[14] The rise and fall of this theory has been often documented and now belongs to the relics of the past.[15] Baptism is important for the author of 1 Peter—and not only in 3:21, the only specific reference to baptism—but the letter is not a reworked "baptismal homily." Recent scholarship has almost completely abandoned this view, regarding 1 Peter as a real letter addressed to a particular situation.

[13]Cf. Walter Bauer et al., eds., *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971) 95–130, which tended to see later New Testament literature as instruments of Rome developing toward the dreaded "early catholicism."

[14]Francis Wright Beare, *The First Epistle of Peter: The Greek Text with Introduction and Notes*, 2nd rev. ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1961).

[15]See, e.g., Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 58–64, and Soards, "Petrine School."

V. The message of 1 Peter has been illuminated by recent methods and perspectives

In a helpful oversimplification, one might say that in 1976 the exegetical scene was dominated by two approaches. On the one hand, the traditional uncritical approach tended to read the Bible devotionally, directly as the word of God for today, buttressing individualistic piety, traditional denominational theologies, or para-church hermeneutics, such as the pop eschatology of Hal Lindsey, with an array of proof texts—an approach still very much with us on the American scene. On the other hand, the primary alternative was the historical-critical method, devoted to setting the biblical text in its ancient context and interested in source analysis, form criticism, and redaction criticism, but often distancing itself from theological interpretation or anything like a "message for today." Since 1976, the situation has become more complex.[16] "The" historical-critical method no longer commands the field; most of its practitioners have been influenced by the recent developments sketched below, and some have incorporated a theological approach to the text without abandoning historical criticism. With the exception of Grudem, who rejects most of the results of historical criticism, all ten commentaries listed above would fit into this category.

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Within the broad variety of more recent approaches and methods, four may be mentioned here as having an important bearing on the interpretation of 1 Peter:

1. Sociological exegesis

In the last thirty years, the advocates of exploring the social setting of New Testament documents as a necessary element in understanding the ancient and present meaning have made a valuable contribution. Again, John H. Elliott has been something of a pioneer in this regard.[17] While debates continue as to the exact social situation of the addressees of 1 Peter, a consensus is forming that the "elect strangers of the Diaspora" (Elliott's translation of 1:1; NRSV "exiles of the Diaspora") refers to people who have been marginalized socially, not people who consider this world as such to be foreign territory and heaven their true homeland. First Peter is not so otherworldly. The addressees are people on the edges of society,

[16]Fernando F. Segovia, "Methods for Studying the New Testament," in *The New Testament Today*, ed. Mark Allen Powell (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1999) 1–9, presents a useful survey of recent approaches, with a helpful selected bibliography.

[17]See not only his magisterial commentary but also his groundbreaking *A Home for the Homeless: A Sociological Exegesis of 1 Peter, Its Situation and Strategy* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981) and his general introduction to the subject, *What Is Social-Scientific Criticism?* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993).

harassed by their neighbors and former associates, without political rights and subject to sporadic abuse, and tempted to abandon their faith. They are not "aliens and strangers *in the world*" (the NIV adds these interpretive words not in the Greek text at 1:1 and 2:11), exiled from their heavenly homeland, but displaced persons in this world, alienated from society at large. This sense of "acute homelessness and feeling of not belonging"[18] is addressed by 1 Peter's root metaphor for the church, the family of newborn brothers and sisters in the household of God. Likewise, the view of the previous generation, that 1 Peter addressed a situation of official government persecution, has now been corrected. The readers of 1 Peter were subject to verbal abuse and socioeconomic discrimination, not the threat of martyrdom from the Roman state. Sociological studies of the profound role that honor and shame played in the first-century Mediterranean world have also helped interpreters to understand the central thrust of 1 Peter, assuring its readers that though dishonored by this-worldly culture (like Jesus himself) they are ultimately honored by inclusion in the eschatological community of the household of God.

2. Rhetorical criticism

Practically all studies of New Testament documents are now aware of the role rhetoric played in first-century education and the ways that first-century authors built a strategy of communication and persuasion into their texts. The dissertations of Troy Martin[19] and Lauri Thurén[20] are among those studies by specialists in this field that provide good insights for the more general reader, especially teachers and preachers who want not only to deliver solid content but to move their hearer-readers to action by effective communication.

3. Feminist hermeneutics

Feminist approaches to the New Testament are among the major new developments in the past thirty years. Exegetes have generally become more sensitive to the implicit and sometimes explicit patriarchy of the first-century context reflected in New Testament documents. No full-scale commentary on 1 Peter from an explicitly feminist perspective has yet appeared. The brief commentary by Sharyn Dowd avoids adopting the facile approach of simply condemning 1 Peter for not having contemporary ideological priorities, and insightfully summarizes: "The recipients of 1 Peter are encouraged to walk the tightrope of being radically different from the surrounding culture because of their Christian identity but at the same time affirming the best values of that culture for the sake of acceptance and witness."[21] A general hermeneutical point is at stake here: how 1 Peter called its origi-

[18]Elliott, "Exegetical Step-Child," 253.

[19]Troy W. Martin, *Metaphor and Composition in 1 Peter* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992).

[20]Lauri Thurén, *Argument and Theology in 1 Peter: The Origins of Christian Paraenesis* (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic, 1995).

[21]Sharyn Dowd, "1 Peter," in *The Women's Bible Commentary*, ed. Carol A. Newsom and Sharon H. Ringe (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1992) 370. On the other hand, Kathleen E. Corley concludes that "of all Christian texts, the message of 1 Peter is the most harmful in the context of women's lives. Its particular message of the suf-

nal readers to negotiate this tightrope walk and how modern interpreters should understand this call in their own setting continue to be key disputed issues in interpreting 1 Peter. David L. Balch is representative of those interpreters who see 1 Peter as calling for conformity—though Balch insists this approach cannot be directly applied to our own situation, which often calls for nonconformity to cultural mores as an expression of Christian faith. John H. Elliott argues that 1 Peter itself, in its own situation, was already more a call to resistance than to conformity. The explication of each position, and each exegete's response to the other, has become a classic exchange that continues to influence the interpretation of 1 Peter.[22]

4. Narrative criticism

One of the major new insights of the last generation is the narrative nature of biblical faith, that biblical authors do not set forth their theology in abstract systems amenable to propositional logic, but present their faith within the framework of the comprehensive story of the mighty acts of God.[23] This approach has mostly been applied to documents that are overtly narrative, which in the New Testament means the Gospels and Acts. A growing edge in New Testament studies is the insight developing that letters too are fundamentally a narrative genre, that letters presuppose a narrative and project a narrative world. While this approach has thus far been utilized primarily in Pauline studies,[24] my own commentary has made a beginning in applying this method to 1 Peter.[25] Here too, the truth of the gospel is set forth not as a discursive argument, but by projecting a narrative world as the real world determined by God's acts; the reader is invited to enter this world, to accept it as real, and to live the alternative life to which it calls. ⊕

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fering of Christ as a model for Christian living leads to precisely the kinds of abuses that feminists fear" (Kathleen E. Corley, "1 Peter," in *Searching the Scriptures: A Feminist Commentary*, ed. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, vol. 2 [New York: Crossroad, 1994] 355).

[22]See David L. Balch, "Hellenization/Acculturation in 1 Peter," in *Perspectives on First Peter*, ed. Charles H. Talbert (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1986), and, in the same volume, John H. Elliott, "1 Peter, Its Situation and Strategy: A Discussion with David Balch."

[23]Seminal to this movement was Hans W. Frei, *The Eclipse of Biblical Narrative: A Study in Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Hermeneutics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974). A good general survey of the approach is given by Mark Allen Powell, *What Is Narrative Criticism?* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990).

[24]E. g., Richard B. Hays, *The Faith of Jesus Christ: The Narrative Substructure of Galatians 3:1–4:11*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002); Norman R. Petersen, *Rediscovering Paul: Philemon and the Sociology of Paul's Narrative World* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985); Bruce W. Longenecker, *Narrative Dynamics in Paul: A Critical Assessment* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002).

[25]Boring, *1 Peter*, esp. 183–201.